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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

FIFTEEN years of life now lie completed behind us. One hundred and eighty numbers have been sent out into the world, carrying some fragments of the message of the
A New Year WISDOM. With the one hundred and eighty-first we open our sixteenth year of life, and face the coming years with unshaken courage and devotion. At the first sending forth H. P. Blavatsky drew to her side as co-editor "Mabel Collins," through whom had come to the West that priceless Eastern jewel, *Light on the Path*. Then she stepped aside, and H. P. Blavatsky summoned Annie Besant as her helper.

Death intervened and carried away the great and noble Soul who held the helm, and Annie Besant, left alone to hold it, asked and found a colleague's help in G. R. S. Mead. Presently one of these will clasp the friendly hand of Death, and the one left alone will choose another comrade, and so on and on till the work of the Magazine is no longer required. Thus is it in the glorious movement in which the THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW bears a standard. As one falls, another steps forward to fill the empty place, and no one person is necessary for the onward-going of the

work; for the work is greater than the workers, and Those who die not guide. "The standard-bearer falls, but the standard floats on high." Such is the sure conviction that cheers us in our work.

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It is startling to look back over the fifteen years, and over those which immediately preceded them, and to see the changes which have come over the face of thought. Statements made by H. P. B. amid scoffing laughter have proved true to the letter, and nothing has changed so much as the science men thought so sure. The theories regarded with reverence in the eighties are now challenged or even rejected, and greater changes are dawning on the horizon, promising to justify yet further the teachings of that great and most unjustly contemned teacher. On the eve of beginning our sixteenth year two such justifications come to hand.

Then and
Now

* * *

H. P. B., in the *Secret Doctrine*, repeatedly combated the then theories of electricity as a fluid or as a "mode of motion." Electricity, she says, is "simply matter, and no peculiar fluid" (i. 554). She notes with approval that Helmholtz regarded it as atomic, though it was generally spoken of as a "force" and "imponderable" (i. 734 note). Occult science, she says, "maintains that Forces are not what modern learning would have them; e.g., magnetism is not a 'mode of motion,' and in this particular case, at least, exact modern science is sure to come to grief some day" (i. 562). Electricity is not "matter in any of the states known to physical science . . . solid, gas, or fluid" (i. 563). On "the infinite divisibility of the atom" the science of occultism is built (i. 566). Since this was written the atom has been subdivided, and Professor J. A. Fleming (in the *Popular Science Monthly*, May, 1902), writes of negative electricity as "identified with corpuscles or masses only the small fraction of the size of an atom"; a corpuscle is "a fragment chipped off from an electrically neutral atom"; "an electron" or negative "ion" is merely such a fragment. The atom of matter has now become a

Changes

core of positive electricity enclosed in a shell of electrons, and "the architecture of atoms" is spoken of. The atom of hydrogen is said to consist of from 700 to 1000 positive and negative ions. "Electricity is atomic in structure." A moving electron "gives rise to magnetic force as it moves." "If," says H. P. B., "they (men of science) would fathom the ultimate nature of these forces, they have first to admit their *substantial* nature, however *supersensuous* that nature may be" (i. 560). The cause of these forces is "in matter existing in supersensuous states" (i. 561), and this substance is Ether (i. 553). Again, she says; "Light, heat, electricity, and so on are affections, not properties or qualities, of matter" (i. 536). And Professor Fleming says: "The agencies we call electric and magnetic force are affections of the æther." H. P. B.'s views were ridiculed at the time, but later science is justifying them.

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So also with regard to Natural Selection. This doctrine, she said, would have to be greatly modified, and then would form only a part of a true theory of evolution (i. 657).

Natural Selection Dethroned "Natural Selection is a pure myth when credited with the *origination* of variations" (2. 313, *note*; 683-685; and many other passages). We have now in the *Contemporary Review* (July, 1902), an article by James B. Johnston, which argues for the placing of Natural Selection in the subordinate position advocated by H. P. B. "The proved influence of Natural Selection is being written down as less and less every day." The article deals with the evidence of palæontology, and states various propositions based thereupon, which "stand at variance with a very large amount of the popular supposition and assertion of to-day." Facts, it is declared, are against Natural Selection, as originating species, and it is accepted rather on Weismann's position that nothing else can be suggested which explains "the adaptations, *without assuming the help of a principle of design*." Here, indeed, is the crux of the whole dispute. The WISDOM alleges design, with a host of divine, human, and sub-human builders. Mr. Johnston shows that developed types appear in strata older than those which show supposed ancestral types, as a flamingo in strata older than those which yield the

archæopteryx, and a cockroach as the first certain insect. The fully developed scorpion is found as a contemporary with primitive crustaceans, of whom he ought to be the far-off descendant. The most ancient whales are like those of the present day. "The influence of Natural Selection on either the secondary or the tertiary mammals seems to have been quite trivial and unimportant. Besides the fossil facts offer most serious opposition to our giving any supreme place to Natural Selection even among the tertiary mammals." "Palæontology to-day, as always, refuses to concede any place of great importance to Natural Selection in the originating of species. Palæontology would hardly allow it even a secondary place; it emphatically proclaims Natural Selection as of quite minor importance." Another important point is that "a new type varies with great rapidity just after it comes in, and then varies very little, often not at all, until it ceases to exist." "It is the inward powers of adaptation which are, and always have been, the chief factor in evolution. Environment, struggle for existence, use and disuse, and the like, only modify externals and unessentials, or at most eliminate; very seldom do we see them creating." Thus strongly do the later discoveries of palæontology justify the position taken by H. P. B. when the whole scientific world was against her. She was much blamed for her unscientific theories, but as time goes on the "WISDOM is justified of her children."

* * *

In the eighteenth and last volume of the works of the late Max Müller, a noteworthy passage appears, distinctly stating his belief in re-incarnation. He writes :

A Voice from
the Grave

I cannot help thinking that the souls towards whom we feel drawn in this life are the very souls whom we knew and loved in a former life, and that the souls who repel us here, we do not know why, are the souls that earned our disapproval, the souls from whom we kept aloof in a former life.

It is only one more witness in an ever-growing band, but each man of mark who adds his testimony increases the rationality of the doctrine in the eyes of the many who are swayed by the authority of well-known names.

HERE is a translation by the late James Legge—kindly given by his daughter—of a Chinese legend, which will interest our readers by its significance and its quaintness :

Digging
"Seven Holes
in Space"

"There were the King of the North Sea, and the King of the South Sea, and between these seas was the land of Chaos. And Chaos allowed them to come on his land whenever they liked ; so they bethought themselves as to what return they could make him for his kindness. As they talked, Chaos himself passed by, and they saw he was a shapeless mass, head, feet, body and limbs in the wildest confusion, vague, miscellaneous and grotesque. So they said : ' We have lately seen some men, and they have heads, and in their heads seven orifices to let in light, and air, and breath, and food. Let us dig seven holes in Chaos, and let in light, and air and breath.' So they dug one hole a day, and on the seventh day Chaos died."

So says the legend. For the likeness of the Heavenly Man was cast on the shapeless mass of Chaos, and Chaos vanished and a Kosmos rose. Thus have we heard.

* * *

OUR readers will regret to hear that Svâmi Vivekânanda—the well-known disciple of Râmakriṣṇa, and the head of the missionary band of Svâmis who have done so much to popularise Hindu thought in America—has passed away at the early age of thirty-nine. The late Svâmi collected large funds in America for his Indian work, and founded the Râmakriṣṇa Mission in Calcutta. May Peace be with him.

Beyond these
Voices

* * *

THE following incident has appeared in the press. The poor woman seems to have shown no signs of insanity, beyond the natural strong emotion of a daughter on becoming convinced of her father's danger. But official routine is difficult to change. It is spoken of as a "very curious case," but such cases are common enough now-a-days, so far as the communication of disasters and of other events is concerned. That which is fortunately becom-

Astral Impression
treated as Insanity

ing more curious, in the sense of rare, is the treatment of a person who receives such an impression as insane.

The woman was coming back from Australia, and while on the voyage conceived the idea that something had happened to her father. This so preyed upon her mind that when she reached Tilbury Dock she was not responsible for her actions, though talking of nothing else but something having happened to her father. She would not give them any details about herself, but from letters found on her, information was received, which resulted in communication being established with her friends. The curious part of the affair was that the solicitor applied to wrote that he knew the girl well, but would suggest that no communication should be made to her father, who had suffered an accident, and was lying in a precarious condition waiting for an operation to be performed. The accident had occurred while the girl was on board ship on her way home.

* * *

GOOD news is shortly expected at Exeter Hall. An American senator has proposed an amendment to the Chinese Exclusion

Salvation at
Last

Bill, that Christian Chinese shall be allowed to enter the United States. (Our readers will remember that while Europe and America force China to admit Westerners at the point of the bayonet, the United States is busy in shutting the Chinese out of America. This is western justice and wide-mindedness: "We grab your land, and shut you out of ours".) Thousands of Chinese are expected to enter the Christian fold. The Spaniards, when they held the Philippines, adopted this policy, and 30,000 Chinese were converted during a single week. And "of such is the kingdom of heaven," in the missionary sense. The clause will be as successful as an Indian famine. Perhaps the Chinese might try a similar condition, enforcing Buddhism or Confucianism on all who enter China. It would have the advantage of preventing drunkenness.

* * *

It may be remembered that impressions on sensitive plates have been produced by what is vaguely called "spirit influence," in

Positive Images

which the images were positive, not negative. Several persons have been engaged in the attempt to produce such images, and it is stated in *Photography* that Mr. M. J. Wilbert obtained an ordinary negative in the

ordinary way, and then developed in the daylight a second plate to which he had given the same exposure. This second plate showed the usual negative when taken from the camera, but this faded away and a positive image appeared under the action of the developer in light.

* * *

I—to drop the editorial we—have been wandering round the South and West of England during this August, which ought to have been hot and was cold. Theosophy is making considerable progress in this part of England, where, some years since, few knew anything about it. In Bournemouth, Dr. Nunn, Mr. Bellairs and Mrs. McDouall have worked steadily, week by week, and have succeeded in creating interest, so that both the public lectures and the conversation meeting were well-attended. In Plymouth, Dr. and Mrs. Mariette have brought much energy to bear on the work, so that we not only had public lectures and a crowded conversation meeting, but opened a Lodge, housed in a room of its own in the centre of the town. May it prosper, and be a centre of life. For many years it seemed hopeless to do anything in Exeter, but Miss Wheaton's courage and perseverance have conquered local antagonism, and Colonel Montague presided over a good public meeting, followed on the next day by a Lodge meeting and a public gathering for questions. Cardiff is almost unbroken ground, and the local bigotry was so great and the inclination to persecute so strong, that I thought it better not to expose anyone to the risk of injury by taking the chair, and lectured without a chairman. There was a gathering of between six and seven hundred people, who proved sympathetic, and a good many attended the conversation next day. Some serious study is now likely to be done. At Bristol the Lodge has had many difficulties, but has held on through all, and the meetings were very successful. Miss Dobbie and Mr. Sidney Old had organised everything successfully, and Mr. Sibree, Lecturer on Oriental Languages at University College, took the chair. Bath was the last town visited, and here we had a pleasant meeting, presided over by Mr. Hill, and a useful conversation on the following afternoon.

FRIENDS all over Europe will be interested in hearing that Mr. C. W. Leadbeater took ship for America from Liverpool, on August 22nd. He is to remain for two years in the States, lecturing and teaching continuously. All good wishes follow him from the various European countries in which he has been labouring with so much earnestness and self-sacrifice.

* * *

WE referred last month to Professor James' Gifford Lectures, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. A correspondent sends us the following note :

A Reviewer " How significant is the fact that in discussing the work, the *Times* accepts without demur the Professor's view ' that our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different.' From the monistic insight of such states, says the *Times*, ' it is an easy transition to what are more specifically recognised as mystical states, whether in the Yoga of the Hindus, the contemplative mysticism of the Buddhists and Sufis, or the transports of Christian saints. With a sure hand Professor James disentangles the common elements of these very diverse experiences, and finally proceeds with studied moderation to discuss the psychological mechanism by which they are brought about, and their possible value as an outlook upon reality.' Outlook upon reality ! Is it not of momentous significance, that on the very threshold of the twentieth century, the Harvard professor and the *Times* reviewer should be agreed that ' reality ' is beyond space and time, and yet may reasonably be sought for, and, haply, recognised by the tenant of the physical body ? and that both parties should repudiate as ' superficial ' the theory of ' medical materialism, which seeks to discredit the spiritual value of religious experiences by an account of their organic causation ? ' Verily, the bread cast upon the waters by the Gnostics is being found again, after two millennia."

THE BOOK OF EPIPHANY

IN my last article* I dealt in a somewhat compressed manner with many things that must be considered by the student of the *Book of the Dead*, and endeavoured to show the necessity of approaching the study in the same way as we should approach the study of religious philosophy in any other sacred book. I entered into the origin of this book and elaborated the theory of its descent from the rituals of the Mysteries of the ancient world, and analysed a portion of it from the point of view of those rituals.

I propose in this article to give some idea of the varying phases of the study of this ancient book, of the difficulties and whence they arise, and I hope to some extent to make clear the reasons and causes which have up till now prevented the Egyptologist pure and simple from arriving at any adequate rendering of its most marvellous and most profound symbolism. Not that we can yet hope to elucidate it entirely, but I do believe that we are upon the right path, that we have, as it were, cleared the surface in the scientific excavation of this buried treasure-house of the wisdom of Egypt.

It will be remembered that I prefaced my last article with a philosophical essay. The reason for this demand upon philosophy is that there has never been found in the ancient Egyptian language and writing religious treatises such as are produced by the theologians of the present day. Even the Gnostic writings are far more of the nature of symbol than of explanation, though they profess to be explanatory. The ancient commentaries on the xviii chapter of the *Book of the Dead*, or as I prefer to call it the *Book of Epiphany*, are only explanatory in the sense that they give us a choice of symbols, saying merely that one symbol is equivalent to some other symbol.

* See July number, "The Mysteries and the 'Book of the Dead.'"

The reason for this lack of explanatory matter is not far to seek.

The *Book of Epiphany* was not written for the general public; it was not written to form the teaching propaganda of any religion, or any doctrine belonging to a religion. It was compiled for the assistance of those who knew, those who had penetrated beyond the outer husk of the external worship of Gods or even of God; it was compiled for those who had entered the sacred hall of initiation; it was compiled for those who were Masters of the Mysteries—men learned in a divine lore which they held too sacred to write down, a knowledge which they kept locked up within their hearts and handed on from mouth to ear to those only whom they considered worthy.

This absence of written document was one of the peculiarities of the Mysteries, and it is the reason why we never come across in ancient Egypt manuscripts which give any justification of her fame for wisdom. Yet that justification is within our reach. Whence came the learning of the Greek philosophers? From Egypt; they went to Egypt to seek for her wisdom, and when they returned they put it into their own language. What is there of the lore of the ancient world that cannot be traced to Egypt? I believe none, unless it be the Chaldæan, and possibly the Vedântic.

The Chaldæan, like the Egyptian, is lost, and probably through the same cause. Yet a certain small amount of the Chaldæan wisdom has survived for our study, and that also has to be picked out from quotations in works by Greek authors.

There is a collection of these quotations known as the Chaldæan Oracles of Zoroaster, many of which are indeed profound in their philosophic conceptions; among other things these sentences afford us the proof that the Chaldæan astrologers were not ignorant of the position of the sun in the centre of our system.

To return to Egypt, however. Whatever in these days of Higher Criticism we may think of the historical existence of Moses, the Hebrew law-giver, few will attempt to deny that the writings attributed to him afford us an example of the transcription of material which came out of Egypt, and which is venerated

to this day. Moses, we are told, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; mediæval Jewish tradition will have it even that Moses incorporated the great and holy Kabbalah under the guise of symbolic history in the first four books of the Pentateuch, having received that Kabbalah from the priests of Egypt, but not daring to write it down in any form more direct than parable.

It seems to us, to-day, strange and incomprehensible that there can ever have existed and been known on this earth a Mystery, so profound, so sacred, and so awful, that men handed it down from generation to generation, from father to son, as a sacred heritage, whispering it only behind closed doors, and not daring to commit it to any more tangible and lasting tablet than the human memory.

To students of the Mysteries sometimes there come in upon the mind vague dreams of what such a Mystery might be, but it would be to no purpose to try to reduce such dreams to words; and I believe that a part, at least, of this mysterious secrecy was but a symbol of the mystic silence that to man, as man, must ever remain as an impenetrable veil around the great First Cause; and yet, it was undoubtedly the great First Cause that the initiation of Egypt was in the first place designed to reveal. First, the revelation of Being, then the revelation of the Path to union with that Being, silently, gradually, and at first by means of symbols.

The *Book of Epiphany* was designed to assist the Initiate in his meditations in this age-long search. Truly was it called the *Book of Epiphany*. Originally and in the time of Egypt's greatness, it was no talisman for the benefit of the dead, but a manual of religious meditation to aid the living.

I have given what is usually called the "Judgment of the Dead" as an example of a ceremony of initiation, but true initiation should never be confused with any ceremonial admission into any order or brotherhood, monastic or otherwise. The ceremony of the Trial was only intended to inculcate and drive home to the soul of the aspirant who was led through it, the necessity of an upright life, a life in which justice and mercy were ever mingled, justice as concerning himself, and mercy as concerning others, if he would attain at length to the great end for which he sought.

Having thoroughly learned this lesson of justice and mercy, the aspirant might ask for further knowledge. Probably this further tuition was given after the manner common to all effective teaching; that is, first the letter, then the sound of the letter, and then how to use the letter; first the object, then the name and meaning of the object, then the use of the object; and so in the initiation of Egypt, first the symbol, then the meaning of the symbol, and after that, how to use the symbol.

When the student had attained a competent knowledge of these three things one may suppose that the *Book of Epiphany* was put into his hands, and he was informed that now he must make use of the symbols himself for his own spiritual development.

It is the want of this previous tuition that forms one of our great difficulties in the elucidation of the book, for we find therein nothing but the symbols, hard and crude, without explanation of any kind, and no real directions as to how to use them.

To gather out again their meanings and uses from the slight threads of evidence that we possess is a long and difficult task; among other things the rubrics are somewhat to blame, for superficially speaking, they are rubbish to the modern mind. What benefit is a man to gain for his soul by performing ceremonies over pictures drawn on fresh papyrus, or from walling up little clay images or tablets in the walls of his room, and reciting words over them while he manipulates the plaster that conceals them from view?

It is difficult to see much use in such things; yet the rubrics inform us that they are highly beneficial to the soul, giving to it even divine powers, while yet it walks the earth in its garment of flesh. Some chapters have merely to be known upon earth in order to produce most startling results.

There can be but two possible explanations to these difficulties. Either that these statements are absurd, or that their intention is not only and exactly that which appears upon the surface. When we consider that this book was never published, was not written to startle the vulgar, but was handed down in silence from learned master to aspiring and tested student, each

one of whom from generation to generation gives no sign of incredulity, we can only conclude that either the wisdom of Egypt was hereditary and inculcated insanity, or that we have not comprehended the meanings and reasons which, for the Egyptian Initiate, underlay these rubrics and chapters.

That the latter is the true solution of the problem I have no doubt; I think this conclusion will be brought home to us best by giving a very nearly parallel case. We read in the New Testament that "if a man have faith as a grain of mustard seed, he shall say unto this sycamine tree, be thou plucked up by the roots and be thou planted in the sea," and "it shall obey him." According to our ordinary use and understanding of words, much less is required here than in any of the rubrics of the *Book of Epiphany*; yet none of these promise so startling a result, for all the results suggested in the rubrics of the *Book of Epiphany* can be readily construed in a spiritual manner, while that of the text I have quoted is startlingly physical; and be it noted that no great faith is required, but only an amount comparable to a grain of mustard seed, which we have always understood is a very small thing. Therefore we may readily put the same question here as I put concerning the Egyptian rubrics: Is this statement madness, or do we really understand its original intention? This then is one of our difficulties.

