

THE  
THEOSOPHICAL  
REVIEW

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VOL. XXXIX

FEBRUARY, 1907

No. 234

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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

WE have lately been kept in a state of great anxiety concerning the health of our venerable President-Founder. On his arrival at Colombo at the end of November, though still suffering from his injured leg, he appeared in good health and spirits and quite ready to fulfil a number of important engagements that had been arranged for him. A few hours after his arrival, however, he suddenly collapsed, and the physicians who were at once summoned to his side pronounced it to be a grave case of heart disease with threatened failure. At first his life was despaired of, but the skill of the physicians, aided by his own sturdy constitution, finally triumphed and the crisis was passed. Our beloved President slowly recovered, and was pronounced out of danger, though we grieve to learn that his heart is permanently weakened; he must always exercise the greatest care and avoid all excitement and worry, an almost impossible task for a man in his responsible position, in spite of his naturally sunny nature. Though the doctors forbade his travelling, he left Colombo for Adyar on December 6th. On his arrival at the home he loves so dearly, he had

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a slight relapse, we are sorry to learn, but since then he has improved steadily. The last news is thus good news, but we are still very anxious on his account. The Convention and General Meeting were to have been held at Benares, but to save the Colonel the risk of travelling they have been changed to Adyar, and we sincerely hope that the love and gratitude of the many members who have gathered together for that important occasion have provided a tonic of far greater efficacy than any to be found in the *materia medica*, and that they have insisted on keeping the old War Horse out of harness as much as he will let them.

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THE last issue of the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research is a thick volume of 432 pages entirely devoted to a general description, laborious analysis and criticism by herself of Mrs. A. W. Verrall's voluminous automatic script. It is indeed a monument of all that there is of the most orthodox "Psychical Researchy." It is a rare thing to find a lady of such wide education, power of mental self-analysis and critical acumen, possessed at the same time of the gift of automatic writing, or psychography. Excellently equipped for the task of criticism, as that term is generally understood, Mrs. Verrall has, in the very nature of the phenomena, the good fortune of being intimately acquainted with all the facts as they presented themselves to her in her own conscious experience. With regard to the details, most of them are of trivial importance compared with a number of automatic scripts we have seen. The chief interest lies in the fact that the script is mostly in Latin and Greek (languages in which Mrs. Verrall is a scholar), but in Latin and Greek that she would not have written in her normal consciousness, both as to style, construction, and a large number of words that are correctly formed but absent from the dictionaries. Moreover, and this most interests us personally, there are a number of phrases and mystic allusions and a few instances of scraps that seem to be reminiscent of mystic rituals, Orphic and old Christian perhaps, for a knowledge of which in her normal consciousness Mrs. Verrall cannot in any way account. The most interesting of these may be translated as follows from the Latin :

A cradle with a phial of unguent holds the infant God. To-day the Holy One of Holies asks and obtains light for the faithful. Who in the Council of God beholds the glory? *or* Who in the Council beholds the glory of God?—with tinkling all is joyous; let the bystanders too sing.

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THE interest is intensified by the fact that Mrs. Verrall, though widely read in scholastically orthodox classical literature, had no

knowledge of classical mysticism or any acquaintance with Gnosticism or the writings of the Fathers. It is, of course, hardly to be expected that the really "spiritual" element in her writings should be dwelt upon by Mrs. Verrall in her busy dissection of their form. Her search is for mechanism, the discovery of how the wheels go round—a very necessary mode of inquiry for one whose main desire is to keep within the precincts of the modern temple of science. Personally we would sooner stand by "the cradle of the infant God" and assist at the office when "the Holy One of Holies asks and obtains light for the faithful," and spend our time in questioning about and searching out that mystery, than in cataloguing and analysing the forms of words and phrases; but that would not be the method of science; it would be the quest of gnosis. Nevertheless the two must work together for realisation, and one become the other. Yet how difficult is it to find the true balance, and arrive at a just judgment of the values, the end of true criticism. Mrs. Verrall frequently breaks a butterfly on her critical wheel in over-anxiety to stand well with the Psychological Inquisitors who would vivisect men's souls rather than be Educators of their latent powers.

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THOSE of our readers who have followed with interest the articles of Mr. Sydney Sprague on Bahaism, will be glad to know that

Sayings of Baha  
Ullah

there is a little book of selections from the works of Baha Ullah, issued by the Bahai Publishing Society of Chicago. It is entitled *Hidden Words: Words of Wisdom and Communes, from the "Supreme Pen" of Baha' U'llah*, translated from the Arabic and Persian by Mirza Ameen U. Fareed. It is difficult to realise that we have before us in these Sayings writings of the latter half of

the nineteenth century. They are conceived entirely in the ancient prophetic mood, and that, too, without even the introductory "Thus saith the Lord"; indeed they purport to be the direct utterances of God Himself! The main atmosphere is thus thoroughly Semitic, though this is often tempered with a Persian blend. Here are a few of the most striking utterances:

I made death for thee as glad-tidings: Why art thou in despair at its approach? I made light for thee a splendour: Why dost thou hide from it?

If thou run through all immensity and speed through the space of heaven, thou shalt find no rest save in obedience to Our Command and in devotion before Our Face.

**My Calamity is My Providence.** In appearance it is fire and vengeance; in reality it is Light and Mercy. Therefore approach it, that thou mayest become an Eternal Light and an Immortal Spirit. This is My Command; know thou it.

Do ye know why We have created you from one clay? That no one should glorify himself over the other. Be ye ever mindful of how ye were created. Since we created you all from the same substance, ye must be as one soul, walking with the same feet, eating with one mouth and living in one land, that ye may manifest with your being, and by your deeds and actions, the signs of unity and the spirit of oneness. This is My Counsel to you, O people of Light! Therefore follow it, that ye may attain the fruits of holiness from the tree of Might and Power.

Be blind, that thou mayest behold My Beauty: Be deaf that thou mayest hear My Sweet Melody and Voice: Be ignorant that thou mayest enjoy a portion from My Knowledge: Be poor that thou mayest obtain an everlasting share from the sea of my Eternal Wealth.

Alas, that a hundred thousand ideal languages are spoken by One Tongue, and that a hundred thousand hidden meanings are unfolded in One Melody, and there is no ear to hearken, nor any heart to perceive a single letter.

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It would be of value to know what Baha Ullah really thought of himself when he was penning these pronouncements; whether

he wrote "automatically" or how. If only he had followed Mrs. Verrall's method! The key to the mood and manner of the writing is

given in the following utterance:

By My Spirit and by My Providence! By My Mercy and by My Beauty! All that I uttered for thee by the Tongue of Power and wrote with the Pen of Strength, verily, We revealed it according to thy capacity and perception, not according to My State and Reality.

Notice the change from "I" to "We," and from "We" to "My." This is not uncommon in such writings, and taken together with the very important factor of the capacity and perception of the prophet, should enable the learner of the mysteries to distinguish the elements of the Master, the intelligences, and the man in those pronouncements. With the acceptance of them as a new revelation for the founding of a new popular religion we have no concern; in the study of them as "scripture in the making" we have every interest.

The Sayings throughout are prefaced by such phrases as: O Son of Spirit, of Man, of Existence, of Humanity, of the Supreme, of Perfection; O Son of Dust, of Earth; O Fleeting Shadow; O Son of Clay! But the most mystical address of all is: O Son of Him Who stood by His Own Entity in the Kingdom of Himself! We shall look forward with much pleasure to a translation of the more mystical writings of Baha Ullah. As for the prayers, supplications and "communes" in the present little book, useful as they may be for the pious exercises of the masses, they are not of so high an order as the Sayings.

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IN our last issue we referred to a great archæological find in Central Asia and have since been glad to learn that our conjecture as to its being the work of Dr. Grünwedel's mission is correct. An article in *The Standard* of December 26th, gives us the following additional information:

The Archæological  
Treasures of Turfan

wedel's mission is correct. An article in *The Standard* of December 26th, gives us the

Unless the stories which reach us from the vale of Kashmir are exaggerated, the German explorer and antiquary, Dr. von Lecoq, who recently arrived at Srinagar, is bringing with him from a remote corner of Chinese Turkestan the most valuable relics of an ancient Asiatic civilisation that will have been seen in Europe for a long time past. . . . All the discoveries hitherto reported would appear to be surpassed by the results of the antiquarian mission conducted by Dr. von Lecoq and his leader and colleague, Dr. Grünwedel, both of the Berlin Ethnological Museum. Their expedition has lasted over two years, and between two and three hundred packing cases full of manuscripts in a dozen languages, fresco paintings, sculptured tablets and images, and various articles of "bigotry and virtue," dating back to the eighth or ninth centuries of our era, have rewarded their labours and the enlightened liberality, it must be added, of the German Government. . . .

Archæologists have often turned envious eyes to this region (Turfan). It was known to have been one of the chief centres of Buddhist civilisation in the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages; and the Uighur Turks, who gave their name to the country, were the most cultured people in Central Asia. They learnt the Syriac alphabet from Nestorian missionaries, and then taught it to Jhinghis Khan's Mongols. This lends significance to the statement that among the manuscripts found by the Germans some are in the Uighur and others in the Syriac language. There are also manuscripts in Sanskrit, Chinese, and in the language of Tangut, which Sir Henry Howorth has identified as the land of Prester John. The full results of the expedition will not be known till the official report is published; and as this, according to Dr. von Lecoq, is likely to fill about two dozen volumes, Oriental scholars may have to wait some little time for it.

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FROM another account, in the *Morning Post* of January 12th, we learn that from the cursory examination that has so far been made, it seems certain that these discoveries will shed considerable light upon hitherto dark places in history of early days, principally of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries, of Central Asia.

Another  
Account

Chief interest in these discoveries centres around the manuscripts, the majority of these being written in the following languages, or modifications of them: Nagari, Brami (two dialects), Chinese, Tibetan, Tangut, Syriac, Manichæan, Uighur, and Turkish. In addition there are several in a tongue that is declared to be utterly unknown. These last will probably attract the notice and interest of ethnologists throughout the world. Apparently this language is a variation of Syriac, but nothing definite on this subject can be stated at the moment. Among the languages represented there is much to interest the student and the man of science. The Tangut tongue, for instance, is a dialect formerly in existence in Tibet, and certain traces of it are still to be discovered in the language spoken to-day in and around Lhasa. Hitherto the only specimens of writing known to exist in this tongue are believed to be a few inscriptions carved on rock. The characters bear a strong resemblance to ancient Chinese, but the present discoveries should add enormously to the rather scanty knowledge of this tongue that previously existed. Some of the Syriac manuscripts run to considerable length and are in almost pure Persian, some of them bearing clear indication of Nestorian influence. It will be seen, therefore, that the very fact of these many and diverse writings in so many languages being found in one place—and this a spot so inhospitable and desolate—in itself opens up a very wide question, and around which considerable controversy is likely to take place during the next few years. Further, it may be added that though, as has previously been mentioned, most of these manuscripts

must date back to the eighth and ninth centuries, if not even earlier, there is no papyrus among them, all being written on parchment, two or three kinds of Chinese paper, or leather. Some of this latter is as soft and pliable as a kid glove, the greatest care having apparently been bestowed upon its preparation. . . .

Though for the moment a halt has been called in this work of excavation, there is no intention on the part of the German authorities to relinquish their research entirely. So much has already been brought to light, however, that it was considered advisable for the present to examine and collate the discoveries made before determining in what direction fresh work should be undertaken. It may be added that in addition to this German expedition there is at the present time labouring in various parts of Turkestan, an expedition organised by the Indian Government, under the direction of Dr. Stein, and another sent out by the French Government. Dr. Stein, one of the greatest living authorities on the buried cities of Turkestan, is for the moment confining his attention to a systematic and very valuable examination of Southern Chinese Turkestan, while the French expedition is devoting its energies to work on the borders of Mongolia.

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THE Rev. R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple, is one of the most liberal-minded and courageous ministers of the Congregational Churches. For some months lately the daily papers have been filled with accounts of his views—and these, too, vastly more sympathetic than critical. In this way hundred of thousands of people are becoming familiarised with tenets which, though commonplaces to ourselves, are a breath of fresh air in the normal stuffiness of theological traditionalism. Mr. Campbell's general position is in many respects highly to be commended by all students of Theosophy, as may be seen from the following extracts from his own statement, published in the *Daily Mail* of January 12th.

The "New  
Theology"

Every man is a potential Christ, or rather a manifestation of the eternal Christ, that side of the nature of God from which all humanity has come forth. Humanity is fundamentally one, and all true living is the effort to realise that oneness. This is the truth that underlies all noble effort for the common good in the world to-day.

The New Theology looks upon evil as a negative rather than a positive term. It is the shadow where the light ought to be; it is the perceived privation of good. It belongs only to finiteness. Pain is the effort of the spirit to break through the limitations which it feels to be evil. The New Theology believes that the only way in which the true nature of good

can be manifested either by God or man is by the struggle against limitation, and therefore it is not appalled by the long story of cosmic suffering. Everybody knows this after a fashion. The things we most admire and reverence in one another are the things involving struggle and self-sacrifice.

The New Theology watches with sympathy the development of modern science, for it believes itself to be in harmony therewith. It is the religious articulation of the scientific method. It therefore follows that it is in sympathy with scientific criticism of the important religious literature known as the Bible. While recognising the value of the Bible as a unique record of religious experience, it handles it as freely and critically as it would any other book. It believes that the seat of religious authority is within, not without, the human soul. The individual man is so constituted as to be able to recognise, ray by ray, the truth that helps him upward, no matter from what source it comes. . . .

The New Theology, of course, believes in the immortality of the soul, but only on the ground that every individual consciousness is a ray of the universal consciousness and cannot be destroyed. It believes that there are many stages in the upward progress of the soul in the unseen world before it becomes fully and consciously one with its infinite source. We make our destiny in the next world by our behaviour in this. Ultimately every soul will be perfected.

From all this it will surely be clear that the New Theology brushes aside many of the most familiar dogmas still taught from the pulpit. We believe that the story of the Fall, in a literal sense, is untrue. It is literature, not dogma, the romance of an early age used for the ethical instruction of man. We believe that the very imperfection of the world to-day is due to God's will, and is a working-out of Himself with its purpose, a purpose not wholly hidden from us.

The doctrine of sin which holds us to be blameworthy for deeds that we cannot help, we believe to be a false view. Sin is simply selfishness. It is an offence against the God within, a violation of the law of love. We reject wholly the common interpretation of the Atonement—that another is beaten for our fault. We believe not in a final judgment, but in a judgment that is ever proceeding. Every sin involves suffering, suffering which cannot be remitted by any work of another. When a deed is done its consequences are eternal.

We believe that Jesus is and was divine, but so are we. His mission was to make us realise our divinity and our oneness with God. And we are called to live the life which He lived.

## THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION

THE progress of science, physical and critical, in the West, has forced the educated public to reconsider the basis of its beliefs, and to ask what is left of the edifice of faith hitherto resting thereupon. If an educated man of sixty asks of himself how much is left to him of religion as taught to him in his childhood, he may well be startled at the answer to his enquiry. The creation of the world, 4004 B.C. ; the Noachian deluge ; the Tower of Babel ; the standing still of the sun and moon at Joshua's command ; the remarkable biology of Leviticus ; or, on another side, the vicarious atonement ; justification by faith ; everlasting punishment ; the dubious condition after death of unbaptised infants and the countless millions of heathens ; the verbal inspiration of the *Bible* ; these doctrines, and many more, where are they in the intellectual world of the educated man ? whither have they gone ? whercin have they been submerged ? Or, if they have not quite vanished, are these pale and filmy ghosts that bear their semblance, all that is left of the full-blooded lusty dogmas of his childhood ? The change, in those who are not troubled over religious problems, is often imperceptible, but is none the less effective, and, when fifty years ago and to-day are placed side by side, the width of the distance travelled so unconsciously is seen.

The chief agents of the change have been the Higher Criticism, a knowledge of World-Religions, the discoveries of physical and psychical Science, the education of the public conscience. Each of these has contributed a factor to the total.

The work done by critical science on the Christian Scriptures can never be undone, and all other great Scriptures will certainly have to pass through the same fire. They also will be shown to be composite documents, writings of different ages woven into a single "book" ; the various readings will be

placed side by side; interpolations will be shown to have become part of the text; recension after recension will be traced out; each will be seen to be a temporary expression of eternal truths. And the result of all this will be to throw man back on his own experience, on the experience of the race, on the testimony of the higher consciousness. The Universal Religion will have no Book as final authority; it will treat with becoming reverence as valuable subjects of study all great books that embody the experiences of mankind.

A century ago, when there was little communication between East and West save for commercial purposes, the ordinary Christian was blankly ignorant of the history and teachings of ancient religions. Boys at school learned the "mythology" of Greeks and Romans, but never dreamed of regarding it as the outcome of religious experience among highly cultivated civilisations. All before and outside Christianity were "heathens," "pagans," inhabitants of a world sunk in darkness; only the glimmering torch of Hebraism traced a faint pathway of light through the midnight of the ancient world. The pages of Tavernier and Bernier, keen observers of manners and men, show the stolid indifference with which they regarded the Indian "heathen" among whom they travelled in the days of Aurungzeb. Not the faintest gleam reached them of the philosophy, the poetry, the drama, of India, despite their admiration of the exquisite art in whose products they so eagerly trafficked. That such art must needs be the flower of a great civilisation never crossed their minds. Later, when Indian thought dawned on the intellectual horizon of the West, in the days of Bailly, Dulaure, Higginson, Moore, it did not affect current Western ideas. It was looked on as a curiosity, not as a teacher. Not until archæological research began to unbury the fragments of the treasures of the past, till Egypt, Babylon, Nineveh, yielded up some of their hidden wealth of knowledge and of thought, did the science of Comparative Mythology prove to demonstration the common substratum in all religions of religious thought and religious experience. The Universal Religion will recognise in its World-Empire all the religions of the past and present, as kingdoms embraced therein.

The discoveries of physical and psychical science, opening new worlds of matter and of consciousness, have taught the vital lesson that no barriers of custom, of antiquity, of prejudice, must be allowed to stand in the way of the advance of the human intellect. They have proved that investigation into "nature" can only render wider and fuller conceptions about "God"; that the ever Self-revealing Self in nature continually corrects and enlarges the narrow views imposed by ignorance in every age, and that Religion has nothing to fear from the discoveries of Science, though sometimes bespattered by the bigotries of scientists—who also are but men. They are establishing on firm experimental—instead of on intuitional—grounds the largeness of the Larger Consciousness, and are building up towards the truths which religions have proclaimed on the celestial authority of seers and mystics. The Universal Religion will see Science as its handmaid, not its enemy, and will place no limitations on the ever-expanding intellect of man.

Much of the revolt against popular Christianity is due to the education of the popular conscience; man cannot believe in a God who commits in his own person actions from which a good man would shrink; as the bonds of dogma, which prevent a man from using his conscience as a critic of religious teachings, are loosened, the moral sense in man judges the morality ascribed to God, and condemns as blasphemous that which is below the noblest human standard. The Universal Religion can have no teachings that are contrary to ethics.

What is the best definition of religion? There are two that seem to me good: Man's search for God, or the means to the unfolding of the God-consciousness in man; Man's idea of his relation to the universe. The first is my own; the second I read in the *Theosophy of the Upanishads*, and it conveys a fine and true idea. Either of these will serve for a definition of the Universal Religion, if in the second the word "universe" is held to include the invisible as well as the visible.

The Universal Religion must be built on a universal fact. What fact is there which is recognised by each as fact? The fact of existence. I exist. No argument can strengthen my security of conscious existence; no argument can weaken it. It

is above and beyond all proofs. All proofs are related to it as secondary, and gain their validity, nay, their existence, from it. This is the one primary truth; all others are secondary and derived. As I plunge more and more deeply into my own consciousness, I pass through layer after layer of me, and discard them as not myself in my veriest essence; but I am always there, sinking more and more into myself. And when I reach a certain depth, I know that all other selves are as myself, and that there is only One Self, One essential Being, and that "myself and others" are but parts of one mighty whole, one Self in innumerable forms. That Universal Self is God, one Life, pulsing in innumerable forms, one Breath, breathing in all that is. This is the one impregnable demonstration of God; all other arguments amount only to a probability; this alone is demonstrative, irrefutable: "IT IS; the truth of existence establishes it by direct perception" (*Kāthopan.*, vi. 13). "The Self reveals its own nature" (*Mundakopan.*, II. ii. 3).

This doctrine of the Universal Self is the only doctrine of the Universal Religion, and the mere statement of it is sufficient proof for all who are able to grasp it. It shines, like the sun, by its own light, and illumines all; it is not illuminated. "When He forth shineth, all shines after Him; the light of Him illuminates this All" (*Kāthopan.*, ii. 15).

