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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

A BODY of people like the membership of the Theosophical Society, which professes one of its three objects to be the investigation of unexplained laws of nature and of the powers latent in man, cannot refuse such investigation because of the manifest and manifold dangers inherent in such studies. It is our bounden duty to investigate and to study everything connected with these all-important subjects. We have to experiment and gain experience; and not the least important thing for us is to benefit by the experience of those who have gone before us, of whom there have been many schools in the past, and not a few exist also in our own day.

There are some who vainly imagine that they can afford to set aside the garnered experience of the past and strike out new ways for themselves, without regard to the paths marked out by the struggles and strivings, by the failures and successes, of the countless Theosophists who have already essayed the solution of the same problems and faced the same dangers and difficulties. Such an attitude of mind is as foolish as would be the fond

illusion that we could invent a new science of mathematics without paying the slightest attention to the discoveries of the countless mathematicians who have given their lives to the study of the science of quantity. The powers latent in man have been studied as long as we have any history of the human race; and many a school of Theosophists has left behind it records of its experiences, and of the way in which the accompanying dangers can best be met and reduced to a minimum.

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WE of to-day may not agree with those who have gone before us on all points; we may find that they do not agree among themselves; but, if we are wise, we shall be persuaded that it is our manifest duty to profit by their collective experience to the fullest extent possible, and to listen patiently to what they have to say; not foolishly imagining that because the formal details of our present day experience may be different, therefore the manner and mode and mood of it are any other than those in which similar experiences have come to the men of the past and the men of the present outside our own ranks.

Concerning
"Messages"

In this connection we would commend to the attention of our readers an article entitled: "Signs and Wonders in Divine Guidance," by Miss Caroline E. Stephen, in the last number of *The Hibbert Journal*. Miss Stephen is by conviction a member of the Society of Friends, and addressed her paper in the first instance to the Sunday Society at Newnham College, Cambridge. Referring to what ought to be a self-evident proposition to all experienced Theosophists, that "the mere fact of mystery or unaccountableness in the transmission of a message can neither give nor take away authority," Miss Stephen continues:

I believe entirely with Professor James that this must depend on the intrinsic nature of the communication, and on the appeal made by it to the enlightened conscience. A communication which, being unaccountable, must of necessity be anonymous, should certainly be subjected to every test by which any other anonymous communication would be tried before being allowed to influence our action. As far as we can have any knowledge of the unseen world of spiritual existence, so far, I believe, do we find the old distinctions between good and evil, weighty and trivial, clean and unclean, holy and unholy, helpful and harmful, and so on, running through everything.

In the invisible as well as in common daylight we need the exercise of spiritual discernment; and the deeper and more central the power, the more essential is a "single eye" in meeting or in wielding it.

* * *

BUT the dangers continue for long, even for those whose one object in life is to follow the narrow upward way; even for those to whom there have come indubitable signs of the Good guiding them, who have at times been touched by the "Finger of God," and heard in the silence the "still small Voice," and been carried into "regions" of the Heights.

The Dangers of
the Heights

But even in this region, and perhaps in it especially, the need of watchfulness is unceasing. Here the imagination may easily play us false. In "high places" there are still snares (and ever fresh snares) for self-love and self-importance; and that divine education which teaches us at all times largely through our mistakes and failures, may well become more severe in its discipline as the pupil advances from the elementary to the higher stages of instruction.

In all the best mystical teachings there are warnings against the snares of the imagination, and the greater safety of the hard and humble path of mere faith is insisted upon.

* * *

THIS is wisely written and shows a clear intuition of the hard actual facts of the Mystic Way. But why we have referred to this instructive article is especially to recommend to the consideration of our colleagues the tradition of "discipline" built up by the many years' experience of the Society of Friends in such matters. Miss Stephen sets this forth as follows:

The Quaker
Discipline

People often seem to think that the claim to be under divine guidance is a claim to infallibility—forgetting that the higher the teaching the more patience and submission is needed for its right interpretation, and the more painful will often be the process through which its lessons are to be learnt. I specially value the emphatic denial of this claim to infallibility which is involved in the Quaker tradition (and out of which indeed our whole system of "discipline" has been built)—the recognition of the need for the most careful testing and correction of individual impulses by the collective judgment of the meeting. Friends have learned to recognise not only that the initiative in any divinely guided service must belong to the individual, but also that the wisdom, and in some cases even the duty, of the individual is to submit his own interpretation of such a call to the united judgment of

his fellow-disciples. In this view there is, I think, an important suggestion as to the path of safety for the inwardly impressionable.

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SINCE the rise of the present Theosophical Movement and the accompanying popularising of the doctrine of reincarnation in the Western world, there has been an ever-increasing number of people who are fully persuaded that they can remember some scenes, or even many scenes, from one or more past births. We know personally of not a few instances of people who have turned out endless visions of past births, both of themselves and of their friends. Frankly, we have never believed in very much of it personally, and have been long seeking not only some safe criteria whereby such visions and imaginings can be controlled, but also for a widening of our general views on the nature of reincarnation. This does not mean we deny that some of these reminiscences may be quite genuine; some of them seem to be so, but many of them that have come under our notice are manifestly not so. What we have to guard against is jumping to the conclusion that reminiscence of past births is the most natural hypothesis to account for many of these seeings and feelings. Many of them can be accounted for by an extension of the possibilities of psychometry, which can be induced by subjective as well as by objective things; others can be explained by the powers of the dramatic imagining faculty, the phantasia of the ancients. And now we have another theory to take into account, which we cordially recommend to the notice of our fellow-students for what it is worth.

* * *

IN the June number of *The Nineteenth Century* the Rev. Forbes Phillips puts forward a fruitful suggestion in a paper entitled "Ancestral Memory." He gives a number of striking cases of such reminiscences, of which he has experienced no small share himself, and after referring to the doctrine of reincarnation in terms that show he has read carefully Walker's popular exposition, he rejects it in favour of a theory of ancestral memory. He writes :

In every line of research we are bound, sooner or later, to stumble upon

Punarjanm-
Anusmriti

The Theory of
Ancestral Memory

an ultimate fact, for which no reason is assigned at all, if we keep clear of religion and revelation. Here is an ultimate fact, the basis of which is memory, and it is in memory, rather than in any new [?] theory of things, that we have to look for the solution. In the doctrine of reincarnation it seems to me we have wandered away from the subject, and then approached it with a specially devised net to capture the main facts, rather than allowing them to speak for themselves. I ask, is there not such a thing as ancestral memory? That a child should present certain features of his father and mother, and reproduce certain well-known gestures and mannerisms of his grandfather, is looked upon as something very ordinary. Is it not possible that the child may inherit something of his ancestor's memory? That these flashes of reminiscence are the sudden awakening, the calling into action of something we have in our blood; the discs, the records of an ancestor's past life, which require but the essential adjustment and conditions to give up their secrets? If so, then we have in ancestral memory a natural answer to many of life's puzzles, without seeking the aid of Eastern theology.