There is a sentence frequently found in the rubrics of the *Book of Epiphany* which informs us that certain results will accrue "if this chapter be known." In Egyptian, as in all full languages, we frequently find many words to express varying shades of one root-idea. There are two special words in the Egyptian tongue to express the idea of knowledge, that is to say two equivalents of our verb "to know." In the sentence above quoted, however, we only find one of these words used and that invariably—it is the word "*rekh*," and this term is that used without exception for that kind of knowledge necessary to success in the battle of the soul for perfection, and for the knowledge of the names of the Gods. Curiously enough, I have been gradually coming to the conclusion that the other word, the word "*sa*," is the more true equivalent of our verb "to know," even in its deeper meanings as connected with the most profound studies. We have then

to discover what manner of knowledge this was wherewith the Initiate "knew," for the very word which denotes "Initiate" is derived from the root "*rekh*" and means "one who knows," and not only knows as we now speak of knowledge, but in that far deeper and less easily translated sense which is denoted by the word "*rekh*." This word, I believe, cannot be translated into English, in fact, can only be explained in a very inadequate manner in our language. It appears to express the idea of the realisation of a thing from the centre to the circumference and from without to within, through and through, in a manner which in our superficial day is almost unknown and unconceived. This is one example out of many of the difficulties which must arise from the loss of knowledge of the precise meanings of words in any long dead and only partially restored language, though the example given is probably one of the most important in the language difficulty. Indeed, portions of the book are absolutely untranslatable as yet by reason of this difficulty; for instance, in the cxlvth chapter (the title of which is given in the Rubric as the "Chapter of the Pylons" or Temple Gateways of the Elysian Field), we find a great hindrance in our very inadequate knowledge of the names of even common things. So that the intricate symbolism of this chapter is at present doubly hidden by our want of knowledge of the parts of costume, and of the various substances used in the making of ointments and perfumes, and many other different materials, all of which evidently have as direct a symbolism in this chapter as they have in a Roman or Greek Catholic Church Service. In order to give a better idea of the nature of the difficulty without quoting the chapter at length (for it is a long one), I will give an analysis of its general scheme.

In order to enter the Elysian Field the aspirant must pass the gates of twenty-one Pylons, each one of which in this highly symbolic number (three times seven) represents some difficulty that must be overcome by the Initiate on the spiritual Path, before he can attain the final peace represented by the term usually rendered "Still Heart," but to be very much more accurately translated by the "Stillness of the Centre."

As the Initiate approaches each gate, one after the other, in

the realisation of the power of Horus, the Saviour, he declares his knowledge of "the Pylon, its name, and the name of the divine Warden of its gate"; and having uttered the two names, he says that he has been purified in the waters in which some divine power or symbol has been purified upon some especial symbolic occasion; that he is anointed with a certain kind of ointment, clothed in a certain kind of garment, and holding in his hand a wand made of a certain kind of wood, or resembling a certain substance. For the majority of the gates all these things are different, so that we have about twenty different garments, or varieties of textile fabrics, of which perhaps one only is known for certain; there are about the same number of oils, of which we may be justified in guessing in the dark as to the nature of three or four. There are many different woods, none of which, I believe, is properly recognised. Nevertheless it is evident that each of these things contains some direct symbolic idea which, if known, might possibly be traced in the more ornate symbolism of some of our church ornaments and vestments of to-day.

I have now dealt with two of the difficulties of the study of the *Book of Epiphany*; they are two which stand in everyone's path, and the latter of the two, that is, the language difficulty, I really think should have been more nearly overcome than it is after seventy-five years of study. It is a matter entirely for our professors of Egyptology and the erudite scholars at our museums, colleges, and centres of learning.

I now come to a third difficulty, yet one which is, to some extent, a development of that of which I spoke first—namely, the difficulty of interpretation; to put it into plain language, the difficulty I am now about to speak of lies in the non-recognition of the symbols employed.

To recognise the Egyptian symbols which are used in the *Book of Epiphany* requires a wider variety of special studies than merely the languages, customs and objects of antiquity; it needs the study of mystical philosophy, and is therefore well calculated to prevent any Egyptologist, who only possesses what is known as a "modern scientific mind," from ever comprehending the *Book of Epiphany*, or indeed any other work that has come down to us from what I would call the religio-scientific past—that is

to say "religio-scientific" in contradistinction to "materio-scientific," by which latter word I would name the spirit that has long ruled in our learned institutions, but is gradually giving way before a vague sense of something beyond, as modern material science gets a clearer and clearer view of the great Pylon Gateway that shuts it out from the Stillness of the Centre.

We have now excellent translations of the later Gnostic documents, and they are, to some extent at least, comprehensible; and though there is evidence that the Coptic Gnostic writings coming out of Egypt are translations from Greek, yet they also seem to be Egyptian speculation, returning to Egypt *viâ* the Greek tongue. As Greek was the polite language of Alexandria at the time when that city was the great centre of Egyptian learning, I see no necessity to suppose that the Gnostic documents known to us were not written by learned Egyptians for the benefit of learned Egyptians without the intervention of Greek learning at all. Be this as it may, it is easier to see the connection between the philosophy of the Greek documents and the philosophies of other nations and times, than it is to find any connection with the symbols of ancient Egypt, as commonly translated, for to some extent the language question rises again; but it is not now so much a question of the Egyptian language, as of the choice of English words wherewith to present the Egyptian ideas.

All who are acquainted with Gnostic terminology are familiar with the word "Æon," and will remember that this word and its uses present many difficulties.

In these days when we are beginning to recognise more and more the roots of Greek and Latin words in older languages, you will perhaps not be surprised if I suggest an Egyptian root for the word "Æon." I believe it to be a corruption from the *HeH* or *HeHU*, the shortened form of the Egyptian sentence *HeHUN-ReNPUT*, meaning "millions of years;" but while the Egyptian in his shortened form of this sentence reduced it to one word *HeHU* or *HaiHU*, meaning "millions," the Greek transcribers by one of those little slips of the ear that almost invariably prevent the idiom of any language being accurately transcribed by foreigners, omitted to strike off the letter *N* at the

end of the word *HĕHU*, and so they called it *HĕHUN* or *HĕHŌN*, meaning literally "millions of," and leaving out the last word, *Renput*, meaning "years." Thus they cut the sentence in two in the wrong place, and it is this incorrect form *HĕHUN* that appears to me to be the origin of the Greek "Aion," which we now call *Æon*; and in translating the Egyptian word *HĕHU*, *Æon* appears to fit it very much better than the usual equivalent of "millions of years," more particularly where it is found in the *Book of Epiphany* used in a personified sense, exactly as the term *Æon* is used by the Gnostic writers, in which case to translate it "millions of years" only serves to cloud the idea expressed. Also the Egyptian word *NeHeH*, from the same root, seems to find its most exact counterpart in the Greek form *αιώνιον*, meaning "Æon-long," rather than in our "Eternal"; the latter being better expressed in Egyptian by the word *ZeTA*, usually translated "everlasting," to which, so far as I know, no particular number or period of time, however indefinite, has ever been attached.

Another very interesting word is *HĕRĀ*, the radical meaning of which is a "face" or "countenance"; but as will be readily understood, owing to the face being the great distinguishing characteristic between man and man, *HĕRĀ* comes to mean "personality," "individuality," and so "Ego," that individual self by which one man is distinguished from another; and so it finally forms an important philosophical symbol, a technical term, so to speak, of the deeper philosophy of the Divine Self, the one and only essential Ego of the Universe, *NeB-HĔRĀ-WA*, "the Lord of the One Ego," or "of the only Ego."

Again, in the Gnostic writings, one finds continually recurring the word "Pleroma," meaning literally Plenitude or Fullness. In the *Book of Epiphany*, we find a Goddess spoken of by the name *MeHe-URIT*, and if one cares to look up the word in a vocabulary, he will find the word simply and definitely rendered into English as "a Cow-Goddess." I presume that the reason for calling *MeHe-URIT* a "Cow-Goddess," is, that in the language of the modern Egyptologist, her symbol was a "cow." If, however, we wish to learn anything from the ancient Egyptian symbols, we must go to work in a more truly scientific manner than the

modern vocabulary maker ; we must not, for example, make such a crude mistake as to state that the symbol of Osiris was a man ; for any person, with even a very small sense of discrimination of the eternal fitness of things, realises that before a man could possibly be taken as the symbol of Osiris, he must be dead and properly embalmed. Even then he is not, correctly speaking, the symbol of Osiris unless he have the white crown with the two Feathers and Uræus, also the Crook and Scourge, held in the proper manner ; he must also wear a particular pattern of collar, and must, finally, stand on a pedestal of proper form. Let us then be scientifically accurate and recognise that the symbol of *MeHe-URIT* was not a cow, but that the cow form became her symbol only when it was placed upon a proper pedestal, crowned with the correct head-dress, coloured in the correct manner, and generally surrounded with the correct insignia ; then let us translate the name of *MeHe-URIT*, for there is no difficulty about it. It means simply and literally, "Great Fullness," or "Great Plenitude;" in short, she is the Pleroma of the Gnostics, or, as I have heard it expressed in Hindu phraseology: "The infinite Light may be likened to a cow, and the 'master' is that by which the milk is drawn for the use of man."

So long then as our Egyptologists persist in the present lack of attempt at differentiation, we cannot expect them to throw much light on these intricate symbols.

Let me return for a moment to the word *HeRÁ* ("face," "individuality," "Ego"), for we find a curiously interesting link by the help of this word with the Chaldæan symbolic philosophy, and I think that the possibility of linking the philosophy of these two separated nations, the two great schools of wisdom of the ancient world, is a matter of considerable importance, for by this means comparison could be made to throw light from one on to the other.

All who have made any study of the Kabbalah will know the importance of the symbolism of the two Countenances, the Greater Countenance and the Lesser Countenance, corresponding to Macroprosopus and Microprosopus of the later philosophy. The Hebrew term for Macroprosopus is Aryk Anpin, while that for Microprosopus is Zaiyr Anpin.

These terms are not true Hebrew but Chaldee; the first is commonly translated Vast Countenance, and the latter Lesser Countenance. Both these adjectives remain with very little alteration in the Arabic language of to-day, the first being pronounced *Aryd*, and the second *Zughayer*. Their meanings may also be given as Vast and Little, but the more accurate modern use of *Aryd* is best expressed in the sense of width or breadth, and curiously enough the Egyptian equivalent for Aryk Anpin, the Vast Countenance, is *Usxet hra*, the "Broad of Face;" thus giving a curious and interesting link, as being more closely allied to the modern descendant of the Chaldee word than are the equivalent expressions in the philosophies of other nations.

These, then, are the main difficulties in the elucidation of the *Book of Epiphany*, and they resolve themselves practically into three. First—the expression of symbolic action in a purely material manner, without assisting the imagination by giving any reasons that might link the material action to any spiritual conception underlying it.

Second—the language difficulty; and third—the difficulty of the recognition of those symbols which are found in all old philosophies. Having recognised and defined the difficulties, we may now go forward to the consideration of the general contents of the *Book of Epiphany* and of the way in which it was intended to be used.

M. W. BLACKDEN.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

REMEMBER, words are not needed. The best work is done in silence. Those in whose midst you may live, quiet and unknown, may have the radiance cast upon them merely by your presence. It is not what you say and do, but what you *are*, that tells, and that will leave its ineffaceable mark upon each character you meet as upon all time.

The soul desires to express itself in its reflection, your life. So live that it may do so. So think and act that you may become a channel for higher things to descend to lower planes. Duty is not an ogre but an angel. How few understand this! Most confuse it, as they do conscience.

Sorrows, crosses, these are our opportunities, could we but see it so. But he is far along who does so see it. He has attained who fully realises it,—
Unpublished MS,

THE LIBERATION OF JÔHANNÂ

(FROM THE XITH TRACTATE OF THE RIGHT-HAND GENZÂ)

"IN the name of the Great Life!" These are the sayings of Jôhannâ the Baptist when he took of the stream of living water and baptised the living and named the Name of the Life.

And Mandâ d'Hajjê came to Jôhannâ and said to him: "Arise, Jôhannâ, and baptise me with the baptism wherewith you baptise, and name over me the Name which you name."

And Jôhannâ said to Mandâ d'Hajjê: "I suffer now from hunger and I suffer from thirst, and I have gathered herbs and I am observing silence. I desire to rest and the souls have been very burdensome. Let it be to-morrow. Come then and I will baptise you."

As Mandâ d'Hajjê stood there He lifted up His eyes to the place of the pure glory, to the great place of the pure light, and He prayed a prayer which is a great prayer and which is no small thing and said: "Unto you I pray, unto the First Life and the Second Life and the Third Life—I pray of you a great prayer which is no small thing! Concerning this hour in which I now stand—concerning the twelve hours of the day and the twelve hours of the night, concerning the twenty-four hours: may they be as one hour! And may a sleep come and a slumbering upon the eyes of Jôhannâ. May he lie down and sleep and may his soul be like that of Enoch in his glory! I will speak with him now and ask him with what baptism he baptises. In this same hour in which I now stand!"

And Mandâ d'Hajjê came out from the place of pure glory and from the place of pure light; for it had been given him concerning the twelve hours of the day and the twelve hours of the night that they should be as one hour!

And it was evening, and it was morning; it was night and it

was day. There came a sleep and a slumbering upon the eyes of Jôhannâ.

He lay down and slept; and he awoke and shook himself and passed his right hand across his eyes, and they were freed from sleep.

And Mandâ d'Hajjê said: "Welcome, Master Jôhannâ, grey-haired Father, Master of honour!"

And Jôhannâ said to Mandâ d'Hajjê: "Come in peace, Little One, whom I appointed yesterday to come to the stream! To-day I will not disappoint you!"

And Mandâ d'Hajjê said: "It is well, let the stream arise, and spread out your arms and take me and baptise me with the living baptism wherewith you baptise, and name over me the Name which you name."

And Jôhannâ said to Mandâ d'Hajjê: "Two and forty years have I taken of the stream and baptised men in its waters: yet none hath bade me enter the stream. Now I go with you, Little One of three years and of one day, that we may enter the stream."

And Mandâ d'Hajjê said: "What is the manner of the baptism with which you baptise?"

And Jôhannâ answered: "I place men in the stream as sheep are placed with the shepherd. And I pour over them water from my staff and name over them the Name of the Life."

And Mandâ d'Hajjê said: "With which baptism do you baptise and what is the Name that you name?"

The disciples opened their mouths as one man and said to Jôhannâ: "Two and forty years have you baptised: yet none bade *you* to enter the stream but this Little One. Despise not the speech with which he speaks!"

The disciples pressed round Jôhannâ. And Jôhannâ arose and went down to the bed of the Stream and caused it to shine, and he spread out his arms and welcomed Mandâ d'Hajjê and said: "Come, come, Little One of three years and one day, youngest among his brethren but oldest with his Father, who is so small yet his sayings are so exalted!"

And Mandâ d'Hajjê went down into the stream to Jôhannâ, and the stream sprang up and rushed to meet him and flooded

its borders. And Jôhannâ was up to his middle and up to his chin in water, and he was driven from wave to wave and had not strength to stand upright.

Mandâ d'Hajjê saw Jôhannâ and took pity on him; and the glory of Mandâ d'Hajjê constrained the stream, and it turned itself back and Jôhannâ stood on dry land.

And Mandâ d'Hajjê went to him and said: "Baptise me with your pure baptism and name over me the Name that you honour!"

And Jôhannâ said: "A thousand times a thousand men have I caused to enter the stream, and ten thousand times ten thousand souls have I baptised with the water, but there has not come one like you under my hand! Now it is dry land; how shall I baptise you?"

And Mandâ d'Hajjê said: "As far as the water has gone, go you also. And I shall go with you."

And the glory of Mandâ d'Hajjê fell on the stream and upon its borders. And the fishes of the sea opened their mouths, and the birds from both shores of the ocean, to praise Mandâ d'Hajjê, and they said: "Blessed art thou, O Mandâ d'Hajjê, and blessed is the place from which thou camest, and blessed and established shall be the great place to which thou goest!"

The voices of the fishes out of the sea and of the birds from both shores of the ocean fell on the ear of Jôhannâ. And Jôhannâ recognised that it was Mandâ d'Hajjê who went with him.

And Jôhannâ exclaimed and said to Mandâ d'Hajjê: "Thou art the Man in whose Name I have been baptising with the living baptism!"

And He asked him: "With what Name do you baptise?" And Jôhannâ answered: "With the Name that was revealed to me, with the Name of the predestinate One who was fore-ordained to come, that the well-concealed Mânâ should be made manifest. Thou! Give me now the handshake of the Kuštâ and thy right hand, the Master of healing, and name over me who am thy branch which thou hast planted: that through thy Name the first and the last may be established!"

And Mandâ d'Hajjê said to Jôhannâ: "If I lay my hand upon you, you will go out of your body!"

And Jôhannâ said: "I have seen thee, and I desire to stay no longer here! I have seen thee and held thee fast. I wish for the handshake of Kuštâ (the true bond). Do not separate me from you, or from the place from which you came, or from the great place to which you are going. I will gird up my loins and say farewell! Be gracious to me and give me the revelation of the Mysteries of the King . . . and of the Living Fire, and of the Life wherein it dwells, and of the primal causes and degrees of all beings."

And he gave him the handshake of the Kuštâ, and laid His hand upon him in Jordan.

And he made him lay off his garment of flesh and blood, and he clothed him in a raiment of glory and covered him with a fine and new head-covering of light.

Mandâ d'Hajjê went onwards to the place of pure glory, to the place of pure light, and Jôhannâ went with him. . . . And there went with them four men—the Sons of Peace, they were: Source-of-Life, Name-of-Life, Glory-of-Life, and Light-of-Life.

The above extracts, though only a translation of a translation, may give some idea of the highly metaphorical character of the narrative.

John the Baptist is not the roughly clad man of the desert baptising men in an actual river Jordan, but a great soul that has been in a position to initiate tens of thousands of souls—entering the stream being the allegorical phrase for initiation.

He is preparing to rest, when he sees coming towards him yet another soul, which he takes to be that of an ordinary disciple.

The solemn prayer that time shall stand still shows that the power of Mandâ d'Hajjê was that of a perfected Master, who was able to confer upon Jôhannâ privileges greater than those connected with the "baptism" given by Jôhannâ himself.

The place of pure glory to which He rises is the timeless plane, and thither he draws the soul of the sleeping Jôhannâ and enlightens the liberated soul concerning some very high matters;

consequently on returning he addresses him as "Master Jôhannâ, Master of Honour," and Jôhannâ, on awakening, appears to realise that this is no ordinary disciple but an Initiate, a "Little One," though he does not yet perceive the greater power that is overshadowing the "Little One"—a power for whose advent he has been preparing the way in the wilderness of the world's ignorance, and whose Name is the very Name he has ever invoked at each initiation.

Mandâ d'Hajje now asks again to be told this Name, and the disciples begin to realise that the questioner is the superior of the two.

In the course of the ceremony Jôhannâ begins to see the whole truth concerning Mandâ d'Hajjê, and at last all the voices of Nature cry out to him to acknowledge their Lord, and he understands that this is indeed the Gnosis-of-Life for which he had waited. This is the Tree of which he is a branch, the Head of the ancient community whose "grip" or handshake he proceeds to give.

We are led to conclude that the human form in which Mandâ d'Hajjê thus appears to John the Baptist is that of Anusch, "The Little Anusch," who figures so often throughout the work. But here comes in also the strange conception of Jesus as the false Messiah, whose personality is mysteriously inwoven with that of Anusch.

Jesus, or Nebu Meschiha, was born of a Virgin but is under the rule of the Seven Planets. He is the "bad Genius," who has a great power of deceiving men, and works only for the acquirement of temporal kingship. He performs miracles with no beneficent purpose, merely for display.

Anusch, the good Genius, seeing his presumption, crucifies the body of Nebu Meschiha, whose Genius goes and hides itself in Mount Moriah.

Anusch has escaped from the dominion of the Seven—that is, he has conquered all the powers of the lower nature.

Tractate xxxi. : "I am Anusch ; choose thou thine elect, the just men and the faithful women, and reveal to them the doctrine . . . that they may utterly astonish the Adepts of the Seven Planets."

Anusch chooses 365 disciples, whom he instructs after the building up again of Jerusalem until the coming of Muhammad.