The Universal Religion is the apprehension of this one truth; it is purely spiritual, and is therefore a unity. One Self in all—this is to be sought after; God-consciousness—this is the goal. This Universal Religion is the Brahma-Vidyā, the God-Knowledge of the East; it is the Vedānta, the end of the Vedas; it is the Gnosis, the Wisdom, of the West. It is Theosophy. It is the ultimate truth in all religions. All mystics have sought it; it satisfies the deepest craving of the human heart: "When I awake in Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied" (*P.*, xvii. 16).

The various religions of the world formulate, by the intellect, the various secondary truths that flow from this One Truth. Religions belong to the intellect, and differ; Religion belongs to the spirit, and is one. Great men have formulated in divers ways, for divers ages, the facts of the universe; and the teachings

about these facts, as thus formulated by them, form the doctrines of the various religions.

It is easy to see that these secondary truths are logical deductions from the One Truth.

*Immortality.*—The dogma of immortality, as taught in religions, is a partial expression of the nature of the Self, as eternal. That which is the source of all life, the Self, cannot die, and the “immortality of the soul” is a necessary consequence, or a limited statement of the inherent eternity of the Self.

*Reincarnation.*—This is a necessary corollary of the life of the Self in all beings; the bodies are ever changing, but the Self remaineth ever, the thread on which the innumerable pearls of lives are strung. In the memory of the Self live all his lives, and none are wanting when he counts his jewels. For the unfolding of his powers in matter, these long series of lives are necessary; the Self in the sheaths of a savage cannot manifest his powers as in the sheaths of a saint or a philosopher; he must “subdue all things unto himself” (*Phil.*, iii. 21), and that is a work which can only be performed by innumerable lives. Until God-consciousness shines out in man, the path of births and deaths must be trodden.

*Karma.*—The changelessness of the Self implies the inviolability of natural laws, the sureness of natural sequences rooted in the nature of things. Karma is but an expression of the linked inter-relations of antecedents and consequents, causes and effects.

*Many Worlds.*—When the infinity of the Self is considered, the unlimitedness of forms embodying the Self is obvious, and the telescope and microscope but reaffirm the conclusions of the reason. That particular forms exist, and under what conditions, these are matters for research, and for the revelations of travellers who have visited other worlds. But the main fact of the existence of other worlds and other intelligences is established by reason, deduced from the universality of the Self, the one Life.

This list of doctrines which are, or should be, found in all religions, might be prolonged, but such prolongation is unnecessary. The point here sought to be established is that all these are secondary and derived truths, and that they are formulated

by the intellect in various ways ; a set of these formulations, with attendant rites, ceremonies, practices, make up a religion, and these religions must necessarily vary, with the variations and limitations of the human minds that frame their dogmas. This is a matter to rejoice over, not to deplore, for the many views of truth give fullness and roundness to its presentation, and each man's thoughts enrich the ever-growing heritage of humanity. The variety of religions is a beauty, not a defect. As the varied hues of sky and sea and land are all due to the variety of combinations of matter, which take from the one white light the constituents they need and throw back the rest in gorgeous play of colour, so do men's varying minds assimilate what they require of the one Truth, and yield the manifold splendours of religious thought.

Rightly seen, all religions are sects in the Universal Religion, as really as Methodists and Congregationalists and Baptists are sects in English Christianity, and Greek, Roman and English Churches are sects in Christianity as a whole. THE WISDOM includes all religions, and they hang from it as fruits from a tree.

As the future recognises this, Religion will become once more a binding instead of a disintegrating force, and will work for peace instead of moving to war. In every religion the evolved man will seek to realise the God-consciousness in himself, and will strive so to shape his life that he may surround himself with the best conditions for that realisation. A true brotherhood with his other selves, himself in other forms, will grow out of his recognition of the spiritual oneness, and he will see in each the Self who "makes his own way according to the Word," the Word which is the Master-Sound of his own form of manifestation. Hence a wide and patient tolerance of all littlenesses and all greatneses, of all vices and all virtues, seeing that each is part of the Making of the Way, and that none may dictate to the Wayfarer his path.

When Theosophy, the Gnosis, the Wisdom, is seen as the common possession of all, then will the special work of the Theosophical Society be over, for then no man shall say to his brother "Know the Lord in thy Self," for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest.

ANNIE BESANT.

## BAHAISM, OR A UNIVERSAL RELIGION

# 9

### II.

WHAT then are the teachings of Bahaism? We can certainly arrive at no better means of comprehension than by quoting from the words of Baha Ullah himself.

“God (exalted is His state, wisdom and utterance), the True One (glorious is His glory), for the showing forth of the gems of ideals from the mine of man, hath, in every age, sent a trusted one. The primary foundation of the faith of God and the religion of God is this, that men should not make diverse sects and various paths the cause and reason of hatred.

“These principles and laws and firm sure roads appear from one dawning place and shine from one dayspring; these diversities have been out of regard for the requirements of the time, season, ages, and epochs. O People of Unity, tighten the girdle of endeavour, that so perchance religious strife and conflict may be removed from amongst the people of the world and be destroyed.

“For love of God and His servants engage in this great and mighty matter. Religious hatred and rancour is a world-consuming fire, and the quenching thereof most arduous, unless the Hand Divine give men deliverance from this unfruitful calamity.

“This precept is as the light in the lamp of utterance.

“O people of the world, ye are all the fruit of one tree and the leaves of one branch.

“Walk with perfect charity, concord, affection, and agreement. I swear by the Sun of Truth, the light of agreement

shall brighten and illumine the horizons. The all-knowing Truth hath been and is the witness to this saying.

“ Endeavour to attain to this high supreme state, which is the state of protection and preservation of mankind. This is the intent of the King of intentions, and this is the hope of the Lord of hopes.

“ We trust that God will assist the kings of the earth to illuminate and adorn the earth with the refulgent light of the Sun of Justice. At one time we spoke with the tongue of the Law, at another time with the tongue of the Truth and the Way; and the ultimate object and remote aim was the showing forth of this high supreme state, and God sufficeth for witness.

“ O friends, consort with all the people of the world with joy and fragrance. If there be to you a word or essence whereof others than you are devoid, communicate it and show it forth in the language of affection and kindness. If it be received and be effective the object is attained, and if not leave it to them, and with regard to them deal not harshly but pray.

“ The language of kindness is the lodestone of hearts and the food of the soul; it stands in the relation of ideas to words, and is as an horizon for the shining of the Sun of Wisdom and Knowledge.

“ With perfect compassion and mercy have we guided and directed the people of the world to that whereby their souls shall be profited. I swear by the Sun of Truth which hath shone forth from the highest horizons of the world, that the people of Baha had not and have not any aim save the prosperity and reformation of the world and the purifying of the nations. . . .

“ O friends, help the oppressed one with well-pleasing virtues and good deeds! To-day let every soul desire to attain the highest state. He must not regard what is in him, but what is in God. It is not for him to regard what shall advantage himself, but that whereby the Word of God which must be obeyed shall be upraised.

“ The heart must be sanctified from every form of selfishness and lust, for the weapons of the People of Unity and Saints were and are the fear of God. This is the buckler which guardeth man from the arrows of hatred and abomination.

Unceasingly hath the standard of piety been victorious, and accounted amongst the most puissant hosts of the world. Thereby do the Saints subdue the cities of men's hearts by the permission of God, the Lord of Hosts.

“Darkness hath encompassed the earth; the Lamp which giveth light was and is Wisdom. The dictates thereof must be observed under all circumstances. And of Wisdom is the regard of place and the utterance of discourse according to measure and state. And of Wisdom is discrimination; for man should not accept whatsoever any one sayeth. . . .

“O friends of God, verily the Pen of sincerity enjoineeth on you the greatest faithfulness. By the Life of God, its light is more evident than the light of the sun! In its light and its brightness and its radiance every light is eclipsed. We desire of God that He will not withhold from His cities and lands the radiant effulgence of the Sun of Faithfulness. We have directed all in the nights and in the days to faithfulness, chastity, purity, and constancy; and have enjoined good deeds and well-pleasing qualities.

“In the nights and in the days the cry of the Pen ariseth and the tongue speaketh, that against the sword the Word may arise, and against fierceness patience, and in place of oppression submission, and at the time of martyrdom resignation. . . .

“Strife and contest were and are seemly in the beasts of prey of the earth, but laudable actions are seemly in man.”

It will thus be seen that the message of Bahaism is one of peace to the world, of good-will to men, and that the Baháís consider this manifestation as but another out-pouring of Divine Truth upon the earth; that they are lovers of the Light from whatever horizon it may appear, considering the different prophets and divine teachers of the past as lamps through which this Light shone forth and by which the world has been enlightened.

Often to the man of little spiritual perception the Light is hid and he sees only the lamp. As Kṛiṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad Gítá*: “Fools disregard me clad in human form not knowing my higher nature as the great Lord of beings.”

Kṛiṣṇa, Buddha, Zoroaster, Moses, Christ, Mohammed—Bahaism considers them all to have emanated from one source

of Light, to be all Manifestations of One God ; therefore it considers all religions to be divine and possessing the essence of Truth, which has since become obscured by the superstitions and different practices which have been added by man.

Let us consider for a moment what are the proofs of a divine Manifestation or Prophet ; if we can discover these we may be able to determine whether the Baháís are justified in claiming their leader to be such a Manifestation.

It seems to me that one cannot logically accept one Manifestation or Prophet and deny all the others. The arguments and proofs which a Christian will use for Christ are essentially the same that a Mohammedan or Buddhist will use for Mohammed or Gautama.

They will speak of their prophet as a saviour or one who shows the way to attain salvation. They will point to the wisdom of their holy works, the wise maxims and teachings of their founders, and of the actual effect these have had upon the hearts and lives of men. They will even dwell on the wonderful miracles said to have been wrought by these prophets.

How little do these ardent partisans consider their own inconsistency, for what proves one thing also proves another, and the glib argument that my holy book is right and yours is wrong, is not a sufficient argument or proof to convince an unprejudiced mind.

The truth is that they are all right, and the recognition of this great truth one of the means by which Baháism hopes to establish a universal religion.

To say all is from God is a healing medicine ; not to antagonise or denounce any religion is one of the first commands of Baha Ullah.

The power and supreme knowledge that we read were manifested in the former prophets, the greatness of their lives and personality, their ability to attract the hearts of men and cause them to lead better and nobler lives, all these we find manifest in Baha Ullah. Then are we not justified in saying that he is another Manifestation for this day ?

The Baháís compare God to the sun, and His prophets or manifestations to the mirrors which reflect His rays, that is to say His attributes.

The more the mirror is polished, the more brilliant it is, the more light and heat it will give ; so that when the mirror is perfect, nothing is visible in it but the reflection and glory of the sun, and this reflection may be considered as identical with the source of its light. It is in this sense that the Bahafs recognise the divine nature of the prophets.

It is in this sense that Baha Ullah has spoken in some of his works as being himself God. But Bahatism does not teach an anthropomorphic conception of God ; nay, rather He is an Essence or Infinite Spirit, eternal, undefinable, which we can only know by its attributes as we know things by their qualities while their substance is hid from us.

Everything on this earth reflects more or less the attributes of God, but the prophets being the most perfect of creatures reflect them to the highest degree. The most necessary thing for man is to arrive at a knowledge of God and to love Him ; this is only possible by means of His Manifestations.

Through their teachings we leave the earthly condition and approach the Divine. They are as guides pointing us to the way that leadeth to love, truth and life.

There are many men calling themselves agnostics who argue thus : What actual proof have we that there have been such Manifestations of the Power of God as are recorded in the lives of Christ, Buddha and others. They are so surrounded by tradition and legends that we know not which is truth and which error.

To such men the Manifestation of Baha Ullah stands as a convincing proof, for they see in his life, his works, his ability to found so great a religion in the face of every difficulty, a power which is beyond that of man, and Baha Ullah himself is a witness to the truth of the prophets who were before.

Let us now approach that aspect of Bahatism which forms the special subject of this paper, namely its claim to be a universal religion. It is one thing to claim, another to carry into effect.

First let us enquire whether the world is any nearer to unity of thought and religion than it was some centuries ago. It is true there has been a wonderful change of thought during the

past sixty years, a great searching for light and truth in every direction ; the adherents of different religions have begun to come out of their great isolation and are studying the books and teachings of other religions than their own.

The higher criticism of the Bible in the Christian Church has done much to correct the narrow views previously held, so that now in Europe and America among educated Christians certain doctrines are no longer believed, to have rejected which some years ago would have meant universal condemnation. Also within recent years the knowledge of those divine and glorious books the Upanishads have revealed to the Western mind the identity of the Essence of religion ; the pure and lofty teachings of the Buddha have also been studied and appreciated.

Then we see among Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and Mohammedans a desire for reform, and many begin to talk of a possible drawing together of the religions. Unity is spoken of, and some societies have been started.

The question is: Which religion is to predominate ? The adherents of each one will say their own, but is it possible that any one of them should be predominant ? History itself gives the refutation. Let us take for instance the two great religions of Christianity and Mohammedanism ; can we say that after all the zeal, the earnestness, the effort with which their adherents have tried to convert each other, they are any nearer being united than they were thirteen centuries ago ; and among the millions of Buddhists in the world, do we notice any perceptible difference in numbers caused by their defection to other religions ? For even if they lose by conversion they in their turn recruit by conversion.

So it is nothing but a continual exchange without approaching any nearer to unity.

A universal religion, to be really universal, must appeal to the humble and less educated minds as well as to the learned and philosophical. It must be religious, not doctrinal ; therefore a society based on more or less abstruse doctrines and ethics can never hope to unite any but a few cultivated minds who are interested in studying the problems of the universe. Can societies hope to bring about what religions have failed to accomplish ?

But there is one thought, one hope, that exists in the humblest minds of the adherents of every religion, namely that some time their Lord or Prophet will return to earth and an era of peace and prosperity for men be established. It is mentioned in all the Holy Books.

For example, in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* Kṛiṣṇa says: "Whenever there is a decay of religion, O Bharata, and there is a rise of irreligion, then I manifest myself." In the gospels Jesus Christ says when faith shall grow cold upon the earth he will return again.

Gautama speaks of the decay of his religion and the coming of the fifth Buddha, in the *Zend Avesta* the coming of Saoshyant from the regions of the dawn is predicted, in the *Korân* Mohammed speaks of the day of God and of His manifestation.

The prophets of the Old Testament of the Jews were continually proclaiming a day when universal peace should exist and God reign in Zion. We find many among the ancient philosophers pointing to a time when the earth would be renovated and an exalted personage appear, who would reduce all mankind to a single empire.

Even the North American Indians have a tradition of a saviour who is to come and deliver them.

The hope, the dream is universal; does this thought exist for nought? Are mankind ever to be disappointed? The Baháís think not, for they see in Baha Ullah the fulfilment of the prophecies of all the Holy Books, the realisation of the hope of the human race.

They believe that Unity and the Brotherhood of man can not be brought about by societies or by the power of man alone, but only by that Universal Power which is able to accomplish all things. That Power they see manifested in Baha Ullah.

If in this limited space I have justified the title of my paper that Baháism is a universal religion, or that it even possesses the possibilities of being a universal religion, I shall be satisfied; for were Baháism a mere sect there would be no excuse for my presenting it to you.

Let us consider in closing some statistics. The history of

Baháism covers but sixty years. In that short time it has succeeded in attracting to it not only hundreds of thousands of Mohammedans in Persia (its birthplace) and in surrounding countries, but it has also taken root amongst the Christians of Europe and America, where it already counts its adherents by thousands; great numbers of Jews, both Oriental and Occidental, have been attracted to it, and the majority of the Zoroastrians left in Persia have embraced it. It is only very recently that it has been presented to the Buddhists and Hindus. The total number of Baháís in the world is variously estimated by different writers as being from one to seven millions.

In considering the power of assimilation that Baháism has shown, its rapid growth amongst so many different races and religions, and the bond of real sympathy, affection and understanding which it has created between East and West, may we not say that it has already proved its claim and that a universal religion is not merely a beautiful ideal but a glorious reality?

SYDNEY SPRAGUE.

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## AGNOSTIC THEOSOPHY

### II.

BUT it is not to these high altitudes that I wish to withdraw the discussion of this question. My object is the humbler and more practical one of indicating what we must regard as the chief scope and aim of Theosophy, so long as we are Theosophists at all. And in this broad view of the question let me say at once that there is no need for us to identify Theosophy, the Divine Wisdom or Gnosis, with the latest presentment of it, or additions to it, in H. P. B.'s writings, in Mrs. Besant's or Mr. Leadbeater's. Theories of cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis, transcendental physics and physiology, geographies of the astral plane, are all very well in their way, but until we have the means of complete verification, can never command more than a provisional assent. However interesting and true they may be, they can never become "truths" for us until we have developed the faculties by

which alone they are verifiable. And had Mr. Orage confined his agnosticism solely to this astrally-obtained information, his attitude would, in my opinion, have been entirely wise and proper. For these facts, if they are facts, are only "truths" for the astral senses and upon the astral plane, though they may occasionally be "brought through" vividly enough for the physical brain to remember, by those who have been specially trained. But they cannot be "proved" or "verified" on any plane lower than the astral, and even when so proved may be found more perplexing than helpful at our present stage of growth. Here, if anywhere, it seems to me, we were wise to remember the caution of the great Christian Initiate: "All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient." And for those who are not astrally clairvoyant such information can only be taken on trust, like an unverified scientific hypothesis, and believed so far, and *only so far*, as it seems to explain and reconcile other facts hitherto unexplained and irreconcilable.

But the important thing, in this connection, for us, as Theosophists, to remember (and had Mr. Orage remembered it his last articles would have been differently written) is that though we cannot transfer our means of verification from one plane to another, still there *do* exist on each plane the means for verifying the truths *of that plane*, and that it is only when we attempt to verify the truths of a higher plane by organs that naturally function upon a lower, that confusion arises. Truth, of course, is one and indivisible, but it is refracted by the medium through which it reaches us, or rather the Self, as knower, is necessarily conditioned by the nature of the "sheath" in which he works. We hear much now-a-days of the relativity of Truth. Strictly speaking, Truth is absolute, it is our knowledge that is relative, relative, *i.e.*, to our methods of apprehension. It is just here that the Theosophical doctrine (if I am allowed the word) of the Self and its sheaths throws such a flood of light, in my opinion, upon the metaphysical puzzles of the past. Let me give three instances in illustration.

One of the oldest problems in metaphysics has to do with the reality of the external world. Nothing, on the one hand, is more certain from the standpoint of physical-brain-consciousness

than the existence of the world of sense. We touch, taste, see, hear, and smell it ; in fact, our physical senses exist for no other object than to bring us into contact with this world. Yet, on the other hand, this contact is never immediate but mediate ; we can never be *conscious* of the external world, except as a mental representation. The senses bring us but the materials of knowledge, which are "represented" in consciousness as "ideas," and it is only as "idea" that we can be said to *know* the world of sense. How, then, can we be sure of its independent existence ? For consciousness, said Descartes, "ideas" alone exist ; all else, continued Berkeley, is merely inference. "The world," said Kant, "is my representation." In the last analysis there remains for the thinker only mind ; all we can say of matter is that it is "a permanent possibility of sensation" (Mill). The problem appears insoluble, the so-called "evidence of the senses" irreconcilable with the *dicta* of consciousness. And it is only, so it seems to me, through the Theosophical doctrine of the Self and its sheaths that reconciliation becomes possible.

For the theory of the Self, as knower, *limited by the sheaths* in which he functions, explains for the first time how for physical-brain-consciousness externality is a *sine qua non* of that world of which the senses bear witness. For it is *the character of the sheath* which determines the aspect to us of that plane of matter with which it is in correspondence. The physical senses, when normally functioning, *do not lie* ; their presentation is an accurate picture,<sup>1</sup> *as far as it goes*, of real facts upon the physical plane, for otherwise no two pictures would be alike, and all knowledge

<sup>1</sup> This is not to say that the "idea" representing the image in consciousness is not distorted by the mind through which it passes. For we know that Manas is the "creator of illusion," and adds its quota of *māyā* to the *māyā* of the senses. So that, not only is the world my "representation," but in the strictest sense, even this representation is inaccurate. It is only the fact that, at this stage of the development of Manas, most minds "think alike," that makes the acquisition of even our limited knowledge possible. The mind may be likened to a mirror, and if all mirrors have the same flaw they will reflect an image in the same way. Imagine these mirrors to be not only conscious, but self-conscious, and they will all be conscious of the same image, but will not know that it is distorted. Thus a relatively true science of external things will be built up by the mirrors, which as self-conscious units will imagine themselves possessed of all knowledge. They will even formulate so-called "laws of nature," not knowing that these are but the expression of their own *unrecognised limitations* (conf. Hinton, *A New Era of Thought*, p. 38). It is only when the Self—to drop the metaphor—realises his separateness from the mental mirror in which the external world is reflected—realises that his mind is not himself—that he can begin to transcend the limitations of his imperfect instrument, and learn to see things as they are.

upon this plane would be impossible. But our means of knowledge of the external world upon the physical plane are limited by the capacity of the physical sheath of consciousness, *i.e.*, the material brain, to respond to the vibrations of physical matter, so that the information it gives, though true, is true only for the physical plane. And the *mâyâ* of externality, though belonging to all three lower planes, is at its very densest and coarsest upon the physical plane. It is only from the standpoint of pure thought, *i.e.*, in Theosophical language from the *arûpa* levels of the mental plane, that the real nature of this *mâyâ* becomes evident. For the Thinker, functioning here in his most highly specialised mental sheath (the causal body) can be conscious only of the Not-Self as a projection of the Self, an identification alternately asserted and denied. In fact, this alternate recognition and repudiation of identity with the Not-Self is the very essence of Self-consciousness upon this plane. Thus, for the Thinker, the world cannot but be, in Kant's language, his own "representation"—the reflection of his own thinking substance upon the mirror of the mind. Upon a higher plane still, even this limitation, we are told, is done away with, and the Self realises at last his identity with all that is. But of that state—the *Tat tvam asi* of the Upanishads—the state where "God is All in all"—we can have here but the faintest apprehension; of comprehension there can be none.