* * *

AFTER developing his theory by citing some more instances, Mr. Forbes Phillips applies it to the phenomena of dreams, in the belief that "dreaming is largely a kind of free
 Its Application play of what I have called ancestral memory."

While the dream lasts it is very real to us. We start on a journey, we fall among thieves, we tumble over a precipice, we are thrown out of a conveyance, we experience all the fright and inconvenience of such incidents. What is the explanation? Here I submit the dreamer, with his will for the moment in abeyance, becomes the instrument on which the mental impressions handed on to us begin to play. That they are images of adventures in the life story of some forebear brought into relation with us through the avenues of a *subconsciousness* which has always held the records of such deeds. That while the ordinary objects of life and the outer world are perceived through the senses—co-ordinated under the conditions of normal consciousness—there are ancient soul or race memories; and the feelings and visions which they recall belong to an inherited order of consciousness, which is less individual, less local than the ordinary one. Ecstasy, and all that the term implies, spiritual vision—inspired utterance—second sight, would then indicate the passing out from the ordinary consciousness into the racial or spiritual, with its various powers, of which I emphasise ancestral or race memory.

In this Mr. Phillips seems to us to go too far, as indeed he himself shows by writing "the racial or spiritual" consciousness. He has the usual enthusiasm of a man who has got hold of an

idea, and wishes to make that idea the master-key to all knowledge. Nevertheless, he has hold of an idea, if he would keep it within bounds. But if it is pushed too far it becomes as nebulous as unlimited heredity, where all can go back to Adam, and all the characteristics of all men can be drawn upon to explain the individual peculiarities of one man. It is the individual that concerns us in the premisses, and his contacts with the records of individuals. Some of these are doubtless to be ascribed to what Mr. Phillips calls ancestral memory; but as probably every atom has a "memory," and as we presumably take in and give out millions of them a minute, we have yet to define intelligibly what we intend precisely by the idea that Mr. Phillips has christened ancestral memory.

* * *

THE Rabbinical Jews believed that their sacrificial cult could be performed only at Jerusalem in the House of the Lord; this was their orthodox creed, insisted upon by the priesthood, who naturally desired that all the offerings should come to them, not only from Palestine itself, but also from their brethren of the Dispersion. In the liberal age of Judaism, however, prior to Talmud Rabbinitism, it was otherwise, and the Temple of Onias in Egypt was a duplication of the Temple of Zerubbabel. It has been strongly denied that sacrifices were ever offered in the temple of Onias, but archæological research has at last settled that controversy and, as is almost invariably the case, in the contrary sense to tradition. The following is a description of the excavation of the remains of this famous monument of Jewish antiquity, taken from *The Times* of March 14th:

Excavations have been undertaken this winter by the British School of Archæology in Egypt on the eastern side of the Delta and in the region of Goshen and Succoth. Among the problems there one of the most interesting was the search for the site of the temple of Onias. It is well known how the troubles of the Jews under Antiochus had driven many of them to settle in the east of the Delta, and that, in order to provide a new rallying point, one of the family of the high priests, Onias IV., had built a temple on the model of that at Jerusalem. This temple served as a substitute for the shrine desecrated and polluted by Antiochus Epiphanes. The documents quoted by Josephus show that this temple was on the site of an old Egyptian

town named Leontopolis, which was dedicated to the lion-headed goddess "Bubastis of the fields," that the place was "full of materials," that the temple was built after the pattern of that at Jerusalem, that "a tower of stone 60 cubits high" was erected, and that the whole settlement was granted by Ptolemy Philometor. Thus there were many conditions to be fulfilled in the identification of this site.

It has been generally recognised that the ancient town known as Tell el Yehudiyeh, eighteen miles north of Cairo, was probably the position; and the Jewish gravestones found there by Dr. Naville had given strength to this opinion. But the temple had not yet been actually identified. The work of this season has in the first place shown that a lion goddess was worshipped there, as a statue of an admiral of the Mediterranean fleet of Psametek II. was found, which represents him holding a shrine of the lion-headed goddess. Hence the name of Leontopolis and the dedication to "Bubastis of the fields" accord with the worship at this site. The description of the place as being "full of materials" for re-use by Onias agrees with there having been an immense stone-lined ditch a mile in length around the ancient town, which would supply material for the new building without using what had been consecrated to idols. Just outside of the ancient town stands an artificial mound, the highest for 20 or 30 miles around. The whole of it has been thrown up at one time; and, on restoring the buildings on it by the remaining indications, it is found that the height must have been altogether over 59 Greek cubits above the plain, agreeing with the 60 cubits of construction named by Josephus. And this mound was thrown up in the second century B.C., as is shown by the pottery in it. On the top were many coins of the time of Ptolemy Philometor, and a sherd with building accounts which bears the name of Abram among others, showing that Jews were employed. Thus every stated requirement of the place of Onias is fulfilled at this site; and these connections are here mentioned as they have not been noticed hitherto.

The form of this settlement of Onias was, roughly, a right-angled triangle, the square corner being formed by the north and east sides. At the west acute angle was the entry to it, and at the south point was the summit with the temple. The mound was enclosed on the eastern side by a stone wall, 20ft. or more in height, and 767ft. long, including two bastions at the ends. In the middle of this a high raised stairway, 14ft. wide, led up to the entry of the temple court on the top. The north side of the settlement was low, with a fortification wall bounding it. The diagonal west side was curved inward, and had a great revetment wall, at least 20ft. thick, rising at an angle of 66deg. or more, to a height of over 68ft., where it supported the temple.

The entrance from the plain at the west end was nearly 150ft. wide over all, and about 100ft. inside. This was fortified with towers and gateways, as we know from descriptions. From here the way ran through an area of three or four acres of houses enclosed in the fortifications leading up to the

temple platform more than 68ft. over the plain. The foundation of this ascent remains, and points very closely to the axis of the court on the top. The outer court was 32ft. wide and 45ft. long inside; the inner court was 24ft. wide and 64ft. long. The block of the brick foundation of the Holy of Holies is 55ft. long and 17ft. wide. This is of the same proportion as in Solomon's temple—namely, seven to two; and it shows that the building was laid out with half the number of cubits of the prototype, and by the Greek cubit, which was probably the most familiar to the Jews under the Ptolemies.

The architecture was Corinthian; and the front of the courts, or of the temple, had the usual Syrian decoration of rounded battlements. The fronts of these battlements were ornamented with a band of lines, which rose from the string-course into each block and returned.

The religious character of the whole place is marked by the great quantity of sacrifices at its foundation. In the lower part of the mound are found on all sides cylinders of pottery, a couple of feet across. These were sunk in the ground, a fire sacrifice was burnt in each, and then the fresh earth was thrown in to smother the fire, in continuation of the heaping of the mound. This is at one with the Syrian sacrifice under a building, and the later form of that known as "lamp and jar burial," familiar from Mr. Macalister's work in Palestine.