“ And when the wicked saw the glory they said : ‘ No, these three men who have appeared in this world are not simple mortals. It is a splendour and an incarnate light and so shall be the form of the little Anusch.’ ” This is in the xxist Tractate, and the Angel of Life also says to Anusch : “ And your form shall be one day like that of your two elder brothers who are now in the Abode of the Life.”

These elder brothers would seem to be the prophets of a by-gone age, not the two other mystical persons associated with Anusch at that time, for while Anusch is contemplating the “ fires of the night ” and “ the dominating angels of the sky ” he says in his soliloquy : “ Although I am small I am older than my brothers ”—meaning presumably the other disciples of John.

In summing up what we may consider interesting in the above, we find that the Mandæan version of the appearance of a great Power whose ministry began by the river Jordan by no means simplifies the psychological problem of the Person of Christ ; rather it opens up deeper and darker questions, as well as presents greater and more vividly glorious possibilities.

The Person of the Christ is rendered more complex by the mystical association of a good and evil Genius—both merged in or overshadowed by a higher Power.

The idea of the great unbroken stream of living souls which are gathered in through all the centuries by an Initiate, in possession of the knowledge of a great Name and a grip or handshake, links the whole episode to many other schools of mystical thought. And finally the guardianship of the world and all things by invisible beings of many orders, whose nature is light, is constantly and vividly brought before us.

A. L. B. HARDCASTLE.

Who in his mind knows the Lord's will to be for the best,
He is verily called Jivan Mukta.
To him joy is the same as sorrow.
He is ever blissful ; to him there is no separation.

GURU V. SUKHMANI.

“PROMETHEUS UNBOUND”

I would fain
 Be what it is my destiny to be,
 The saviour and the strength of suffering man,
 Or sink into the original gulf of things :
 There is no agony and no solace left ;
 Earth can console, Heaven can torment no more.

THIS is the last cry wrung from the tortured Titan. The zenith of his agony, mental and physical, is here. Dauntless in fortitude, sublime in patience, conscious of ultimate victory, he has borne every nameless suffering which the power of Jupiter could inflict, every horror which the imagination of a God could devise. His last words of pain ring out, beneath the agony, a strain of hope and a prophecy.

Among modern dramas, this, perhaps the least dramatic, from the “modern” point of view, is, in the opinion of some, the most perfect. Life and form, spirit and structure, conception and treatment, are alike worthy of the subject. We have here a world-drama, whose *personæ* are abstractions, yet “live, move and have their being,” vivified by the heart-blood of the mighty poet, their creator.

The philosophy and lyrical utterance of the poem are alike theosophic. And though the whole drama must be read and taken in its entirety, to form any adequate idea of the fulness of “theosophic lore” contained in it, yet a short study may serve to introduce it, perhaps, to some who love beauty of thought clothed in gracious form. To those, “Prometheus Unbound” will bring a rich harvest.

Here then we have Prometheus, the God-Man, made perfect through suffering; Asia, type of love, in its patience, purity and passion, the redeeming, uplifting spirit of life; Demogorgon, mysterious elemental, with power to work in the darker forces of

Nature ; and Jupiter, mighty shadow of evil—mighty, yet we feel throughout the poem that he is but a gigantic apparition of unreality. Before the poem brings us to his downfall, we know that it must come. How graphically does our poet with his divine intuition foreshadow this conquering of darkness by the irresistible might of light :

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Forth then, came the God, with the gold of his immortality purified by the furnace, calm and strong, secure in that peace which comes only after strife.

With what splendour and strength the poet paints the death-pangs of Jupiter, son of the darkness, whose death-struggle thrills with desire to drag another down with him to the depths of his abysmal tomb. He cries to Demogorgon :

Sink with me then,
We two will sink on the wide waves of ruin,
Even as a vulture and a snake outspent
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,
Into a shoreless sea. Let hell unlock
Its mounded oceans of tempestuous fire,
And whelm on them into the bottomless void
This desolated world, and thee, and me,
The conqueror and the conquered and the wreck
Of that for which he combated.

Ai ! Ai !
The elements obey me not. I sink
Dizzily down, ever, for ever down.
And, like a cloud, mine enemy above
Darkens my fall with victory ! Ai ! Ai !

The terror which enwraps the very atmosphere in its black wings, the elemental struggle for supremacy, are depicted here with a master's power. Throughout this poem, titanic in structure as in conception, we have a striking example of the power of genius to personify emotion, without losing or lowering the flight of the ascending song. This, of course, is one of the tests by which we try our poets. Shelley possessed the power in an inimitable degree, and nowhere shows it with such “rare excellence” as in this, his masterpiece, “Prometheus”.

Let us look now, in this forest of poesy, for some flowers of theosophic symbolism. We have not far to seek, for our poet is deeply imbued with the temper of mind which looks always beneath and beyond the apparent for the real. "I seek (he says) in what I see, the manifestation of something beyond the present and tangible object." The three-fold vision was always before him—he saw it as "Love, Light and Life"; and each poem was an endeavour to give somewhat of form to this wealth of elemental beauty and terror, which was revealed to the eye of the poet's soul.

Throughout "Prometheus Unbound" we breathe "the wind, the sea, the depth of air". His was true sympathy with Nature. He looked deep into her mighty heart and saw there all that was noblest, truest, in the heart of man.

The truth, familiar to us, that before the eye of the mind can see, the darkness of ignorance must be dispelled, is given in the words of the "Spirit of the Hour," speaking immediately after the awful descent of Darkness, symbolised in Jupiter :

Soon as the sound had ceased whose thunder filled
The abysses of the sky and the wide earth,
There was a change: the impalpable thin air
And the all-circling sunlight were transformed,
As if the sense of love dissolved in them
Had folded itself round the spheréd world.
My vision then grew clear and I could see
Into the mysteries of the Universe.

Shelley, too, knew by "right divine," by virtue of his art, that all Life is one, that the only difference is in degree, and not in kind :

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes
From man's high mind even to the central stone
Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-fretted domes
To the dull-weed some sea-worm battens on.
(A confused voice) "We hear—thy words waken oblivion."

Surely here is the poet's contribution to the dictum "One Force, One Life." Yet another instance, showing how love raises both lover and beloved :

Common as light is love,
And its familiar voice wearies not ever,

Like the wide heaven, the all-sustaining air,
It makes the reptile equal to the God.

In this wondrous drama we find a deep belief in the typical nature and archetypal forms of all things that are of art, and in the mind and apprehension which humanity brings to art, “ parts of one stupendous whole ”. Prometheus is here describing the life which shall be his and Asia’s (and all who have suffered and triumphed with them) in a beautiful sea cave where they are to dwell, re-united once more. This sea cave is a symbol of the triumph of love over hate, of light over darkness, subduing all things unto the lovely image of itself. He tells of all high visions which shall be theirs, and of

Lovely apparitions, dim at first,
Then radiant, as the mind arising bright
From the embrace of beauty, whence the forms
Of which these are the phantoms, casts on them
The gathered rays which are reality,
Shall visit us, the progeny immortal
Of Painting, Sculpture and rapt Poesy,
And arts, though unimagined, yet to be.

Here we have the old philosophic conception of mind, casting on matter (as it were) “ the gathered rays which are reality.”

Innumerable quotations might be made. May the few here given tempt some to gather blossoms for themselves from this wondrous forest of theosophic thought and imagery.

To all who love Nature, too, Shelley is a friend, a master, an inspiration. “ He loved Nature so,” said Leigh Hunt, “ that she almost broke her silence for this her child. If she did not speak, yet she returned him look for look ”—this poet of poets, who dwelt so near to Nature’s heart, and yet loved struggling humanity with a high hope and a burning passion.

If any poet should ask us “ What does Theosophy teach ? ” send him home to read his “ Prometheus ” and will he not find the answer ?

L. NIGHTINGALE DUDDINGTON.

A VOICE FROM THE KINGDOM

IN reading J. M. I.'s interesting paper in the May number of the *REVIEW*, entitled "A Little Lost Kingdom," the thought suggested itself that if other quondam subjects of that kingdom would in like manner relate their personal recollections and observations of this misty realm of childhood, there might result a mass of testimony which could not fail to suggest many interesting psychological problems, and which might possibly throw a new light on some of the difficult questions in child study and child training.

Is it warm in that green valley,
 Vale of childhood, where you dwell?
 Is it calm in that green valley,
 Round whose bournes such great hills swell?
 Are there giants in the valley—
 Giants leaving footprints yet?
 Are there angels in the valley?
 Tell me—I forget.

We have all forgotten, and forgotten the more because we were early taught to despise that first kingdom to which we fell heirs. But we all remember, too, something, more or less, and it is possible that we may learn in reviewing the mental records of babyland a clearer understanding of the lights and shadows that chequer the path leading into the world. And if some of our recollections seem trivial, and some have the air of being egotistical, let us not be discouraged, remembering that there is wisdom in all the little things common to humanity.

In my own case recollection does not seem to extend back to a very early period. It is obviously impossible to attempt to date events accurately in a world where time is merely an unmeaning word employed by an alien race for its own unintelligible purposes, but I feel pretty well convinced that none of my collected impressions go back beyond the age of four years or so,

Some, no doubt ; one, certainly, must have been brought over from the land which is hid by a misty, unremovable veil, the land of infancy, but as a distinct memory they can be given only where they are found, in the days of small childhood. That one, which is as a memory of a memory, is the ineradicable belief that the power of flight had once been mine : nay, that this lost art of flying was one that was in abeyance merely, that some day when I should really try I should fly again. Why did I not make the attempt then, it may well be asked ? Because, no doubt, another part of nature forbade, but that did not prevent my locating the position of my remembered flights down a steep and dark and particularly uninviting back staircase of my childhood's home. Was I, perhaps, carried swiftly down by a nurse on some occasion in infancy ? I do not know : I only know that the sensation of floating through the air above those wooden steps, with just a touch of the toe in the middle of the flight to give a new momentum, was present with me all the days of my childhood, and is easily recalled even yet.

In the life of Tennyson mention is made of the extraordinary fascination which was exercised on his mind in childhood by the three simple words, Far, far away ; and in his old age he embodied this phrase in a little poem intended to be set to music, of which the last verses are as follow :

What vague world-whisper, mystic pain or joy,
Thro' those th ree words would haunt him when a boy,
Far—far—away.

A whisper from his dawn of life ? a breath
From some fair dawn beyond the doors of death ?
Far—far—away.

Far, far, how far ? from o'er the gates of birth,
The faint horizons, all the bounds of earth ?
Far—far—away.

What charm in words, a charm no words could give !
O dying words, can Music make you live ?
Far—far—away.

Possibly every child has, though it may be in a less vivid degree, experienced the same feeling with regard to some expression which, in one of those self-satisfied phrases which pretend to explain, "has caught his fancy." For me that charm, "a charm

no words can give," dwelt in the very ordinary phrase "By-and-bye." They come back to me now as when I first consciously heard them, spoken rather hastily by a grown-up, who, as I recall, was worried over some small domestic catastrophe. They seemed to wrap me in a mystic veil of indefiniteness as I wandered away into an empty hall in order to say them over to myself, gazing up to a window whose aspect at that moment I perfectly recall. I think that I used to have the same feeling afterwards in gazing at sunsets, perhaps would say to myself the same words without attaching any meaning to them—but of this saying the words in after days I cannot be certain.

All the rest of my recollections seem to be such because they were burnt into my mind by the icy-hot iron of fear. Two are connected with fear of the phenomena of nature. In one of these my sister and I are out in the fields with our father, accompanied by a dog. The dog refuses to obey, and is beaten by my father in consequence, with what seems to my baby mind great anger and cruelty. There either was, or my excited fancy pictured that there was, an angry lowering of stormy clouds in the sky, darkness coming on with a cold wind, and that, with the cries of the dog, my own revolt from, and baby condemnation of, my father, and my sister's great terrified eyes, are blended in my mind in one impression of dread and suffering.

The other is less obvious. Leading from the road which we trod daily to school for a number of years there was a little-used lane, which in its beginning led past some cottages and a farm-yard, closed up by a big black door. To my recollection I had never been down this lane, and I would not go far enough to look down it; it was shrouded to my fancy with awe, and a mystery, half painful, half pleasurable, but which effectually prevented me from attempting to penetrate its mystic recesses. I made no romances about it such as a more imaginative child might have done, I simply avoided setting foot in it. Afterwards, when I was nearly a woman, I asked a possible reason for this feeling from the relative who cared for my motherless childhood. Her explanation was simply that we—the babies, nurse and herself—had once been overtaken some way from home by a thunder-storm, and had hurried through this unfrequented lane to make a

short cut. The haste, nervous anxiety, and heavy atmospheric conditions, had made a cloud in my baby brain dense enough to last all through my immature life.

Of the "horrible dark passages" of dreams, the tortures by wolves, bears and crocodiles, of which J. M. I. speaks, I have no recollection. My nightmares were only two in number, but they seem to have been repeated *ad infinitum*, if not *ad nauseam*! In one I stood with my nurse, or some grown person, near a gate which crossed the road by a pond, close by my home. We would be returning from walking, when we saw on the other side of the closed gate a farmer's cart jogging slowly along. The horse stopped at the gate, and his driver prepared to dismount in order to open it. It was at this moment that my blood turned to ice at the discovery that this driver was without the ordinary appendage of a head! Instead of it his trunk ended with—to all remembrance—a gory neck. At this point horror awoke me. I believe that this dream expressed—or did it cause?—a secret fear that haunted my mind of suddenly, as I went about the world, coming upon persons lacking in a dreadful recent way some of the members of their bodies. Monsters, and "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders," formed one of the not impossible terrors of that great unknown world in which I found myself.

My other nightmare was more abstruse. I was in another and a new world, amongst kind but stranger people, who lived in a state of infinite terror. At any time IT might appear: IT might come at any moment. What IT might be could not be communicated, but I was told that when IT came my only safety from an indescribable fate lay in throwing myself face downwards on the ground, and so remaining until IT had gone away. And, right away, IT came, and, quite unable to throw myself on the ground, I remained gazing with the serpent fascination at a creature which appeared like a great jack-rabbit walking on its hind legs. I was conscious that all around were people flat on their faces, and with the gaze of the monster being turned slowly upon me I always awoke in a cold perspiration, rigid, and unable to cry out.

But the strange part of the story is that, a quarter of a cen-

ture, or more, after that dream had become a memory, I saw one evening the picture of my childhood's terror thrown on to the great white sheet by the light of the stereoscopic lantern, under the title of the Serpent God of the Ancient Aztecs!

May I not ask, with J. M. I., is not this the ghost of some terrible past stalking fantastically through a childish memory?

Of those fears which children deliberately manufacture for the purpose of experiencing a "new thrill," I recall but one. That is connected with a large stone which covered the mouth of a drain for waste water in a ditch which we passed daily. This stone to us was the covering of the habitation of a wicked fairy, who, evolved deliberately at first, presently grew into a small Frankenstein, and ruled her creators. She used to pursue us fleeing, whenever we thought about her, from her domicile to the great white gate that led into home precincts, where her power ended. Of course it was we who had decided that at this gate her authority ceased, but that did not hinder the fact that this edict became a law of nature as soon as it was fairly promulgated, and as irresponsible of our influence as the rain or the sunshine. When we passed the home of our enemy in grown-up company we walked sedately without a sign, but triumphing over her in our hearts.

There was one odd taboo of our childhood which I mention because I think I have heard of a similar one amongst some savage or half-civilised tribes. This was the rule that forbade our saying our own names. This was felt to be both wrong, or at least unbecoming, and also rendered the transgressor ridiculous. "You said your own name," was a reproach to which there was no reply, and the answer to the first question of the Catechism, which obliged the infraction of this rule by the catechumen, was the most disliked, though certainly the easiest of all.

My first revolt against the authority of false conventions dates back to a very early age, probably to about the age of five years. Out on our daily walk a discussion had arisen about weather probabilities, if it was going to rain or to be fair, and I was told that it was without doubt going to rain, because my father had said so, and because my father could not be wrong. I wish I could recall the words in which I pleaded the fact, quite patent to my

baby brain, that father, though wise no doubt, might possibly occasionally be mistaken. I can only remember being told with exaggerated firmness that it was utterly impossible that my parent could ever be wrong, or make a mistake, and the tone, if not the words, added that I was an extremely naughty little girl to imagine such a thing. What I do well remember is the storm of impotent wrath which filled my heart at the falsity imposed by the voice of authority, the absolute conviction I had of the assertion being untrue, and that out of no want of affection for my father, but from—I do honestly believe—a greater and innate affection for the simple essence of truth. How often has that same storm of wrath against false conventions and pious frauds filled my heart since that day, stronger, yet, alas for the paradox, as impotent!

My sense of logic betrayed me into trouble in quite early days, but I most distinctly remember an incident which did not occur until I was about ten years old. I was being instructed about the birth of Jesus, and about there being "no room in the inn," and the fact that it was so was the text for a very sweeping condemnation of all concerned with the inn, for whom I very rashly took up the cudgels of defence. I could not see why people should be blamed for not giving something which according to the statement they did not possess. If it was a fact, argued my sense of justice, that there was really no room for any more travellers, why blame the authorities? If it had been said they would not make room, I thought the case would have been different. Needless to state the small heretic got small satisfaction and quick suppression.

I cannot remember that in my *small* childhood the names God, spirit, heaven, hell, had any real significance for me, or were anything but names. I do recall earnestly assuring my aunt of the fact that I had no conscience, and I remember the helpless feeling I had when she refused to believe what I was sure was the truth.

Such a lonely little child as I was! I wonder if I might not have grown up "like myself," if it had not been for the ever present fear of ridicule, and the people in the books I read. Ridicule, indeed, was the beast of prey that lay in ambush in all dim recesses of the life of every day, at any moment ready to spring

out, and feed on my vitals. Only the most careful suppression of every original thought, and every spontaneous act, sufficed to keep him at bay. Looking back, these two, ridicule and misunderstanding, seem to have composed the dual-headed monster who ruled my young days. Such language may seem exaggerated; it but faintly represents sufferings which were never suspected, and would not have been believed. I grew up at a time when for grown persons to exhibit their wit by publicly bantering and teasing small children was not held to be unkind or unparental. How often have I seen my timid sister, as nervous as a thoroughbred, led on from rejoinder to repartee, until, unconsciously overstepping the permitted bounds, she was summarily dismissed into disgraceful banishment, and was led away with scarlet face and convulsive sobs, the small victim of a Roman holiday. Somewhere now she is going through the initial years of a new life experience. Wherever that may be, and whatever it may be, may it be in a happier environment, and with a tenderer training than the one that cramped and straitened her life possibilities here.

There was one young fellow, a friend of my father's, who seems in retrospect to have spent the entire time of his visits at our home in teasing us two little girls, and provoking us to ebullitions of passion which always met with condign punishment. Yet he was not a bad-hearted youth, only unused to children, and probably nervous, and taking this means of appearing quite at ease with them. If only *once* our father had been our champion, once been for instead of against us, what a wealth of love and gratitude he might so cheaply have earned. I do not think it ever entered his head to think of us as anything but amusing toys, then, and serviceable household implements afterwards. But I think that even then I dimly felt it a small thing for a man to sharpen his wit against a baby's, and a mean thing to call in parental authority when that wit came off second best.

I wonder if a terror of the unknown face of life is an ordinary experience of childhood? I well remember the effect produced on me by my aunt's expatiating on the goodness of our father towards us, and the gratitude we were in duty bound to return to him. She illustrated her thesis by the relation of an incident drawn from the life of Charlotte Brontë, where that amiable gentleman,

Brontë *père*, finding his offspring's shoes set out in a row before the fire to warm during their absence outdoors, incontinently cast them all on the back of the flames. What would we do, we were asked, if our father were like that, and burnt up our shoes? Experience being at fault, for I doubt if we had ever seen a barefooted person, and imagination not being adequate to picture ourselves going round in that condition, we promptly answered that he would have to get us some more. Whereupon we were told with solemn air and head-shakings, that we little knew! But though we put such a gallant face on the situation, and objected, as I think all healthy normal creatures would object, to being forced into gratitude, yet our secret hearts were full—I know mine was—of the sense of being given over helplessly and irretrievably into the hands of a perfectly irresponsible power, a power that might choose to be good and kind, but also might, for anything we could know to the contrary, choose to inflict the most painful disgraces and deprivations on us, without our having any possible redress or rescue. It is painful, it is, in a sense, humiliating, to be obliged to own that such was the dominant idea of childhood; one knows not whether to attribute it to a defect in one's own nature, or entirely to environment.