Take again the cognate question which agitated philosophy for two centuries, the question as to the existence of "innate ideas."<sup>1</sup> Ever since Descartes, in modern times, though the question is as old as thought, it has been debated whether there are or are not "innate ideas." Advocated by Descartes, the affirmative of this proposition was vehemently denied by Locke and the sensationalists. "*Nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*" was the maxim of this school. And there was much to be

<sup>1</sup> A word of caution as to the distinction between Cartesian and Platonic "ideas" may save much confusion. In the Cartesian sense "ideas" are "representations in thought" of the images presented by the senses of external things. In the Platonic sense, they are the archetypal forms (of things) existing in the creative mind, the Logos of our system—the real *noumena* of which *phenomena* ("the things which are seen" of St. Paul) are "copies" in the world of form. Our ideas are but imperfect copies of these "copies," blurred by their passage through the distorting medium of the lower Manas: it is only when we "know as we are known" that we shall see the Logos-ideas in all their beauty and perfection.

said in its favour. It was obvious that, limiting the "intellect" to the waking-brain-consciousness, there was nothing in the materials of *this* consciousness which the physical senses had not at one time or another supplied. The mind or intellect was, *from this standpoint*, (to borrow a figure from Plato) a *tabula rasa* upon which the senses wrote their pictorial script. The senses brought images of external things which were reflected or "represented" in the mind as "ideas," and it was only by the grouping and interaction of these ideas that the mind grew and knowledge was built up. The "Ego" was thus, in Hume's language, but a "bundle of sensations," or a mental stage across which ideas passed in endless succession.

But it was soon evident that, under all these images, the problems of memory and personal identity remained absolutely unsolved. For neither memory nor the sense of personal identity can inhere in a *stream* of consciousness or a *series* of sensations; there is wanting in both cases a percipient subject which, remaining always the same, *recognises* that similarity between mental impressions in which memory consists. For these impressions are similar, not the same, and it is only by meeting in the same subject that they can awaken the sense of personal identity. If the mind was at birth a *tabula rasa*, covered as experience widened with the script of the senses, by whom was this script read, or did it read itself? If it was a "bundle of sensations," what constituted the *nexus* of this bundle, and by whom was it tied up? If it might be likened to a theatre, or mental stage, for which the senses provided the drama, who was the audience? Even Locke saw the difficulty and was obliged to admit that though the senses provided the only material of knowledge, the mind must add its quota of "reflection" before this knowledge could exist as such. But it was Leibnitz who pointed out how the difficulty must be solved. For by making to Hobbes's maxim "*Nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu,*" the pregnant, if not very happily worded, addition "*nisi intellectus ipse,*" he showed at once where the missing clue was to be sought. The existence of a higher tribunal apart from or in addition to the reflecting mind must be predicated, or the problem of consciousness was for ever insoluble.

And it is this higher tribunal which Theosophy identifies with Manas, the Thinker, the individualised Self. It is this Self which reads the script of the senses on the *tabula rasa* of the mind (as Plato well knew)—this Self by whom the “bundle of sensations” is tied up—this Self which is the audience of the drama of the senses played upon the mental stage. And we see now in what sense, and in what sense only, ideas can be said to be innate. Of course, from Locke’s standpoint, ideas could not be innate in that which without the aid of the senses is incapable of ideas at all, any more than “reflections” can be “innate” in a mirror. And equally, from Descartes’ standpoint, since nothing but “ideas” really existed, they must be innate in or native to a thinking mind. But it was Theosophy, with its doctrine of the Self and its sheaths, which first showed how these two positions could be reconciled. And it did this by showing that the Thinker is separate from his mind, as thought is from the idea which is its reflection. For the mind being the instrument of thought, by which alone the Thinker contacts the external world, thought cannot be innate in this instrument any more than music is innate in a piano. For just as a musician, developing a musical theme, sets in vibration certain particles of mental matter which are transformed into *sound-forms* or “musical ideas” through the instrumentality of the mind, the form-producer—so a thinker, developing a mental theme, sets up vibrations, though of a different rate, in the same matter, which are transformed by his mind into *thought-forms* or “mental ideas.” And just as these “musical ideas” may be further materialised into musical notes by means of a musical instrument and the vibrations of the atmospheric air, so the thinker’s “ideas” may be expressed in verbal sounds by the vocal organs and so given to the world. For as with music so with thought; the mind supplies the form, the matter of the mental plane the substance, but the Thinker the soul or life. The thought clothes itself with form, and only when clothed with form becomes “idea.”

“Ideas” thus cannot, strictly speaking, be “innate” in the mind, though it is from the mind they take their origin. For just as reflection is the property of a mirror, so ideation is a faculty of the mind. But the mind receives impressions not

only from within, from the Thinker ; but from without, from the world of sense. It is a double-faced mirror reflecting at once images from the external world and thoughts of the Thinker. Images and thoughts both take "form" in the mind, which is thus the Thinker's only means of perception and self-expression on the three lower planes. And only as we keep this mirror of the mind bright and untarnished, free from that "dust it gathers while it reflects," can it be a faithful reflector of either thoughts or things.

Take one more instance from the science of mathematics. The younger Mill, we know, and thinkers of his school, professed their ability to conceive of worlds where  $2 \text{ plus } 2$  did not equal 4, or where two parallel straight lines might meet. Granted that it is possible to conceive of such worlds, but this was not what Mill intended. His object was to question the universal validity of *à priori* forms of thought. In other words, he declared that necessities of thought need not be necessities of things. But within a world of three-dimensional space, and successional time, which was all that Mill contemplated, the contrary of the two propositions specified above is absolutely unthinkable. I cannot think a thing out of space and time, which is proof positive that for waking thought things cannot exist out of space and time. (In dream-life, as we know, these limitations do not exist.)

But for pure geometry and mathematics the necessities of thought must be the necessities of things, for these sciences do but express the laws of mental relations and are impossible except on the assumption of their truth. It is the lasting service of Kant to philosophical thought to have proved, beyond possibility of cavil, that the *à priori* notions of time and space are necessary "forms of thought," the mould in which all our thinking is cast, and the limits of which our minds can no more transcend than our lungs can transcend their need of atmospheric air.

But it is Theosophy again which gives the reason why this must be so. For if these *à priori* notions are truly "forms of thought" they must be imposed by the very nature of the mind itself, which can no more transcend them than a body can its

shadow. From a higher standpoint, indeed, they may be but shadows cast by the mind, or mental body, upon the mental plane, but still they are as "real" *on that plane* as bodily shadows are upon the physical. For what is "illusion" on a higher plane is "real" on a lower. In more technical language, and dropping metaphor, these forms of thought may be described as constituting the rate or wave-length of the vibratory activity of the mental sheath, which conditions the response of the sheath to the unfolding consciousness, and not until the Thinker learns to function in a sheath with a higher vibrational capacity can they possibly be transcended. For just as our physical ears are "keyed" to a certain auditory "pitch," different in different persons, and are deaf to sounds of a higher rate of vibration, so our mortal minds are deaf to that spherical music which is beyond the bounds of Time and Space. For though the Self be bathed in an atmosphere of truth and beauty, it is the responsiveness of the sheaths that condition our consciousness of it.

This brief excursion into the realms of metaphysics, that so-called region of "everything in general and nothing in particular" so deprecated by Mr. Orage, will, I trust, be forgiven me, if it helps to illustrate the fundamental contention of this paper: that Truth, though it may take different forms when seen from different standpoints, yet always remains Truth from whatever standpoint it may be seen. Just as sunrise and sunset are perfectly true facts, from the standpoint of one who looks at the sun from the earth, yet false from that of one who looks at the earth from the sun; just as it is undeniably true, for three-dimensional space, yet possibly false for space of more than three dimensions, that two parallel straight lines can never meet; so there are "truths," or rather "aspects of truth," on the physical plane that are false for the astral, and "truths" of the mental plane that are false for both. Truth itself does not change; what changes is merely our point of view. Truth, indeed, does not only not change, it becomes clearer and clearer, as veil on veil of "illusion" drops away, and the worshipper approaches more closely to the shrine. And this paper will have been written to little purpose if it has not done something to vindicate the claim of Theosophy to show the Path by which that shrine may be best

approached. For so far is Theosophy from proclaiming that "there is no truth," that our Society has taken for its motto the proud maxim, "There is no religion higher than Truth." That is, not, as might be vulgarly supposed (though this, of course, is included in it), "There is no religion higher than *speaking the truth*"—but none higher than *seeking* Truth, and when found, realising it. And far as we, as a body and as individuals, may have fallen from that high standard, still, as true Theosophists, that standard must ever be our goal and aim. The wonder is all the greater that Mr. Orage should have studied Theosophy for ten years without finding it out.

MONTAGU LOMAX.

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## IN DEFENCE OF AGNOSTICISM

I HAVE been taken to task (very gently) by Dr. Montagu Lomax for my agnostic Theosophy. It is a good phrase in its way, but to my mind pleonastic: as if one should say atheistic materialism. From which remark it is rightly concluded that I am prepared to defend my agnosticism.

Note, in the first place, the curious and striking change that has come over our valuation of words. Doubtless a hundred, fifty, twenty, even ten years ago, a word like agnostic was generally employed in a bad sense. It is true that Huxley coined this particular word for himself, but none the less it very soon became the favourite substitute and synonym for heretic, unbeliever, recreant, rebel, and all the rest of the words expressing moral indignation at differences of opinion. But to-day, in the minds of intelligent people, the word and such words have an entirely different flavour and *nuance*. Instead of a deprecatory they are now used in a complimentary sense. Dr. Lomax must have been reading too exclusively the literature of fifty years ago, or he would scarcely have employed a word which so much honours my Theosophy—and Theosophy.

Also it is to be observed that whereas doubt was once regarded as impious and dangerous, it is belief that we now regard as dangerous. The Theosophical Society itself regards belief as dangerous ; its main purpose is to destroy those beliefs which have proved dangerous, beliefs concerning races, creeds, castes, sexes, and colour. What are all these things but beliefs, —convictions, if you like—*idées fixes*, and settled prejudices ; moreover, beliefs that have had a considerable share in misguiding the activities of humanity, and in delaying the ends, even a formulation of the ends, open to the race of Man ? Therefore, it ill becomes us to use the word agnostic with the early Victorian implication. Behind that implication always lay, more or less concealed, the stake and the gallows. Agnostic ! Heretic !—the distance is not far between those terms and—Enemy of Man, Evil One. And once that climax is reached, nothing but the strong arm of the secular law that, like Gallio, cares for none of these things, can hold the morally indignant from flourishing visibly and triumphantly those instruments of conformity, the stake, rack, and gallows. At all times doubt has been less dangerous than belief. But it is not on that account better !

For I should be blind, indeed, to defend the value of doubt in all matters of action. In action it is belief which counts. Belief is necessary to action. Doubt paralyses,—there is no doubt about that ! Belief invigorates. *Therefore* doubt is less dangerous than belief ; *therefore* belief is more pleasant—and also more dangerous—than doubt.

But let us discriminate between “ necessary for action ” and “ true.” There is really not the least reason why a belief should be true in order to be effective. We have only to think of the myriads of superstitions (superstitions, that is, to us who do not believe them) which have done duty during the earlier history of man. They were none the less effective because later ages have discovered them to be a mass of ignorant, partial and absurd opinions. And equally it is probable that many of the beliefs which operate to-day will prove in time to be absurd and false. But they are effective so long as they are beliefs.

Now it is the proud boast of the Theosophical Society that its motto is : There is no religion higher than Truth. All I have

to say concerning that motto is that for most of us it should be : There is no religion higher than Belief.

If it is objected to me that the attitude of doubt is sterile, that belief is so much better and more improving, that, in a word, faith saves—then I agree. Only to demand that because a belief improves it is a true belief is to suppose that the universe was designed to improve man. Personally I prefer to assume the contrary, that man has designs on improving the universe ; and that just on this account a belief that saves and improves man, may very well be regarded as necessarily false ! But that is too condensed a statement for idle readers. What is clear is that a religion of truth is by no means the same thing as a religion of faith ; and that we must not mistake the natural craving to believe in something for a genuine will to discover truth.

The will to discover truth at any cost is, as I say, emblazoned on the charter of the Theosophical Society. Ought we not to be prepared then to find that this will to truth may cost us faith, may cost us the means to action, may, in fact, cost us everything ? Truth that costs nothing is suspicious ; though, to be sure, the value of a thing is not always what is paid for it.

My contention is that the Theosophical Society stands more for doubt than for belief ; that in comparison with non-members we are characterised by extraordinary incredulity, unbelief, scepticism, agnosticism ; that in the majority of cases we are on the side of doubt and not on the side of belief ; and that, as I have said, our main business is to destroy beliefs.

Belief being, however, a necessity for action, we cannot strip ourselves entirely of belief. A little private preserve of beliefs we must have in order to live at all. But the smaller the better ! We should be economical of belief, if we wish to criticise beliefs. Absolute scepticism is impossible,—would that it were not ! But at least we can make a little belief go a long way.

But let me persuade my friends that what I am saying of Theosophy is true. You tell me, do you not, that the world is a riddle and a problem, that with regard to the ultimates perchance even the Highest knows not. Yet when I specify some of the riddles, and state some of the particular problems, I am told that I am agnostic. So I am, but is not the Society also, and

even more so than I can hope to be, when it declares that perchance the Highest, even He knows not?

Or what do we mean by saying that all manifestation is *Mâyâ*, if we do not mean that all manifestation is false? And if all that is manifest is false, imperfect, unstable, how should not all truths concerning it be imperfect and unstable, opinions merely!

Again, we are told that this is Kali Yuga, or the Dark Age of the Cosmos; that mankind is now at its nadir; that illusion was never so thick upon illusion as now. Yet I am expected to believe the statements made during these darkest ages, I am expected to blow a bugle on behalf of truths discovered by I know not what miraculous means. Is it likely that our truths are really truths? In the darkness of our age is there light enough to see truth by? Remembering too our urgent need of belief, is it not more likely that we have swallowed anything for the sake of belief,—anything but truth!

For remember again that we are not as the Christians, we deny revelation and consequently authority. There is no salvation for my friends in that boat. I know that too many of us long secretly for an authority other than our own miserable selves; that we secretly have that authority in this person or in that person. If it were not so, there would be no outcry when this person's or that person's authority is impugned. It is natural to defend our *needs*! But explicitly we deny all revelation and all authority. That is where we are so superior to every other body. Every other society, religion, sect, school has unblushingly an authority of some sort, be it only a theory. But *we* have not. We dispense with creeds, forms, ceremonies, persons, doctrines, miracles, revelations. We reserve to ourselves the proud right of accepting and rejecting ail or nothing. Is Madame Blavatsky an authority? She denies it no less than we deny it. Is anybody else? It is strenuously denied. Then where on earth does our individual right to set up truths come from if not from ourselves? Each of us is therefore his own revealer and authority; priest and king in his own household. The conclusion may be unpleasant, may even be false; but it follows from our specific protestations of No Revelation, No Authority.

3

But I shall be told that Reason is our guide, philosopher and friend ; that Reason is our revelation and authority ; that if the majority of our members do believe in, say, Reincarnation or the Planetary Chain, it is because Reason compels them.

It is contrary to my experience that Reason, in the sense of ratiocination, demonstration, ever compels anybody to do anything. At its present stage Reason is much too embryonic to make us reasonable. More often it is we who compel Reason. Poor Reason is set to prove what we want to do. If we need a particular belief, in order to give us the feeling of right, then Reason is employed to demonstrate that belief. That done, Reason proceeds to investigate on its own account, and to criticise the service of demonstration it has been compelled to perform. But that freedom of Reason is just what we deny it ; for it is belief we want, not truth.

Reason indeed is by our own theories a two-edged sword. It can just as easily destroy as create a belief. Employed in the service of creating beliefs, it turns naturally to the task of destroying what it has created. That, surely, is the characteristic of the formal mind of man ; whose image is the serpent swallowing its tail ; whose meaning is that opinion is swallowed by opinion, reason by reason.

And it is on this gyration that you would construct truth ! Well, I am thankful to have escaped from such truths. If Reason is the only evidence for Reincarnation or for any other doctrine, then such doctrines have their houses built on sand. Unless there is something superior to Reason, unless, in short, Truth itself is irrational, super-rational, it is not truth, and we are still in the squirrel-cage (as Mr. Mead calls it) of the formal mind.

So that not only have we no external revelation or authority but also we have abjured and foresworn the authority of Reason ; not on impulse, as it were, or without reflection, but with full knowledge of what we were doing. Our whole literature of psychology is a solemn warning against the worship of the formal mind.

Yet, curiously, when I tremblingly venture, as a novice and a "youngster," to join the chorus of the Abjuration of Reason,

and to specify some particulars in which my belief has been shaken,—thereby exemplifying, as I think, the main psychologic doctrine of the Society,—I am hauled before the readers of this REVIEW, and accused of agnosticism and “an emptiness of intellectual conviction”! The very quality I took to be a sign in myself of Theosophic grace is charged against me as a crime. No, *not* as a blunder; for I can prove that proof is absurd. I can prove that agnosticism and emptiness of intellectual conviction are right and proper. Out of the mouths of Theosophical psychologists, as well as out of my own experience, I can prove that the serpent of Reason always lives on its own tail. But what does it matter? I do not believe. I cannot believe. Therefore: “Away with him! What is he doing in the Theosophical Society?”

But really, my friends, do let us be reasonable, impossible as it is. The only obligatory clause of the Society’s creed is that of Brotherhood. Well, I believe that Brotherhood is a fact. I believe that humanity is one species. Have I any reason for that belief? None. On the contrary, reason is against it quite as much as for it. And as for experience,—well, *do* we experience brotherhood? Then is there authority for my belief? None. On the contrary, the Old Testament of Theosophy—I mean *The Secret Doctrine*—implicitly denies the unity of man, by supporting polygenesis. However, in spite of reason, experience, and authority, I believe in brotherhood; and to that extent I am a full member of the Theosophical Society.

But what do I make of the Ancient Wisdom? How do I regard all the other doctrines which have grown around that doctrine of Brotherhood, and would fain usurp its place?

Since I am in a confessional humour, I may as well say that they interest me,—and no more. Very interesting indeed they are,—absorbingly so! I have seen plenty of people caught and devoured by one or other of such theories. A caught and devoured person is called a crank. I have seen and known many cranks. The world is full of people who have been captured and thrown into dungeons by that gloriously artful Rajah of the Mind. Such imprisonment they call belief; and when it is penal they call it a conviction.

But I regard it as the special business of the Theosophist to preserve himself from such a fate, to dispense himself from the desire for beliefs, to be always on his guard against falling into beliefs, to discipline himself to do without beliefs. That one belief in Brotherhood is permitted him ; it is his business to make it serve his needs. Other beliefs he may not have, on penalty of becoming like all the rest !

I know that this view of mine is contrary to the view of many members ; for they have said so, and they have *done* so. For them the Society's business is to substitute for old and effete dogmas and doctrines a new set, or rather a revised set. They offer new lamps for old. But every doctrine becomes a dogma, and every dogma becomes a prejudice. In a very short while the new doctrines will become prejudices, and then what is our fate ? To be superseded by a new Theosophical Society with a new set of dogmas !

I should have no objection to that if I did not wish to see somewhere in the world a society that did not need supersession every ten or twenty years. If I did not believe that there were such things as Wisdom and a Wise Way, such things, at any rate, as wise men (for what have we to do with abstractions such as Wisdom ?) ; if I could bring myself to such a state of contempt for man that I could doubt the possibility of there being one man, even a group of men, who did not need to become fossilised and old and opinionated and dogmatic inevitably and fatally ; if, in short, I could *not* believe that a society could live up to the motto of the Theosophical Society, then—why then, I should see no objection to the Theosophical Society promulgating and propagating doctrines of temporary service, even under the false belief (for it would be false) that such doctrines were everlasting truths.