A model of this temple, restored from the fragments of the foundations, was shown among Prof. Petrie's exhibits at University College, during the month of July.

WE live and move amid a crowd of flitting objects unknown or dimly seen. The beings and the powers of the unseen world throng around us. We call ourselves lords of our own actions and fate, but we are in reality the slaves of every atom of matter of which the world is made and we ourselves created.—J. H. SHORTHOUSE.

THE best preacher is the heart; the best teacher is time; the best book is the world; the best friend is God.—*Talmud*.

Sow a thought, reap an action;
 Sow an action, reap a habit;
 Sow a habit, reap a character;
 Sow a character, reap a destiny.

OLD SPANISH PROVERB.

THE ROSY CROSS IN RUSSIA

RUSSIAN MASONRY AND NOVIKOFF

*Les héros les plus grands ce sont les moins connus,
Ce sont ceux qui dans l'ombre accomplissent leur tâche.*

A. DE CHAMBRIER.

AT the first step our task is surrounded by particular difficulties. Some of our most important sources—though as “real” (*i.e.*, physical) and trustworthy as historical evidence ever was—are inaccessible for verification to the ordinary reader or critic. Not only the barrier of a little known tongue stands in the way, but the hiding-place of the precious documents has so far opened its well-guarded doors to as few favoured students as the most secret occult library. On the other hand, duty and gratitude towards the very high personage whose word opened these doors—closed for over a century—obliges us to avoid even naming its whereabouts, though this will be easily guessed by diplomatists and by some historians.

Our next difficulty is the enormous amount of material concerning Masonry proper, be it on Russian soil or in connection with the various systems and lands that influenced Masonry in Russia.

Our object being not to add a superfluous account of any part of this vast subject, but to attempt a study of the almost unknown occult Group which worked behind Masonry and in its midst, under the sign and name of the Rosy Cross, we shall give only a very general outline of Masonry from the first planting of its first seeds in Russia to its blossoming out in that splendid group of high minds, of high souls, that bore the humble name of the Theoretical Degree—the chosen Rosicrucians.

At the outset one name confronts us at every turn, in every relation, so pre-eminent that works are headed, “Masonry till

Novikoff," "Novikoff and Martinism," and so on. The name of Nicolaï Novikoff is now surrounded by all the light of gratitude and admiration that a race can give to one of its chosen heroes. He has been called "the best of Russians," and as such we must study him, for truly this man was the first flower of his race, at least of his nation. He embodies its most striking virtues and powers, perfect simplicity, fortitude, patience, forgiveness, an intuition that verged on genius in almost all things he took up.

If one goes far enough back on almost any line of modern Russian progress,—model schools, university circles for students, diffusion of good books, philanthropy, brotherhood, hospitals, refining travels in foreign lands, first ideas of the "Red Cross" as embodying the ideal of equal treatment of sufferers whether friend or foe, the most varied types of higher literature,—on all these lines we find Novikoff as a guiding star, as the hand that started the work, the mind that foresaw the coming need, the coming good.

He was chosen at once as one of the heads of the Theoretical Degree when the "unknown Superiors" abroad had declared that "the hour had come" for Russia, he who in Masonry was but one student among many. For almost a hundred years persecution and fear veiled his memory in a shroud of oblivion. . . . By and by streaks of dawn lit up a deed of his here, there. . . . Brave men tried to tell of him. Now his portrait hangs in the great Imperial Library, and most historical works on his time bear his name as title or refer to him.

* * * *

It is a widely spread tradition that the first founder of Masonry on Russian soil was Peter the Great. Important sources state plainly that in his travels Russia's great Reformer was received into Masonry by Christopher Wren himself, and that the first Russian Lodge had the famous Genevois Lefort for Master, and for Senior Warden the Czar.¹

Anyhow there is no doubt that in 1731 Lord Lovell, Grand Master in the London Grand Lodge, appointed Captain John

¹ *Latonia*, xiii. 149. *Allgem. Handbuch der Fr. M.*, 1863-67, iii. 106 (Leipzig; Brockhaus).

Philips Grand Master for Russia, and that the chief promoters of Russian Masonry were Englishmen. In 1738-1744 the Berlin Lodge of the Drei Weltkugeln had already an active correspondence with Russia, and in 1747 we see already the first persecution against the young Count Nicolai Golovine as Freemason, who, in his trial, stated that both the Counts Tchernichoff also belonged to it. The trial ended without serious consequences to the three accused.

But in 1756, still under Elisabeth (daughter of Peter I.), another trial was started against Michel Olsufieff with the same accusations, and there is mention of a Russian as Grand Master (Count Roman Voronoff) with many names belonging to the best of Russian aristocracy, as well as the names of some of the most cultured people of the time. Yet Beber¹ states that never was there such a unity and devotion of the Brothers as in that "*ecclesia pressa*"—when the Masons had to assemble in secret places and in secret spread the teachings all over the land.

One of the most devoted members was later on Count Moussine-Pouchkine-Bruce, who was the Russian envoy in London in 1760. He entered the Strict Observance rite in 1765 or 1766 in Hamburg and worked hard to establish that system in Russia.

The work came into full vigour with Catherine II.'s ascent to the throne, though Catherine's own mind was of a materialistic and satirical turn and spiritual interests seem never to have played in her life more than the *rôle* of political trumps. Clavel (*Hist. pittoresque de la Franc-Maçonnerie*, Paris, 1843, p. 127), says: "En 1763 ils (les travaux maçonniques) reprirent tout à coup une grande activité. A l'occasion de la fondation d'une loge . . . Klio . . . [in 1763] Catherine s'était fait rendre compte de la nature et du but de l'institution maçonnique. Elle avait compris aussitôt quel immense parti elle pouvait en tirer pour la civilisation de ses peuples et elle s'en était déclarée la protectrice."

The statement is sometimes doubted, yet we have seen in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg (Section of MSS.), in one of the Masonic papers of the time (on initiations ancient and

¹ "Einige Notizen über die Frei-maurerei in Russland," *Handbuch*, iii. 612.

modern), the same statement reiterated, naming the Empress the "head," the "protectress" of the Lodge Klio. The MSS. collections of the St. Petersburg Library and of the Roumian-tzeff Museum in Moscow (e.g., the letters of O. Pozdeeff and of N. Novikoff—under No. 95—Documents of the Rosy Cross) are of the highest interest to the students of Masonry. Many of the earlier documents of the Olsufieff trial are still unpublished and therefore inaccessible to investigation.¹

Krassinsky, in his *Religious History of the Slavonic Nations*, says: "There can be no doubt that had they (i.e., the 'Martinists' as Freemasons were called) been permitted to continue their noble labours, they would have rapidly advanced true civilisation in Russia. They reckoned among their members all the best men in Russia.

"This was a glorious epoch in the annals of Freemasonry, which never, perhaps, had such a noble though, alas, short career of usefulness as that which it pursued under the guidance of its Martinist leaders in Russia. . . . Among the members of that admirable society Novikoff was particularly remarkable."