Two things, experience impressed on my mind—never to lie to a child, and never to ridicule it; and I hope that these principles, which seem to have been so little recognised in the days of my youth, are the ordinary commonplaces of morality to the parents of to-day.

What has been written so far is drawn from the recollections of a childhood whose note was repression, and concerning a child with very small natural powers of expression, and who was always discouraged from exercising such powers. That which follows is written from observation of a very different nature, the nature of a child highly gifted with the powers of expression, and always encouraged in employing them.

G. was an only child, and had the only child's natural longing for a playmate who should be more easily available than kindergarten companions and visitors to spend the day. When she was about three years of age an invisible companion for awhile cheered her solitude. Out of doors she would be heard convers-

ing with great volubility, and when asked, "Who are you talking to?" she would reply with a finely matter-of-fact air, "Oh, jus to my wikke brudder"; and when a little guest—of the visible order—took occasion to question the existence of this hypothetical relative, the most strained relations immediately ensued. The little brother, however, was short-lived, and seemed to fade away out of his sister's consciousness without any effort of farewell. He perhaps represented a sphere of consciousness of which the last manifestation took place two years later, as the little girl stood beside a busy street, and watched the crowd stream by, a shifting kaleidoscope of faces and forms passing silently along. After a space of complete silence G. looked up to say: "They're not real, are they, mother? Because nothing's real. *They only seem to be.*"

So, in like manner, J. M. I.'s little girl found nothing real but herself, and thought that perhaps she too "only seemed to be."

For a long time G.'s religious instruction was confined to simple hymns and songs learnt in the kindergarten. These led her to put that query which so long has baffled theologians and philosophers: "What is God?" A perplexed public hazarded the statement in reply that "God is our father." For some reason this did not at first please: "I don't want him to be my father," G. said definitely, "I'm going to write him a letter and tell him not to be." Nevertheless the idea took a great hold of her, and led to innumerable questions and remarks. From a very early age she had a fixed idea that not only had she lived before, but that she was very certainly going to live again. A very favourite phrase was, "When God makes me over again," as thus: "I'll be a boy when God makes me over again." When hearing of anyone spoken of as having died, she always made use of the same phrase, "When God makes them over again," and would ask if they "would be just the same, and have the same things." Asking why George Washington's birthday was observed she hazarded the conjecture that it was "because we are keeping it for him till God makes him over again."

She was very small when she assured her mother that "I was once the mother, and you were the little girl; when you

grew big, I grew little." Later she attributed all the phenomena of nature directly to the divine agency, and would say, "Isn't it kind of God to make it fine to-day"? Or, "I thought God would have made it snow." If she saw a sickly or deformed person or animal she would say: "Isn't it mean of God to make him so?"

She defined a spirit as "a cage with little holes all round it".

It must be clearly understood that there was nothing in her environment to suggest speculation of any sort. On the contrary, it was of a most matter-of-fact kind; she heard absolutely no talk about religion or metaphysics; the words God and spirit she heard first at school. "Does God hop out of us when we die?" was the rather startling question propounded on one occasion. And the experience of ages of imperfect beings is surely expressed in the remark, made to serve as an excuse, that "You know we can't always do as God wants us to do." A famous biblical assertion is recalled by her expressed opinion that, "Children oughtn't to be spanked. It's the spirit that makes them naughty, so it's the spirit that should be spanked."

If all conscious sinners could honestly add the same saving clause as little G., nestling into sheltering arms: "Now when God sees us He'll see two naughty little angels—naughty, but loving."

From what dimly metaphysical sense of the impossibility of the existence of inorganic matter, or of the noumena back of forms, could arise the remark that "Everything's got a heart in it. Even a tea-pot's alive till you break it."

And if metaphysics are involved in the last expression, surely psychology is suggested in this plea for forgiveness: "I didn't know it was wrong. At least probably I did in my *heart*, but I didn't in my *mind* and *memory*"—the emphasis being her own.

The expressions quoted are sufficient to indicate the attitude naturally assumed towards the invisible of a mind which appeared otherwise eminently practical and at home with the world. They at least serve to illustrate the assertion of a vigorous and unbiassed writer on religious subjects, Miss Frances Power Cobbe, that nothing is more remarkable than the readiness of the human heart

to love the Divine Father. This little girl, who had never seen a Bible, and whom orthodox church-goers would have instantly dubbed "heathen," had yet attained, quite spontaneously, and without conscious effort, to that which has been well defined as being—not a part of religion, or the aim of religion—but religion itself, namely, the love of God. "To awaken which in a child's heart," to use Miss Cobbe's words, "is the alpha and omega of religious education."

The orthodox will of course exclaim that this is nothing but a doctrine of *laissez faire*, that the counsel is to let a child remain in ignorance, with the inevitable result of its growing good. We would answer rather: Direct a child's thought towards loveliness and gracious things, and it will of itself endeavour to search out the invisible source of good.

Yet in this most difficult of sciences, the science of child-training, each must be a law unto himself, as each child to be trained is a world of himself. Some little help, some support from others' experience, may be obtained, but that little must be individually applied. There is but one certainty in the practice of this science, the certainty that our blunders, negligences and ignorances will be as the sands of the sea for multitude. Yet even these may oft-times work out for more good than our wisdoms.

Only, and above all, let us strive to make the children happy, for an unhappy childhood is a heritage that can never be wholly lived down, at least in the space of one earth existence. All after-life is too short to lay to rest the ghost of insufficiency that stalks restlessly through the chamber of the brain.

And still remains the word, "to him that hath shall be given," and "le vrai bonheur c'est d'être né heureux."

But on the knees of the Gods lie all these things.

K. W.

THE ink of the scholar is more valuable than the blood of the martyr.—THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD.

THE GENESIS OF THE TALMUD

It is perhaps not too much to say that the Talmud has been the chief means whereby the Jews have preserved themselves as a nation ever since the time of the final destruction of their Temple, and the extinction of the last shred of their political independence, until the present day. The Talmud is the chief embodiment of that mysterious power which has kept alive the peculiar spirit of Jewry, and never permitted Israel to forget that it was a people apart.

It is the Talmud which beyond all else has established the norm of life for the Jew; for it is the repository of that multitude of rules of conduct and laws of custom (Halachoth), which the Rabbis, with a bewildering ingenuity (which would frequently be a perverse casuistic were it not so intensely serious), deduced from the Law—that Torah, which they, in every fibre of their being, believed had been given by God Himself, who had chosen their fathers from out the nations and for ever bound them to Himself by a special pact and covenant.

But over and beyond this the Talmud is a vast store-house of the strangest mixture of wise saws and witty sayings, of legend and folk-lore and phantasy, parable and story, homily and allegory, magic and superstition,* to be compared to nothing so much as to some seething bazaar of the Orient, where all sorts and conditions of wisdom and folly swarm together and are blended in inextricable confusion.

The most convenient point of departure for a brief excursion into the jungle of Talmudic beginnings is the period from 70 to 200 A.D., which marks the first definite attempts at arrangement (for codification would give the reader a too precise idea of its confused nature) of those rules of custom which constitute the oldest deposit of the Talmud in both its forms.

* The Haggadic as contrasted with the Halachic element.

The fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. deprived the Jews of even that comparative political independence which they had previously possessed. It was a terrible blow to the hopes of the nation, especially to all those who looked for a material fulfilment of the many promises in the sacred rolls which bore the names of their ancient prophets—that if they kept the Law, and were true to their covenant with Yahweh, all nations should be placed in subjection under their feet. And now not only was the Holy City destroyed and the Elect of the earth prostrate before the hated power of idolatrous Rome, but the Holy Temple itself, the chief means, as they then believed, whereby they were to carry out their covenant, was a heap of ruins !

It was indeed a terribly tragic moment even in the history of a people inured to tragedy in the past and destined to a future replete with tragic terrors. It is true that even so the spirit of the zealots was not yet broken ; they were yet stubbornly to essay the fortune of arms in Trajan's time in the opening years of the first century, and again in the desperate attempt of Bar-Kochba in the closing years of Hadrian's reign (132-135 A.D.). But with the final shattering of their hopes of a material Messianic victory by the crushing defeat of their champion, even the most irreconcilable were forced to abandon the unequal struggle.

One thing alone remained to save out of the general ruin in Palestine—the treasure of the Law. This desolation, they were convinced, had come upon them because they had not rightly kept their covenant with Yahweh. To the keeping of this bond they would now devote all their remaining strength. The “study” of the Law should be the means of their future deliverance. From this determination, into which they threw all the perseverance of their stubborn nature, there resulted a marvellous enthusiasm for collecting and preserving the traditions of their predecessors concerning the Law, and of still further developing an infinity of rules of conduct and laws of custom to meet all the diverse changes and chances of Jewish life.

By the end of the second century what were at that time held to be the more authoritative traditions emerged in a definitely fixed form—the Mishna. This was the nucleus of our

Talmud, the skeleton, so to say, round which the industry of the next three centuries built up the study of the Law into its present shape, by completing the Mishna with the Gemara.

And indeed it seems almost as if it required that something of this kind should have been done if the Jews were to be preserved to play the important part they have played, and doubtless have still to play, in Western history. For had it not been for the eager zeal for this Study displayed by the Palestinian Rabbis of the first centuries of our era, it is very probable that the Jews would have been entirely absorbed in the nations. It was a period when in Babylonia the descendants of the Jews who had contentedly remained behind at the time of the Return (and they in those days constituted the majority of the nation), had almost entirely forgotten the Law and its traditions; from what we can make out of the dim historical indications, they seem to have been almost utterly ignorant of that for which they subsequently became so famous. In Egypt, again, where very large numbers of the Hebrews were permanently settled, Greek culture and Alexandrian mysticism had gradually weakened the old exclusiveness; philosophy and cosmopolitanism had greatly sapped the strength of pure legalism and narrow materialism, and the crude objectivity of ancient legend and myth had long been allegorised into subtler forms more suited to immediate intellectual and spiritual needs. The same factors were doubtless at work elsewhere in the Diaspora or Dispersion of Israel, while even in Palestine itself the influence of the numerous communities and associations who looked to a more universal view of things had been so strengthened by the crushing disaster which had befallen the nation, that the forces of rigid conservatism were being weakened in every direction, and the ideas of an Israel of God to be formed out of the Righteous of the world, irrespective of race, seemed to threaten the very existence of Jewry as a nation apart.

Indeed it seems most highly probable that the strongest factor which helped to intensify Talmudic activity was the rapid spread of general Christianity, on its emergence from an embryonic stage in which it was hidden in the womb of communities of a somewhat similar nature to those of the Essenes. More than

ever was it necessary to put a fence round the Torah, that the Law should be preserved by Jews, as Jews, for Jews, when, by means of the ceaseless propaganda of Christianity of all shades, the Gentiles seemed to be robbing the Jews of their birthright—of their Law and their Prophets and their Holy Writ. The main claims of the Christians on behalf of their Founder, so argued the Rabbis, were based on mistranslation and misinterpretation of the sacred scriptures of their race. More than ever was it necessary to preserve these writings in their original tongue and purity, and to strengthen the tradition of the authoritative interpretation of their fathers. So thought the Rabbis of Palestine, and unweariedly they laboured to make strong their special tradition and develop it.

It is to this period that we owe the formulation of many vague, floating opinions and dim reminiscences into distinct and rigid formularies, and the selection out of many contradictory traditions of a view that should constitute "*the tradition.*" Nay, sometimes the bitterness of controversy brought to birth "traditions" which, perchance, had had no previous existence. Just as the industry and high literary ability of the Sopherim, from the time of Ezra (about 440-400 B.C.*) to the days of the apocalyptic scribe or scribes of *Daniel* (about 164 B.C.), and even later, gradually evolved out of originally very scanty materials a grandiose tradition of pre-exilic greatness, priestly legalism, sonorous prophecy, and splendid hymnody, so did the Rabbis of the first Talmudic period, 70-200 A.D., the Tanäim, put the finishing touches to the tradition evolved by their immediate predecessors,—that all these gradually developed scriptures of the Sopherim were not only written throughout by those archaic worthies whose names they bear and immediately inspired by the Holy Spirit, but that Yahweh himself had given to Moses the five books of the Torah proper written by his own hand. It is on this fundamental presupposition that the whole of the Halachic development of the Talmud is based. These norms of conduct and laws of custom are founded on the Torah, expanded to include all three divisions of the sacred writings, Law, Prophets, and

* The traditional date of Ezra's "promulgation" of the Law is 444, but as late as 397 has been argued for.

Hagiographa, as upon infallible revelation from Deity Himself extending to every word and letter.

In brief, the Palestinian Rabbis would have it that the canon of the Old Covenant revelation ceased with Ezra, whereas modern scientific research has proved that in the highest probability it only began with that famous scribe. For the Rabbis of Palestine,* then, there was no prophet after Malachi; prophecy and direct inspiration had ceased with Ezra; from that time they would admit no addition to the Law, they acknowledged the authority of no subsequent prophet and of no subsequent scripture. It was for them a question only of the correct tradition of interpretation, and logical development of what had been once for all infallibly laid down. They were to vindicate the authority of the schoolmen and legalists against the claims of subsequent prophecy and apocalyptic of all kinds, and to do so they could find authority for their authority solely in the "Oral Law."

They would have it finally that this Oral Law had always existed side by side with the Written Law ever since the days of Moses onwards. In the first chapter of the Mishna tractate *Aboth*, or *Pirke Aboth*, containing the "Sayings of the Fathers," we are given what purports to be an unbroken succession of individuals, from Moses to the destruction of Jerusalem, who are said to have been the depositories of this Oral Law. The succession runs as follows: Moses; Joshua; the Elders; the Prophets; the Men of the Great Assembly (from Ezra's time to about 200 B.C.); the famous "Five Pairs," as they were called, the last of which were Hillel (about 70 B.C. to 10 A.D.) and Shammai; and finally, Gamaliel and his son Simon.

Such is the account given in the Mishna of the heredity of its tradition, and it is not surprising that if scientific research not only questions, but actually reverses, the judgment of the Mishnaic Rabbis with regard to the development of the Written Law, for it practically begins where they would have it cease, that modern scholars should hesitate to accept their account of the Oral Law without question.

Even the most inattentive reader must be struck with the vague and fragmentary nature of the line of descent. Evidently,

* The Rabbis of Alexandria had a far more extended canon.

little was known of the past; even the history of the great literary activity from the fourth to the second century B.C., which had practically given them their Written Torah in the form in which it lay before them, was utterly forgotten. The "Men of the Great Assembly," who are made so much of in the Talmud as the immediate depositories of the Oral Law from the Prophets, are nameless. The Rabbis evidently knew nothing of a historical nature concerning them; nay, of the succeeding period they can only produce the names of teachers to whom tradition ascribed certain sayings, but of whose life and labours we can glean but the scantiest information, while of their literary activity we hear not a word.

Accordingly, the very existence of the "Men of the Great Assembly" has been questioned by modern research, and it has been conjectured with great probability, that the historical germ of the traditional idea is to be traced to the general assembly of the people who were called together to accept that Law which had been rewritten by Ezra after the Return (*Neh.*, viii.-x.). "In course of time, instead of an assembly of people receiving the law, a college of individuals transmitting the law was conceived of, and this notion seems to fill up the gap between the latest prophets and those scribes to whom the memory of subsequent times still extended."*

Whatever else is obscure it is clear that the Palestinian Rabbis of the Tanäite period, or first Talmudic epoch, were busily engaged in establishing a rigid "orthodoxy" for Judaism, and making it strong against manifold "heresies."† The history of the past fine literary activity of the nation which had produced not only the great monuments of scripture we still possess in the Old Testament documents, but much else, was utterly forgotten. And if documents, some of which we now know were written as late as the Maccabæan period, could be ascribed with every confidence to a David or a Daniel, we are justified in assuming that

* Schürer (E.), *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Eng. trans. London; 1893), Div. ii., vol. 1., p. 355.

† See Weinstein (N. J.), *Zur Genesis der Agada* (Göttingen; 1901), "Die Minim," pp. 91-156, and "Kampf des Patriarchats gegen das Eindringen polytheistischer Ideen in die Gelehrten-Kreise des palästinischen Judenthums," pp. 157-252.

the authority given for the Oral Tradition was, for the most part, of a similarly unhistoric nature. No doubt the heredity of the methods employed by the Tanäim could be traced with very great probability as far back as the earliest of the "Five Pairs," somewhere approaching the beginning of the second century B.C.; but the striking fact that the greatest industry could only discover the names of two teachers for each generation, seems to indicate either that no others were known, or that many names and tendencies had had to be eliminated in seeking the paternity of that special tendency which the Tanäim erected into the test of orthodox Jewry. As to the Oral Law being contemporaneous with Moses, we must place this fond belief in the same category with the still more startling claim of later Kabbalism, that *its* Tradition was first delivered by God Himself to Adam in Paradise.

Again, the fact that the appeal for authority was to an oral and not to a written source, is at first sight strange when we remember that there were thousands of books in existence, some of them claiming the authority even of an Enoch or an Adam. Thus the writer of IV. *Esdras*, which in every probability was composed under Domitian (85-96 A.D.), tells us (xiv. 18 ff.), "that Ezra prays to God to grant him his Holy Spirit that he may again write out the books . . . which had been burnt (with the temple, one understands). God bids him take to himself five companions, and in forty days and nights he dictates to them ninety-four books, of which seventy are esoteric writings, and the remaining twenty-four are the canon of the Old Testament."* It is moreover to be noticed that the numbers differ greatly in various forms of the text; thus we have eighty-four instead of ninety-four, but also 204, 904, and 974. But whatever may have been the number in the original text, this much we learn, that there existed at the end of the first century A.D., a very different view from that so strongly insisted on by the builders of the Talmud—namely that there was a very extensive written tradition not only contemporaneous with the Torah, but of equal inspiration with it, nay, of so precious a nature that it was kept apart and guarded from public circulation.

* K. Budde's art., "The Canon," § 17, in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

The adherents of this view, who we know from the indications of the many mystic communications of the time and also of preceding centuries, were very numerous, seem, it is true, to have been as ignorant of the actual history of the development of the twenty-four books of the Torah as were the Tanäim, and this is strange, seeing that it is in the greatest probability to their predecessors that we must assign the more spiritual elements in the Torah itself. It was these esotericists and their communities who were in intimate contact with that ever-widening and spiritualising tendency which we can trace in Essenism, Therapeutism, Philonism, Hermeticism, and Gnosticism; and it is their writings which as strongly influenced the development of Christianity as did the twenty-four books of the Torah.

Doubtless all of these schools and associations had oral as well as written traditions, but their main interest was vision and apocalyptic; they devoted themselves to the culture of prophecy and the practice of contemplation, and their whole energy was centred on the unfolding of those mysteries of the inner life which gave them a certainty of heavenly things. Whereas the chief concern of the Tanäim was the separation of the national life from contact with all "foreign" religious influences by the ever more and more stringent insistence upon that peculiar legalism which the others had found, or were finding, more and more irksome, or had entirely cast off for a more liberal spiritual interpretation, suited to the needs of those who were gathered round the cradle of the infant Proteus that was destined to develop eventually into a new world-faith.

It seems somewhat a sign of weakness that in the midst of so much that was written conservatism had to rely entirely on an oral tradition for its authority. Be that, however, as it may, the lack of written authority for establishing the Mishnaic legalism as the orthodoxy of Israel seems gradually to have evolved a virtue out of necessity, and we find it repeatedly laid down in the Talmud that the tradition must on no account be written down but solely committed to memory. Indeed later times would have it that not only was the Mishna never written down even when it had reached its final form about 200 A.D., but that the whole voluminous contents of the Talmud Completion, or Gemara, were never committed

to writing until the time of the Saboräer* (500-650 A.D.), the schoolmen who followed the Amoräer, or those who wove the Gemara on to the Mishna.