It is because I feel that the valuable attitude, the enduring attitude, of a wise man and a wise society is the attitude of critical yet experimental agnosticism, that I believe it is the genuine attitude of the Theosophical Society. I am *not* advocating passive agnosticism, the attitude of negation and fatigue. I *am* advocating a superlatively active agnosticism, that holds all opinions, creeds and doctrines as tentative, experimental,—

doubtful! If that is what is meant by Agnostic Theosophy, then, as I began by saying, the phrase is for me pleonastic.

A. R. ORAGE.

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## A MEASURE OF WHAT THEOSOPHY MEANS TO ME

ANY attempt by an individual to appreciate justly the general worth of Theosophy must in the nature of things be doomed to failure, for such a general judgment of real value would require a knowledge not only of what Theosophy means in the general scheme of things, but also of what it has wrought in the nature of every individual who has come under its influence.

No adequate evaluation of the true worth of Theosophy can be set forth even by the best endowed individual, for whatever he may say is but his own single praise-giving, an appraisalment that can diminish no whit from the praise-giving of others, or in any way appropriate their songs of thankfulness. These have all to be added together to form the grand total; they must all sing together to complete the great symphony of praise, the heartfelt thanks of all awakened souls for the infinite variety of the Divine Wisdom.

Whoever seeks to determine the value of Theosophy, can do so for himself alone, appraising it by his own standard, according to his own idea of what it is, and according to his knowledge of what it has wrought in himself. If a man does not value it himself, he cannot value it for others; if, in the ignorant conceit of prideful patronage, he allows it may be helpful to A. or Z., but declares it is no good for him, he is not talking about Theosophy but about some false notion of it; for Theosophy is precisely that which is the most valuable of all things for all, seeing that it is the Wisdom that unveils the mystery of seeming good and seeming evil, to the utter satisfaction of body, soul and spirit with the state of things as they are.

I shall, therefore, in this writing, attempt no more than to try to let be seen a momentary glimpse of some small measure of what I think the value of Theosophy is to me. I have already let the atmosphere of feeling in which my thought is bathed in contemplating my ideal be seen above. The evaluation of Theosophy for me is pure praise-giving for Theosophy. I have nothing but praise for it ; my difficulty is that I cannot praise it enough. I have no evil to say of it, for it is the energising of the Good ; no criticism to make, for it transcends my judgment ; no depreciation to offer, for it is beyond all praise. I am an unreserved, enthusiastic absolutist on the subject.

Perhaps, good or bad or indifferent reader, whichever you may happen to be—you may, in your wisdom, think I am foolish to be an absolutist about anything. But my Theosophy is absolute, must inevitably be so, for it is that which will make me wise and free, absolutely wise and absolutely free—not wise and free as you or I may understand these words in our present ignorance and slavery, but really wise in ignorance as well as in knowledge and free in bonds as well as in liberation.

For you really do not suppose I am so feeble as to allow any one else to define my Theosophy for me, and impose his notion of things on my universe, play hell with my heaven, and make me weakly suffer the passion of an intellectual and spiritual martyrdom, when my Theosophy teaches me as one of its first lessons to be prepared at any moment to shift my standpoint and be ever readjustable. No ; even a babe in my Theosophy is big enough to have a universe of his own without any outside interference, for a universe in Theosophy has no outside. His infant thought-control can wipe out systems in the wink of an eye, the instant they are perceived to be awry from the truth ; his baby laughter creates new ones every moment he sings in greater harmony.

Oh—but you will say—you are not playing fairly with us. Theosophy we know is this, that, and the other. We have read all about it in books by Mr. B. and Mrs. A.

It is quite true that Theosophy is this, that and the other—and something else. But it is not true that you have read all about it in books by Mr. B. or Mrs. A., or that you can read

all about it in all the books of all the Messieurs and Mesdames A.'s to Z.'s in the literary or illiterate world. At any rate it is not my Theosophy you have read about, if you think you can snuff out my enthusiasm by your criticism of this book or of that, or even of this bible or of that. If you have read of my Theosophy, you have read of something that must inevitably take you out of yourself because of its grandeur and greatness; if you have ever come across it self-consciously (I do not mean if you have simply read sentences and chapters with your eyes and unreflecting brain), you too would sing its praises; you could not help so doing; it is the *natural* result, and the proof that you have understood.

Whatever takes a man out of his little self and refunds him into his Greater Self even for a moment is the energising of Theosophy in him. This divine impulse may be conveyed by the understanding of written or the comprehension of spoken words, or without the mediation of words at all as we understand them, —by means of those winged intelligences who are voiceless for physical ears, but who speak the universal language of the soul.

The value and meaning of this mystery? How can one appraise such wealth of meaning, such inestimable worth, when the Spirit of God, the Divine Breath, begins to inbreathe itself self-consciously in the essence of man's being? How shall we estimate this good in any terms of human valuation, when every such term is already exhausted in appraising the simple gift of Life, even in its mode of life in death and death in life, which men cling to as the most precious of all their possessions?

Let us bethink ourselves of the ceaseless song that Nature sings in praise of Life, of Life even in its known phases from plant to man, of the joy of Life when it courses through the physical veins, and then let us think of this Life no longer as unknowing and spontaneous, but as impregnated with the Light of true intelligence, and so bringing to birth within the essence of man a marvel, a being of a new nature, man-angel or man-god, of superhuman power and faculty, who of his very nature sings a song infinitely more wise than any man can sing, in realisation of the worth and meaning of the actual, not in praise of some selected good alone according to man's limited view of

what is good and what is evil, but in praise of things as they really are, a natural song that must be sung, once even the possibility of this meaning begins to be realised, and the secrets of the Divine Purpose begin to reveal their hidden presence in all things—good and bad for the dualities of bad and good that we call men.

You say, perhaps: This is not possible. My Theosophy replies: It is inevitable; it is man's glorious destiny, fore-ordained of Wisdom. We are not the cruel sport of a heartless tyranny, the victims of a callous cosmic inquisition, the senseless torturer of human souls, but nurslings of the Gods, and children of the Father of the worlds. How then can we sufficiently admire and praise such marvellous Forethought for our good, and wise Provision for our welfare? And the Divine Purpose, Forethought and Provision is Wisdom,—that is Theosophy.

You, perhaps, reply again: This is not of science, but of faith—the baseless fabric woven by fond dreams of soaring fancy, and far removed from any actuality of fact and of experience.

My Theosophy rejoins: I am not ashamed of a faith that puts all so-called science to the blush. Faith alone can remove the mountains of our present prejudices that encircle the horizon of our ignorance; theosophic faith is the precursor of gnosis; faith is that which makes us act rightly, and it is by right action alone that this supernal knowledge comes. It comes not by thinking, nor by dreaming, not by fancy, nor even by meditation. Realisation comes by action; actuality is hid in action and is revealed by action. Faith is compelling will; not belief in this or that creed, but the determination of man's being to terminate the illusion of his present crucifixion on the cross of the opposites, and so arise to a knowledge of the reality of the Great Passion which feels with all that lives and breathes, and to the intuition of the Great Drama in which One Actor acts through all the bodies in the universe. Will is beyond all pairs of opposites; within the pairs all is desire.

Such faith in the overmastering truth of man's potential divinity is not born of ignorance, but is already of knowledge; ignorance cannot breed faith, it spawns belief; faith is of the will, not of the desire. It is that which makes us act without

attachment, and action is the language of our God, the speech that Gods can understand in all its meaning, while men can comprehend only so much of it as perchance dogs of human speech.

Theosophy has thus changed for me the values of many words. Once I cared little for faith, now I esteem it highly; once I cared much for knowledge, now I esteem it lightly. But the faith I cared little for was not faith, it was a false notion of what faith meant,—the topsy-turvy notion that the summation of a series of beliefs would result in conviction. But faith is of another order; it is of the will and being, not of the intellect and desire; it is immediate and not dependent on time. So with knowledge; knowledge as humanly conceived is deduced and not immediate; it is an intellectual process, and not the expression of wisdom in action, which is gnosis.

Theosophy once meant many things for me; indeed, it eventually came to mean so many that my intellect saw no possible prospect of ever containing them; their variety was so great that I became lost in the endless diversity of detail. Now Theosophy means one thing only; but this one thing is not one of the many things; it is of another order. It is a will not to know but to be; it is the knowledge that gnosis is realisation. This knowledge is the death of conventional knowledge and the birth of Theosophy.

The more you absorb this Theosophy, the more it absorbs you; you cannot get tired of it; that is impossible, for it is perpetual refreshment, of the nature of ever making new again. It is the secret of the perpetual youth of the gods, the panacea of all ills, the divine elixir, the secret of the philosopher's stone.

How, then, shall we who have come within its benign influence, who are conscious of its holy presence, appraise so great a mystery? We cannot adequately value it, for even its possibilities are inestimable realities, while in itself it is the plērōma of satisfaction, complete fulfilment. But if we would estimate it by considering what we were before we came to consciousness of its existence, and what we are now in this faith in its being, then we can calculate an infinitesimal fraction of its worth in the terms of our present procession in Fate.

For myself it is now difficult to realise the utter vacuity and meaninglessness of my life before I came to know Theosophy. I ask myself again and again: Is that dim memory of purposeless wandering and drifting on from day to day which I conjure up as the picture of my youthful past before I heard of Theosophy, really my self? It is now less real to me than many a dream; it was indeed dream, not waking consciousness.

In brief, it is to Theosophy I owe everything that makes life liveable. The first magic touch came to me by means of a book; it was *Esoteric Buddhism*. The rod of Hermes that wakes the soul is the true caduceus on the plane of actuality; the real caduceus is not the symbol of the powers of the Master, but those powers themselves. The powers of the Master are conveyed by countless agencies. In my case a book came into my hands, and the power in the book touched my soul, so that it became attentive to the powers behind the power in the book. I did not realise it then, but now I know that it must have been the call of the true blood of me, the life-essence of many lives, or as though I had heard the voices of the long-forgotten past, voices as it were of parents, as the soul has parents to bring it to birth in a man, bringing the message so beautifully recorded in "The Hymn of the Soul":

To thee our son who art in Egypt, greeting!  
Up and arise from thy sleep,  
And list to the words of our letter!

That was upwards of twenty-one years ago; but I remember it quite clearly to-day as if of yesterday; how eager I was, how roused, how hungry for the words wherever they were to be found. For in those days there were no shelves full of modernised Theosophical books designed for popular consumption; there were only *Isis Unveiled* and a year or two of numbers of *The Theosophist*. This thing has come to others in many other ways; but to me it came in this way, and I owe an ungrudging debt of gratitude to the Society that organised itself to be a means of helping to arouse the sleeping memory of the soul to a recollection of its past and of recalling the attention of the soul to its glorious future.

It was not only that what I read of the writings of the members of that Society was full of suggestion, and treated of many things of which I had never heard at school or at college, but which I now recognise I had been longing all my life to hear, but the books put me on the track of a practically inexhaustible literature of all times and climes.

I was densely ignorant of religion though I had gained prizes for "divinity"; I knew nothing of science though I had passed examinations; I was a dunce in philosophy, for of it I had read little save some books of the ordinary scholastic curriculum, such as of Cicero, Aristotle and Plato, and these for the sake of satisfying examiners in philology, rather than with any official sanction that they were worth studying in themselves.

What a shocking education you had!—you will perhaps exclaim. Yes, an amazingly bad education, just the education that ninety-nine out of a hundred had who were ground through the mechanical tuition of the schools in my time.

Suddenly, it was as if all things were opened to me, had I only the power of pursuing after them all. On every side paths of fascinating study were revealed, for purpose and meaning were put into the study of all the arts and sciences; there was a reason in things. Among other precious gifts of information, I was made free of the knowledge that the East existed; I had heard of that before as a geographical fact, the only aspect of the subject that seemed to interest the pastors and masters with whom I had been previously acquainted. I now learned that there were literatures of enthralling interest in the East, and that it was worth all a man's while to study the other great religions of the world. Previously these great world-religions had been severely condemned as not only valueless but positively mischievous by my professed educators, those set in scholastic authority over me.

But why go through the list? Nearly all my Western readers who can look back a quarter of a century must know the familiar tale. There was I being ground out in the relentless machinery of a falsely called educational system. All kinds of wrong notions were being ground into me, and the soul ground out of me, rather than its native qualities brought forth. Even

before I heard of Theosophy there was something in me that made me read widely in the classics, believing that there was some reason why we had to study Greek and Latin other than for the sake of philology or even for a knowledge of "literature." But so close in the schools was the boycott of prejudice of all that I have since found of value in those languages, that I never came across a book that gave me what I wanted. I spent many an hour in the University Library; I ransacked many a shelf with the dust of ages upon its books, but the Gods were not favourable. I daresay it was mostly my own fault, and that the books were round me all the time; but I had no one to tell me, no friend to help. I devoured much "literature," but my soul wanted not books but bibles; all books treating consciously of Theosophy, not simply parroting what others have said of it, are for me of the nature of bibles.

In brief, with the reading of my first book on Theosophy my real education began. I set to work to educate myself; I did not ask anyone to do it for me. At first I was like a child without discrimination. I was hungry; there was food piled high on many tables. I wanted to taste all of it; I was a glutton or an epicure, which you will. I set to work to taste it mentally; I read ravenously, devoured anything I could lay hands on. What an indigestion it was!—Indian philosophy and Buddhism, religions and mythologies of all kinds, magic and the occult arts, cabalism and mysticism and gnosticism, the mysteries and secret societies, spiritism and mesmerism and hypnotism, biblical criticism and heresies of all kinds. I think I got through, skimmed through, over two hundred books in the first year. I was young and inexperienced and was—starving! There were no Introductions to Theosophy, no charts of the unseen world, no catalogues *raisonnés* of the best books to be studied in those days. You were turned loose in the midst of it, and ate yourself out like a grub.

But even so, think of what it meant. True it was all as yet a chaos for me—but what a chaos! It was living substance to feed on, a chaos only in so far as I had not as yet the power of proper selection and discrimination in the too great profusion of the banquet. But, even so, it was a foretaste of the good things

of Home, which made the exiled prodigal realise once for all the utter emptiness of the dead husks of the conventional midden that for so long had been his daily meal.

It was the beginning of an absolutely new life, in which at first one was naturally enough a babe ; but it was life not death, waking not dreaming. Gradually the powers of discrimination began to dawn ; taste, the innate taste of the soul, developed from tasting the many dishes set before me, and I gradually began to select the purest forms of food, the greatest sayings and inner teachings of the theosophies and gnosés of the great world-faiths.

What was at first in my case an intellectual delight began gradually to take hold of my emotional nature. Of this side of Theosophy it is not becoming to speak in terms of personal experience ; at least it has never seemed to me to be so. To wear one's heart on one's sleeve appears to me to be rather a sign of superficial emotion than a revelation of the depths of true passion. There is a natural hesitation in displaying to the gaze of the crowd the secrets of the shrine of the heart ; whereas the opinions of the head are generally all the better for the rough criticism of the world, for they have to be either broken in pieces or hammered into proper shape by strife and struggle with other opinions ; but the tender thoughts of the heart, the loving hopes of the faithful spouse of the spirit, are not for any ears but those of spiritual relatives and friends.

And yet it is precisely in these same tendernesses and loves of the heart that the power of Theosophy is most potently manifested to self-consciousness. This power transfigures the whole nature ; the formal mind follows after it, anxious to shape itself into the image of its love. For it is the Power of the Father in the Mother that brings the Son to birth. It is the power of love within the formal mind that organises it from within like to the Cosmos of Great Mind, while the conflict of contrary opinions from without provides the right resistance for the moulding.

Indeed, it is not seemly to display the secret workings of the mystery within,—not seemly because no description can do anything but dim the beauty of the reality of the Divine inworking.

For that inworking is the energising of Beauty itself, which transforms the unadorned and unordered nature into a copy of itself, the harmonious order and cosmic loveliness of God's own Son.

This living realisation of the meaning of Theosophy is not derived from books ; from books we may intellectually grasp the theory, but for understanding theory must first be put to practice, and rightly acted out. The theory impresses upon us the idea, we then imagine or image forth that idea in our minds, and so imagining, by sympathetic magic we feel the power, and feeling it we act it out, and by acting it out we then and then alone begin to know in terms of truly gnostic knowledge.

But how is it possible to convey emotionally to others what such an apparently bald statement as this may mean to one who has experienced even a moment's duration of such ecstasis? How can anyone express on the surface of things the depths of meaning that such gnostic ecstasis or theosophic actuality contains? Far as I am from any pretension to the achievement of such exalted ecstasis, I can nevertheless "imagine" so much of it as to make me feel utterly convinced that if I could convey to another in a single flash a knowledge of all the books and articles I have written and of all the lectures I have delivered on Theosophy it would not exhaust even the surface meaning of what it is to me. I know I have not as yet even begun to express what it really means for me ; I am as yet inarticulate in the true language of Theosophy, I can as yet only send forth cries and utter interjections. The more I realise its grandeur and its power, its inestimable wisdom and its inevitable satisfaction, the more I am persuaded how utterly it is beyond any human power of expression. And this must naturally be so, for the whole universe has been created for its expression, and for this purpose solely ; how then can any wee mortal with his human baby talk say what it may be?

Those of my readers who have flattered me by reading so far, and who flatter themselves that they have matter-of-fact minds, will, perhaps, here interpose : All this is rhapsody and rhetoric ; if you possessed any clear notion of the matter you could express it.

But is it really rhapsody and rhetoric ; or rather is it not the calculated statement of the fundamental fact on which existence rests ? It seems to me to be purely scientific in the best sense of that much misused term. The whole universe expresses Theosophy, sings the praise of Theosophy ; for Theosophy is the Wisdom of God, and this is revealed equally well in the foolishness of men as in the wisdom of nature, to the sight of God and to those Blessed Ones who have pure vision. " In Wisdom God created the heavens and the earth," and all that are therein. The Mother of all things is Wisdom, actually so and not metaphorically. Wisdom is the spouse and complement of God as Creator, the that in which the Deity fulfils Himself.

It is living ideas alone that grow and have the power of reproduction ; and it is to the treasure-house of such living ideas, the priceless seeds of the Divine Sower, that the holy quest for gnosis and self-realisation conducts us. The mechanical handing on of what others have written or spoken without the power of transmitting the living spirit of the thinker or the seer is trafficking in dead or barren ideas. That is not truly human Theosophy, for there is no conscious wisdom in it ; it is the work of elemental transmission solely—an excellent thing in itself, exceedingly useful, but not the work of self-found men. Theosophy must have life as well as light ; the one without the other is either chaotic or barren.

All the teachings, all the instructions of Theosophy on countless problems can be summed up in one master living idea, the most potent seed of all in the great granary for planting in the fitly prepared mind of man,—that man is potential God ; this seed of true Gnosis, this power of growth in Theosophy or perfecting in the Wisdom of God, is the true man himself self-realising himself in the soul of his purified nature, which means a nature capable of sensing all opposites in a balanced state that transcends them and thus supplies the ground of pure knowledge, or gnosis of the clarified or justified mind.

And here I break off, having perhaps said little I have not said before, and having fallen far short of what I desired to write, and yet with the conviction that if I tried again and wrote it otherwise, I should still feel the same about it, even if I

succeeded in giving my sentences fairer form and my idea clearer expression.

For Theosophy, then, I repeat, I have nothing but praise. Theosophy must be lived to be known; for living Theosophy one lives wisely, and living wisely, one reaches true happiness, and reaching true happiness, one sings songs of thankfulness to Him who by this Wisdom has made all things.

I do not, however, for one instant suggest that it is because of the passing through these high stages that I praise Theosophy; I praise Theosophy because I cannot help it even from the bare imagination of what it means.

G. R. S. MEAD.

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## THE SALT-CRYSTALS AND THE LINES OF THE SURFACE

ONCE upon a time all the Lines on the sea of manifestation held a council meeting to discuss how they might become something great and important immediately, where they were, without always continuing in unceasing monotony towards infinity, or towards the boundless shores of the Deep. It was agreed that, during the next great storm, when the waves broke in unusual fury upon the rocks, and every wavelet was crossed and recrossed with lines by the fury of the wind, that each little Line should cling tightly to the first little Line which was formed upon his wave, and by their mutual embrace they should endeavour to retain their state of permanency in that particular spot. And this they did at the next storm. And it was observed by the mariners how long the ripples lasted on the sea after the great swell had died away; but even these died away in less time than one moon period, and the ocean returned to its normal condition of ceaseless monotony, and all the Lines resumed their normal course to infinity.

But the Lines were not satisfied and they decided to call

another council meeting to discuss again the possibility of altering their normal course, so monotonous. And it was discussed how it would be possible to add to their power, that they might run contrary to the nature of things even when the wind was not there to help them. And one suggested that they should call in the assistance of the Sun, for he too had the power to form lines; but at this there was great dissatisfaction among the majority, for the Lines on the sea of manifestation prided themselves on being of far greater importance than the lines created by the Sun, which were mere shadows, or non-reality, or mere specks of brilliance liable to terminate abruptly at any moment upon the interference of any earth-form, and were incapable at any time of continuing to infinity. For, although among themselves these Lines on the sea of manifestation were secretly rebelling against the ceaseless monotony of their existence, when discussing such subjects amongst other beings, sun-lines for instance, they boasted of the great value of this characteristic and prided themselves upon the greatness of their power. So it was agreed that their discussions should be kept secret and that on no account should sun-lines know of their scheme.