And indeed Novikoff's life-story is the story of Freemasonry, and still more of the Rosy Cross itself, in Russia. Friends or adversaries, all the other eminent workers in that field came in contact with him, and we must study his biography as Mason and as one of the heads of the Rosicrucian degrees in order to understand the history of the Rosy Cross on Russian soil.

Nicolai Novikoff was of an ancient family which appears in Russian history as early as the 16th century. According to the prevailing custom he was intended from early childhood for the army, and he received, so to say, no education whatever. He himself said: "My first teacher was God." Indeed, with him his later knowledge seems to have been a case of memory, of awakening the wisdom developed in past lives.

He was among the young guard that, early in the morning of June 28th, 1762, watched for Catherine II. on her ride to the conquest of the throne and first welcomed the new Empress. Among these young men, some still simple soldiers, though of noble birth, were all the future stars of her reign: the "Eagles

¹ *Chron. of Russian Literature and Antiq.*, t. v., part iii.

of Catherine," as they were called—the great Potemkine, the poet Derjaime, yet none so great as the boy on watch at the bridge of the Ismaïl Regiment's chancellery—Novikoff.

In 1767 he was sent to Moscow as one of the Commission of Deputies (a shadow of Parliament that was to be), and had later the honour to read personally some of his reports to Catherine II. But in 1768 he got weary of his military career—though he was studying all alone—and took his leave of the army, still quite young (he was born on April 27th, 1744, in his ancestral country home Tihvinsko, near Moscow).

He tried literature, and became at once one of the best-known satirical journalists in St. Petersburg. Princess Dachkoff, the young and most beautiful friend of Catherine, who had followed her in uniform and sword in hand on her Ride for the Crown on June 28th, 1762, and who was President of the Academy of Sciences (and one of the best it ever had), knew Novikoff well, and the Empress herself was gracious to him and replied to his literary attacks in the same way. He was in the best intellectual society. From 1772 to 1778 he worked untiringly for the progress of science and literature in his country and some of his works are still indispensable to the student.¹

In 1777 he founded the *St. Petersburg Messenger*, which, with some interruptions, has come down to our times (and is now in the hands of Prince Ouchtomsky, so well known to many Theosophists in the East).

Princess Dachkoff's father, Count Voronzoff, had been Grand Master of the St. Petersburg Lodges in 1756. Was it the genius of the Lady President of the Academy of Sciences, or was it destiny? At least Novikoff soon realised the futility of all his intellectual endeavours and turned to Masonry for light. In 1775 he entered the Order and was received by his friends directly as Master in the Astrea Lodge, without pledge and with full liberty to leave if anything went against his conscience. His lodge was under Elaguine as Grand Master and we shall have to devote a short study to that worker presently. Novikoff and some other members were dissatisfied with the Elaguine system and founded a lodge of their own, turning to the system of the Mason Reichel

¹ Lonzinoff.

(i.e., of Zinnendorf) with Jacob Doubiauský as chief. Novikoff was then already in the fourth degree and, at that time, was strongly opposed to the "Strict Observance" rite. Reichel showed Novikoff it was not true that Masonry followed political aims, and that it did not preach "equality and freedom."

In 1777 Novikoff met Prince Peter Repnine and was told of the existence of the Rosy Cross. . . . He asked Repnine whether he himself had had such difficulty to "find" the Rosy Cross? But at that moment somebody rushed into the very midst of their conversation and Repnine gave no reply. Novikoff had no opportunity to repeat his enquiries and the next year Repnine died. Novikoff's "hour" had not yet come.

Elaguine, who was Novikoff's chief in his first Masonic years, was a good example of the Russian nobleman of the eighteenth century. The deep, mystical Slav nature and the French education, superficial, though brilliant in some ways, which spoiled some of its inherent qualities, forcing it into scepticism and a mode of existence uncongenial to it, had made Elaguine first lead the fast life of the higher classes of his time. Then, tired of it, he turned to Masonry while still young, but finding no satisfaction for his spiritual cravings in all the "systems" and "degrees," he had nearly renounced it altogether when he met an unnamed Englishman travelling in Russia. This man convinced Elaguine that real Masonry was a mysterious science seldom given to anyone, that England did not give it out otherwise than orally, that the real secret was kept in London in a lodge "very ancient" and known to very few of the Brothers, into which it was very difficult to be initiated. This unknown Brother took Elaguine in hand, giving him five years to "learn Wisdom." Elaguine then studied the scriptures and the Fathers of the Church, and also Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, Socrates, Epictetus, Plato, Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Homer, Zoroaster . . . , in translations of course. Yet his own studies would not have permitted him even "to see from afar the Temple," as he says, if he had not received as teacher and friend one Dr. Stanislas Ely, (the author of the *Brotherly Advice*¹ so well known at that epoch). Ely was a Kabbalist

¹ *Brüderliche Vermahnungen*, etc., Vom Brud. Seddag (Philadelphia; 1781).

(member of one of Elaguine's lodges later), and, among other services, saved Elaguine's life in an illness.

Ely was "excellent in the Kabalah and deeply versed in Theosophy." Elaguine undertook with him the study of Robert Fludd and many others. Among his MSS. we find "A Word on Being," translated from Eug. Philalethes, with the mottoes: "Listen to the Voice of the Fire" (Zoroaster), and "Many will go by many ways and knowledge will increase" (Daniel). We find a diagram of the Sephiroth and the correspondences of the planets worked out in a most interesting way. Among his notes he says that: "The Spear which strikes at both ends . . . is the mystery of Pythagoras and of the Cross."

He quotes much from the *Mysteries of Christianity*, saying that: "Those who become theologians ought not for that to renounce their reason; that this century (the eighteenth) is the nineteenth century since Christianity was spoken of; that it was to be the religion of the world, but, up to now, it had conquered the nations of only one part of it, the smallest, and created there several 'creeds,' so that it rather added to the confusion and strife; that there ought to be a holy union bringing all into one fraternal Society."¹ (Translated from the English, printed in London, 1775.) Elaguine studied deeply also *Recherches historiques et critiques sur les Mystères du Paganisme*.

He himself expounded the knowledge received and meditated on by him in his *Teaching of the Ancient Wisdom of God*, and we may here quote the titles of some books in the vast library belonging to the lodges of his system. They are as follows: *Stories of the World's Creation; Reception of a Knight Templar; Occulta Occultissima; Hermes Trismegistus' Cognition of Nature* (from the Greek, Moscow, 1775); *Secret Symbols of the Rosy Cross; Notes on the Masonic Teachings of Pythagoras; Book of Symbols by Degrees* (full of splendid suggestions); then the well-known *Theosophical-Magical (and) Cabbalistic A B C, etc.*, and *Theosophical-Magical Cabbalistic Explanations, etc.*, by Woellner, the remarkable anonymous MS. in which prediction is made of true Masonry having to come later from Tibet. (N.B.—This MS., when

¹ This was the ideal bequeathed by the 18th century Masons to Alexander I. and his allies when with Mme. de Krüdener's assistance they tried to create the Holy Alliance.

we saw it, was in a sealed parcel which has remained under guard—the most severe in Europe—for nearly a century. It required a special order from a very high authority to have that parcel opened. To touch it before would have meant exile, perhaps death. No accusation of fraud or substitution is here possible. The Elaguine papers have remained in *statu quo*, under key, ever since they were taken from an arrested Mason under Nicolai I.)