But in spite of what we know of the prodigious memorising faculty of orientals,† and in spite of the fascinating stories told of the marvellous feats of memory of the Talmudim, while we might be tempted to accept the oral tradition of the far less voluminous and comparatively less complex Mishna text, the enormous mass and utterly confused and chaotic nature of the contents of the Gemara make it very difficult to believe that it was handed on solely by verbal repetition. Indeed, it seems far more probable that the Mishna was fully committed to writing at the time of its final redaction about 200-207 A.D.; for when we hear of its completion at this date, it is difficult to understand how an authoritative form of codification of such heterogenous material could have been arrived at by the exercise of the memory alone; and if this be true of the Mishna, much more must it hold good for the far more voluminous matter of the Gemara.

With regard to the Halachic contents of the Mishna, it may, of course, have been that the tradition of the precedents on which the lawyers based their decisions had been kept private as the hereditary possession of a special profession; but surely some brief written notes had existed, perhaps also private collections of notes been made, even prior not only to the time of an Akiba in the beginning of the second century, but even of a Gamaliel in the days of Paul.

Are we to believe that a Joshua ben Perachia and a Nithai, a Judah ben Tabbai and a Simon ben Shetach, a Shemaiah and an Abtalion, a Hillel and a Shammai, a Gamaliel and an Akiba, left nothing in writing?‡ They surely must have done so. And if this holds good with regard to the tradition of the most authoritative Halachoth, much more is it likely to have been the case with that huge mass of Haggadic legend and homily, and flotsam and jetsam of like nature, with which the Talmud is filled. In-

* See Strack (H. L.), *Einleitung in den Thalmud* (Leipzig; 1900, 3rd ed.), p. 55.

† Even Western scholars have declared that the oral tradition of a Vaidic text, for instance, is to be preferred to a written copy.

‡ See Block (J. S.), *Einblicke in die Geschichte der Entstehung der Talmudischen Literatur* (Wien; 1884), pp. 2 ff.

deed, a scientific review of all the Talmud passages germane to the question, reveals a most confused state of mind on the subject, even among the many makers of that stupendous patchwork themselves. While on the one hand we find it most stringently forbidden to write down Halachoth, we come across isolated references to older written Halachoth; and though the writing of Haggadoth as well is apparently included in the general prohibition, we meet with very precise references to Haggada books and even collections of such books.*

In fact, while the North-French Rabbis of the Middle Ages held that the Talmud was never committed to writing till after its final completion at the end of the fifth century A.D., the Spanish Rabbis maintained that the Mishna was written down by Rabbi Jehuda (136-217 A.D.), the Palestinian Gemara by Rabbi Jochanan (199-279),† and the Babylonian Gemara by Rab Aschi (375-427) and Rab Abina (head of the Sura School 473-499). This difference of opinion was probably owing to the fact that the French Rabbis had to depend almost entirely on their memories, owing to the burning of their MSS. by the Inquisition, while the Spanish Rabbis of an earlier date were still in enjoyment of their literary liberty.

But whatever may have been the precise mode of the genesis, development and transmission of the text until it reached its full growth in the form which now lies before us, and however difficult it may be to sift out reliable historical data from the dim and confused indication of its contradictory assertions, the tractates of the Talmud remain like the mounds of some great buried city of the past to challenge the industry and ingenuity of the courageous explorer to ever fresh exertions, in the hope of laying bare traces from which the outlines of some of the ancient buildings may be reconstructed.

And to none can the Talmud be of greater interest than to the student of Christian origins. We will not go so far as to say with Reuchlin that the Talmud (or even the Mishna) is a book "written by Christ's nearest relations," but it is ungainsayable,

* See Block's *Einblicke*, pp. viii., ix.; and Strack's *Einleitung*, §2, "Das 'Verbot des Schreibens,'" pp. 49-55.

† And this in face of the fact that many of the authorities cited in the Palestinian Gemara lived after R. Jochanan, some even a century later.

as has so often been pointed out before, that every purely ethical precept in the Gospels can be paralleled in the Talmud by sayings ascribed to the ancient Rabbis of Israel.

In the Talmud we have a strong stream of tradition which generation by generation, we might almost say year by year, runs parallel with the primitive streamlet which so rapidly widens out into the river, and finally into the flood of Christianity. Here, if anywhere, should we expect to find reliable information as to how what subsequently became the great religion of the West arose, who was its founder, what the matter and method of the teaching, and who were the earliest followers of the teacher.

But before we discuss the passages which are said to refer to Jesus, we must give some rough idea of the history of the written Talmud, and show how these passages were gradually singled out to form the ground of bitterest controversy and persecution.

G. R. S. MEAD.

TO MY HEART IN ETERNITY

When all the worlds have withered, when you gain
 The perfect blossom of Nirvānic calm,
 When you have left the paths of joy and pain,
 Will you not pause, bearing the crown and palm
 Of victory, to think upon the past
 And of the endless tracts of shine and rain
 Whereon you journeyed helpless, now how fast
 To seek some shadowy joy, now bent with grief;
 And how you strayed far from the hidden end
 In the great folly of obscure belief;
 And of the vanity which thought to bend
 The ways of Beauty to the senses' will;
 And how weak things were strong to wound and rend?
 And seeing this, your seraph life will thrill
 With infinite pity, seeing how you called
 On your dim shadowed Self in broken song,
 By failure wrought, when you were deep enthralled
 Behind the iron bars of right and wrong.
 O heart, what though thy hour be overlong?
 The heart of these vain joys and idle tears
 Greets thee, strong brother of the coming years.

CÆCIL FRENCH.

THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

(CONTINUED FROM p. 531)

THE SEVEN STREAMS

THE question is constantly asked : Why this continual play upon the number seven ? We speak of it as the “root-number of our system,” and there is one obvious reason why this number should play an active part in the grouping of things, since we are concerned with the triplicities previously mentioned. A triad naturally produces a septenate by its own internal relations, since its three factors can group themselves in seven ways and no more. We have spoken of matter, outside the limits of a universe, as having the three qualities of matter—inertia, motion and rhythm—in a state of equilibrium. When the Life of the Logos causes motion, we have at once the possibility of seven groups, for in any given atom, or group of atoms, one or other of these qualities may be more strongly energised than the others, and thus a predominant quality will be shown forth. We may thus have three groups, in one of which inertia will predominate, in another motion, in a third rhythm. Each of these, again, subdivides, according to the predominance in it of one or other of the remaining two qualities : thus in one of the two inertia groups, motion may predominate over rhythm, and in the other rhythm over motion, and so with the other two groups of motion and rhythm. Hence arise the well-known types, classified according to the predominant quality, usually designated by their Sanskrit terms, *sâttvic*, *râjasic* and *tâmasic*, and we have *sâttvic*, *râjasic* and *tâmasic* foods, animals, men, etc. And we obtain seven groups in all, six subdivisions of the three and a seventh in which the three qualities are equally active. [The varieties of type are simply intended to mark in each triad the relative energies of the qualities.]

we have in the First Elemental Kingdom materials ready to clothe abstract thoughts; in the Second Elemental Kingdom materials ready to clothe concrete thoughts; in the Third Elemental Kingdom materials ready to clothe desires. But in addition to imparting qualities to aggregations of matter, the Second Logos gives forth, during this stage of His descent, evolved beings, at various stages of development, who form the normal and typical inhabitants of these three kingdoms. These beings have been brought over by the Logos from a preceding evolution, and are sent forth from the treasure-house of His life, to inhabit the plane for which their development fits them, and to co-operate with Him, and later with man, in the working out of His scheme of evolution. They have received various names in the various religions, but all religions recognise the fact of their existence and of their work. The Sanskrit name Devas—the Shining Ones—is the most general, and aptly describes the most marked characteristic of their appearance, a brilliant luminous radiance.* The Hebrew, Christian and Muhammadan religions call them Archangels and Angels. The Theosophist—to avoid sectarian connotations—names them, after their habitat, Elementals; and this title has the further advantage that it reminds the student of their connection with the five “Elements” of the ancient world, Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. For there are similar beings of a higher type on the âtmic and buddhic planes, as well as the Fire and Water Elementals of the mental and desire planes, and the ethereal Elementals of the physical. These beings have bodies formed out of the elemental essence of the kingdom to which they belong, flashing many-hued bodies, changing form at the will of the indwelling entity. They form a vast host, ever actively at work, labouring at the elemental essence to improve its quality, taking it to form their own bodies, throwing it off and taking other portions of it, to render it more responsive, as well as constantly busied in the shaping of forms, in aiding human Egos on the way to reincarnation in building their new bodies, bringing materials of the needed kind and helping in its arrangements. The less advanced the Ego the greater the directive work of the

* The translation of this descriptive term as “Gods” has led to much misapprehension of Eastern thought. The “thirty-three crores of Gods” are not Gods in the western sense of the term, but are merely Devas.

Devas ; with animals they do almost all the work, and practically all with vegetables and minerals. They are the active agents in the work of the Logos, carrying out all the details of His world-plan, and aiding the countless evolving lives to find the materials they need for their clothing. All antiquity recognised the indispensable work they do in the worlds, and China, Egypt, India, Persia, Greece, Rome, tell the same story. The belief in the higher of them is not only found in all religions, but memories of those of the desire and of the ethereal physical plane linger on in folklore, in stories of "Nature-spirits," "Fairies," "Gnomes," and under many other names, memories of days when men were less deeply enwrapped in material interests, and more sensitive to the influences that played upon them from the subtler worlds. This concentration on material interests, necessary for evolution, has shut out the working of the Elementals from human waking consciousness ; but this does not, of course, stop their working, though often rendering it less effective on the physical plane.

At the stage we are considering, however, all this work, except that of the improvement of the elemental essence, lay in the far future, but the Shining Ones laboured diligently at that improvement.

There was thus a vast work of preparation accomplished before anything in the way of physical forms, such as we should recognise, could appear ; a vast labour at the form side of things before Consciousness, save that of the Logos and His Shining Ones, could do anything at all. That which is to be human Consciousness is a seed, sown on the higher planes, unconscious of all without it. Under the impelling warmth of the Logic life, it sends out a tiny rootlet downwards, which pushes its way into the lower planes, blindly, unconsciously, and this rootlet must form our next object of study.

THE PERMANENT ATOM

Let us now return to the spiritual Triad, the tri-atomic Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas, the Jivâtmâ, the seed of Consciousness, within which the warmth of the stream of Logic life, which surrounds it, is causing faint thrillings of responsive life. These are

internal thrillings, preparatory to external activities. After long preparation, a tiny thread, like a minute rootlet, as said above, appears, proceeding from the tri-atomic molecule of Consciousness, a golden-coloured thread of life sheathed in buddhic matter; countless such threads appear, waving vaguely at first in the seven great streams of life, and then becoming anchored—if the expression may be permitted—by attachment to a single molecule or unit, on the fourth mental sub-plane. Round this attached unit, in each case, gather temporary aggregations of elemental essence of the Second Kingdom, scattering and regathering, over and over again, ever with the attached unit as centre. This stable centre, serving for an endless succession of changing complex forms, is gradually awakened by the vibrations of these forms into faint responses, these again thrilling feebly upwards to the seed of Consciousness, and producing therein vaguest internal movements. It cannot be said that each centre has always round it a form of its own; for one aggregation of elemental essence may have several, or very many, of these centres within it, or, again, may have only one, or none. Thus, with inconceivable slowness, these attached units become possessors of certain qualities, that is, acquire the power of vibrating in certain ways, which are connected with thinking and will hereafter make thoughts possible. The Shining Ones of the Second Elemental Kingdom work upon them, also, directing upon them the vibrations to which they gradually begin to respond, and surrounding them with the elemental essence thrown off from their own bodies. Moreover, each of the seven typical groups is separated from the others by a delicate wall of monadic essence (atomic matter ensouled by the life of the Second Logos, see p. 539), the wall of the future “Group-Soul.”

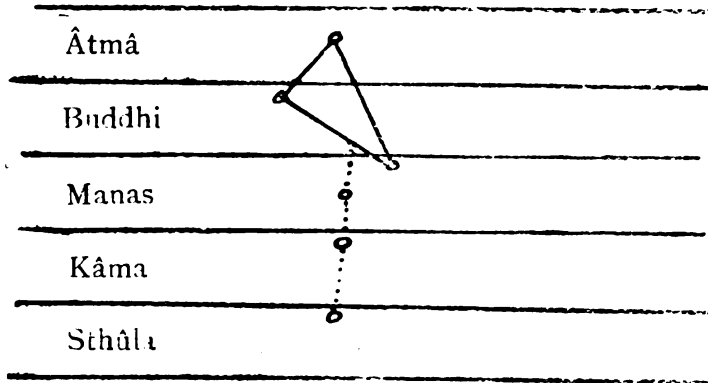
This whole process is repeated, when the Third Elemental Kingdom has been formed. The tiny thread of buddhic ensheathed life, with its attached mental unit, now pushes outwards to the desire-plane, and attaches itself to a single astral atom, adding this to itself, as its stable centre on the desire-plane. Round this now gather temporary aggregations of elemental essence of the Third Kingdom, scattering and regathering as before. Similar results follow, as the countless succession of

forms ensheathes this stable centre, awakening it to similarly faint responses, which in their turn thrill feebly upwards to the seed of Consciousness, producing therein, once more, vaguest internal movements. Thus, again, these attached atoms become slowly possessed of certain qualities, that is, acquire the power of vibrating in certain ways, which are connected with sensation, and will hereafter make sensations possible. Here also the Shining Ones of the Third Elemental Kingdom co-operate in the work, using their more highly developed powers of vibration to produce sympathetically in these undeveloped atoms the power of response, and, as before, giving them of their own substance. The separating wall of each of the seven groups acquires a second layer, formed of the monadic essence of the desire-plane, thus approaching a stage nearer to the wall of the future "Group-Soul."

Once more is the process repeated, when the great wave has travelled onwards into the physical plane. The tiny thread of buddhic-ensheathed life, with its attached mental and desire units, pushes outwards once more, and annexes a physical atom, adding this to itself as its stable centre on the physical plane. Round this gather ethereal molecules, but the heavier physical matter is more coherent than the subtler matter of the higher planes, and a much longer term of life may be observed. Then—as are formed the ethereal types of the proto-metals, and later proto-metals, metals, non-metallic elements, and minerals—the Shining Ones of the Ethereal Physical Kingdom submerge these attached atoms in their sheaths of ether into the one of the seven ethereal types to which they respectively belong, and they begin their long physical evolution. But before we can follow this further we must consider Group-Souls, which on the atomic sub-plane receive their third enveloping layer. For the present we need only realise the existence, the nature and the function of these permanent atoms, the tri-units, or triads, which are as a reflexion on the lower planes of the spiritual Triads on the higher, and each of which is attached to a spiritual Triad, its Jívâtma. Each triad consists of a physical atom, an astral atom, and a mental unit, permanently attached by a thread of buddhic matter to a spiritual Triad. That thread has sometimes been called

the Sûtrâtmâ, the Thread-Self, because the permanent particles are threaded on it as "beads on a string."*

We may again resort to a diagram, showing the relation.



The function of these lower triads—the sole connection for long ages between the Jivâtmâ and the lower planes—is to preserve within themselves, as vibratory powers, the results of the experiences through which they have passed. If we glance forward, we shall find that they serve, later, as the connecting link between the re-incarnating Ego and the lower planes, and act as the nuclei of his lower bodies when he begins a new incarnation. The results of all assimilated physical experiences remain stored in the permanent physical atom, as powers of vibrating in a particular way; the result of all assimilated astral experiences are similarly stored up in the permanent astral atom, and of mental in the mental unit. The physical, astral, and mental bodies perish at and after death, but this triadic unit remains, ever stored up within the causal body. And when the time for re-incarnation comes, the mental unit acts as the attracting centre for the new mental body, drawing to itself the suitable material, brought by the Shining Ones of the Second Elemental Kingdom within its reach, and shaped by them in the earlier stages of evolution, and by the Ego in the later, until an appropriate mental body is thus obtained. The astral atom plays a similar

* This term is used to denote various things, but always in the same sense, as the thread connecting separate particles. It is applied to the re-incarnating Ego, as the thread on which many separate lives are strung; to the Second Logos, as the Thread on which the beings in His universe are strung; and so on. It denotes a function, rather than a special entity or class of entities.

part in the forming of the astral body, and the physical atom in the forming of the physical. As our readers well know, the Ego has little to do immediately with the building of the physical body; he supplies the permanent atom he has guarded, and it is, in fact, the presence of this atom which enables the ethereal builder, the Nature-spirit, to choose the material suitable for his work, as it must be consonant with the permanent atom.

That such complicated results, capable of impressing their peculiarities on surrounding matter, can exist in such minute space, may indeed appear inconceivable—yet so it is. And it is worthy notice that ordinary science countenances a similar idea, since the biophors in the germinal cell of Weismann are supposed to thus carry on to the offspring the characteristics of his line of progenitors. While the one brings to the body its physical peculiarities from its ancestors, the other supplies those which have been acquired by the evolving man during his own evolution. H. P. Blavatsky has put this very clearly :

The German embryologist-philosopher—stepping over the heads of the Greek Hippocrates and Aristotle, right back into the teachings of the old Aryans—shows one infinitesimal cell, out of millions of others at work in the formation of an organism, alone and unaided, determining, by means of constant segmentation and multiplication, the correct image of the future man, or animal, in its physical, mental, and psychic characteristics. . . . Complete the physical plasm, mentioned above, the “germinal cell” of man with all its material potentialities, with the “spiritual plasm,” so to say, or the fluid that contains the five lower principles of the six-principled Dhyāni—and you have the secret, if you are spiritual enough to understand it.*

The question has sometimes been asked: how can these permanent atoms remain within the causal body, without losing their physical, astral and mental natures, since the causal body exists on a higher plane, where the physical, as physical, cannot be? Such a querent is forgetting, for a moment, that all the planes are interpenetrating, and that it is no more difficult for the causal body to encircle the triad of the lower planes, than for it to encircle the hundreds of millions of atoms that form the mental, astral and physical bodies belonging to it during a period of earth-life. The triad forms a minute particle within the causal body; each part of it belongs to its own plane, but as the planes have meet-

* *Secret Doctrine*, i. 243, 244.

ing points everywhere no difficulty arises in the necessary juxtaposition. We are all on all planes at all times.

GROUP-SOULS

Speaking generally, a Group-soul is a collection of permanent triads, in a triple envelope of monadic essence. This description is true of all Group-souls, but gives no idea of the extreme complexity of the subject of Group-souls. For they divide and subdivide constantly, the contents of each division and sub-division decreasing in number, as evolution goes on, until at last a "Group-soul" encloses but a single triad, to which it may continue for many births to discharge the protective and nutrient functions of a Group-soul, while no longer technically describable as one, the "Group" having separated off into its constituent parts.

In the life of the etheric region of the physical plane, the Group-souls form a definite and remarkable feature. At the commencement of the shaping of the etheric types, seven Group-souls are observable, but the division goes on rapidly with the multiplication of distinct sub-types, as the immediate fore-runners of the chemical elements appear, and subsequently the elements and the minerals formed from them. The laws of space, for instance, may lead to the division of a Group-soul, as well as the specialisation of its contents—the permanent triads. Thus a vein of gold in Australia may lead to the inmineralisation of many such triads within a single envelope, while the laying down of another vein in a distant place, say the Rocky Mountains, may lead to the division of this envelope, and the transfer of part of its contents to America in their own envelope. The Group-soul and its contents divide by fission, like an ordinary cell—one becomes two, two four, and so on. All the triads have to pass through the mineral kingdom, the place in which matter reaches its grossest form, and the place where the great Wave reaches the limit of its descent, and turns to begin its upward climbing. Here it is that physical consciousness must awaken; life must now turn definitely outwards, and recognise contacts with other lives in an external world.