It was then suggested that they should ask the advice and assistance of the Salt-crystals, as they were known to be great rebels, who were already working contrary to the nature of things in the Great Deep, to such an extent and with such power that some folk said that, in the near future, the Salt-crystals would probably govern large portions of the Deep and control the waters.

And it was unanimously agreed that the Salt-crystals would be the best friends to call in, for, though they were such rebels and delighted in working contrariwise, they still were true children of the waters—neither spirits of the air, nor the sun, nor the earth, nor any sort of foreign element.

So another council meeting was fixed for a later date to which all Salt-crystals were invited, and the secret dissatisfaction of the Lines on the sea of manifestation was made public among them, after a solemn oath had been taken by all present that the secrets should be divulged to no others.

Now the Salt-crystals were greatly interested, for they had

always been very good friends with these Lines of the surface, and they sat together in council for a long time pondering as to what it might be possible to do and in what way they might render assistance.

Salt-crystals have one great peculiarity with regard to stability, and that is this: whenever they find themselves swimming in a single current of water they have no power whatsoever over the current or the direction in which they shall move, but at the junction of any two currents they develop a centre of permanency within themselves and are carried neither in the one direction nor the other, nor in any intermediate direction, but they rise straightway to the surface of things and this is how they come to be on such intimate terms with the Lines of the surface; and then on the surface of things they develop an individuality of their own and often remain permanently in one position for long periods of time.

After much more talk it was decided that, during the next storm, the Lines on the surface of things should act in precisely the same manner as they had done on the previous occasion, namely, each two that first met should embrace, and endeavour to retain their hold on one another for so long time as possible, and that the Salt-crystals meanwhile, who generally rise to the surface of things in large numbers during any storm, should attach themselves to any two Lines whom they might meet, and then possibly by the united power of the three a state of permanency might be attained, and this terrible monotony in the life of the Lines on the sea of manifestation be ended.

And they all waited eagerly for a storm, for without this the Salt-crystals had not the power to rise, nor the Lines to cross.

There is another power common to Salt-crystals, which I forgot to mention, and that is a great power of attraction, especially a power to attract the Lines on the surface of things, and it was hoped that this would be of great service in the present scheme. For, although fundamentally this power of attraction belonging to Salt-crystals is directly opposed in nature to any kind of stickiness it often has the effect of glueing lines together more firmly than any glue. For Lines you will find are never affected by stickiness.

A storm came. The Lines crossed, the Salt-crystals rose, and there appeared on the surface of the waters a new state of affairs.

The three friends clung together merrily, and great excitement ensued, wondering how long they would be able to retain this delightful state of independence, for really it was only the independence that was delightful. There were no other advantages in this state of existence over the normal existence of the Lines of the waters. And still the cross continued, past one moon period, past two moon periods, past three moon periods, and there was great rejoicing. Such a state of permanency had never been heard of on the surface of things before.

And they held together thus until there was another storm, when new complications ensued ; for, now the crosses crossed the crosses, and the Lines of each cross felt his hold on his fellow member so firm, thanks to the magnetic influence of the Salt-crystal, that each Line did not hesitate to embrace another Line, and cross on cross followed, till there was quite a network of Lines and Crystals on the surface of the sea of manifestation, and this brought with it all sorts of new appearances such as had never been known before.

The Lines were dragged first in one direction and then in another direction, for as the network grew and covered more and more waves of the sea, each wave pulled the network in a different direction, and each Line, instead of immediately obeying the direction of the wave beneath him, as he had been accustomed to do, and thence going off to infinity, or extermination, found himself pulled in many directions at once ; and there ensued such great confusion that at last the Lines found themselves in some cases one above the other in a sense in which they had never been before ; and it felt so strange to be there that some amongst them, the more faint-hearted, began to wish that they had remained content with the old normal state of affairs.

The Salt-crystals were now lying one on top of the other, and the Lines were lying one on top of the other, which produced all sorts of new forms and markings, and this is how the net which lies on the surface of things gradually becomes formed into shells which sink into the bottom of the ocean, for

just as Salt-crystals rise to the surfaces of things, upon the union of two currents in the Great Deep, so do they sink again to the depths after the union of many forms, with each contraction and friction, concentration or centralisation. And this tells you how the little shell was formed which rose from the deep in the story of the Light Ship.

E. R. INNES.

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## ANASTASIS AND METEMPSYCHOSIS

No Jew ought to believe anything, the germ of which cannot be found in the *Tanach*, that is, Torah, Neviim and C'tovim, or the Old Testament ; and in order to become a Christian, he need not do so, for every one of the *vital* doctrines of Christianity, as soon as his spiritual eyes are opened, will he find there.

He has the truth concerning the Christ in his Scriptures, but he cannot discern Him there, because the "vail lieth on his heart." So also the Christian has a far more abundant revelation, a large part of which is meaningless to many, because of the veil of the carnal mind.

Some, therefore, say, when they come into contact with the teachings of Metempsychosis, that there is no Scriptural ground for it whatever. Let us see if this is really so, or whether, on the other hand, the Scripture does not absolutely require this doctrine in order to explain the doctrine of the resurrection.

Tradition, which is held to be more sacred than the Scriptures, makes huge mistakes. For instance, Church doctrine teaches that there will be one general resurrection of just and unjust, and that the world will be consumed and that God will settle the affairs of the myriad generations of the world's population in one day. All this, however, is pure ignorance of God's plan.

If traditionalists were asked to prove their assertion as to a general resurrection they would point to I. *Corinthians*, xv. But this does not say anything about the resurrection of the wicked.

The language used is applicable only to the "dead in Christ," who shall be raised, not with their earthly, fleshly, physical, corruptible bodies, but in spiritual bodies, incorruptible and immortal. For though it be sown in weakness and dishonour, "it is raised in power" and "glory." This is the resurrection, therefore, of *believers only*, whose whole destiny has been settled by faith in, and union with, Christ. "This is the first resurrection"; the blessed and holy, the dead in Christ, alone have part in it. Christ Himself speaks of them as those "that are accounted worthy to attain (τυχεῖν) that age (αἰῶν) and the resurrection which is from among the dead (της ἀναστάσεως ἐκ νεκρῶν)," who cannot die any more, and are equal to the angels (ισάγγελοι) and are sons of God (υἱοὶ θεοῦ), being sons of the resurrection.<sup>1</sup> So that the destiny of those who are children of God is eternally settled. Theirs is not a resurrection in the flesh, but in spiritual and glorified bodies, copies of Christ's own glorious body.<sup>2</sup>

But what about "the rest of the dead"? "The Scriptures of Truth" say plainly of them, that they shall be restored to their *former estate*—even the people of Sodom and Gomorrah and the Cities of the Plain, whom God "took away" with a sudden destruction<sup>3</sup> when "it rained fire and brimstone from heaven" and "destroyed them all." He will turn again their captivity and that of Samaria, of Israel, of Moab, of Ammon, of Elam, and of Egypt.<sup>4</sup>

They are to be brought back from Sheol or Hades and to have bodies of flesh, sinews and skin.<sup>5</sup> So that all mankind, except the elect, are to "live again" in bodies of flesh upon the earth, for: "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." The spirits in prison, the prisoners of death, shall be delivered.

According to the Scriptures, therefore, *all* men must live again, and the unregenerate in bodies of flesh and blood. But for what purpose? Not to live in heaven, for "flesh and blood

<sup>1</sup> *Luke*, xx. 35.

<sup>2</sup> I. *John*, iii. 2; *Phil.*, iii. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Ezek.*, xvi. 50.

<sup>4</sup> *Ezek.*, xvi. 53; *Jer.*, xlviii. 47; xlix. 6, 39; *Ezek.*, xix. 14; xxxvii. 12.

<sup>5</sup> *Ezek.*, xxxvii. 6.

cannot inherit the kingdom of God."<sup>1</sup> What then? For condemnation to eternal torment, or for destruction? Every consideration forbids the thought. It must be to live again on the earth—restored to their "*former estate*," as the Scripture says.

Now, according to the traditional view, this must mean the sudden re-creation of all the thousands of billions who have ever lived on the earth. This is a physical impossibility. The earth could never contain them. Reason rebels against it. All science contradicts it. Such an hypothesis could arise only in the dark ages of ignorance and superstition.

But metempsychosis, or resurrection by reincarnation, explains all. No further creation of entirely new bodies of flesh is needed, but the souls brought back from captivity can be provided with suitable bodies by the ordinary means of generation, which in regard to mankind in general, will never cease until the time comes that "there shall be no more death."

So Job could say that he knew "that in the latter days his Redeemer should stand upon the earth, and that from his flesh he should see God."<sup>2</sup> To Daniel it was said that he should "stand in his lot at the end of the days."<sup>3</sup>

So that all men shall live again;<sup>4</sup> all men must have an "anastasis" or "standing again," but the unregenerate must be born again in the flesh; their anastasis will be by means of metempsychosis, which means literally "change of soul," from *meta*—change, and *psuchē*—the soul, or transfer of the soul, which is the self or ego, to another body, which will be formed by the ordinary process of generation, in God's own time and order. He will give to each one a body as it pleases him.<sup>5</sup>

HENRY PROCTOR.

<sup>1</sup> I. Cor., xv. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Job, xix. 25; Heb. "*mibšari*," from my flesh.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel, xii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Romans, v. 18.

<sup>5</sup> I. Cor., xv. 38.

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JUST as eating contrary to the inclinations is injurious to the health so study without desire spoils the memory, and it retains nothing that it takes in.—DA VINCI.

## THE STUDY OF ANIMALS

IT is a matter of common observation that within the last few years a change, amounting almost to a revolution, has taken place in men's attitude towards animals. No longer do we regard them generally as constituting a solved and settled problem, but more and more as our knowledge of them, and, still more, our realisation of the "abysmal deeps" of human personality, increase, animals together with ourselves enter upon a new order of research.

It is well that our settled convictions with regard to all things under the sun should from time to time be shaken, and more particularly when these convictions entail injustice upon hosts of sentient creatures. Whether the new point of view will in the end be wholly successful, and bring about such general relations between ourselves and the animals as the best of men have long wished to establish, is at present beyond calculation. But it is certain that no one can entertain the new attitude or share in the new methods of research who has not abandoned the older methods, as, in the main, either imperfect or simply stupid.

For, briefly, the new methods of animal study depend primarily on the faculty of sympathy. Sympathy in the most exact, as well as in the widest sense, is the first requisite, without which all the later refinements are not merely useless but impossible. We must, however, remind the reader who may be scared by the vision of doting old maids as exponents of the new methods, that sentiment is not sympathy. Sentiment may be one side of sympathy, but by itself it is of no more value, and may easily become of less value, than sheer indifference.

It is difficult to fix an exact date for the beginning of the new era of animal study. Perhaps the book which superficial students would regard as the first sign of the new school of naturalists is Kipling's *Jungle Book*. There were, however, better

observers before Kipling, there have been better observers since, and the methods of which the *Jungle Books* were the outcome are neither new, nor, after the first application, very fruitful. For Kipling, it is obvious, has merely applied to animals the form of observation and deduction familiar to the friends of Sherlock Holmes, and sacred to the memory of Fenimore Cooper. His animals are life-like, but they are not alive. While the paw is unmistakably the paw of Shere Khan or Old Baloo, the voice is quite as unmistakably the voice of a well-known Kipling character, who appears in free translation as Kim or Stalky, as Tommy Atkins or as Mowgli.

Delightful as everybody must admit the *Jungle Books* to be they are also significant of the rise of the new school. While it is scarcely true that they were the veritable pioneers of the modern methods, they abound in evidences of the new spirit. It is, moreover, probably true that, except for Thompson-Seton, and, in another region, Maeterlinck, no books about animals have ever been so immediately popular and at the same time so revolutionary in their effect. Many youthful barbarians—and perhaps not a few of their elders—have been led to open eyes of benevolent wonder on even the harmless necessary cat since Kipling's "Just-So" story of "The Cat that Walked by Himself." Above all, the *Jungle Books* deserve credit for their negative demonstration of the absurdity of the stuffed-case order of nature study. In Kipling's pages the animals are at least placed in their proper setting; the forest is theirs and the society thereof. They neither exist to be hunted for sport nor stuffed for science. Their lives are their own, and they are determined neither by the moral prejudices of their author as pedagogue, nor by his ambitions as mighty hunter before the Lord. In short, the reader is taken completely out of the camphorated atmosphere and sawdust floors of the museum and menagerie into the forests and fields where the animals actually lead their lives.

And this simple change of laboratory, with all it involves, is perhaps the decisive change that distinguishes at the outset the new student from the old. But once out in the open air with the live animals as subjects the problem of observation is by no means rendered easier. Your caged or stuffed or strapped-down

animal is docile enough to the eye of the most timid or stupid student ; but alive and at liberty, animals, no more than men, are inclined to lend themselves to the disinterested propagation of science. The new naturalist is therefore driven to the most cunning devices as well as sometimes to the most perilous adventures in his desire to know the animals at home. Thompson-Seton, Edmund Selous and the brothers Kearton, for example, have displayed in their researches an amount of ingenuity, courage and patience that would have won mere skin-hunters an enduring reputation.

But there is no cause for complaint of neglect. As a matter of fact, with an increasing public, these writers have already won an enduring reputation. Everywhere the interest of readers is being stimulated and satisfied by the records of the new naturalists. The binocular is displacing the gun ; the alert mind and its trained imagination are taking the place in the public view of the scientific eye and trained hand of the vivisector. Men begin to suspect that the precious part of life will never be revealed by the scalpel. The popular naturalists of to-day are observers and students like the brothers Robinson, Mrs. Brightwen, Warde Fowler, Dixon, Knight, Pollock, Cornish, Burroughs. Hosts of excellent articles are appearing in our magazines. Several journals are devoted entirely to the new methods. Everywhere are being formed societies and groups of students, devoted to the new methods and bound by the ideals of the new school.

And since these ideals are uniformly kindly, and depend entirely on the measure of sympathy employed, it is perhaps not utopian to hope that, in a generation or two, the major horrors at least of our civilisation's relations with animals may be abolished ; and that for the few at any rate the way may be opening into the secrets of the interior lives of our wild brethren.

R. MAGUIRE.

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THE senses are of the earth, the reason stands apart from them in contemplation.—DA VINCI.

## THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

LAST month Mr. Mead was good enough to impart to us his own special dream of Initiation. At our present stage this can hardly be more than a dream to any of us ; the vast reality must, by its very nature, be beyond all reasoning of ours. Nevertheless, when one who has lifted his eyes to the Hills takes courage to tell us, as well as words can convey it, how the prospect shapes itself to his eyes, it is a true and much needed service to the whole body of Aspirants. For the prospect, as it seems to me, can never be exactly the same to any two seers. Each starts from his own position, and has his own path upwards ; and it is only by free exchange of our views that we can avoid the ever-present risk of insisting so strongly on our own vision that we miss others of equal importance. And we may even do worse than merely miss them ; expressions which seem, on this lower plane, to contradict ours may be equally true, from another side ; and in opposing them we may unwittingly be fighting against God. The history of religion contains little else but exemplifications of this great error ; and the mere fact that we Aspire does not raise us beyond the danger.

In my turn I will take courage to tell *my* dream ; the more freely that I think Mr. Mead's way of looking at it and mine are characteristic of two wide classes into which most dreams of the Path fall, and may be studied with some profit. As I understand him, the essence of the Path presents itself to him as growth in Power, and he dislikes the idea of being beholden to anyone for the Opening of the Doors. He would come, as the Egyptian candidate, knowing the mystery-names of lintel, doorposts, and threshold, armed with the Word of Power, before which the gates fly open for him to enter as a conqueror, and this repeated, until at last he takes his seat in his own right as the Lord of the World, to rule it in righteousness. Now this view of the Ascent

is true and valuable ; perhaps there never was a time when it was more needful than it is just now to insist that "the battle is to the strong," and to them alone. The Aspirant must first be *strong* enough to stand in the presence of the Masters, before he can possibly see, hear, or speak ; and it cannot too often be repeated that the "Hall of Learning" is no Infant School, but a place where strong men are trained to become something *more* than men. But strength is not the only thing needful.

Before I come to speak of my own view, I must first say a word or two as to the character of the Aspirant ; for the gate, as we are told, is only open to the *right* man who knocks. The first requisite is that he shall be utterly and entirely in earnest about it ; earnest as very few of this generation have the pith in them to be in earnest about anything. Two or three months back one of our liveliest writers allowed himself to make merry with the idea of any one "finding comfort" in our Theosophical faith. At the time, I was inclined to think that he was but for the moment doing, as I myself have often done here and elsewhere, identifying himself for the purposes of exposition with the O.P. ; let us say openly, with the Philistine. And I agree that when the Philistine condescends to express his approval of our views, it *is* amusing ; I myself should use a stronger word. He don't need or deserve comforting, rather to be kicked ! But from Mr. Orage's later pronouncements I find I was mistaken. I must add then, that when a writer, a little heady with the new wine of F. Nietzsche's bold iconoclasm—and who has not yet made the fatal discovery that there lurks within the brazen armour and frowning headpiece of Nietzsche's *Uebermensch* none other than the Great Philistine himself, Goliath of Gath in all his brutal self-sufficiency ; when, I say, such an one undertakes to express his *disapproval* of our Theosophy, and his conviction (which, by-the-by, is *not* Nietzsche's) that there is nothing true and that it don't matter ;—why, we are, once more, "amused." Not in the least desirous, let us assure him, of roasting him alive for his heresy, as he seems to imagine ; the matter is not so serious. A very much more innocent "correction" may suffice for the sin—and the sinner ! He is not yet old enough to be capable of the seriousness I have demanded

for my Aspirant. There is an old Indian story which well illustrates this ; in which the Guru holds his pupil's head under water till he is nigh drowned, and then asks him what he was thinking of during the process. "Thinking of! I was *dying* for a breath of air!" was the answer ; to which the Guru returned reply : "My son, until you feel yourself *dying* for a glimpse of the Wisdom as you were then *dying* for a breath of air, your search will be in vain."

Something of this kind is in truth the first experience of everyone whose ambition it is to leave the common highway. The very first step on the road upwards is always (so far as I know) as John Bunyan saw it, from the city of Gath into the Slough of Despond, and *there* a man needs comfort, very badly. The vulgar Calvinistic theology, absurdly mistaken as it is on most points, rightly sees that if a man's "finding religion" is to be of any good, he must first learn that life is *serious*—that issues of life and death are involved in his action ; and that without this (which it calls "conviction of sin") what he believes, or thinks he believes, is of very little consequence. All masters of the spiritual life have insisted on this ; all poets have repeated it. Tennyson's "Palace of Art" is, perhaps, its finest exposition. The Soul, the glorified Philistine, knowing and caring for nothing but its own development (Goethe's *Bildung*), is happy for awhile, until

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,  
God, before whom ever lie bare  
The abysmal deeps of Personality,  
Plagued her with sore despair.

Those who have forgotten it should read the whole magnificent passage. Is there any Aspirant who does not look back, with a shudder, to the time when

—Death and life she hated equally,  
And nothing saw for her despair  
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
No comfort anywhere.  
Remaining utterly confused with fears ;  
And ever worse with growing time,  
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in crime ;

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round  
 With blackness as a solid wall,  
 Far off she seemed to hear the dully sound  
 Of human footsteps fall.

If indeed there *be* any Aspirant to whom these words do not speak, and recall the abyss through which we have passed (never ask *how* !), all I can say to him is, as Aprile to Paracelsus : “Thou hast not passed my trial and thou art no King of mine !” And then, when to one in the deep waters, all God’s waves and His billows going over him, every standing ground (even the “truths of Christianity !”) melting away from under his feet, Theosophy shows for the first time a world-system which he can comprehend and a God whom he can love, and he snatches at it as a drowning man at a plank of safety in the whirling waters, will the Philistine be “amused” at his “finding comfort” ? It is quite possible ; nothing short of a hard stone, well aimed and well slung, can reach *his* feelings.

Next, what is the Aspiration ? I do not ask this with any idea of defining it—*that* is a secret for the Aspirant alone. But there is one negation which may be usefully laid down. It is *not* a matter of daily washings and abstinences, of long concentrations to gain powers of sight and action on other planes, even though this be undertaken with the purest unselfishness, solely to make of ourselves “Invisible Helpers” on those planes which are commonly—and mercifully—hid from our eyes. All this is of the world the Aspirant leaves behind—the Middle Path of the souls under the rule of Karma. To help *for the sake of helping* binds the soul to earth, by bonds, of love indeed, but strong as those of hate. It lays up store of good Karma for the next life ; those who walk the Middle Path cannot do better for themselves—but Aspiration is to the region *beyond* Karma. Hear Seraphita’s admonition to the Aspirant : “Like one preparing for far travel, you must leave your home, renounce your projects, bid farewell to father, mother, sister, even to the helpless babe that cries after you—yes, farewell to them all eternally. You will no more return than did the martyrs on their way to death. You must strip yourself of every longing, of everything to which man clings. Unless you do all this, you are but half-hearted in your

enterprise." Truly, as the Indian saying has it: "Gurus you may find at every street corner, but disciples are rare!"