That MS. (the diary of an anonymous member of some German Lodge who went to help the Russian Brothers and then returned to Berlin, where he assisted at the studies of the Rosy Cross degree) reports that in a reunion of these R.C.C. of Berlin, one of them ("Simson") said he had heard "that true Masonry was to come once more from the kingdom of Tibet, while another (Ritch) had it that it was to come from eastern Russia. It bears the No. 19, Section VIII. 216, of the secret papers seen by us and by some historians also. Its date is 1784. We shall have to mention it later on. The prediction is both curious and important to Theosophists, nor can it be declared to be a forgery by any critic, however inimical to the Theosophical Society and to H. P. B.

The author says he was born in 1756, entered Masonry on July 17th, 1776, in Rostock and was sent to Russia to help. We find there strictures on Elaguine which—though sharp—must have been more or less exact, and explain why Elaguine, with all his fervour and earnestness, and even the knowledge which made him Grand Master of the St. Petersburg Lodges for a time (General Melissino was Head of the Lodges of his own system, on which we have few details so far) could not satisfy or hold Novikoff and some of his most spiritual companions.

"Elaguine," says our author [we translate here from memory], "sleeps, rises, eats, goes to his state office to work, and returning eats and sleeps again." He seems to have been a man of honest endeavour who did what he understood to be directly his duty—but no more, for he was not able to see it. He laboured much to grasp the outer teachings and the meaning of exoteric symbols, but he always remained outside the true spirit of both. He clung faithfully to what he knew of the

ancient English system, but distrusted all that seemed to him an "innovation"; if it saved him from some impostures it prevented his intuition working as it began to work in Novikoff and his companions, when they formed themselves in 1780 into a Lodge named "Harmonia." It consisted of eight or nine members only and was instituted for seeking the "inner perfection and the union of all Masons." The members called themselves "Brothers of the Inner Order."

Novikoff had become in 1778 a friend of Prince N. Troubezkoï and his brother Yuri, and of their half-brother the poet Heraskoff, then Curator at Moscow University. Prince N. Troubezkoï removed to Moscow, and they entreated Novikoff to do the same. The Prince transferred also to the most ancient of the two capitals the seat of the Lodges "Osiris," "Isis" (of Reval) and "Latone." Into the latter came Prince Tcherbatoff, Prince Gagarine, Prince Galitzine, Prince Dolgorouki, Prince Volkousky and Count Saltykoff. It is uncertain whether this Mason gave his name to the "Lodge of the Saltykoff system" so-called, which worked on theosophical-hermetic lines, and which Pypine mentions as founded by Hofrath Nitschke. Echessky also mentions it (*Signalstern*, iii. 448). Novikoff also yielded to his companions' appeal and came to live in Moscow, where Heraskoff put him in charge of the University printing. He entered Troubezkoï's Lodge (though it was one under the Strict Observance rule) and rose to the seventh degree, being already Master of the Chair in his St. Petersburg Lodge.

Heraskoff, being of four Curators the only one who ruled, was, though young, much loved by the students and by the public. He and his sweet and gifted wife did much to spread light in Russia. He had high connections and was thus a link between science, the students and society.

In Moscow, where, according to the great poet Derjavine's testimony, Masonry flourished since 1760, there existed several "systems." Baron Bennings founded a "Templar" system, but failed to win confidence, and his members turned to the famous Berlin Lodge of the "Three Globes." There was also a group of lodges working under a French system of the Strict Observance and dependent on the "Lodge of the Three Flags" (Longinoff,

p. 144). But Novikoff testified that these lodges were very superficial and that earnest Masons turned from them as soon as they became better known.

Novikoff, who had done, besides philanthropy, such splendid work as editor and journalist in Petersburg, especially in his *Russian Library*, still invaluable for research into ancient Russian life in Moscow, soon became engrossed with his printing. He edited in translation *The Predestination of Man* (Spalding), just before meeting with his own fate in the shape of his future nearest friend and guide, John George Schwarz.

John Schwarz was born on Slav soil also, in Transylvania. He knew Novikoff by his *Library*. Prince Gagarine had called Schwarz to Moscow to act as tutor to his friend Rachmanoff's children in Mohileff. The young tutor soon returned to Moscow to enter Masonry under Prince N. Troubezkoï, to whom he was introduced by the poet Basil Maikoff, a descendant of Nil of Sor. Schwarz created a lodge in Mohileff, and, hearing of more ancient Masonry in Curland, went there at once. He was received into the fifth degree of the Strict Observance, and was made Master in his own lodge. In 1779, at the same time as Novikoff, he appeared in Moscow to live there, for he spoke Russian well and loved Russia. The University offered him the chair of German. Novikoff and Schwarz became friends at once.

In 1780 they founded their "secret and scientific Lodge of Harmony" already spoken of. It had no regular meetings, but met to discuss the means to restore true Masonry. They had the idea of seeking for the explanation of its secrets in the convent archives of the Greek rite, which has so much resemblance with the Masonic. Woellner and some others also had much desired to know more of the Greek-Russian Church and its ancient church rites; it seemed to them so closely akin to Masonry that they also hoped to find there the "truth." Woellner persuaded Baron Schweder to sell his property and go to Russia to study this question. Their search, however, seems to have been unsuccessful, or the hindrances were too great under the special Russian conditions. And, after having refused the advances made by Swedish Masons who tried to include Russia as part of the Province the Swedish Chapter wished to form and to rule,

the Moscow Masons decided to send abroad Professor John Schwarz and a young nobleman Pierre Taticheff, to seek the "Light" and the "Secret Brotherhood." (This proves that they must have known both of its existence and of some likely means of finding it.) In 1781, on October 22nd, Schwarz presented his papers to the Duke of Brunswick. Though this first interview was devoted to questions of Masonic organisation, it put Moscow into direct relations with the Duke, and Russian deputies were invited to attend the Convention of Wilhelmsbad (July-September, 1782).

At the Wilhelmsbad Convention the deputies for Russia were the Duke himself and Professor Schwarz. We cannot enter into purely Masonic details here; it suffices to say that Russia was recognised as an independent Masonic Province (the place of Grand Master remaining vacant, which is very significant, and to be remembered when we deal with the question whether Paul I. had been a Mason or no). The Chapter was constituted as follows:

Eighth Province (Russia)

Prior: Pierre Taticheff
 Treasurer: Nicolaï Novikoff
 Chancellor: John Schwarz
 General Visitor: Prince N. Troubezkoï

The Russian deputies declared that it was contrary to Russian ideas that the Order should hold property (the old objection of Nil of Sor).