Now the evolution of each being in these early stages depends chiefly on the cherishing life of the Logos, and partly on

the co-operating guidance of the Shining Ones, and partly on its own blind pressure against the limits of its enclosing form. I have compared the evolution through the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms to an ante-natal period, and the resemblance is exact. As the child is nourished by the life-streams of the mother, so does the protective envelope of the Group-soul nourish the lives within it, receiving and distributing the experiences gathered in. The circulating life is the life of the parent; the young plants, the young animals, the young human beings, are not ready for independent life as yet, but must draw nourishment from the parent. And so these germinating lives in the mineral kingdom are nourished by the Group-souls, by the envelopes of monadic essence, thrilling with Logic life.

For the sake of a clear conception, we may glance forward over the changes through which the group-soul passes, as its contents evolve. During the mineral evolution, the habitat of the Group-soul may be said to be that of its densest envelope, the physical; its most active working is on the physical plane. As its contents pass onwards into the vegetable kingdom, and ascend through it, the physical envelope slowly disappears—as though absorbed by the contents for the strengthening of their own etheric bodies—and its activity is transferred to the astral plane, to the nourishing of the astral bodies of the contained triads. As these develop yet further and pass into the animal kingdom, the astral envelope is similarly absorbed, and the activity of the Group-soul is transferred to the mental plane, and it nourishes the inchoate mental bodies and shapes them gradually into less vagueness of outline. When the Group-soul contains but a single triad, and has nourished this into readiness for the reception of the third outpouring, what is left of it becomes a constituent part of the causal body, formed by the downpouring from above meeting the upward-drawn column from below—to use the graphic water-spout simile. Then is the re-incarnating Ego born into manifestation; the guarded ante-natal life is over.

ANNIE BESANT.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

THE SEARCH FOR THE SILVER SHIELD*

IN Book IX., we find Arthur in the Polar regions, brought thither in a Norwegian barque led by the Dove. It is here that his second labour begins—the search for the Shield hidden in the caves of Lok. In that region all is desolate; cold, loneliness, darkness prevail. It is a tale of Life warring against the Ice Element, and we read that Nature had stricken down all in that waste world except the soul of Arthur. That sublime soul in its faith saw beyond the present, and was satisfied.

Believe thou hast a mission to fulfil
 And human valour grows a God-head's will . . .
 Calm to that fate, above the moment given,
 Shall thy strong soul divinely dreaming go,
 Unconscious as an eagle, entering heaven,
 Where its still shadow skims the rocks below;
 High beyond this, its actual world is wrought,
 And its true life is in its sphere of thought.

Intent on his mission the King leaves his companions and the shelter they had built, and goes forth musing—but not alone—for the Dove is still with him in this desolate place. It replies to his caress and is ever near his heart; it has shared his sorrows, it responds to his hopes, it follows “each quick movement of his soul.” It was his Angel-guide.

In Book X., we find that the King has met his good knight Gawaine, who has been sent before to aid him, and is living with a tribe of dwarfs. It is amongst these that he hears the legend of a fierce Dwarf, said to be dwelling in a certain cave and guarding a Shield of Light. The hint is enough for Arthur. Then it is that he again goes forth alone, and comes to a rock standing out of the ice-bound sea. It was a chaos of chasm and precipice, and near it was a charred crater made in ages past, and within

* See July issue of the THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

this a cavern. In the space within that cave he sees a Shadow ever quivering. It is a strange shadow ; the savage bears around do not sense it, as they would were it man. They are gambolling in the shadow of the unseen, but are arrested in their sport as they hear the King approach, and they watch for him as for a prey.

He comes—the Conqueror in the Halls of Time,
Known by his herald in the starry Dove,
By his imperial tread, and front sublime
With power as tranquil as the lids of Jove—
All shapes of death the realms around afford ;
From Fiends God guard him !—from all else his sword !

Thus, led by the Dove and having the Dwarf's clue, does the lonely King find himself in that awful solitude. Yet the friends he has left and the Norwegian sailors are following him afar off. He however feels in the "desert of the desolate" and is still haunted by the strange quivering Shadow. Sometimes it is in the beach cavern, sometimes in the snow. The place is full of savage life, and the hungry bears come towards the King, but are blinded, and slink away in terror as he bares the diamond sword, which gives out a flaming light.

At last the Shadow takes shape. It is an awful form, half giant and half dwarf—manlike, but not human, a terrible Power.

As the King looked on it he feared, and the Thing addressed him, asking him why he came to these gloomy realms. "Hath thy world," it said, "no fairer path to Death?" Then the pale King tells his errand—how he comes to seek the Silver Shield which guards the free. The Demon mocked him and said that he could not expect singly to face the "Hosts of Hell"; that if he persisted he must bring on his comrades. But the firm King falters not, and the Fiend then sends away the beasts who are thirsting for his blood, saying to them :

Your prey escapes the snare
Here not the mortal, but the soul defies.

And entering the cavern he cried, "Follow," and goblins echoed "Follow."

The King paused until he saw the Dove wing its way on ; then he made the sign of the cross, and went into the darkness,

the glitter from his sword sending a ray of light down the cavern. He was in the bed of an old volcano, amidst poisonous gases, smouldering fires and glowing lava, while in the rock he saw the skeletons of vanished monsters, foul reptiles, and dragon-like things. The Fiend watched the King; had he faltered he would have been lost, but he kept his eyes steadily on the Dove, and the Fiend was foiled. On and on they went among a race who were forging evil, murders, destruction of all kinds. They were forms who had never seen the sky, and as they approached the King, they fell back before his blazing sword. At last a place was reached where was a mighty circle belting the mine; these were the corpses of giant warriors—giants whose guilt had perhaps provoked the Deluge—all were kneeling vigourless, and their eyes were fixed on a couch screened by curtains, on which slept a kingly Fiend. Around the couch sat the Valkyrs, weaving the woe of war; each web when finished was thrown into a pit of gore, yet, ever rising, it wandered upward—the seed of future “heaven-fruit” from the “hell-born” deeds.

For out of every evil born of time
God shapes a good for his eternity.

The Dwarf glared upon the silent King, and pointing to the curtains, said that even the Valkyrs dared not draw them aside, yet it was there that he must seek the Shield. It was well that he should know what would happen when his hand woke the Fiend—“Incarnate War.” It was that all the kneeling corpses of warriors who had lived in distant ages would leap to life; that the skeletons of monsters from giant days would be re-clothed and thirst for blood, and that the rocks would close all paths for flight save one.

Ho, dost thou shudder, pale one? Back and live.
Thrice strove the King for speech, and thrice in vain,
For he was man, and, till our souls survive
The instincts born of flesh, shall Horror reign
In that Unknown beyond the realms of Sense,
Where the soul's darkness seems the man's defence.

Yet his Faith saved him.

Mute on his knees, amidst the kneeling dead
He sank; the dead the dreaming Fiend revered,

And he, the living, God! Then terror fled,
 And all the King illumined the front he reared.
 Firm to the couch on which the Fiend reposed
 He strode—the curtains, murmuring round him closed.

While all this had been going on, the Norwegians and the dwarfs, led by Gawaine, had followed Arthur's wanderings by his footprints in the snow, and at last they came to the crater cave. There were great noises as from a terrible tumult within, and smoke-clouds burst from every cleft. The men were all overcome with the pestilential blast and lay senseless. On coming to life again they found themselves in silence and light, and looking up they beheld in the calm air the Dove. When they saw that its wing was poised over the prostrate form of the King they rejoiced, but on reaching him he appeared death-like. His armour was crushed, his bright sword dim with gore, and on his face was seen a solemn change. It was as though he had gazed with awe on some terrible sight; but on his arm was clasped the wondrous prize—the Silver Shield.

Led by the Dove they carried him to a green inlet amid the snows, where after remaining many days in trance state he revived, the bird ever resting on his breast. Voice and strength came back slowly, but never did he speak of the strife that won the Shield.

That secret was never revealed to mortal ear; it was a mystery that ever flowed through his thought and yet "remained unuttered and unutterable." The memory of the struggle lived within his life for ever; it was with him in solitude, in crowds, in strife, in joy. He was not sad, but he was changed; his strength was calm, his smile was ever grave; had he not "learned to look upon the stars"?

Such Freedom is, O Slave that would be free!

E. WILKINSON.

SEEK the Place of Peace and dwell therein, and let the storms rage outside as they will. For the SELF is still and waveless, and that SELF art thou.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SIMPLICITY

THERE is only one test of the beautiful, the true and the virtuous; it is harmony. Plato in his doctrine of Ideas summed these up in the one word "Good." We may look upon the good as that which is harmonious. In the Platonic philosophy the harmony of intelligence and goodness is regarded as the highest attainment of human integrity. The harmony of the intellect is expressed in the perception of truth, which follows upon a true perception of things in their essence, that is, their unity. Goodness may be defined as the right adaptation of one's feelings to all the circumstances of daily life. Thus we have the attainment of Truth by right thought and the attainment of Goodness by right feeling. Right thought is expressed in right speech, and right feeling in right action. The harmonising of right speech and action is expressed in right living. This is what we are concerned with.

There is in the nature of things a law of compensation which cannot be better expressed than in the familiar words: "Who-soever humbleth himself shall be exalted," and "whosoever giveth his life the same shall save it." It is a complete and a definite statement and there is no paraphrase permitted. It is directly counter to the feeling and the policy of modern times. This is an age of so-called progress, of civilisation, of ever-growing complexity in daily life, of consequent strife and stress. To be up-to-date, and if possible one day ahead, is the purport of every social function, every commercial enterprise, every political measure of the present times. The pioneers of modern civilisation appear to have concentrated all their powers upon making the pace, regardless of how long it can be kept up or whither it is taking us. Century after century has seen the professional "pacer" making the giddy round of the vicious circle, the world red-hot upon his tracks. Only the philosopher, calm and self-

possessed, attentive but unmoved, sits in his place of peace by the milestone where, in his estimate of men and things, the contest will be finished. That stone is passed a thousand times in every thousand rounds. It is marked by a single word: SIMPLICITY.

Buddha, Plato, Democritus, Jesus, and all the great Teachers and moulders of the highest thought, have refined all the beauty and virtue and goodness of life to this one standard of simplicity, whereby life itself is rendered of least value when most worth living according to modern notions. Possibly no thinker has better expressed himself upon the superlative virtue of simplicity than has Laotze of Tchu, who was born in the year B.C. 604, and who in his eighty-fourth year so greatly impressed Confucius with his clearness of thought and power of expression.

To leave the beaten track and take our seat at the feet of the old philosopher for a few minutes may prove a source of refreshment to many who are from one cause or another tired and discouraged with the struggle for existence. For the social derelict, for the needy and oppressed, the moral transgressor and the bankrupt of soul, in equal measure with the great and mighty of this world, the old philosopher has a word of welcome. The virtuous and the thoughtful already know the Master.

"The Path which is the cause of contention is not the true path."

There is the whole subject of discussion, the cause of the ancient feud twixt man and man, in just so many words as go to make a line. The philosopher takes us by the ears from the first, and arrests all further hostilities by informing us that the bone of our contention is devoid of meat, that, in fact, it is not worth discussing. In thus setting the subject of our enquiry outside the pale of discussion, the philosopher must not be mistaken for a gymnast. Beyond the Brahmâ of the Hindu theogony the Vedântins have placed Parabrahm; above the Elohim of the Hebrews the Kabalists have set Ain Suph, the unfathomable depth of hidden mystery, upon the clear face of which as upon a veil, a man may write whatever name he deems most suitable; or, standing on the brink of the great ocean of Truth, robed in the thought of his own divine kinship, the pure in heart may look into the great depths and see himself reflected!

“There is only One Cause, Heaven; and only One Effect, Nature.”

The spiritual, noumenal or causal world he calls “Heaven.” The natural, phenomenal or physical world he calls “Earth.” This is an example of his great simplicity. What is the use of all this bandying of words, these fine distinctions of principles, causes, effects and ultimates, this cleaving of the substance of things into states of matter, when after all, as our philosopher tells us: “the Non-existent and the Existent are identical in everything but name.” The names are only so many labels of our own affixing. Every man who comes into touch with the Obvious puts a new label on it. That is why the Sage calls the One Effect (Nature) “the open door of bewilderment.” When we have learned to see the effect in the cause, not viewing them separately, “to see oneself reflected in all things, all things in Self,” as the *Voice of the Silence* dictates, all barriers to thought will be broken down and all discussion of this way and that will cease. Our feet are on the Path just where we find them.

“The Sage is occupied only with that which is without prejudice.”

Having affirmed the essential identity of apparently opposite things, the disputants are disarmed, the victory is won without a blow being struck upon either side, and the philosopher smiles us into friendliness. His attitude is at once easy and natural. What use is there in further talk of my way and your way, of this view and that? The right and the wrong way are things which concern the minds only of those who are groping in the dark. To the Sage sitting in the full light of Heaven, the difference between No and Yes is not much after all. These are distinctions and things of prejudice, and he is not concerned with them. “He acts without effort; he produces without possessing; he works without regard to the fruit of action; he brings his task to perfection without assuming credit; and claiming nothing as his own, he cannot at any time be said to lose.” Verily he is sitting in the Place of Peace.

“A man who does his duty can be paid for it. If he be zealous he will gain distinction.”

The virtue of simplicity is its own reward, and what good it does is done for the sake of good. Like a tree that is strong and

flourishing it produces good fruit, naturally and without effort, and the maggot of selfishness is not hidden at the core. If diamonds were as common as pebbles they would not be esteemed. Only those who set a value on rare things are troubled about the scarcity. For breaking up the rays of light a diamond will serve, but if you want stones broken on the highway you had better find a man. Neither the jewel nor the stone-breaker assumes any merit. It is the way of the world to esteem the one and disparage the other, thus putting a premium upon theft and discounting honest work. Yet the virtue of everything is its use.

To the man who is dying of thirst a sirocco laden with diamond-dust would bring no consolation.

“Neither Heaven nor Earth has any predilections. They regard all persons and things as sacrificial images.”

The perfect impartiality of Heaven in the distribution of life-conditions to man needs no modern commentary. It is an ancient saying that “He maketh the sun to shine on the evil and the good.” It has nevertheless been as much an occasion of scoffing among the ignorant as of thoughtful gratitude among the devout and learned. The laws of nature, as observed from the physical side of things, appear to have no direct relations with the mental and moral status of the individual. The soil responds in equal measure to the operations of the honest and dishonest. The same ungrudging nature supplies all their needs, the same heaven overarches them. The wicked, equally with the good man, procreates and sustains his species. What is the reason of this? The Sage tells us that neither Heaven nor Earth has any regard to merit in the person, but both have a great regard to use. So whether we sow or reap is an inconsiderable matter, so long as we serve some useful purpose in the general economy of life. For the sower sows more than he can reap, and the reaper gathers more than he can garner, and he who garners has greater store than he alone can consume. So that while nature is most lavish she is also economical, and things are so ordered that no man can sow or reap for himself alone. Therefore the Sage, keeping close to God and Nature, regards all men as sacrificial vessels, the virtue of everything being its use.

“The cause of Heaven and Earth enduring so long is their indifference to life.”

Man as the "sacrificial vessel" exists only for use. The extent of his usefulness and the manner of it is a matter that is left to the law of spiritual selection. Regarded merely from a pathological view-point, this indifference to life as the probable cause of long life would appear to be a fact in nature. It is the effort to live which destroys life, the care engendered by the struggle for existence which makes existence so unendurable, so pitiable. The constitution which can long withstand the attacks of disease and the continual corrosion of unhealthy conditions of life will readily break down under the effects of carking care. Men grow old with care far in advance of their years. Pleasure also is a frequent source of corruption. But pleasure itself would never corrupt a man if he did not first of all corrupt pleasure. There is only one antidote for care, and that is carefulness. And because there is nothing more deadly than life, the Sage secures himself from harm by his indifference to it. Being indifferent to life he is nevertheless careful of its uses, and thus secures the best fruits of life without desiring them. Thus he is wholly free from care and his old age is full of contentment.

"The greatest virtue is adaptability."

Having said that the virtue of everything consists in its use, and that the only quality which commands the esteem of Heaven and Earth is usefulness, the Sage now states that whatever is most adaptable is most useful. He cites two universal things, spirit and water. He points to their faculty of attaining the most inaccessible places in the two worlds without strife, their power of adapting themselves to the vessels which contain them, their soft, yielding nature and irresistible power, their servitude to all forms of life without acknowledging a master in any, and the fact that they are the only desirable things which are always in season. The body cannot do without water, and the soul cannot do without the spirit. Therefore man, compounded of soul and body, needs both water and spirit. From them alone can both body and soul derive that degree of adaptability which is necessary to complete usefulness. It is necessary to observe, however, that the philosopher does not speak of convertibility in that which is most adaptable and therefore most useful. Through all the infinite manifestations of the spirit there is no essential

change. Self-adaptation to the exigencies of life, to the constant change of environment, does not entail a change in the purpose of life, or subjugation of inherent powers to inappropriate uses. It does not imply adherence to the servile policy of being "all things to all men." It merely demands an adaptation of the individual line of action to the state of things as we find them. The lightning flash does not come straight to earth the shortest path; it follows the line of least resistance, the quickest path; it reaches its objective and fulfils the law. The river which meanders through the valleys and plains, sometimes doubling back upon its course, but all the while gaining strength and volume by every such deflexion and detour, reaches at last the ocean to which it is inevitably impelled. To pursue one's purpose without strife, to yield without losing ground, and to accommodate oneself to the needs of the day without change of character, are things which are possible only by the use of the supreme virtue.

"To stop when good work is done is the way of Heaven."

Many a fortune, many a good reputation, would have been saved if those who had secured them had known when to stop. Of the vaulting ambition that over-reaches itself our philosopher seems to have seen many examples, and he therefore proclaims a sabbath for everything well done. It is better to have a little and be able to hold it, than to have much and be in constant dread of losing it. And because the jewel is more to be considered than its setting, the welfare of the soul must ever be of more importance than merely physical or worldly advantage. And after all, as Shakspeare wrote: He is well paid that is well-satisfied. How often a fortune is lost by the man grasping at the penny when he is sure of the pound. How often a good picture is spoiled by the very last touch. Nature is more careful, the spirit is more reticent. What is created is preserved, what is revealed is sustained. Neither nature nor the spirit can ever be said to have done their utmost. For if they were exhausted in the production of things, what would be left to sustain them? It is well to do a good thing, but better to leave well alone.

WALTER GORN OLD.

OUR DUTY TO GOD AND OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOUR

I give no alms to satisfy the hunger of my brother, but to fulfil and accomplish the will and command of my God.—*Religio de Medici*.

THE above passage from Sir Thomas Browne has been severely criticised by Professor Mackenzie in his *Manual of Ethics*, a book, by the way, which is extremely interesting to theosophic students, as showing how nearly the ordinary moral science of the day approaches the theosophic standpoint.

Ethics is founded on metaphysics ; the end of the moral life is self-realisation brought about by realising social ends ; individualism and socialism are not really opposed ; man has freedom in a higher sense than any of the lower kingdoms, but *there is a freedom of a still higher kind* ; evolution in man consists not in adjusting himself to his surroundings, but rather in adjusting his surroundings to him.

This is all right, and one only wonders that anyone should see so far without the theosophic spectacles, or rather perhaps, one wonders that such an able writer should prefer to walk round and round the subject without actually going into it.

His criticism of Sir Thomas Browne, however, is misplaced.

According to Professor Mackenzie, it is evident "even to the plainest common-sense" that the attitude of the philanthropist—who is actuated simply by love of those whom he seeks to benefit—is immeasurably higher than that of Sir Thomas Browne.

This amounts to saying that according to the "plain man"—and apparently also according to the writer on ethics—it is a higher thing to serve a hungry man than to serve God.

In answer to this, we may say with Dogberry, who was surely a "plain man," that "God defend but God should go before such villains" (as any of ourselves).

This curious idea that human beings should come first and

God second, seems to be founded on the theory that the service of God is impossible without self-conscious glorification of the personal self. Professor Mackenzie says:—

It would scarcely be a paradox to say that in such cases the more purely a man is guided by love, and the less conscious he is of performing a duty, the better his action is.

He does not seem to have grasped the idea that it is possible to serve God without self-conceit.

Now it is of course true that the service of God and the service of our neighbour are at root one and the same thing; each includes the other; they are two different aspects of the object towards which human effort is directed. It is also true that there may be times and places when the attention of some human beings may be rightly entirely directed to one or other of these two aspects.