Now for my dream. No more than Mr. Mead can I picture to myself a time when I shall utterly lose my identity. I see myself (if all goes well) ever growing, but always keeping a consciousness apart from the Divine, though at the same time *also* lost in it as "the dewdrop slips into the shining sea." How these can *both* be accomplished I have no hope of understanding in this life; but we are distinctly taught that even after the Night of Brahmâ, when everything without exception has been indrawn into the Godhead, in some mysterious way we shall come forth, again ourselves, in the new universe. But for all that the chief distinction between the Masters and ourselves is that whilst we are working separately They are One; and we are taught that each step in our advance is a widening out of our consciousness towards the Unity which is our final goal. My dream, then, embracing to the full all Mr. Mead's, is farther of a Power "which setteth the solitary in families"; of admission to a Communion of Saints; to be received as a duly qualified recruit in the Grand Army, and thus made a hundred-fold more useful than I could ever have been alone. And in this thought, it seems to me, there is a justification of a good deal which jars upon *his* feelings. For *ceremonies*, however mystical or symbolical, I care as little as anyone. I remember, when I was invited to enter Mrs. Besant's Co-Masonry, replying to the effect that before the play was played out I should surely lose patience and do something desperate to the Worthy Master, or the Grand Organist, or the respectable Tyler, and be quoited out again into the exterior darkness; and the descriptions of the Egyptian Neophyte climbing ladders and wandering in dark passages, probably to the serious damage of what a well-known Hindu pleading describes as the leather of his nose, give me much the same feeling. They seem to me plays for children. But, surely, one who understands that his present life, and all his previous ones, have been merely his school, his training for the Great Work, for which so few are found worth a trial, and still fewer successfully to pass through their long and hard student life, must look forward to his Initiation—the recognition by the Powers

that he has done well, and stands, called chosen and faithful, a man fit for Their service, no longer a child as we all are, so far, in this world—with something like awe; and will feel that his leaving school is a distinct step in his life which may well be marked with solemn ceremony, as it was with the Knights of old. The Door opens only to the soul who is strong enough to lift the heavy bar; *that* is profoundly true, and neither fear nor favour can for one instant anticipate the entrance; but (to speak honestly) I don't myself see any reason why I should trouble to use my strength for the purpose if it be not that within the Gate await me the "Company of the just made perfect," the Masters who have taught me and guided me, the companions who have reached the goal before me. And of this meeting we have been taught somewhat—that the new Knight is furnished with the Secrets belonging to his degree, his armour and weapons for the Great War. It is true that we have grown to be worthy of them—have proved our power to use them well—or they would not be given to us; but (at least as I understand the teaching) they are given, not taken by violence. One sees, indeed, that it must be so. For the whole process is one of hastening our development, because workers are needed; as soon as we can handle the new powers they are given; there is no time to wait for the slow process of our finding them out for ourselves.

But Initiation is far more than this, great as it is. There is a change in ourselves; we become *more* than men, under the new out-pouring of the Spirit. As I have said, the gift is of the widening out of our consciousness, the first great step towards the Divine Unity. The accepted pupil thereby enters the Communion of Saints, becomes a portion of the Great Life, inextricably joined with all the rest, instead of the stray personality, floating loose upon the waves of Time, he has been until now. The prayer of the Syrian Master is answered; he and They are one, even as He and the Father are one. So overpowering is to me the deep meaning of these words, vaguely as one who has not *felt* their reality can apprehend them, that I find a difficulty in picturing to my imagination what individuality can be left to take, as a *separate* being, the higher Initiations. Indeed, from this point of view one seems to see a meaning in the old

Indian idea that the great Lords of the World are those who have so far *failed* to lose themselves in the All, and are thus made use of in the lower work of ruling the world, much as H. P. B. was utilised for its teaching.

Once more; all this, again, is nothing to the great Love—the Shining Sea, into which the soul slips as the dewdrop, when the gate opens and the Blessed Ones welcome him into their company. With Dante he has passed through the cleansing fires of the Purgatory and the Devachanic bliss of the Earthly Paradiso—solitary still, but for the faithful guide who has led him to the point where he no longer needs human guidance, being himself a Master; and now the Heaven opens for him in immeasurable Light and Love, reflected back upon him from every soul of the Blessed Company who dwell there. Initiation after Initiation, Heaven after Heaven, each distinguished from the last by more piercing Light and fuller, richer Love than he had known before, he passes, beyond every earthly thought or dream.

Yes, beyond us; let us wake from our dream. I have told it, partly as a protest against a tendency I seem to perceive, one especially strong in the new generation, to subject the teachings we have received, and which it is the Society's one business to spread in the world, to a similar process to that to which the Christian "truths" are being subjected in the world outside; a tendency to slip them quietly into the background as "dogmas," covering our retreat like the cuttle-fish with a cloud of ink, a milk-and-watery deluge of "Universal Brotherhood." But when this is accomplished the use of the Society is ended. If the Philistine should require "evidence," what can we say? There is not, and never can be, evidence on the physical plane; what may be seen on the astral, that ever-shifting Plane of Illusion, can be no confirmation. But if the Philistine draws what seems to him the natural conclusion that it is a dream *only*, we look at each other with a tolerant smile, "He has not been through the waters—he knows nothing!"

ARTHUR A. WELLS.

## THE DAYS OF THE WEEK: THEIR RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

ONE of the most familiar of our associations with the sacred number seven is our division of time into the seven days of the week. So familiar indeed is it, that we are apt to overlook what there may be of sacredness underlying it.

Convenience and convention have no doubt played their part in the arrangement; and the fact that custom varies in this respect among different races and at different periods of the world's history, seems at first sight to justify a superficial view of the matter. But, on further enquiry, we find that no system of marking time is wholly dissociated from the natural divisions of night and day, summer and winter, full moon and crescent; so that all the various methods, even of division into weeks, have some fundamentals in common.

The sun in every case marks the year; the moon the lunar month; the earth's revolution gives us the alternations of night and day, a warfare between light and darkness. We shall frequently find these three fundamentals represented in the naming of the first three days of the week. For whether the week includes seven days or ten, and whether these have distinctive names or are merely known as First, Second, Third, and so on, a tradition lingers in most cases of the dedication of each to some great Spiritual Intelligence whose soul was believed to animate one or other of the heavenly bodies which give light to our earth.

In the Western world the grouping of seven days is now usual, and as a rule each has its distinctive name traceable to some mythological or religious origin. The first day of the week, for instance, is by common consent regarded as the one of deepest religious significance. It is thus by most peoples dedicated to the Supreme Deity or to the Sun as typifying Him in the physical

world. Hence we get the Teutonic words *Sunday* and *Sonntag*, and the various forms of the Latin *Dies Domini* (the Lord's Day) that appear as *Dimanche*, *Domenicà*, and *Domingo*, in French, Italian, and Spanish.

Similarly the second day of the week is generally dedicated to the Moon; for she typifies the reflected glory of the Sun, the divine life as variously expressed in human personality. Our *Monday* and the German *Montag*, as well as the French and Italian *Lundi* and *Lunedì*, are thus all connected with the lunar orb.

To find to which of the heavenly bodies the third day of the week belongs, we must look first at the Latin languages, where it is called *Mardi* or *Martedì*, after the planet *Mars*, whom the Romans worshipped as the God of War. The Norse name for this deity was *Tyr* (the feeder of the fierce wolf Fenrir), and it is after him we call our *Tuesday*.

The same links of connection are found in the case of Wednesday, which is *Odin's* or *Woden's Day*; for Odin, in Norse tradition, is the God of Speech, presiding over everything which is characteristically human on this earth. It is he who comes most readily into human form, and shares most freely in the activities of mankind. His attendants are Winged Thoughts, Silver Speech, Memory and Speed. He is very specially the messenger of the gods to man, and also the means of communication between mind and mind; for he is able to be everywhere at once, and to know everything always.

In all these respects he corresponds closely with the Greek and Roman *Hermes* or *Mercury*, which latter is namesake to the French and Italian *Mercredi* and *Mercoledì*.

The God of Thunder, in the same way, names the fifth day, whether under the German form *Donnerstag*, the English *Thursday* (*Thor's Day*) or the French and Italian *Jeudi* or *Giovedì*, after the Greek *Zeus* and the Latin *Jupiter* or *Jove*.

The sixth day has, even among the Hindus, been reserved to the honour of a feminine deity, the spirit of summer or fruitfulness. Thus our *Friday* is called after the Norse Goddess, *Freyja* or *Frigga*; while the same being, under her Roman name of *Venus*, presides over the *Vendredi* or *Venerdì* of Southern Europeans,

and names alike for us and for them the planet of love and beauty.

Saturday being named after what was for long believed to be the most distant planet of our Solar System, naturally comes last on our list ; for *Saturn* represents that condition of existence which is furthest from the Source of all life. He typifies matter as the polar opposite of spirit, and represents physical being in its aspect of limitation, even the extreme limit of physical death. He is the Greek *Kronos* equated with *Chronos* (Time), a limited part of Eternity, and is therefore regarded as the son of *Ouranos*, the limitless heaven, and of *Gaia*, the bounded earth.

To the student of mythology it is interesting to find in things of everyday experience a connecting link between the mythologies of North and South. A little further investigation shows a correspondence with Semitic and even Christian ideas ; for we learn that the Hebrew Astrologers of old were like the Greeks and Romans in postulating the existence of some great spiritual Being as the animating principle of each of the heavenly bodies. The names they gave to these Beings are those that appear in the Apocryphal Books of the Bible, applied to the Archangels, *Michael*, *Gabriel*, *Samael*, *Raphael*, *Zadkiel*, *Azrael*, and *Cassiel*.

St. Michael, as the spirit animating the Sun, is naturally associated (in artistic tradition, for instance) with the Last Judgment ; since the Sun is the influence by which life on this planet is maintained, and at whose withdrawal physical life here must cease. The name means "like unto God" ; and this great Archangel is regarded as God's Lieutenant, the Chief Captain of the Heavenly Host.

Gabriel, the Angel of the Annunciation, on the other hand, watches, like the classic Diana, over birth and the physical aspect of human life generally, and so is identified with the Moon, whose movements regulate physiological periods.

Raphael, the Soul of the Planet Mercury, represents, like Odin, or Mercury, or Hermes, all that is peculiar to the human stage of our evolution, as distinct from the lower creatures, on the one hand, who have no speech, and, on the other, from the Gods who need none. His symbol in art is therefore *Man*, often,

indeed, the patriarch Joseph, whose instructor he very specially is said to have been, while Gabriel is recognised by the annunciation lily, Zadkiel by the thunderer's trump or the lightning's fire, Cassiel by the scythe of death, and Michael by the sword and scales of justice.

The conception of these Archangels, to whom the *Book of Revelation* refers as the Seven Angels, Seven Stars, or "Seven Spirits, which are before the throne," while the *Psalms* speak of them as "those ministers of His who do His pleasure," helps us to understand the early gropings of our forefathers. For, just as the Jews, whose monotheism is undoubted, could think of divine influence coming to humanity through the agency of divinely-appointed Beings, each of which was manifest as Sun, Moon, or Planet, so the Greeks, Romans, and Norsemen, at their best, realised that there was a controlling power—be it only known to them as the Threefold Fate (Past, Present, and Future)—above and beyond what we, perhaps ignorantly, call their "gods."

Our ignorance, as compared with the ancients, appears very markedly in this very connection; for we have good reason to know that the wise men of the East were aware of the existence of stars and planets which have only been rediscovered in very recent times, and it is not unnatural for us to connect this fact with the ancient method of dividing a week into ten or more days.

In our week of seven, we have no day to spare for the newly-found planets, Uranus (1781) and Neptune (1846); still less for the Vulcan of the Ancients, who, in their longer week, could do honour to each of the Planetary Angels in turn.

Much has yet to be learned as to the particular sphere of influence attributable to each, especially to the latter three. There is the suggestion, for instance, that Neptune, who was the Roman God of the Sea,—Poseidon, in Greek, and Ægir, in Norse—presided over the watery element, in its figurative sense also denoting the emotional, psychic, or astral regions of nature so little understood in the modern world; and that Uranus and Vulcan are also concerned with these more hidden powers of the mind, which the ancients acknowledged, used, and even abused, and which the twentieth century is only now beginning to rediscover and recognise.

E. H. C. PAGAN, M.A.

## AVE, VENUS, AVE !

Ponder me well, for with me is everlasting life ;  
And without me all life is vain !

To the Belovéd supreme,  
To her of the purple deep,  
To her of the azure air,  
Love-homage again and again.

Ave, Venus, ave !

Form of the Eternal Life,  
Colour and light of the Soul,  
Sacred and innermost flame,  
Spirit of Beauty in all,

Ave, Venus, ave !

Thy suave, amethystine seas  
Are ever sounding thy name ;  
The clear gold-shining air  
Is thrilled with the pulse of thy heart ;  
In the depths of the forest dim  
The greenness is sighing of thee.

Ave, Venus, ave !

Iris that grows by the sea,  
Purple against the blue,  
Narcissus white on the hill,  
And deep red, perfumed rose,  
They all are thy children sweet.

Ave, Venus, ave !

All harmony comes from thee,  
All rhythm of notes and words,  
All balance and symmetry.  
Thy essence flows out in form ;  
In the spiral curves of the shell,  
In the lines of the human frame.

All colour is born of thy heart,  
That heart of transcendent fire.

Ave, Venus, ave !

The voice of the bridegroom and bride ;  
Deep eyes of the maid that wait,  
Set towards thy heavenly dawn,  
And ardent eyes of the man,  
Who at last the long-sought has found,  
Proclaim but thy grace and power,  
Oh mother of love divine !

Ave, Venus, ave !

The ascetic's frozen dream  
Shall dissolve beneath thy smile ;  
He bows to the spell of thy name ;  
His past before thee is dust,  
For thy hour in the end must come.

Ave, Venus, ave !

Thy hand is outstretched over all ;  
Yea, e'en in the depths of hell,  
That hell created by man,  
The inverted Venus thou art,  
The dark which opposes the light,  
The foul which opposes the fair,  
The false which is held for the true.

Still, Venus, ave !

\* \* \* \*

In the crystal cups of the sea  
That lie the red rocks between,  
Where the water seems golden wine,  
In the midst of the amber and green  
The rays of the Sun found *thee*,  
And mixed with thy fairness divine.

Ave, Venus, ave !

Oh Venus, thou " little sun " <sup>1</sup> !  
Could Sol be a stranger to thee ?  
With all the Immortals thou'rt linked

<sup>1</sup> *Secret Doctrine.*

Throughout their eternity.

Ave, Venus, ave !

Thou art the fair face of the Moon ;<sup>1</sup>  
Luna changeth her shape with thee.  
Of her aspects thou art that one  
Which is Beauty eternally.

Ave, Venus, ave !

The golden, the crownéd snake,  
He who was Wisdom of old,  
His head is reared above thine,  
His coils thy body enfold ;  
For Wisdom protecteth Love,  
And those only love who know.  
The snake and thy fairness are one ;  
For the snake's is the seeing eye,  
Without him thou art undone.

Ave, Venus, ave !

Oh, Venus, born of God's grace,  
Immaculate ray of His mind,  
Thou seemest well known but art hid ;  
Few thy still, white flame may find,  
For the Highest is ever veiled.  
Who may speak thy secret name ?  
Thy face none may see and live ;  
Thy loveliness, mother of love,  
No mortal eye could sustain.

Ave, Venus, ave !

A boy with a lute, rose-crowned,  
Once sang praises of thee,  
Now lost in an alien land  
(A land by the gods unblessed),  
And soiled by an alien dust.  
Still thou raisest my soul from the dead,  
Still salutation I send.

Ave, Venus, ave !

FLORENCE TUCKER.

<sup>1</sup> Ashtaroth or Astarte.

## A MEDITATION

**ETERNAL One ! Thou self-existent cause  
 Of all existence, source of love and light,  
 In whom all things exist and have their light,  
 Who lives in all things and all things in Thee.  
 Nothing exists but Thee, and there is naught  
 In which no good exists. Thou art ; we but  
 Appear to be. For forms are empty, nothing,  
 If not inhabited by Thee ; they are Thyself  
 Made manifest.  
 For we are nothing if our inmost be not Thou.  
 We have no life but Thine,  
 No will or thought, no love or strength but Thine.  
 Thou art our life, our will, our mind, our all.  
 We are in Thee and Thou in us ; Thou art  
 The Father, and we, in Thee, the Son.  
 Thy Spirit fills the universe with glory,  
 And impregnates all Nature with Thy power,  
 Enabling her to bring forth living forms  
 Of plants and trees, of animals and men.  
 It fructifies the soul of man and gives  
 Birth to the Christ, the Saviour of mankind,  
 The Master, He who makes immortal all  
 In whom His presence is made manifest.  
 Thus Christ is God made manifest in man  
 As man ; and no one can attain to God  
 Except through Him. For He Himself is God  
 In man, and He who strives to find His God  
 Must seek for Him in His own holy temple  
 Within himself, in Spirit and in Truth.  
 To Him, the Christ, the God in man we pray ;  
 And praying strongly we fulfil our prayer.**

For rising up to Him we are Himself.  
No man knows God ; it is the God in man  
Who knows Himself in man, and lifts man up  
To the conception of what is Divine  
In his own nature. Rising up to Him  
We come to God through Christ, through God to man,  
And to all nature in His Holy Spirit.

FROM THE GERMAN.

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## THE WATCHER

HIGH above the haunts of men sits a lonely Watcher who never sleeps. Day and night without ceasing ; year after year without ceasing ; age after age without ceasing ; He watches, watches the hearts of men.

And as He watches, from His hand drops seed down, down, down, into the hearts of men.

Like dew falling from the heavens silently it drops and never ceases.

Like manna in the wilderness it falls and no seed goes astray.

The breath of the Watcher follows the seeds downwards, and they are fertilised and spring up.

None there are that die, but many lie dwarfed and stunted ; for the ground they fall on is hard and stony, and the warm breath passes but finds no home there.

Many there are that grow tall of stalk, and many leafed plants that bear no fruit ; they live for a season, then cease to feel the breath, and wither away, leaving the root-seed hid within the ground.

Many spring forth like creepers ; cling to and clothe the ground with tendrils that shut out the light and warmth, till no man seeth what lies beneath.

Many come forth as poisonous flame-plants, scorching and

withering with their own heat, leaving behind blackness and desolation.

Few there are that store within them the breath, and grow tall and straight and strong up to the heavens; leaves first, then the flower, white and lovely, whose perfume is as incense in the nostrils of the Watcher, and then the perfect fruit.

Bending He breathes forth to them a seven-fold force of His breath, and all around them they exhale light and sweetness; and passers-by seeing say: "Behold the abode of peace and the garden and sanctuary of our Lord!"

Legions of helpers glean the Sower's harvest; and each man's crop is stored and set aside as his heritage, when he cometh again to his Father's land.

Out of the mouth of the Watcher proceedeth words of wisdom which no man save His seed bearing fruit may understand.

I am one with the Father!

I am the blackness of darkness, and the heart of eternal light.

I am the warrior's courage, and the weakness in the heart of the weak maiden.

I am the gold of the miser, and the selflessness of the selfless soul.

I am the heart of corruption, and the sweetness of the breath of flowers.

I am the heart of power, and the soul of humility.

I am the lord of death, and the giver of life.

Before the world was, I was,

And to all eternity I am.

I am the Sower of seed which grows in the heart of men.

S. PRESTON.

WHERE there is most power of feeling, there of martyrs is the greatest martyr.—DA VINCI.

WHILE I thought that I was learning how to live, I have been learning how to die.—DA VINCI.

## CORRESPONDENCE

## MR. SEDLÁK'S WORSHIP OF LOGIC

*To the Editor, THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW*

DEAR SIR,

More readers of this REVIEW than myself have probably been interested and puzzled by Mr. Sedlák's positive divinisation of Logic. Pure thinking appears to him to be, if not Heaven itself, at least the only way there. Now, unfortunately, pure thinking is not necessarily lucid thinking, still less is it true thinking. And perhaps I shall be doing the readers of the REVIEW a service by begging Mr. Sedlák to give us the grounds of his belief in Logic and in what he calls Pure Thinking.

I am not concerned, as Mr. Sedlák will perceive, with the logical process when once it is started. Doubtless he understands that process extremely well. And he is certainly an interesting exponent of Hegel. But what I am seeking is the ground of Logic itself.