The Lodges of St. Petersburg, which were more given to ceremonial, took at first no part, and only the Moscow Lodges were in 1782 reformed under the two Chapters, under Prince N. Troubezkoï and Taticheff. The latter had led a very fast life, being exceedingly rich, but Masonry and the influence of Schwarz had saved him, and he helped the work considerably. (It is to be remarked that one Lodge was formed *exclusively* of officials of the Moscow University; its name is unknown.) For St. Petersburg Novikoff and Prince Troubezkoï entered into

¹ An unnamed, unknown high Mason, a "Superior," had been on a visit to Moscow just before the two emissaries started, and had declared he found "Brother Schwarz absolutely trustworthy."--Echessky, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

relations with André Rjessky—one of their heads—and he became later Warden of the Theoretical Degree for St. Petersburg.

But among all the conquests made by Schwarz as ambassador of Russian Masonry, the most glorious was that moment—described further on—when he met at Wilhelmsbad “those who hid from the other Masons,” those who told him “the hour to bless Russia had come,” and gave him “all that was needed.” These were the papers for the organisation in Russia of the first degrees of the “Rosy Cross” under the name of “Theoretical Degree of Salomonic Sciences” which Troubezkoï called: “The School of Nature’s Highest Mysteries.”

Schwarz, who, though very young, was dashing past his companions of study like a meteor (to be soon followed by Novikoff), had already in Berlin been received into the Rosy Cross by Woellner.¹ He was made the Head of the Theoretical Degree for Russia and obliged under pledge (1) not to give that Degree to any except such as had the rank of “Ancient Scottish Master,” and even then only to those distinguished by their devotion, their love of humanity and their piety. (2) Not to give that degree paper to be read into the hands of anyone except in Schwarz’s own presence, and still less to allow anyone to copy it. (3) He was to give the teachings so that in nine meetings it had to be passed through once. (4) He had to try to explain it to the brothers as best he could. (5) He had to keep the degree under absolute secrecy and be very prudent in the choice of members. Novikoff was to be admitted, pledging himself in the presence of at least three Theoretical Brothers to recognise Schwarz as his Head, to be loyal and obedient to him, not to receive anyone without his permission and to observe the other rules stated above. The other Russian Wardens were to obey Novikoff.

Given in the “Palace of the Theoretical Degree,” Berlin, 1st October, 1781—signed by three:

M. II. Johan Christian Eq. a Tarda.

Franciscus Wilhelmus Eq. a Castore,

Secretarius.

¹ Woellner kept watch over them severely, not to let them be contaminated by “Illumination.”

(When later at the death of Schwarz a Directory was chosen to rule the Theoretical Degree, the three directors had no precedence among them and had to speak in turn, one at each meeting of Directory, so as to exercise modesty.)

Indeed, Schwarz came back with Light that "shone like a stream of rays over the land"; a new teaching unheard of was brought to Russia. In spite of all coming trials "the inner force remained unshaken." (This was written forty years after his death, when the tide of persecution had rolled thrice over Russian Masonry). The teaching, whose aim was "to seek the Great Mystery of perfection so high as it be accessible to man," was to be the foundation of a "new Church to which land and government could be submitted and which could unify all nations."

A RUSSIAN.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

THE GNOSIS OF THE MIND

IN the June number I recorded some of the deeper impressions which a study of the Trismegistic literature has left on my mind, and endeavoured in a general fashion to set forth a few of the leading ideas of the Religion of the Mind, or the Pure Philosophy, or Single Love, as the disciples of Thrice-greatest Hermes called their Theosophy some nineteen centuries ago.

The most general term, however, by which they named their science and philosophy and religion was Gnosis; it occurs in almost every sermon and excerpt and fragment of their literature which we possess. The doctrine and the discipline of Mind, the Feeder of men and Shepherd of man's soul, are summed up in that fairest word—Gnosis.

Let us then briefly consider the meaning of the name as the followers of this Way understood it. Gnosis is Knowledge; but not discursive knowledge of the nature of the multifarious arts and sciences known in those days or in our own. On this "noise of words," these multifarious knowledges of the appear-

ances of things and vain opinions, the followers of the True Science and Pure Philosophy looked with resignation; while those of them who were still probationers treated them with even less tolerance, declaring that they left such things to the "Greeks"; for "Egyptians," of course, nothing but Wisdom could suffice.

At any rate this is how one of the less instructed editors of one of the collections of our sermons phrases it. For him Egypt was the Sacred Land and the Egyptians the Chosen Race; while the Greeks were upstarts and shallow reasoners. The like-natured Jew of the period, on the other hand, called the body "Egypt," while Judæa was the Holy Land, and Palestine the Promised Land, and Israel the Chosen of God; and so the game went merrily on, as it does even unto this day.

But the real writers of the sermons knew otherwise. Gnosis for them was superior to all distinction of race; for the Gnostic was precisely he who was reborn, regenerate, into the Race, the Race of true Wisdom-lovers, the Kinship of the Divine Fatherhood. Gnosis for them began with the Knowledge of Man, to be consummated at the end of the perfecting by the Knowledge of God or Divine Wisdom.

This Knowledge was far other than the knowledge or science of the world. Not, however, that the latter was to be despised; for all things are true or untrue, according to our point of view. If our standpoint is firmly centred in the True, all things can be read in their true meaning; whereas if we wander in error, all things, even the truest, become misleading for us.

The Gnosis began, continued and ended in the knowledge of one's self, the reflection of the Knowledge of the One Self, the All Self. So that if we say that Gnosis was other than the science of the world, we do not mean that it excluded anything, but only that it regarded all human arts and sciences as insufficient, incomplete, imperfect.

Indeed it is quite evident on all hands that the writers of the Trismegistic tractates, in setting forth their intuitions of the things-that-are, and in tricking out the living ideas that come to birth in their hearts and heads, made use of the philosophy and science and art of their day. It is, on the one hand, one of the charms of their endeavour that they did so; for in so doing

they brought the great truths of the inner life into contact with the thought of their age.

There is, however, always a danger in any such attempt; for in proportion as we involve the great intuitions of the soul and the apocalypses of the mind in the opinions of the day, we make the exposition of the mysteries depart from the nature of scripture and fall into the changing notions of the ephemeral. Human science is ever changing; and if we set forth such glimpses of the sure ideas and living verities of the Gnosis as we can obtain in the ever-changing forms of evolving science, we may, indeed, do much to popularise our glimpse of the mysteries for our own time; but the days that are to come will accuse us of clothing the Beauty of the Truth in rags as compared with the fairer garment of their own improved opinions.