But a treatise on ethics which almost entirely omits any explicit reference to one of these aspects is surely incomplete. A fuller treatise on the subject would surely contain definite and explicit statements that it is the duty of human beings to steadily direct effort towards *the understanding of the laws of God*. It would surely treat of the pursuit of Divine Wisdom as an important part of the duty of man.

It is in fact the aspect of human duty to which it is most important to call attention at the present time.

The duty of serving our neighbour is well-known and universally acknowledged, but the pursuit of Divine Wisdom is sometimes spoken of, even in the Theosophical Society, as though it were a form of selfishness, and the same curious assumption is sometimes made that is made by Professor Mackenzie, that the man who makes the service of God his object is actuated by self-conceit.

We have been told so often that we must distribute all the knowledge which we have, that there seems to be some risk that we shall forget the duty of acquiring any.

There is in some quarters an underlying conviction that study is selfish, and it does not seem to be quite distinctly realised that a man must have something before he can give anything away.

There does not appear to be any particular reason why a philanthropist should be less conceited than a student.

It is not always wise to begin to play before we have learned the rules of the game. Do we feel sure that all our propaganda work is necessarily useful? Is it not conceivable that some of us may engage in propaganda work which is, on the whole, not a wise expenditure of energy? There is no object, however, in setting up one form of service against another.

The point to be brought out clearly is that study as well as propaganda work *is service*. It is, in fact, a very important part of our work, if we intend to fit ourselves for usefulness to the cause in this or any other life.

The mere fact of *trying to understand* is service, and for some of us may be the most important part of our work.

It is a most important part of the service of God to find out *what we believe and why we believe it*.

The study of spiritual law is closely allied with the realisation of brotherhood. The one is the service of God, the other is the service of our neighbour.

SARAH CORBETT.

SINK into the very depths of your being; you will find all there. Be a follower of no man. Follow the inner voice. The truest happiness is to be found in the deep interior study of the great mysteries of nature and of life, seeking thus to find the best manner in which the soul may express itself, and in a constant fulfilment of this manner of expression when found. If men can be taught to see and feel this and the true meaning of it, the work is done. Labour, therefore, faithfully to accomplish this in yourself, for we can teach others only what we ourselves know, and this knowledge is one with experience. The Divine Light burns for all; take your part of it, and illuminating first your own heart, the power will then be yours to illumine others.

Be what you love, strive after what you find beautiful and high, and let the rest go. Harmony, sacrifice, devotion: take these for keynotes; express them everywhere, and in the highest possible way. The beauty of a life like that, the power of it, who can measure or set bounds to?

An unpublished MS.

“ BECOMING AN ORIGINAL ”

THE sun was high in the heavens and the heat of the day was great, but the man felt cool and refreshed, for he was walking quietly through the dark, green glades of an ancient pine forest and the spirits of the trees breathed forth such friendly fragrance that he was at ease and restful; therefore he sat down and leaned against the bole of a weather-beaten veteran. The hush was intense, all things seemed subdued, and “his mind spread itself out like a becalmed and boundless ocean,” penetrating into nature’s secret chambers, which she silently opened before his spirit’s gaze.

Ethereal beings moved about him and he saw them flocking all round the earth, for his vision comprehended much. Like a great army were these spirits reviewed and set in order by glorious Angels, and each was appointed to his own service in this world. Then the man knew that these were the souls seeking rebirth upon the earth.

Every soul had a name upon his forehead, that of a mighty Archangel, one of the great Seven next to the One at the head of all things, the Archangel in whose battalion he was enrolled and of whose characteristics he partook. On the foreheads of some the names flashed forth brilliantly; on those of others they were indistinct or blurred; but above the eyes of each one of these seven names was written. An Angel-minister conducted each soul to his post upon the earth, and as he left his charge, he gave this command: “Be thyself; become thy name. Let the sacred waters of originality that flow forth from the great Origin have free course in thee, and be glorified with that glory with which thou alone art entrusted.”

That vision passed.

Again the man sat in the forest and, as his inner sight reached out afar, he beheld a home in a land across the seas and

there, upon a couch, lay a young girl, tossing to and fro, restless, for she could not understand many things, much less herself. She chafed against that prison, her body. "O body!" she said, "thou wilt not let me do as I desire. Thou thwartest me continually, and, when thou art foolish, the people think it is I when it is thou. I would get away from thee and be myself."

Then one of the Angel-ministers came to the girl. He drew her forth from her body and took her to a region where she could be herself. "Ah, Master!" she said, "this is beautiful! I will stay here." But the Angel said: "No, I must take thee back to thy body and thou wilt make it like thyself." When she again beheld her body, she drew back. "I cannot, Master," she said, "the people will laugh." "Go," he gently replied, and she obeyed.

Then the people did laugh, for her body was awkward, and she was often restless and ill at ease and longed for the Angel to come again. But he did not come. She tried and tried to make her body like herself. It seemed of little use, yet, as time went on, she found herself caring less and less when the people laughed.

Then — she cared not at all.

Then — she forgot she had a body.

Then — one day she looked up fearlessly and with joy into all the people's faces and lo! in each there shone the Christ, the Lord of Love. "O Lord Christ! Lord Christ!" she cried.

And the whole of Nature becoming to her luminous with the radiance of that countenance, she felt herself "one with all that lives and breathes." The man recognised a soul serving in the battalion of the Archangel Love.

That vision passed.

Again the man sat in the forest at the noon-tide hour against the old pine-bole and, as he sat and thought, a soft melodious thrill ran up the tree and sped outwards along its branches. Then a bright light shone round about him and, in the midst, a figure stood and spake these words:

"I went to hell. The Master took me there and left me to test my strength of soul. It was awful in hell. The people had all kinds of forms like beasts and reptiles. It was dark and the

silence was intense. The reptiles crawled over me, and the beasts glared and showed their teeth. I thought of being like God and loving them, but I was afraid and called out to the Master to come and take me away. He came and lifted me up in his arms and carried me thence. He said: “O foolish one, thou art useless thus; thou must do greater things.” Then I laid my head down upon his shoulder and fell asleep, for I was tired.

I went to heaven. The Master took me there. It was full of light and sweetest sound. He said: “Dost thou see the people here?” “Yes,” I said, “they are like thee. Oh, they are beautiful! They are altogether lovely!” He said: “Those in hell will some day be as these.” And I said: “Is that so?” And he said: “It is so.” Then I put my hand in his and said: “I am going.” And he smiled. And I flew back to hell for very joy; God’s secret made my heart so full.

When I went in, it was awful, but I was not afraid. And the people were hideous, but I loved them. Then the reptiles crawled over me and the beasts skulked round, and they whispered: “Thou art not afraid. Art thou God?” And I said: “No, but I bring His love.” And they looked hungry and athirst and grated forth: “Give us, give us His love.” And they drew nearer, and pressed upon me from every side with their fangs and their glaring eyes. And I threw my arms all round about them, and drew them to me nearer still. And, with a sound as of falling music, the light of heaven shone into hell.

Then she in the midst of the light asked: “Have I begun my becoming?” “Thou hast begun thy becoming,” rang through the forest. The spirits of the glades sang forth in chorus: “Another has begun becoming,” and the great pines caught up the refrain and wafted it towards the sun.

As the man gazed upon the figure, he knew it was she whom he had seen upon a bed of anguish with her battalion’s name scarce visible. Now, the word Love flashed forth like living fire upon her brow and radiated on every side.

He thought. She is letting the sacred waters find outlet. She is “becoming an original.”

M. P.

THE TRUE STORY OF A VISION

For here have we no continuing city
But we seek one to come.

A YOUNG man, scarcely more than a youth, sat alone in his room. He was struck down by the first great disappointment of his life, —a blow so heavy that it had taken him weeks and months to realise it; and now at last, when it came home to him in the solitude of the night, his very life, even consciousness itself, seemed to be falling away from him, and the future became unthinkable.

It was the old story, the story which every human soul must live through in one form or another before it can attain its majority; a necessary step in that long pilgrimage which for every soul begins in doubt, hesitation and pain, and ends—ah! where does it end?

But the youth did not know this as yet, though for many years he had been unconsciously preparing himself to enter on the pilgrimage. Therefore it was that he was so deeply wounded, so utterly bewildered. For it was the great passion, the great love of his life that had overtaken him, and he knew it to be so, though he did not yet know the true meaning of it. He did not yet know how happy is he who is capable of a great love, a great joy, or a great grief, nor how it is that these three must always be bound up together, for indeed they are one. To him his love, because it was not returned, because it was utterly hopeless and impracticable from the world's point of view, was as yet nothing but misery. The words of the poet rang in his ear—

Entbehren sollst du, stets entbehren—

those words which are so terrible to the many, so glorious to the few; and he was still one of the many.

He was fighting for his life, and more than his life: he knew

with the sure knowledge that comes at moments like these, that, young as he was, the great crisis had arrived. He could not realise yet what victory meant, but he saw only too plainly the meaning of defeat, and he shuddered, for he was afraid. He could only see that he must renounce his Beloved, and he understood in some dim way that unless the renunciation was a willing one it was of no avail. And yet how could the sacrifice be a willing one, seeing that the Beloved was more to him than life itself? How could he renounce his Beloved willingly, without renouncing his love? And if he gave up his love he might lose the power to love, and then he lost everything. At least, this was how the problem appeared to him. All the powers of evil seemed to rise up in his heart to mock and to torture him, and there was none to help. Bitterness, envy, and the black phantom of despair struck at the inmost fortress of his heart, and he knew that surrender or even weakness meant death. The weapons upon which he had been used to rely failed him utterly in his need; no reason or logic, no common-sense, no habit or teaching of his boyhood availed him anything. His only safety lay in what seemed to be a dead, unreasoning, unswerving force of will, which obliged him to resist to the last gasp—to be annihilated rather than to surrender. And this force had been terribly weakened and worn down during the long and hopeless struggle; he had wrestled for months with his foe, and his foe was his very self; and now, during this last long night of terror the final assault was being made upon his fortress, and his power of resistance was well-nigh spent. Slowly the hours passed, until nature could endure no more, and the sleep of utter exhaustion fell upon him.

* * * *

He found himself in a wide and desolate valley; no rock nor tree, nor blade of grass was to be seen, and the deathlike waste harboured no living thing. The earth was enveloped in a dense and choking mist, and a dark veil of thick cloud hurried unceasingly across the sky. Furious winds buffeted him with their icy blast, and voices and wailings as of lost souls sounded in his ears. An awful sense of untold and hopeless evil pervaded everything and seemed to be sapping his life. Nevertheless

something within himself told him that all this was not real, and had no real power over him, since he was a Warrior and a Pilgrim bound for other shores, whom none of these things could harm.

After awhile he became aware that he was not alone, but that the valley was filled with a great multitude of people, men, women and children, who crowded together for warmth and comfort, and for protection against the dread powers that filled the waste and from time to time made furious onslaughts upon them. It seemed to him that sometimes these powers took visible shape as ravening wild beasts, while at other times they were clothed with a mantle of darkness. The whole multitude was continuously fighting and struggling, each one for himself, in order to avoid the danger to which those were exposed who were on the outer edge of the crowd.

The Pilgrim was sorely tempted to join in the struggle, and escape the danger by the use of his superior strength; but the inner voice warned him that it was not for him to escape from danger, but rather that this multitude was entrusted to his charge, to save and defend from the powers of darkness, even at the sacrifice of himself. At length he accepted the charge, and placed himself upon the outside, resolved to fight manfully at any cost.

And then he perceived that close to him, and protected by his own body, was his Beloved; yet, though he knew beyond doubt that it was she, he could never see her face, nor hear her voice, nor know her as she was, and the inner voice said, "The time is not yet." All that he could understand was that she was no longer as she had seemed to him on earth, radiant with power and beauty, and independent of his care. Now he saw that it was he that was strong, and his Beloved that was in need of him.

It seemed to him that many years, indeed a lifetime, passed in the struggle. There were no helpers, and the whole burden fell upon him alone of defending the multitude, and above all of cherishing and protecting the Beloved; yet the burden was welcome, and the struggle not beyond his powers. He led the multitude far along the valley, until gradually the tempest ceased and

the battle seemed less desperate. He still felt his Beloved at his side, and now she seemed to be fighting with him, and supplying to him both comfort and courage. Then he turned to look at the charge that had been entrusted to him. The vast multitude had diminished to a small band, but whether they had succumbed to the attacks of the enemy or whether they had been finally delivered he knew not. However that might be, a sense of peace and comfort seemed to steal over him, and he knew that but a little more and his warfare would be accomplished.

Once again he looked round. The whole of his company had disappeared, and none but the Beloved remained. A grey and voiceless quiet brooded over all things; gone were the powers of evil, and the icy wind had sunk to rest; a holy calm pervaded his own soul, and a sense of expectancy spread itself over all the world.

He turned to the Beloved, and, as he did so, she held out her arms to him with a smile, and gently sank into dust.

Then he knew that the time had come, and with a sigh of infinite peace and thankfulness he too laid down the burden of the body, knowing that his task was accomplished.

Time passed—whether minutes or years he knew not, for he had no sense of time, but only of duration.

The remainder of the vision no words can describe, since the vision is reality, and words are but symbols.

He became conscious that he was entering, as it were, a vast hall, tremulous with life, joy and peace. In himself he seemed to possess the Peace that passeth understanding, and to be part of that Peace; and yet, perfect though his condition was, he understood nevertheless that there were realms of unimagined bliss beyond, to which he would surely attain. He had an intense feeling of his own unworthiness, yet this caused no disturbance of his peace. His very being pulsed with unearthly life and love and the sense of great things accomplished. At the end of the hall hung a great Veil, through which shone out the greater glory whither he was bound, and seated before the Veil was his Beloved, waiting for him.

He approached her, and knew that she was singing, and knelt at her feet weeping. The music that she sang has lived

with him ever since, yet it cannot be expressed by mortal notes, and as to the words, a seal has been put upon his lips and upon his understanding, so that he can neither express them nor remember them until he comes again into that place. Let it be enough that she sang of all that ever has been, or is, or shall be.

Then they rose to their feet, and hand in hand approached the Veil of Glory. They knew in that supreme moment that each was about to lose the other, yet the thought caused no pang of regret, for grief cannot enter into that place. They knew that they would no longer exist in human form—that the days of lover, of friend, even of individual existence, were past for ever. What awaited them behind the Veil they knew not, but they knew that it was good, and together they passed on.

* * * *

The sleeper awoke, but it was no longer as a weary wrestler, blinded by pain and unconscious of his destiny. Henceforth he became a Pilgrim, with the goal ever before him. The renunciation was made, but it was a willing one, and having lost all, he found that he had gained all. He understood also that though it is good to be loved, yet to love is heaven itself, and therefore he was content. Moreover the memory of that place dwells in his daily life as some deep organ note, with which all common events have to be brought into harmony.

Years have passed, and, contrary to all the probabilities as this world reckons them, the events shadowed forth are fulfilling themselves to the letter. The Pilgrim and his Beloved dwell together in this life and together have learnt many things. The call to arms and the lifelong struggle also have not been wanting, nor have the Pilgrim and his Beloved beheld each other face to face, for they are still veiled in flesh, and the time is not yet come. It is enough for them to know that their love will be crowned, and to await with a sure and certain hope the completion of the vision and the end of sorrows.

Z.

Note.—The events here related occurred many years ago, before the author had so much as heard of Theosophy, and the story is not therefore coloured by any mental prepossession.

A DÛSAN CREATION MYTH

IN the *Spectator* for April 26th, 1902, there appeared an article by Mr. H. Clifford entitled, *An Anomalous People*. The people in question are the Dûsans, a savage tribe of Borneo. They are a persecuted race, much harried and oppressed by the Malays; they are also a people possessed of very unpleasing characteristics, to judge by the account given of them by Mr. Clifford, who says: "They are filthily dirty in person and surroundings; they dress in foul wisps of rag round loins and head; they tattoo their bodies in fantastic fashion; they carry much of their portable gear in the elastic holes punched in the sagging lobes of their ears;" their "roof-trees fairly groan under their loads of dried human skulls the Dûsan, like all natives of North Borneo, never kills in fair fight if he can avoid doing so he kills, in fact, as the ferret and some other animals kill, for the mere love of bloodshed, selecting the defenceless for his prey, and sparing neither sex nor age."

Surely in this people we come near to the primitive man: rude material from the "prentice han'" of Nature, struggling slowly upwards from the animal, through a condition once common to all men, unaided save by the evolutionary force of the life working in his physical frame, and the guidance of his elders.

"It is certain," says the writer of the *Spectator* article, "that his (the Dûsan's) past has been both unrecorded and inglorious, that his present is abject, and that his future is hopeless;" but—and here is the anomaly indicated by the title—"his language and his religious beliefs betray a subtlety, a refinement, and an amount of originality which seem altogether at odds with the man himself. He has been utterly dominated by the Malays, who possess one of the simplest if one of the most idiomatic of tongues, and whose own rude pantheism surrendered almost

without a struggle to the teachings of the Muhammadan missionaries; yet he possesses a language which would seem to belong to a refined and fastidious civilisation, and has held staunchly to his own beliefs in spite of all efforts to convert him to the faith of Islâm. The Dûsan runs fearlessly a tilt against all the best constructed theories of the learned. What business has such an one as he with a language which is not only agglutinative and complicated by a most elaborate system of prefixes, suffixes, and diabolical interfixes, but conjugates its verbs and declines its nouns after a fashion which seems to have stepped straight out of some sort of chaotic Latin grammar?"

Mr. Clifford may well express surprise; the reported condition of all the tribes of North Borneo is such as to render it practically impossible that they can have evolved an elaborate language. The Dûsans and the other tribes of the Malayan Archipelago, are not the only people whose language shows an advancement they do not share; there are certain North American Indian tribes who speak a tongue which indicates a higher degree of civilisation than is possessed by the speakers; these tribes account for the fact by saying their ancestors were a great nation, and from them they received their language, their religion and mystery rites, their magic, and such arts as they possess. These American Indians have also legends of creation which are not unlike the Dûsan creation myth given by Mr. Clifford in the *Spectator*; he explains that space forbids him to give more than a single example of the "ingenuity" of the creed of this savage tribe, but it is of such a nature as "to convince most readers that this curious people, though sunk in the depths of an abject barbarism, have in their time thought deeply concerning the origin of things."

This Dûsan myth I summarise below, from the account given by the above-quoted writer. The story of the building of the world by the Goddess Sinemundu bears a resemblance to the myth of the "abortion," created by the Sophia; the reader has only to turn to *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten* and compare with the Dûsan legend the account given by Hippolytus of one of the variants of the Sophia-Mythus.*

* See *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, G. R. S. Mead, p. 335 et seq.

The story of the forming of the earth by Sinemundu is as follows :

In the beginning there was darkness and an empty void ; in the void was a long, thin stone ; from one end crept forth the God Kinohringan ; from the other the Goddess Sinemundu. They sat on the stone in the dark void, and Kinohringan unfolded to Sinemundu the thought which was in his mind, for he, alone and unaided, planned a Perfect World, wherein should be neither pain nor evil. Sinemundu listened, and flattered him " after the manner of women," says the Dûsan cynic ; at last Kinohringan went into the void to explore its capabilities ; Sinemundu was left alone ; she was angry because Kinohringan planned to create alone, and spoke of his schemes without reference to her. In order to show herself his equal in power she began hastily to fashion the world without his assistance ; but she was in too great haste and wrought nothing perfectly. When Kinohringan returned and saw what she had done, he cried out in dismay at the misshapen, ill-made world Sinemundu had fashioned ; he refused to help her, and bade her manage it after her own methods. This is why women hold sacerdotal offices among the Dûsans, who, though they pray to the great God Kinohringan, know that the world is ruled by the Goddess Sinemundu, who, striving to create, became the source of evil.

It is a curious allegory of a world in which, to outward appearance, matter rather than spirit rules, and evil oftentimes seems to be stronger than righteousness and peace. It is certainly not a myth which one would expect to find among a tribe of unclean, ignorant " head-hunting " savages ; the very conception of a world in which pain and evil are not is an ideal one would scarcely expect to find among a race whose roof-trees groan with the skulls of men and women who have been treacherously slain by them. There is a subtlety of thought displayed in the tale which is inexplicable from the standpoint of the accepted theories of students of anthropology.