To begin with, Mr. Sedlák attaches a great deal more importance and value to subjective changes than to objective changes. And what is more, since pure thinking is necessarily confined to conscious thinking, he attaches a great deal more importance and value to consciousness than to unconsciousness. In criticism of the first assumption I would say that the phenomenality of subjective changes is no less certain than the phenomenality of objective changes. And in criticism of the second assumption, I remind him of the enormously wider area controlled unconsciously than is controlled consciously. What, in fact, we need before setting up Logic as an explanation of the Cosmos, is to settle the relative values of consciousness and unconsciousness (or, to use a modern word, subliminal consciousness). If Mr. Sedlák can demonstrate the active nature of consciousness, or point to anything complete within it, I may withdraw my objection to his Logic. But until he does so, I shall persist in believing that the very changes in consciousness on which he bases his Logic are

in themselves fragmentary and therefore misleading registerings of changes unconsciously being produced.

And if this is true—as theory and experience tend to prove—it surely follows that the sequence of those changes is a fragmentary sequence. How many links in the chain of causation may never be registered in consciousness at all we cannot know. It is only out of broken links, taken at random here and there, that *our* theory of Cause and Effect is set up. But on that sand-based theory the theory of Logic rests. In fact, pure thinking concerns itself entirely with patching up the chain out of broken links, in imagining what the real chain may be, and in establishing to its own satisfaction a theory of Causation, which the pure thinker is foolish enough to impose upon things. As well might a dreamer construct a theory of waking causation from the snippets and cuttings of waking-life that come to him! Or H. G. Wells' mermaid write a history of European literature from the books dropped overboard by Atlantic passengers! I deny that there is any causal succession in consciousness at all. All succession in consciousness is absolutely atomistic. Under the circumstances, therefore, I fail entirely to perceive the ground on which Mr. Sedlák's pure thinker stands. As a pure thinker and at the same time a lucid thinker, I do not doubt, however, that Mr. Sedlák will enable me to clear up my mind.

Yours, etc.,

A. R. ORAGE.

“THE UNDULATORY THEORY OF LIGHT”

*To the Editor, THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW*

SIR,

Will Mr. Francis Sedlák now be so kind as to inform us precisely how the phenomena in Tyndall's experiment *are* to be explained?

To judge from his article on this subject one would suppose that he was unaware that no one—neither Young, nor Tyndall, nor anyone else—ever regarded the undulatory theory as anything more than just a practical working hypothesis which has been almost forced upon us by a very large number of observed facts. If, however, Mr. Sedlák can now give us a better hypothesis I hope he will do so.

To say that light is essence, and that “of course the dark bands are not due,” etc. (p. 450), does not explain why, in Tyndall's experi-

ment, one sees a number of rectangles of light. If Mr. Sedlák could tell us why we see these rectangles, it would inspire us with greater confidence in the value of his rather amazing statements. Meanwhile of course he is just as free to disbelieve in Young's theory as he is to believe in "the concavity of the earth's surface" (p. 447).

Yours, etc.,

W. L.

## FLOTSAM AND JETSAM

ONE of the greatest puzzles of the historian of Christian origins is to determine who the "Christian" Churches were to whom

Paul preached. The late document of com-  
 The Pre-Christian Jesus promise, *The Acts*, gives no clue, and its writer seems to be blissfully ignorant of the *gryphus*.

It is to this chief problem that Professor William Benjamin Smith has addressed himself, in a series of valuable and suggestive studies. Professor Smith is an American mathematician, but his theological and critical equipment is of a very high order, and is sincerely praised by Schmiedel, who has written a preface to Smith's recent work, *Der vorchristliche Jesus, nebst weiteren Vorstudien zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Urchristentums* (Giessen: Töpleman; London: Williams & Norgate; 1906). One naturally asks why Professor Smith has not written in English; doubtless he will have a larger audience in Germany capable of appreciating his labours at their proper worth, but these scholars can all read English, while English scholarship is only too frequently ignorant of German. The book has not been sent in to us for review, but as it is of importance to those who are good enough to be interested in our own researches, we append a general outline of the author's position, for which we are indebted to *The Westminster Review* of November:

Professor Smith seeks to prove that the Jesus cult was pre-Christian, current among the Jews and among the Hellenists, from about 100 B.C. till about 100 years A.D., that it was a gradual growth, and that Christianity, instead of spreading from only one point (Jerusalem) had various starting

points. He cites the case of Apollos, mentioned in the *Acts*, who taught the Gospel or "the way of the Lord," although he knew only of John's baptism and had heard nothing of Jesus as an historical person; of the finding by St. Paul at Ephesus of some disciples who were in a similar state; of Simon Magus, between whose creed and that of Philip the deacon who converted him [as it is said], there must have been intimate and sympathetic connection, as witnessed by the testimony of the oldest Christian authorities, including Irenæus; of Ananias of Damascus; of Priscilla and Aquila, who left Rome and came to Corinth, where they, *already Christians*, joined Paul, no mention being made of their having been converted by him, and so on. Professor Smith refers to the Paris Papyrus (edited by Wessely), which, reputed of Hebrew origin (Essenic or Therapeutic), and showing no signs of Christian influence, mentions the name of Jesus as God of the Hebrews used in exorcism. In fact, according to our author's view, Jesus was a theological person; a God, the King of kings, the Saviour, a protecting divinity. . . . Professor Smith gives large extracts from Epiphanius, which show that a sect called the Nasaraioi, or Nazarenes (not to be confounded with the Nazarites or Nazirites), existed before Christ and knew nothing of him. [See *Did Jesus Live* 100 B.C. ?] He concludes that the name Nazōraios attached to Jesus had nothing to do with a "town called Nazareth," especially as there is no proof that any such town existed at the beginning of the Christian era; but that it is a descriptive by-name, meaning protector, guardian, etc. (*Hüter, Wächter*), and was known among the Hebrews in that sense for hundreds of years; that it is on a par with such combinations as Zeus-Xenios, Hermes Psychopompos, Javeh S'b'aôth, etc., which by-names express the idea of a divine power in regard to the protector or Saviour's person. The Anastasis is not a resurrection of the body, and originally had no such meaning, but is the "*Erweckung*," or raising up or installation of Jesus as the representative of Jehovah, the Old Testament affording examples of the use of the word in this sense.

\* \* \*

ALL of this falls into line with our own researches, except that we hold that Jeschu ha-Notzri was an historical character as well.

There was indubitably a pre-Christian Gnosis, in both Jewish and Hellenistic circles, and the above indications all point to elements of that Gnosis. We are also glad to see that Professor Smith has recognised pre-Christian traces of the Parable of the Sower. His reviewer characterises this as a novelty, but that it is not novel to those of our readers who have followed our studies in Philo, Hermes, and Hippolytus, may be seen from the following. For :

In addition to the version of the Gospels our author mentions an older

Naassene or pre-Christian version as found in the *Philosophumena* of Hippolytus, which had a common source with that in the Synoptics, or from which even the latter may have been taken. In the Naassene version he Sower is God himself, the seed (world-seed [and also word-seed]), the spermatic Logos, and the three kinds of ground are the material or earthy, the psychic or natural, and pneumatic or spiritual. This three-fold division was well-known and figures in the writings of Paul.

Paul certainly knew of the Gnosis, and was well versed in the technical language of Hellenistic theology, as we have long contended.

\* \* \*

WE reproduce the following leaderette from *The Globe* of January 8th as an indication of the marked change in editorial opinion on psychic subjects. *The Globe* is the most conservative of the evening papers, and is therefore an exceedingly good index of the progress of the revolution that is taking place in the domain of psychology.

The Psychic  
Renaissance

The investigations of the Psychical Research Society have revealed such an enormous number of "appearances" at the moment of death that we may almost take it as proved that, however they are produced, such appearances do occur. The suggestion, of course, is that the mind of the dying man telepathically affects that of the percipient, with the result that the latter forms an image of his friend, which is really subjective, but appears to him to be objective. The theory has the advantage of explaining why one person should see a "ghost," while another close by him does not, and why the percipient sees his friend's clothes as well as his face, because his mind naturally represents the image in its customary guise. A tale which comes from New York to the *Daily Mail* seems a little outside the accepted explanation. In this case, the percipient, a New York lawyer, was travelling in a Pullman car, when he had a dream or a vision, in which he thought himself in a strange city, in which he saw two friends, one of whom was alive at the time, but ill and unconscious, while the other has been dead since 1899. The lawyer and the dead man had been great friends at Harvard, and had entered into a compact with one another that the one who died first should appear to the other, but we do not gather that the third friend—the man who was ill—was a party to it. The strange thing in the tale is that the vision of the dead man did not come until some seven years after his death, so that telepathy on his part would seem to be excluded. Are we to assume, then, that the cause of the vision was the third man, whose mind, though apparently unconscious, was in fact dwelling on

his two friends? If so, we shall have to revise all our theories on the subject of unconsciousness, and treat it as being really sub-consciousness.

We should say that the thought-impression of the dead friend had been on the threshold of the living friend's psychic consciousness for seven years, waiting for the door to be opened; the door was opened to it by the vision-state, and would have been opened at any time previously if that state had occurred under conditions which contained material on which the law of association of ideas could act.

\* \* \*

WE are indebted to a German colleague for the following notes :

Recently the well-known nerve pathologist P. J. Moebius has published at Leipzig a complete edition of  
 Goethe's Seven Year Periods his works, which deal with exceedingly instructive subjects, and contain monographs on

Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Goethe. Although Moebius in his last writing goes to work in just as one-sided and purely materialistic-physiological a way as in his book *Physiologische Schwachsinn des Weibes*, nevertheless in his treatment of Goethe there are some interesting points of view which need only to be looked at from a Theosophical standpoint to make them intelligible, although they remain riddles to Moebius himself. One of the most interesting points is the observation that Goethe's whole life was a journey which may be divided into periods of seven years each. After every such period a kind of rejuvenation process seemed to take place in him, and he became afresh productive as a poet. Indeed the most important epochs of his development and also the creation of his greatest works were coincident with such periods of seven years.

\* \* \*

VERY interesting too are certain discussions on the now famous book of Weininger, *Geschlecht und Character*, and on some very recent publications of Weininger's friend:

The Bi-sexual Origin of Man Swaboda. We have nothing to do here with the not very profitable "Plagiarism" contro-

versy which has been tacked on to them, except the fact that in the course of the controversy one is reminded of the book of a Berlin investigator, Wilhelm Fliess, the title of which is *Der*

*Ablauf des Lebens.* By these investigations the question of an origin bi-sexual starting-point for man in its physiological bearing is put forward as a hypothesis. These investigations have their origin in the idea that certain organs of the animal and human body are transformations of others which originally had other characteristics. This idea reminds us of Goethe, who first explained the bones of the skull as transformations of the vertebræ. The materialistic ideas of Fließ interpreted by Theosophy throw a light on the scientific problem of the transformation of the two-sexed into the one-sexed, since this can be demonstrated in the transformed organs. It is, of course, impossible here to go more deeply into this exceedingly interesting morpho-physiological hypothesis.

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

### FOREL'S "HYPNOTISM"

Hypnotism; or Suggestion and Psychotherapy. By Dr. (Med.) August Forel. Trans. from the fifth German Edition, by H. W. Arnit, M.R.C.S. (London: Rebman; 1906.)

NOTHING shows more clearly how hard modern psycho-physiology is put to it to explain the ever-accumulating proofs of an intelligence independent of the physical brain than the present treatise. Writing from the standpoint of absolute psycho-physiological identity, of a monistic conception of the universe and man which, though calling itself scientific, only escapes materialism by the verbal subterfuge which regards "mind" and "matter" as equally abstract and artificial terms for an unknown *tertium quid*, Professor Forel is yet obliged at every turn to confess the existence of "incompatibilities between the phenomena of consciousness and the observed and measured physiological results" (p. 16). He apologises for the necessity of speaking of "two consciousnesses which are sharply differentiated from each other in certain peculiar cases of somnambulism" (p. 23). He admits that if Mesmer's theory of a "magnetic fluid" were proved "it would without doubt seriously influence our scientific knowledge, for the consistent ignoring by science up to the

present time of this unknown force would necessarily have caused an error in our results hitherto, in the same way that an important factor, if forgotten, would have done" (p. 50). Yet the Professor makes no effort to disprove Mesmer's theory, and indeed regards this and all other theories of the existence of an unknown force with supreme contempt. The "fluid theory," he says, "takes umbrage (*sic*) behind the supposed facts even at the present time, which are guarded (*sic*) by spiritualists, and which according to the circles in which they are produced are so intimately intermingled with blind fanaticism, with mental disturbances (hallucinations), with misconceived suggestions, with trickery and superstition, that it is extremely difficult to subject them to a scientific examination." That a Society has existed in Europe and America for the last twenty-five years, the sole *raison d'être* of whose existence has been to make this scientific examination; that men of science like Sir W. Crookes, Professor Wallace, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Charles Richet, Professor Lombroso, have not found this difficulty insuperable, and as a result of their investigations have confessed themselves complete converts to the theory of an unknown force, while two of them have become professed Spiritualists—all this our author completely ignores.

These extracts will indicate sufficiently the spirit in which Professor Forel approaches any "explanations" of the mystery of human personality which do not accommodate themselves to his special monistic hypothesis. How little this resembles the true scientific spirit, that sees in difficulties and exceptions the possible hint of new discoveries, may be gathered by comparing his attitude with that of another well-known man of science of the last century. "The perfect observer will keep his eyes open in all divisions of knowledge that they may be struck at once by every event which according to accepted theories ought *not* to happen, for these are the facts which serve as clues to new discoveries" (Herschel, *Introd. to Study of Nat. Science*, § 27).

It must not be supposed, however, that because Professor Forel is so contemptuous of theories which clash with his own preconceived opinions, that his latest contribution to the study of hypnotism is of little value. On the contrary, it is an extremely able and interesting work, which no one can read without realising afresh how difficult and complicated are the problems which hypnotism presents, and how impossible it is (at least in the present writer's view) to solve them from the standpoint of pure scientific monism. It would take me

too far, and except in the pages of a *Physiological Journal* would be out of place, to follow the author in his highly technical exposition of Sernon and Vogt's psycho-physiological theories of the dynamics of cerebral nervous action. Suffice it to say that Professor Forel's entire argument is built up upon the absolute identity of psycho-physiological processes, and repudiates "all attempts to separate a part of the 'soul' as a soul-nucleus from the mental life, as independent from (*sic*) the living brain-substance," and lays stress on "the absolute inseparability of all normal as well as pathological phenomena of the mind from the integrity of its organ" (p. 18). So again he says (p. 165): "Physiology alone can lead to a doctrine of the mechanism of the mind, as it can supply a complete chain of argument."

It is not surprising that a materialistic attitude so uncompromising as this (and what is materialism if not the attempt to *explain* the phenomena of mind by the mechanism of matter?) should be hard put to it to account for the most commonplace and familiar of hypnotic phenomena. As our author is forced to admit, there are everywhere "incompatibilities between the phenomena of consciousness and the observed and measured physiological results" (p. 18). In fact, the whole field of sub-conscious mental action, in which the phenomena of hypnotism chiefly lie, and which is associated by Prof. Forel with the functions of the basal ganglia, the mid-brain, and the cerebellum, is acknowledged to be "the most obscure chapter in the physiology of the central nervous system" (p. 26). Yet sooner than alter his theories to fit the facts, the greater part of the Professor's laborious investigation seems undertaken to make the facts fit the theories, or —*tant pis pour les faits*. The facts of clairvoyance, thought-transference, curative mesmerism, spiritualism, etc., are contemptuously rejected, or, when admitted, are put down to "unconscious suggestion" either on the part of the hypnotiser or the subject. Throughout the whole book no single work is quoted whose views do not coincide with the author's, except *Phantasms of the Living*, and this only to be summarily dismissed. Of "telepathy" he says that it "has not been able to bring forward a new elucidation," and that "nothing new of importance on the subject" has been reported. "All the stories of spiritualists and superficial persons have not been able to alter anything belonging to these facts" (p. 52). It seems, indeed, as if one needed to be a German Professor to realise properly the unimportance of all other persons.

Needless to say, that in this way, however interesting a fabric of psycho-physiological theory may be built up, no true science of hypnotism will ever be written. In proof of this, one fact, and one fact alone, need only be evidenced. Throughout the whole treatise there is barely any reference to the sympathetic nervous system and its great plexuses, and no attempt to elucidate its functions or appor-tion its share in the production of hypnotic phenomena, though its intimate connection with many of these is admitted (p. 110). The words "sympathetic," "solar plexus" are not even important enough to appear in the Index. Merely to state this fact is to review the book.

For the rest the author is not to be congratulated on his translator. Not only is he apparently incapable of writing English, but he is so little of a philosopher that he cannot represent German philosophical terms by their English equivalents. For these reasons, the reviewer is never sure that he has grasped the author's philosophical meaning, a difficulty which is especially present in the first chapter. Might we suggest before Dr. Arnit takes another philosophical translation in hand, that he devote some study to a treatise like Gerald Massey's translation of Du Prel's *Philosophy of Mysticism*, which is an admirable example of how such work should be done.

M. L.

#### MR. WAITE'S STUDIES IN MYSTICISM

*Studies in Mysticism and Certain Aspects of the Secret Tradition.*

By Arthur Edward Waite. (London: Hodder & Stoughton; 1906. Price 10s. 6d. net.)

MR. WAITE is so prolific a writer, that it is somewhat difficult to keep pace with the output of his works. But the other day we reviewed a very large volume of his verses and now we have another of 348 large pages, closely printed, and have received yet another, though of smaller compass, for review. The studies before us deal with the Western tradition of mysticism, and with the history, or rather the critical appreciation, of a number of latter-day movements connected with "occultism" of sorts and spiritism; while the third part is devoted to an exposition of the conditions and manner of the mystic way according to Mr. Waite's understanding and experience of it. It is quite true, as Mr. Waite says, that the history of mysticism is still without a real historian. Those who have so far attempted the matter are either scholars without sufficient sympathy, or sympa-

thisers without sufficient scholarship. He attempts himself to find a middle way, to write with detachment and just appreciation, and is to be congratulated on achieving a large measure of success in so difficult an undertaking. Mr. Waite is critical of many things, as he must be from the high ideal he has of mysticism, and allows himself sometimes to write somewhat too magisterially; but he evidently has tried hard to be just and sympathetic. He will, however, be found somewhat difficult to follow by those who are not personally acquainted with the history of the many movements and associations and endeavours he attempts to evaluate, and by those who are not familiar with his phraseology. He admits, however, that he is not writing for the general reader so much as for a smaller circle of serious students. These fellow-students of Mr. Waite's will all be glad that he so courageously sets himself to winnow out the wheat from the chaff; their own sieves may have a somewhat different mesh, but they cannot but agree that the winnowing is absolutely necessary.

Mr. Waite is specially strong in Latin and French literature; he does not get back to Greek literature, and limits himself for his link with origins to Kabalism. He is weakest in his knowledge of German mysticism; Italian, Spanish, Polish and the rest he does not regard.

But we must recollect that he is not writing the history of European mysticism as a whole, but only studies in some of its better known phases. Such a history would mean an *Encyclopædia Mystica*, and a staff of scholars who were mystics themselves. Perhaps time may have in its womb such a work, but at present we must be content with studies, among which Mr. Waite's will hold an honourable place.

G. R. S. M.

#### THE EGYPTIAN DUAT

The Egyptian Heaven and Hell. By E. A. Wallis Budge, M.A., Litt.D., etc. "Books on Egypt and Chaldæa" Series. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.; 1906, 3 vols. Price 6s. net each volume.)

THIS most useful series of "Books on Egypt and Chaldæa," begun a few years ago by two officials of the British Museum, has been steadily added to from time to time, until it now extends to twenty-two volumes, of which Dr. Budge, Keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian

Antiquities, has contributed twenty, all dealing with Egypt, and his Assistant, Mr. L. W. King, two on Babylonian Religion and Assyrian Language.

The work under notice is one that many students of Egyptology have been desiring to see for a long time past. *The Book of the Dead*, so called, has been edited and translated over and over again, by Naville, Renouf, Birch, Dr. Budge himself, and others; while the other sacred books of Ancient Egypt have been much neglected. One class of these, however, the indefatigable Doctor has now collected, edited and translated, with reproductions of all the texts and illustrations, in these volumes.

There were current, it appears, among the Egyptians from about B.C. 1600 to B.C. 500, that is to say, during the period when the worship of the Theban Amon, or Amon-Ra, had absorbed into itself all the local cults of Egypt, and had made all the more ancient gods to seem but aspects of this "King of the Gods," three books, dealing exclusively with the topography and inhabitants of the dark and fearful world through which the Sun-god passed on his way from west to east during the night. These books were: (a) *The Book of that which is in the Duat*; (b) an Abridgment of this, without illustrations; and (c) *The Book of the Gates*. Many copies of these books have been found, on papyri, and inscribed on the walls of tombs and upon sarcophagi, copiously illustrated in the case of (a) and (c) with careful plans of every district of the Duat, its lakes, rivers, and mountains, and pictures of the good and evil spirits that reside there, each one labelled with its name and attributes.