The documents that have been preserved from the *scriptoria* of the Trismegistic tradition are by many hands and the product of many minds. Sometimes they involve themselves so closely with the science of their day that the current opinion of the twentieth century will turn from them with a feeling of contemptuous superiority; on the other hand they not unfrequently remain in the paths of clear reason, and offer us an unimpeded view of vistas of the Plain of Truth. But indeed, even when they hold most closely to the world-representations and man-knowledges of their day they are not without interest; for it may be that in their notions of living nature—the very antipodes of our modern-day opinions based on the dead surfaces of things—they may have been with regard to some things even nearer the truth than we are ourselves in this so boasted age of grace and enlightenment.

Be this as it may, there are ample examples of clean and clear thinking in the *logoi* or sacred sermons, or discourses, or utterances, of the School; and one of the most attractive elements in the whole discipline is the fact that the pupil was encouraged to think and question. Reason was held in high honour; a right use of reason, or rather, let us say, right reason, and not its counterfeit, opinion, was the most precious instrument of knowledge of man and the cosmos, and the means of self-realisation; into that Highest Good which, among many other names of

sublime dignity, was known as the Good Mind or Reason (Logos) of God.

The whole theory of attainment was conditioned by the fact that man in body, soul and mind was a world in himself,—a little world, it is true, so long as he is content to play the part of a “procession of Fate”; but his Destiny is greater than that Fate, or rather, let us say, his Unknowingness is Fate, his Awareness will be his Destiny. Man is a little world, little in the sense of personal, individual, separate; but a world for all that—a monad. And the destiny of man is that he should become the Monad of monads, or the Mind of God—the Cosmos itself, not only as perceived by the senses as all that is, both that which moves and moves not, which is the Great Body and Great Soul of things; but also as conceived by mind, as that Intelligible Greatness of all greatnesses, the Idea of all ideas, the Mind and Reason of God Himself, His own Self-created Son, Alone-begotten, the Beloved.

On this transcendent fact of all facts is founded the whole discipline and method of the Gnosis of the Mind. The Mystery of mysteries is Man or Mind. But this naming of the Mystery should not be understood as excluding Soul and Body. Mind is the Person of persons, the Presence of all presences. Time, space, and causality are conditioned by the Mind. But this Mind, the True Man, is not the mind in bondage to causality, space and time. On the other hand, it is just this mind in bondage, this procession of Fate, the servant's form, which is the appearance that hides the potentiality of becoming the All, of becoming the Æon, the Presence,—that is, the subsistence of all things present, at every moment of time, and point of space, and every instant cause-and-effect in the Bosom of Fate. It is true that in the region of opinion, body, soul and mind seem separate and apart; they are held by the man in separation as the fundamental categories of his existence; and truly so, for they are the conditions of *ex*-istence, of standing *out* of Being, that environment of incompleteness—the complement or fulfilment of which is *ec*-stasis, whereby the man goes forth from his limitations to unite himself with Himself, and so reaches that Satisfaction and Fulfilment, which our Gnostics call the Pleroma when set over against the conception of space, and the Æon when set

over against the idea of time, and the Good when contrasted with the notion of fate.

But Being is the Three in One, Mind, Soul and Body—Light, Life and Substance, co-eternal together and co-equal.

It therefore follows that he who would be Gnostic, must not foolishly divorce within himself the mystery of the triple Partners, the Three Powers, or the Divine Triad. For him the object of his endeavour is to consummate the Sacred Marriage within himself, where Three must “marry” to create; that so he may be united to his Greatest Self and become at-one with God. Body, soul, and mind (or spirit, for in this Gnosis spirit is frequently a synonym of mind) must all work together in intimate union for righteousness.

The body of man must be regarded as a holy temple, a shrine of the Divine—the most marvellous House of God that exists, fairer far than the fairest temple raised with hands. For this natural temple which the Divine has wrought for the indwelling of His beloved sons, is a copy of the Great Image, the Temple of the Universe in which the Son of God, the Man, dwells.

Every atom and every group of atoms, every limb and joint and organ, is laid down according to the Divine Plan; the body is an image of the Great Seal, Heaven-and-Earth, male-female in one.

But how few know or even dream of the possibilities of this living temple of the Divine! We are sepulchres, tombs of the dead; for our bodies are half-atrophied, alive only to the things of Death, and dead to the things of Life.

The Gnosis of the Mind thus teaches us to let the Life flow into the dead channels of our corporeal nature, to invoke the Holy Breath of God to enliven the *substance* of our frames. That so the Divine Quickener may first bring to birth in us our divine complement, our other self, our long-lost spouse; and then we may ourselves with ungrudging love and fair wooing of her bring our true selves to birth, so becoming regenerate or reborn,—a trinity of Being, not a unit of vegetative existence, or a duality of man-animal nature, but the Perfect Triangle jewelled with all three sparks of perfected manhood.

It is very evident, then, that if the idea of this Gnosis be carried out logically, the hearer of this Mathesis must strive ever to become a doer of the Word, and so self-realise himself in every portion of his being. The object that he has in view is intensification of his whole nature. He does not parcel out his universe or himself into special compartments, but he strives ever to refund himself into ever more intimate union with himself—meaning by this his ever-present consciousness; for there is nothing really that He is not.

Indeed it is one of the pleasantest features of the Trimegistic Gnosis, or rather, one may say its chief characteristic, a characteristic which should specially endear it to our present age, that throughout it is eminently reasonable. It is ever encouraging the pupil to think and question and reason; I do not mean that it encourages criticism for the sake of criticism or carping, or questioning for the sake of idle curiosity, but that it is ever insisting on a right use of the purified reason, and the striving to clarify the mind and soul and body, so that they may become a crystal prism through which the One Ray of the Logos, the All-Brilliancy, as Philo calls it, may shine with unimpeded lustre in clean and clear colours according to the nature of the truth in manifestation.

And here we may attempt to compare, though not with any idea of contrasting to the disparagement of either, the greater simplicity of the Gnosis of the Mind with the dazzling multiplicity and endless immensities of the, perhaps for my readers, more familiar revelations of the Christianised Gnosis. They are two aspects of the same Mystery; but whereas the former is conditioned by the clear thinking of philosophic reason as set forth pre-eminently in the Logic of Plato, and refuses to sever its contact with the things-that-are "here" as well as "there," the latter soars into such transcendent heights of vision and apocalypse, that it loses itself in ecstasies which cannot possibly be registered in the waking consciousness.

I, for my part, love to try to follow the seers of the Christian Gnosis in their soaring and heaven-storming, love to plunge into the depths and greatnesses of their spiritual intuitions; but it cannot but be admitted that this intoxication of the spirit is a

great danger for any but the most balanced minds. Indeed, it is highly probable that such unrestrained outpourings of divine frenzy as we meet with in some of the Christian Gnostic Apocalypses, were never intended to be circulated except among those who had already proved themselves self-restrained in the fullest meaning of the term.

The Trismegistic sermons show us that such rapt and visions were also the privilege of "them who are in Gnosis"; but they did not circulate the revelations of such mysteries; and though they taught the disciple to dare all things in perhaps more daring terms than we find recorded in any other scripture, they again and again force him to bring all to the test of the practical reason, that so the vital substance received from above may be rightly digested by the pure mind and fitly used to nourish the nature below.