Mr. Clifford is of opinion that the myth would be remarkable in any religion ; remarkable, no matter what the race whence sprang the " unknown philosopher " who evolved it. The origin

of evil attributed to woman (as the symbol of matter, of form, and *separation*) reminds one of the biblical account of the Fall: "the woman whom Thou gavest to be with me" bears the burden of the pain of the world alike in the Dûsan and the Jewish accounts of creation; and rightly so, if the "woman" be a symbol of matter and differentiation, and the early stages of the climbing upwards of the hidden life.

The Dûsans are, as the writer of the *Spectator* article says, "an anomalous people," unless we see in them the laggards of an earlier race, which inhabited the earth in days so far past that their history is forgotten; a race whose language and whose myths were given them by those possessed of a knowledge beyond that attained by the philological and anthropological experts of our own day.

I. HOOPER.

THE SECRET TRANSMISSION OF NEWS.—Under this title the *Spectator* of August 16th has an interesting article, in which are discussed various theories which are intended to explain the fact "which not unfrequently forces itself upon the notice of Europeans in their dealings with men of other races, and this is the extraordinary and accurate knowledge which they sometimes possess of events happening at a distance, and of which they cannot apparently have received information through ordinary channels of communication, though when news of the events subsequently arrived it fully confirmed the native rumours." The *Spectator* mentions the arrival of the news about the disasters in Afghanistan in 1842, of the death of the Amir in 1901, and various other cases: "In the same way the attempts of daring travellers to penetrate into Thibet without permission have usually failed, for however carefully they may have arranged their plans, they are always met at the most unexpected places by the Thibetan guards, who make them prisoners, or compel them to return."

The *Spectator* regards it as "not improbable that there may be not one but several modes of communicating intelligence to a distance, which were known to the ancients, but the knowledge of which has not descended to, or has not yet been rediscovered by, the scientific men of modern Europe, though this knowledge may well have been perpetuated among some of the descendants of ancient races whom we are too apt to despise as 'savages' or 'niggers.'"

After remarking that thought-transference, or some kind of "optical phenomena" may account for some of the cases cited, the *Spectator* says: "Other cases of abnormal perception of events may possibly be due to the imperfect working of faculties usually in abeyance in our ordinary waking state, but which may be, as has been conjectured, faculties which the human race enjoyed at an earlier stage in the history of man, but which have since fallen into disuse; or possibly, dawning faculties which will become fully developed in future races of men; or, thirdly, faculties, in what we may call a larval condition, which do not pertain to our present life at all, but to some other stage in our existence, though potentially present, or on rare occasions partially active, even here and now."

THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF MIND

THE study of "The Evolution of Consciousness," and similar writings, has naturally turned the attention of our students to that physical organ by means of which man contacts the world in which, for a time, he finds himself. In response to the interest thus aroused, I purpose giving a brief, untechnical sketch of the way in which this, the crowning structure of evolution, has grown from simple beginnings to its present stage of marvellous complexity and adaptability. Though the brain be not the mind, though it be not even the body of the mind, it is a fact that all the phenomena of consciousness on the physical plane are dependent for their action on the integrity of the ganglia of the brain cortex. In the brain-cells, as in innumerable storehouses, are garnered the memories of the myriad vibrations that play upon the peripheral fibres; all these memorial structures being erected in such fashion, that, linking one with the other, they form a co-ordinating house or vehicle through which the mind can function.

We cannot intelligently understand the workings of the brain, until we have read somewhat of its long history; and although to trace every link of the processes of organisation, from the simplest amœboid cell up to those "unstable combinations of potential energy," the vertebrate nerve cells, would be an impossible task, still to know how brains are builded it is necessary we realise that the most complex grows, by gradual increments of differentiation, out of the most simple. The human brain does not start as a finished product; it is even now in the process of making. In evolution, as in political economy, demand creates supply, and it is no figure of speech to say that unless we had wanted brains we should never have had them. Development, the highest as the lowest, is a direct answer to

the demands of sentient life. What the life needs it translates into its emotional nature, as a want ; the want is closely followed by demand ; iteration of the demand, of the desire, of the feeling, originates activity in the search for the means of gratification. Repetition of the activity tends to consolidation, from which it is possible for functions and organs to arise. As soon as anything analogous to desire, or thought, awakens in an organism, it becomes necessary for that body to isolate some portion of its structure and to endow this with psychic* properties, in order that the bodily machinery may come under such control as is needed for the particular methods of functioning that belong to its stage in evolution.

It is obvious that the first link in the chain of nervous systems will arise in the outer layer, or skin, of those primitive organisms whose bodies have not differentiated out into parts. The life-functions of a creature who has barely stepped over the boundary between vegetable and animal are too primitive for the exhibition of any activities allied to thought, as we conceive it ; its sensations appear to be dim feelings of actual contacts with the outer world, coupled with the all-impelling hunger sensation that leads to locomotion in search of food ; therefore, the earliest nerve-cells are found only in connection with the integument ; they are modified skin-cells. As evolution proceeds these root-cells sink below the surface, throwing out simple fibres which remain connected with the skin, and finally the root-cells, or ganglia, are found to have retreated close up to an inner and central nervous system, and to have developed processes of most complex arrangement for transmission to and from the central system and the periphery. From microscopical anatomy we learn that living bodies of every grade—vegetable as well as animal—are wholly composed of structural units or cells, each being a direct ascendant from a unit cell, but, in speaking of the body as a congeries of cells, we must not suppose that they are always simple in structure and function. Absolute homogeneity exists nowhere in manifestation. From the first enfoldment of the life by the atom, differences in the relationship of one part with

* "Psychic," in the physiological sense, means that which is related to consciousness.

another are brought about by the play of multiplied and varied vibrations; therefore, whether we speak of the atom of Âkâsha or of Pṛithivî, it follows, as a result of the superimposition of unlike vibrations, that changes will be set up within, that tend more and more towards heterogeneity. The initial life-impulses in the unit are followed by changes that are wonderful in diversity, and most beautiful as means towards a desired end. Into these more abstruse processes we need not enter; it is sufficient for our purpose to represent the growing cell as a microscopical membrane or bag, containing two chief sections—an inner and denser part, called the nucleus, and surrounding this a more fluid portion, the cytoplasm, which may be termed the vehicle or body of the vital part of this life-unit. The power of any entity to specialise itself, to develop out in any direction—as in the formation of the heart, lungs, the five senses, each building up a particular organ with a special work to perform—depends upon the fact that the cells out of which they have grown have also been endowed with capacity for progressive alteration on any needed line. Going back to the starting-point of the man or the animal, we note that growth begins in the unit as the result of internal changes in its own economy, which manifest as cell-multiplication, cell-enlargement, cell-specialisation. It is solely from this trinitarian modification of the one cell that it is possible for man to possess an organised body, or to be anything more than a lump of protoplasmic jelly.

Quite early in the embryonic life, preparations begin for that division of labour by which alone the multifarious functions of the perfected body can be carried on in orderly fashion and with least expenditure of force. We cannot understand how brains, or lungs, or muscles grow, severally, out of the unit, unless we bear in mind the self-evident fact that each and all, one cell or many cells, are inheritors of powers which come to them from the unit. Nothing in the shape of faculty is added, nothing is subtracted, all is in the original cell. Very soon, however, in the developmental history of the individual, we have to bring in a familiar term—potentiality. As the oak is in the acorn, and the chick is in the egg, so is it possible for the complicated man to be in any one of the early growth-cells; not in actuality, but in

potentiality ; any one growth-cell—and by “growth-cell” is meant an active cell that develops by way of the trinitarian processes of multiplication, enlargement and specialisation—may become a nervous system, a digestive system, a muscular system, or, by a combination of the three, a man. The capacity for development on any one of these lines is inherent in all the cells, and the special direction of development taken by any one cell is merely the emphasising, by its own energy, of a part of the potentiality that is common property. The cell takes some one function out of the general stock and specialises it to its own use : thus it stultifies itself, becoming a one-sided individual.

Passing over the earlier stages of multiplication and enlargement, we take up the work of specialisation or “adaptive alteration.” Stimulated thereto by the working of the inner life-force, the cells begin to alter in character and shape, and, by way of preparation for that particular work of development which has been imprinted by heredity on the molecules of the unit, they array themselves in three distinct groups or layers. The component cells of each layer gradually show forth special characteristics to the exclusion of other qualities, adapting themselves to the performance of some one great function of life and letting everything else slide. As time goes on it is seen that these cells become more and more specialised, more and more “physiologically unbalanced,” more and more unable to fulfil the offices of the perfect cell. These adaptive alterations of constitution enable each layer of cells to take a particular part in the upbuilding of the body. The outer layer takes upon itself the function of forming the skin, with the whole nervous system, sympathetic and cerebral ; from the middle layer grow the muscles, cartilage, reproductive system, the heart and entire circulatory system ; while from the inner we get the digestive tract and its numerous ramifications. Each layer, moreover, forms a sort of skeleton, or protective outer tissue, within which its functional cells can develop quite separated from the other two systems. Given a living cell, and it is possible by small increments of differentiation to generate any amount of modification. Evolution, it is said, moves along the line of least resistance, and this is quite true, for that line is the Path-

way of Desire, and it is on this pathway that functions are brought into activity, and forms are builded in every kingdom. What we are now is the specialisation of past desires ; the familiar grooves in which, to-day, we throw our thoughts, are being chiselled by those thoughts into the mould in which our next body will be cast—our physical, emotional and mental vehicles.

Those who have studied *Evolution of Life and Form* will understand the great difference between the work of evolution in the downward sweep of elemental matter, and in the upward working of the same after the mineral stage is reached. We remember that, on the downward arc, qualities are imparted to the essence by reason of its vibratory frequencies, and that on the upward arc forms are builded for the exercise of the life-functions of those qualities. "Always," as Mrs. Besant so aptly expresses it, "the organ comes after the function . . . always the life-impulse first, and then the moulding of the matter into a shape which enables that impulse to express itself more perfectly." Thus Nature builds up the form in response to a desire for it which manifests itself, in every stage of development, by growth in the *forward direction*. In the very lowest organism, as in the very highest, progressive changes are initiated from within and manifest themselves exteriorly, by growth, or movement outward.

A strikingly beautiful illustration of this universal law is presented by the Foraminifera. If we place a living Radiolaria on the microscope stage we shall see, issuing from hundreds of minute holes in the tiny shell, thread or glass-like processes, delicate, fragile, protoplasmic material that a breath, almost, would annihilate. Persistently this pushes outward. We see opposing particles come in the way and fancy the whole body of the shell will be brought up to render assistance. But, no ! The resisting capacity is in this filamentous hyaline, and doggedly it forces its path through the space of its microscopical world by sheer tenacity in the forward direction. This is no chance movement ; it is the universal psychic response to the working of the non-physical life imprisoned within a physical casement. In evolution there is no turning back ; the entity, or organism, or even part of an organism, that is unable to advance is, by inexorable law, wiped

out of Nature's scheme. It is this law, working up through the endless chain, that links the hyaline processes of the Foraminifera with the nervous processes of the man. Whatever, in the make-up of any form, represents that form's highest, evolutionary material, becomes the part of the whole which always pushes itself foremost into space; not only so, but it is the dominator of the rest of the form. In these minute microscopical creatures the protoplasmic hyaline constitutes the life-spring of their activities. And man dominates the world by reason of that portion of his brain, which, in relation to the rest of his body, he carries above and beyond in space, and by means of which he pushes out the vibratory frequencies of his thoughts into the surrounding world. So, although we speak of expansion and contraction, it is the former only that is the fundamental property of life. Expansion, in this scientific sense, is but another term for life-energy; contraction being the term used to express the expenditure of that energy. The life of anything down here—animal, vegetable, mineral—is just so much of the real centre, the life of Âtmâ, as can find expression in any particular form; therefore, it follows that the expression, radiating from the centre, will energise in outward directions.

We may define a nerve, of any grade, as a cell modified to make response to external impressions, and it is important for us to bear in mind that, at no time does the nerve itself institute those chemical changes that are the outcome of nervous activity. The nerve is an inert body until played upon by vibrations coming to it from outside. It matters not whether they are vibrations of abstract thinking or concrete feeling; the disturbances that translate themselves as a problem of Euclid, or the sensations of injury to a muscle, are sent for translation to the nerve from bodies exterior to itself.

MARY POPE.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

A BOOK FOR BEGINNERS

An Outline of Theosophy. By C. W. Leadbeater. (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. Price, cloth, 1s.)

MR. LEADBEATER has given us a little book for which we have long been waiting, a brief and yet comprehensive outline of theosophical teachings, fit to put into the hands of a busy man, and intelligible to the most ordinary reader. It is quite "A First Book on Theosophy," and it opens up the way to fuller study for those who wish to pursue the subject further, by adding at the end of each chapter references to works in which the matters outlined are more fully treated.

The first chapter states what Theosophy is, and how it is known, and the second gives, under the head of "General Principles," a plan of the book. Three great truths, as formulated in *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, are laid down as foundation, and from these truths certain corollaries are drawn. These points are taken in detail in the remaining eight chapters of the book.

After treating the first truth as to God, Mr. Leadbeater passes on to explain the constitution of man and his relation to the worlds around him; he then expounds re-incarnation clearly and forcibly, bringing out its consoling and invigorating aspects, and follows this with a chapter on "The wider outlook," in which occurs a singularly lucid explanation of one of the reasons for the internal struggles accompanying evolution. Chapter VII. deals with "Death," and the part which relates to the heaven-world brings out very clearly the reason for the little understood fact that "every man makes his own heaven." After very briefly outlining "Man's Past and Future," our writer explains the law of karma, or of "cause and effect," as it is termed. Finally, Chapter X. expounds "What Theosophy does for us," with all the vigour and ardour of one who feels what it has done for *him*. "The student of Theosophy," we are told, "should be distinguishable from the rest of the world by his perennial cheerfulness, his undaunted

courage under difficulties, and his ready sympathy and helpfulness." "Thus he will look ever for the good in everything, that he may endeavour to strengthen it; he will watch for the working of the great law of evolution, in order that he may range himself on its side, and contribute to its energy his tiny stream of force. In this way, by striving always to help and never to hinder, he will become, in his small sphere of influence, one of the beneficent powers of Nature; in however lowly a way, at however unthinkable a distance, he is yet a fellow-worker together with God—and that is the highest honour and the greatest privilege that can ever fall to the lot of man."

I heartily recommend this little book and hope it may command a very wide circulation. It is daintily got up in an oblong shape suitable for the pocket.

ANNIE BESANT.

MAGAZINES AND PAMPHLETS

Theosophist, July. In "Old Diary Leaves," the Colonel writes of the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893: "Theosophy was presented most thoroughly, both before the whole Parliament, an audience of 3,000 people, and at meetings of our own. . . . A profound impression was created by the discourses of Professor Chakravarti and Mrs. Besant, who is said to have risen to unusual heights of eloquence, so exhilarating were the influences of the gathering." And the representatives of Eastern religions used their opportunity to such effect that the editor of one of the Chicago newspapers said: "We have been for years spending millions of dollars in sending missionaries to convert these men, and have had very little success; they have sent over a few men, and have converted everybody." S. Stuart concludes his article on "Evolution and Consciousness"; Alexander Fullerton's "H. P. B. and the T.S." is inserted, and "The Ideal of God," by A. Marques, is continued. In an essay entitled "The Trend of International Evolution," W. A. Mayers informs us that he is shocked at Mrs. Besant's views on war, and lays down that "it is impossible that any war can be either just or righteous." In passing, we protest against the words "Mrs. B." being allowed to find their way into print. "Astrological Warnings," by Thomas Banon, and two poems by Josephine H. Olcott and E. B. van Deusen conclude the number.

Theosophist, August. "Old Diary Leaves" contains an account

of the machinations of "Dr. Sarak" who, according to American newspapers, is once more to the fore with ingenious schemes to deceive the credulous. Professor Max Müller's famous letter "denying the existence of any esoteric meaning in either the Buddhistic or Brâhmanic scriptures," received by our President-Founder in July, 1893, is quoted at some length. Apart from the Professor's refusal to believe in any esoteric side to these scriptures, there is a passage in his letter shewing that he fully realised the One Truth underlying all religions: "You can really do a good work if you can persuade the people in India, whether Buddhists or Brâhmanç, to study their own religion in a reverent spirit, to keep what is good and to discard openly what is effete, antiquated and objectionable. If all religions would do that, we should soon have but *one* religion, and we should no longer call each other unbelievers and Giaours. . . ." A. Fullerton begins an article on "Immortality," Anna M. Stoddart contributes the first portion of an essay on "Paracelsus," and Dr. Thirlwall discourses at considerable length on "Yoga," while A. Marques concludes "The Ideal of God." In "Eastern and Western Ideals," P. Narâyana Ayer states that "recent writers in the THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW have emphasised the difference of ideals between the East and the West," and denies that any such difference can exist. H. S. O., in "The Ordination of Allan Macgregor," draws an exceedingly entertaining picture of the ordination of Mr. Macgregor as a Buddhist priest on the last Wesak day. We regret that lack of space prevents us from quoting some of the features of the ceremony. The number concludes with the announcement of the formation of a "Religious Parliament Extension" to promote "friendly international and inter-religious relations," and with "Light on the Path," by G. B. Grewe. In the *Supplement*, the President-Founder announces the formation of the new German Section.

The Vâhan, August, contains the resolution, passed at the recent Convention, regarding the change of name of the "European Section." During Mr. Keightley's absence in India, it is notified that Mrs. Hooper is appointed Acting General Secretary, and Mr. G. Arundale, M.A., LL.B., has been appointed Joint Assistant Secretary of the Section. In the "Enquirer," A. P. S. replies to the question "How can we explain the first human birth, life and death?" and A. A. W. explains the "true meaning and value of confession and absolution."

Theosophia (Holland), continues its translations of H. P. B.'s "An Unsolved Mystery," and of Mrs. Besant's "Thought Power, its

Control and Culture." A. Fullerton's "Theosophy and Materialism," and Mrs. Besant's "Free-Thought in Theosophy," are translated from the THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW. Mr. Sinnett is represented by his London Lodge Transaction, entitled "Apollonius of Tyana," while the sole original contribution consists of a good article by M. Reepmaker on "Brotherhood."

Sophia, July, has the continuation of Mrs. Besant's "Esoteric Christianity," and of H. P. B.'s "From the Caves and Jungles of Hindustan," D. Luis Phathelet furnishing the original matter to the number.

Teosofia (Italy), contains translations from Herbert Spencer's "Facts and Comments," and from Max Müller's posthumous "Last Essays"; Mrs. Besant's "Problems of Religion" is continued, and translations of answers from the *Vâhan* conclude the number.

New Zealand Theosophical Magazine, July, has a good article by Catherine W. Christie on "The Basis of Theosophy," in which she replies to the constantly-recurring question: "If, as a Society, Theosophists insist on no beliefs, support no party, favour no church, . . . how is anyone unacquainted with the teachings of Theosophy, and with only our meetings as a means of learning, to become acquainted with them? Or has Theosophy any decided teachings?" F. M. Parr writes on "Aspects of Religion," and "Philalethes" contributes an article on the "Building of the Cosmos."

Sophia, our Santiago contemporary, has translations from the writings of Mrs. Besant and Alexander Fullerton. The editor has had the happy inspiration of printing separately a translation of Mr. Leadbeater's "Astral and Devachanic Planes," by Don José Melian, and of enclosing an instalment in each number, so that his readers may be able to bind them apart from the magazine.

We have also to acknowledge *The Theosophic Gleaner*; *The Prashnottara*; *Teosofisk Tidskrift*; *Le Journal des Femmes*, June and August, the organ of the women's movement in France, and containing clever articles by various writers; *Lotus Lodge Journal*; *Light*; *The Psycho-Therapeutic Journal*; *The Pacific Vedântin*; *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*; *Bulletin Théosophique*; *Free Thought Magazine*; *Modern Astrology*; *Light of Reason*; *Mind*; *The Animals' Friend*; *The Real Origin of Religions*.

G. S. A.