A problem which confronts us at the outset is to find a satisfactory translation of the word Duat, a term which includes Heaven, Hell, the Place of Judgment, and the path of the sun at night. Dr. Budge points out that it was believed to be not, as one might expect, underneath the earth, but on it, or on a level with it, so that it cannot be called the Underworld (but what of the word *kherti-nóter*, Lower-region of the God, *inferna sacra* ?), behind the great chain of mountains which was thought to encircle the habitable world. The root meaning of the word would doubtless help us greatly if it were possible to discover it, but that has not as yet been done. Dr. Budge has therefore fallen back on the phrase the "Other World," as the least misleading rendering of this difficult word.

This Duat, then, was, to the popular Egyptian mind at all events, a vast circular or semi-circular valley surrounding the world,

a place of utter gloom and horror. Through it flowed a great river, counterpart of the Nile. It was divided into twelve sections, separated from one another by great doors or gates, and presided over by the goddess of the hours of the night. To this place the Sun-god, after sailing over the upper firmament in the day-time, comes at sunset, and without leaving his bark sails along the stream until dawn, when he once more mounts the eastern sky. As he approaches each door it is thrown open by those who guard it, and the gods of the district render homage and praise to their august visitant. When he has passed through, and the next door has been closed behind him, they raise loud lamentation and sink into apathy until he comes again the next night. Always the great serpent 'Apep lies in wait to overcome Ra, and always the partisans of that god bind his Enemy with chains, gash him with knives, and otherwise humiliate him.

To the Duat pass all the souls of the departed, and crave of Ra that he will grant them a place in his ship for ever. Those, however, who are followers of Osiris may disembark when the boat reaches his domain towards midnight, and live with him in the Sokhwet-'alu or Fields of Reeds (of which many pictures are to be seen in the MSS. of *The Book of the Dead*) if found worthy to do so; for it is here that the Judgment takes place. Those souls who cannot pass satisfactorily through the ordeal of the Weighing of the Heart are either hacked to pieces which are burnt in a fierce fire, or cast into lakes of liquid fire or boiling water.

Such is a summary of the beliefs of the priesthood of Amon-Ra made clear by Dr. Budge's book. The two works, however, the *Book of what is in the Duat* and the *Book of the Gates*, differ on many points, the latter giving great prominence to Osiris, who is hardly mentioned in the former.

In these books the illustrations are all-important, telling us much more than the texts, which are "scrappy" and consist of little more than names of the various inhabitants. And what extraordinary pictures they are, what nightmares! Many of our future companions we find to be huge snakes, some on legs, some with human heads, some with three or more heads and wings, some with human heads growing from their backs at regular intervals, others belching forth fire into the faces of the damned. One would be glad to know the idea that lies behind these snake-pictures

In fact, in looking over these books, one is chiefly astonished at

the extraordinary degree of the *bizarre* which they display. The texts are mostly very monotonous and uninteresting, but there are strange and vivid touches here and there; the great serpent who lives on the sound of the rumblings of the earth, a meagre diet for one who has to produce twelve loyal servants of Ra every day; the cries of the imprisoned gods of the Eighth Division, cries like those of male cats, like the hum of many honey-bees, like the voice of "those who make supplication through terror," or the "confused murmur of the living"; and the mighty noise, like that of the heights of heaven when they are shaken by a storm, heard in the Realm of Seker when Ra has passed through it.

We repeat, that the debt which Egyptian students in this country already owe to Dr. Budge is much increased by the publication of this important work. We wish, however, that he could see his way to give up a method of transliterating the hieroglyphics which is entirely obsolete and unscientific, and cannot but hamper the progress of students of the Egyptian language who look to him, as many do, for guidance. It has been proved quite conclusively, about twenty years ago, that the letters which he transliterates as *a, á, ā, i, u*, are not vowels at all but consonants.

Finally, we may drop a hint that anyone engaged in concocting awe-inspiring rituals might gain many useful suggestions from these volumes.

B. G.

#### SEEKING THEOSOPHY

A Vade-Mecum of Theosophy. By Seeker. (Bombay Education Society's Press; 1906. Price 12 annas.)

THE title of this neatly got up little book is not quite appropriate, for its theosophy is rather implicit than explicit. It contains three essays upon the improvement of the "Body," the "Character," and the "Mind." Its teaching is unimpeachable, if somewhat vague and diffuse. Doubtless the importance of purifying the body, strengthening the character, controlling the mind, cannot be too strongly enforced. Yet this is not a book that is likely to be useful to the enquirer. Too much praise recommends a Society no more than an individual; and when the non-Theosophist is informed that the members of the Theosophical Society, "free as air from taint of self-aggrandisement or sordid motive, are laying by a large stock of purity

and self-sacrificing virtues in the Bank of Providence for the elevation of the coming race," and is assured over several pages of their superiority to their "enemies," he is apt to be restive. Small blame to him.

Vegetarians will welcome the author's onslaughts upon what he calls the suicide of flesh-eating. But perhaps a man beginning to consider these matters is not best persuaded to self-refining by abuse of his "tyrannous pampered taste," "ungodly appetite," "brutal degeneration."

The book is evidently written with much conviction and with much care. Its effect, however, is frequently impaired by quaint phrases such as "the elegance of the Divine Beauty," "the thick and thin of the Real and Unreal"; though doubtless it derives force from the authority with which "Seeker" confirms other teachers, as thus: "Shri Kṛiṣṇa has very justly observed," "the *Gītā* correctly says." The "Seeker" must continue his search.

A. L.

#### THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA

The Way of the Buddha. By Herbert Baynes, M.R.A.S. (London: Murray; 1906. Price 2s. net.)

THIS is the last volume of that very useful sequence, "The Wisdom of the East" series. Mr. Baynes keeps mostly within the somewhat grey atmosphere of Pāliism in his exposition; he writes, however, generally with sympathy, if not with insight, though in the end he cannot avoid his Christian prejudice obtruding itself in a quite unnecessary manner. The texts of the passages quoted are given in an appendix in Roman transliteration of a somewhat novel kind. With regard to the meaning of Nirvāṇa, Mr. Baynes writes:

"Before the publication of the Pāli text of the Southern Canon it used to be thought that, inasmuch as the word is derived from the negative or privative particle *nis*, 'out,' and *vā*, 'to blow,' it must mean *extinction*. But we have already seen that, even in Brāhmaṇism [in the *Gītā*], it was not a question of being 'blown out,' but rather the merging of the individual soul in the Over-Soul of Brahma. In Buddhism there can be no question of the extinction of a soul,<sup>1</sup> but only of the loss of the power of *Karma* over the five *skandhas*, faculties or qualities of which the human being is said to consist. And we must remember that Nirvāṇam is a state to be acquired in this life.

<sup>1</sup> The *anātta* theory should make that quite clear.—G. R. S. M.

“From what we now know of the Tathāgata’s teaching, it is clear that this, the most important word in his system, can mean nothing else than the extinction of that sinful and grasping state of heart and mind which, according to the law of Karma, leads to renewed individual existence. In other words, the Arhat who has become an *Asekha*, and attained Nirvāṇam, is one of ‘right views, high aims, kindly speech, upright conduct, a harmless livelihood, perseverance in well-doing, intellectual activity, and profound meditation.’”

This is the “path” to Nirvāṇa, we should ourselves hold, rather than Nirvāṇa itself; but what is certain is that the Western “extinction” notion of Nirvāṇa is going fast, or has already gone, to extinction. It was born of ignorance and prejudice and had no real vitality even as a lie.

We are always glad to see a new work on Buddhism, and thank Mr. Baynes for his labours. Every little helps, and Mr. Baynes’ *dictum* that Buddhism is “a religion of mere morality,” because it does not possess a “personal” Saviour in the orthodox Christian sense, may be thought to be high praise enough by many even if they are unable to correct this judgment, while others who know it is ludicrously inadequate, can well be content with such *nolens volens* homage.

G. R. S. M.

#### TOWARDS UNITY

The Religion of Nature and of Human Experience. By W. J. Jupp.  
(London : Philip Green ; 1906. Price 2s. net.)

THE theme of this thoughtful and restful book is expressed in the author’s beautiful quotation from Giordano Bruno : “We are dwellers on a star, and within the precincts of heaven.” It is another and a welcome affirmation of the unity of the universe. We premise that unity. We are apt to forget its consequence—that we now live in heaven, if we could but see. Volumes like this, which remind us that the inward and the outward are at one, prove as valuable to the traffic-tortured soul as the hermit’s cell used to prove to the way-worn traveller.

Not the least valuable portions of Mr. Jupp’s book are his many quotations from those greater than he, windows which give glimpses into an enchanted forest.

To "return to Nature," as he points out, is not only, or necessarily, to abide in the woods and fields. It is something more imminent and more immanent than that. And these admirably-written chapters may well help some on that way back which those are treading who know that "to go back, you must go through yourself."

A. L.

#### NEW TESTAMENT CRITICISM IN NOVEL FORM

Silanus the Christian. By Edwin A. Abbott. (London: A. & C. Black; 1906. Price 7s. 6d. net.)

WE have from time to time informed our readers, by means of reviews, of the progress of Dr. Abbott's *magnum opus* on the criticism of the four Gospels. *Diatessarica*, of which six volumes have already appeared, and which will be completed by yet another volume, is a monument of learning, patient industry, ripe philological acumen, and fair-mindedness. But the nature and style of these highly technical labours are such that no one but a specialist can grasp their true significance and importance. It is, therefore, a happy inspiration which has led Dr. Abbott to cast the general results of his investigations into the form of a story which describes the conversion to Christianity of a certain Quintus Junius Silanus while attending the lectures of Epictetus, at Nicopolis, somewhere about the year 118 A.D.

We cordially recommend the book to those of our readers who would become acquainted with a clear statement of many of the problems of New Testament criticism and with their candid treatment by the venerable scholar whose philological knowledge of the language of the books is unequalled in England and whose kindness of nature and generosity of feeling do him high honour.

Dr. Abbott has much to tell us of Epictetus, the independence and cold intellectuality of whose lectures, however, he somewhat exaggerates, as a foil to the dependence and warm emotionalism of faith in and love of a personal Saviour, which our author considers to be the inspiring force of Christianity. Of the mystical elements in Christianity Dr. Abbott says nothing. It is, perhaps, not quite a just comparison to contrast a philosophy with a religion; points of far deeper significance might have been brought out by contrasting Christianity with one of the mystery and contemplative cults of the time.

The story of Silanus is of course not a romantic recital full of movement, but the narrative of the change wrought in the mind of a studious Roman gentleman by the perusal of the Christian books, and between the opposing influences of two other acute minds, one that of an old friend and scholar who is not a Christian, but who has devoted a long time to their critical study, and the other that of a singularly broad-minded Christian, who can appreciate the difficulties of the historical and literary problems with which the books teem. It is not worth while enquiring whether such a rare critical atmosphere could have existed in those early days (they settled things in a much more rough and ready manner as a rule); for we are not asked to believe that we are reading history, but only to permit a device whereby the technicalities of New Testament research which discourage the general reader, may be removed and the spirit of living interest infused into what is a matter of the very greatest importance.

Dr. Abbott promises us an additional volume of notes, giving chapter and verse for all his statements, so that it is not necessary at present to make any remarks on some quite novel solutions which he offers; we would, however, point out, with regard to the narrative part, that the mention of steam and an elaborate simile of magnetism worked out on quite modern lines are somewhat anachronistic, and that the rapidity of the mail service between Rome and Nicopolis seems hardly in keeping with the conditions of the time, in spite of the Imperial Post.

G. R. S. M.

#### THE RADIANT BODY

Luminous Bodies Here and Hereafter. By Charles Hallock, M.A.  
(New York: The Metaphysical Publishing Company;  
London: John M. Watkins; 1906. Price 4s. 6d. net.)

MR. HALLOCK is apparently of the clerical persuasion and of a young country whose values in things religious are yet quite indeterminate. He thinks he has discovered something new, and that the body of the resurrection is to be electrical! He seems to have no idea that what he is trying to get at is as old as the hills, that he is vulgarising the mystery of the radiant body or spiritual vehicle of man, the body of transfiguration, known among the Egyptians as the *khaibit* or *maakhheru*, among the Hindus as the *hiranyagarba* or "golden womb," and *taijasa* or the "radiant," and among the later Platonists as the *augoeides* or "ray-like" and the *astroeides* or "star-like" body.

We are in hearty sympathy with any attempt to restore knowledge of this sublime truth to the Western world, but we deplore vulgarity in sacred things, and to our mind it is the mark of a vulgar mind to recite in the clauses of a Creed as Mr. Hallock does :

I believe in the corpuscle theory of Sir Oliver Lodge, and of the interdependence and reciprocal correspondence between man and his Maker ; and that telepathic connection is kept alive by the faculty called love.

“ Telepathic connection ” between man and his Maker ! Do we telephone to God, or pray to Him ? Sir Oliver Lodge *and* God ! We could quote much more of the same nature, but we will spare our readers such an infliction.

G. R. S. M.

#### MAGAZINES AND PAMPHLETS

*Theosophist*, December. This number has not very much which needs noting for our readers. “ Old Diary Leaves ” continue the Colonel's travels with Miss Edger as lecturer. The letters from N.E. Australia, the “ Great Pyramid,” Râma Prasâd's “ Self-Culture,” and “ Buddhist Rules for the Laity,” are continued ; as are also Dr. Schrader's “ Who are the Pitris invoked in the Shrâddha ? ” and “ Bâlabodhini ” ; Dr. N. Chattopâdhyâya begins an interesting series upon Zoroastrianism. The President-Founder's circular to the members of the Italian Section has much that is valuable for ourselves also.

*Theosophy in India*, December, opens with an important paper, signed M. J., on “ The Significance of Psychic Experiments.” “ The Necessity of a Guru for the Spiritual Life,” by “ Seeker,” is concluded. To one who is familiar with what Catholics are taught as to the need and the use of a Spiritual Director, the resemblances, and the differences, are interesting. I once had a book by an old Spanish friar, who closes his chapter on this subject with the pithy advice : “ But remember always this ; that your eternal salvation is of much more importance to *you* than it ever can be to your Director ! ” Whether the Hindu sages would allow this, in words, I am not quite sure ; but there *is* a meaning in it. Miss Edger's “ Studies in the Pedigree of Man ” are continued, with useful tables ; and there are shorter articles on “ The Vital Airs,” and “ The Construction of the Tesseract,” the latter with diagrams, curious, but of which the author candidly confesses that the matter “ will not be any clearer ” for them.

*Central Hindu College Magazine*, December, gives an interesting account of Mrs. Besant's autumn tour, and the work she managed to cram into it. Miss Willson's "Science Jottings" are always interesting, and we are glad to be able to praise the illustrations to the paper entitled "Some Natural Wonders."

*Theosophic Gleaner*, December, has much that is worth reading in the "Editorial Notes," and a good series of short articles, including "What is the Physical Ether?" by Mr. Sutcliffe, and a curious paper, "The Iconoclast," which might repay the trouble of a translation into English *thought* as well as words.

*The Vahan*, January, announces the serious illness of the President-Founder, previously referred to, and appeals for assistance for the Pretoria Lodge, on the ground that "the conditions of work in South Africa are somewhat difficult as yet," a phrase which is, surely, a quaint under-statement of the case. "Stray Notes" form an illustration of the brief life of *any* scientific theory under present conditions. "The Enquirer" has farther answers as to the case of born idiots, and two short answers from G. R. S. M. on matters pertaining to his special domain.

*Lotus Journal*, January. The Editorial states that the volume of "Lotus Songs" is now on sale. A farther portion of Mrs. Besant's valuable lecture on the Spiritual Life is given. "Mystery Plays for the Lotus Circle" and the story form a somewhat belated Christmas number, and the more serious papers are all good and readable. We wish the Editors the increase of circulation in the new year which their work well deserves.

*Bulletin Théosophique*, January, gives an account of the reception of a lecture on Theosophy given at the meeting of the Vaudois Theological Society at Lausanne, which seems to have been received "with much impartiality," but met at once with the inevitable objection that our doctrine cannot be reconciled with the personal Divinity of Christ. The final vote, that "Protestantism is menaced by Theosophy," is entirely correct, until Christianity reconciles itself with reason.

*Revue Théosophique*, December. In this number the Editor gives a brief but pleasant study of the history of Christmas, which makes a relief to the regular running translations. The account of the activities of the Paris meetings has much that is interesting for us.

Also received with thanks: *Theosophische Bewegung*, in which H. J. v. Ginkel continues the subject of our Study-classes, now rightly

attracting so much attention; *Teosofisk Tidskrift*; *Omatunto*; *Fragments* (Seattle); *Revista Teosofica*, No. 2 of a promising little magazine which reaches us as the organ of the "Aura" branch at Mexico; *La Verdad*, December, which translates from our October number the article on "Illusions," by P. T. S. Aiyengar; *Theosofisch Maandblad*; *Theosophy in Australasia*, November, one of our best magazines, as times go. The "Outlook" is as usual interesting and lively; the leading papers are "Beauty," by K. C.; a pleasant and timely article on "The Merits of Discontent," by J. B. McConkey; a still more valuable paper by E. H. Hawthorne, pointing out the much-needed lesson that we have no more right to be unjust or unkind in our judgment of ourselves than of others. We agree with the Answers to Questions that it would *not* assist the younger souls to be enlightened as to their past lives; but for the elder souls there is no information so valuable as the knowledge how they came to be what they are. *New Zealand Theosophical Magazine*, November and December, is entitled to the same praise as its next-door neighbour. W. M. Newton's "The Mysteries of the Ancients," and W. A. Mayers' "What constitutes a Christian?" are well worth reading, and a heading "The Stranger's Page, a series of short articles or extracts adapted for those who have no previous acquaintance with Theosophical literature" is one deserving of imitation, especially if it can be so well carried out as it is here. We are very glad to see that in almost all our magazines, all the world over, original (and frequently very useful) answers to questions are replacing the reproduction of the "Enquirer" from the *Vâhan*. There is no better way of instructing oneself than by answering other people's questions!

Of Magazines not our own we have to acknowledge: *Broad Views*, January. This periodical has now completed its second year—the time when most new magazines begin to fall off from their early promise—with success, and the present number is even above the average. The Editor's views of "What the Children should be Taught" must certainly be correct, for they agree with our own! whilst C. B. Wheeler's apotheosis of "The Candid Friend" is worthy of Bernard Shaw. "The Intelligent Savage as a Religious Critic" is also well worth study. *Modern Astrology*; *Occult Review*, which is developing a curious faculty for finding things before they were lost, as we used to say when children; this month the Editor has "discovered" the "Mahatma Sri Agamya Guru Paramahansa" and the "case of Mary Reynolds," so well known to all readers of Gurney

and Myers' books. *Cœnobium*, the first number of what is to be an Italian "International Review of Free Studies," to be published every other month at Lugano, a very convenient International centre. It is a portly volume of 164 pages, price 2.50 lire, and from the contents should fill a rather important place in Italian literature. "Faith and Belief," "Religion," "Recent Systems of Morals," "The Constant Growth of Science and the Universe," "Discourses of Gotama Buddha," "Concerning the Nature of Christianity," are some of the subjects treated carefully and at length in this number; we hope it may find many readers both in Italy and beyond the Alps. *Indian Review*; *Siddhanta Deepika*; *The Dawn*; *The Arya*; *New International Review*; *O Mundo Occulto*; *Notes and Queries*; *Les Nouveaux Horizons*; *Psycho-Therapeutic Journal*, which asks us to announce that "with the January number the title will be altered to *The Health Record*, and its scope will be so extended as to include articles and news on matters of health and health-reform generally, whilst otherwise pursuing the same policy as hitherto." We wish it well under whatever title.

*Theosophy as a Science, and the Theosophical Society as an Academy*, a lecture given to the Roman Lodge, by Augusto Agabiti. This little pamphlet has the apt motto from H. P. B.: "If you do not make of Theosophy a living factor in the cultivation of the mind, I shall have lived in vain." Whether the establishment of an Academy, with a four years' course of study, beginning with "The Magical Review, edited by Sedir, at Paris," and continuing with "Cain, a Dramatic Mystery, by Fabre d'Olivet," and the like, would quite answer to H. P. B.'s ideas as to the cultivation of the mind, there may be two opinions; but no question that the writer means to do what seems to him most useful to the cause.

*Never say Die*, by J. Wallace-Clarke (Fowler & Co., London). In this small work we have many useful hints as to how to attain old age, and (still more needful) how to make these last years worth living. But the author's examples are not all so inspiring as he seems to imagine. The (Irish) bishop who at 70 years old married a girl of 18, and had ten children by her, will, we fear, rather be taken by most of us as a "frightful example." The author has, unwittingly, added a new terror to—life!

W.