But as for us who are hearers of the Gnosis, of Theosophy, wherever it is to be found, it would be unwise to reject any experience of those who have gone before upon the Way. Whether we call it the Gnosis of the Mind with the followers of Thrice-greatest Hermes, or the Gnosis of the Truth as Marcus does, or by many another name given it by the Gnostics of that day, it matters little; the great fact is that there *is* Gnosis, and that men have touched her sacred robe and been healed of the vices of their souls; and the mother-vice of the soul is ignorance, as Hermes says. But this ignorance is not ignorance of the arts and sciences and the rest, but ignorance of God; it is the true a-theism, the root-superstition of the human mind and heart,—the illusion that prevents a man realising the oneness of his true self with the Divine.

The dawning of this sacred conviction, the birth of this true faith, is the beginning of Gnosis; it is the Glad Tidings, the Gnosis of Joy, at whose shining Sorrow flees away. This is the Gospel, as Basilides the Gnostic conceived it, the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings; that is to say, the Father in the likeness of a dove—the Father of Light brooding over the sacred vessel, or divine chalice, or cup, the awakened spiritual nature of the new-born son.

This is the true baptism, and also the first miracle, as in

the Gnosis of the Fourth Gospel, when the water of the watery spheres is turned into the wine of the spirit at the first marriage.

But perhaps my readers will say: But this is the Christian Gnosis and not the Gnosis of the Mind! My dear friends (if you will permit me, I would reply), there is no Christian Gnosis and no Trismegistic Gnosis; there is but One Gnosis. If that Gnosis was for certain purposes either associated with the name and mystic person of the Great Teacher known as Jesus of Nazareth, or handed on under the typical personality of Great Hermes, it is not for us to keep the two streams apart in heart and head in water-tight compartments. The two traditions mutually interpret and complete one another. They are contemporaneous; they are both part and parcel of the same Economy. Read the fragments of these two forgotten faiths, or rather the fragments of the two manifestations of this forgotten faith, and you will see for yourself.

But again, some one may say (as a matter of fact not a few have already said): What do we want with a forgotten faith, fragmentary or otherwise? We are living in the twentieth century; we do not want to return to the modes of thought of two thousand years ago; we can create a new Gnosis that will interpret the facts of present-day science and philosophy and religion.

I too await the dawn of that New Age; but I doubt that the Gnosis of the New Age will be new. Certainly it will be set forth in new forms, for the forms can be infinite. The Gnosis itself is not conditioned by space and time; it is we who are conditioned by these modes of manifestation. He who is reborn into the Gnosis becomes, as I have heard, the lord of time and space, and passes from man into the state of super-man and christ, or daimon and god, as a Hermes would have phrased it two thousand years ago, or of bodhisattva and buddha, as it was phrased five hundred years before that.

Indeed, if I believe rightly, the very essence of the Gnosis is the faith that man can transcend the limits of the duality that makes him man, and become a consciously divine being. The problem he has to solve is the problem of his day, the transcending of his present limitations. The way to do so is not, I venture to

submit, by exalting his present-day knowledge in science or philosophy or religion at the expense of the little he can learn of the imperfect tradition of the religion and philosophy and science of the past, handed on to us by the forgetfulness of a series of ignorant and careless generations. The feeding of our present-day vanity on the husks from the feasts of other days is a poor diet for one who would be Gnostic. It is very true that, speaking generally, we do know more of physical observation, analysis and classification, we do know more of the theory of knowledge, and many other things in the domain of the lower memory of appearances; but do we know more of religion as a living experience than the great souls of the past; do we know more of the Gnosis than the Gnostics of other days? I doubt it.

We are beginning once more to turn our attention in the direction of the Greater Mysteries; the cycles of the Æon are, I believe, once more set in a configuration similar to the mode of the Time-Mind when such illumination is possible for numbers of souls, and not for stray individuals only. But the conditions of receiving that illumination are the same now as they have ever been; and one of the conditions is the power to rise superior to the opinions of the Hour into the Gnosis of the Eternal Æon.

It therefore follows, if I am right in my premises, that the illusion of all illusions that we must strive to transcend is that of the Lord of the Hour; it is just the general opinion and pre-suppositions and prejudices of our own day against which we must be on our watch with greatest vigilance. There are certain forms of knowledge, forms of religion, and forms of philosophy, that dominate every age and every hour; these forms are most potent, for they are alive with the faith of millions; and therefore it follows that it may be we shall find less difficulty in our endeavour to pierce through the clouds of opinion to the living ideas beyond if we study forms that are no longer charged with the passions of mankind,—with that storage of the hopes and fears of incarnated minds, the shock of which few are strong enough to withstand. It may thus be that the forms of the Gnosis of the past may be read more dispassionately and seen through more clearly.

However this may be, it would be manifestly absurd to go back to the past and simply pour ourselves once more into these

ancient forms; this would be death and a mental and spiritual reincarnation backwards, so to speak. It is precisely this absurdity which so many literalists attempt in theology, only to find themselves sticking in the mud of dead forms with the tide of the spiritual life far out.

On the other hand, there may be some who feel that in what has been said above the artist and lover of the Beautiful in us risk to be sacrificed entirely to the Philistine. There is such a thing as scripture; there are such things as the best books. *Non refert quam multos sed quam bonos libros legas*; it is not the quantity but the quality of the books we read that is of importance. The Gnosis is enshrined in scripture, in bibles and not in books. And I doubt not that even to-day there are enough bible-lovers, in the wider sense of the word, among us to appreciate the beautiful and permanent in literature.

The Trismegistic sermons have a common language with the writers of the New Testament books, and they also use the language of Plato. They can, therefore, hardly be said to be out of date even as to their form; while as to their content, as far as their main ideas are concerned, I venture to say that they pertain to the great books of the world, they are part of the world-scripture.

If, then, any would learn of the Gnosis of the Mind, they will not lose anything by reading what the disciples of this form of the Wisdom-Tradition have handed on to us. They may prefer more modern expositions, or they may find some other scripture of the past more suitable to their needs; but if they are lovers of comparative theosophy, and are persuaded that he who is acquainted with one mode of theosophy only does not know theosophy truly, even as he who is acquainted with one language only knows no language really, they may learn much by comparing the theosophy of the Hermes-Gnostics with the theosophy of the Christian Gnostics, or of the Buddhist or Brahmánical lovers of the Gnosis.

G. R. S. MEAD.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

THE aim of the spiritual life is to enable the spirit of man to manifest itself in all its glory and power ; and, for this purpose, we gradually train our bodies—of muscles and nerves, of desires, and of thought—to perfect obedience to their owner. These bodies have to be completely mastered by us, in order that the body of thought, instead of acting as now only under the impulse of random desires, may always serve us as the means of developing Jñâna ; that the body of desire may become the permanent vehicle of the emotions of love and not of hate, of the emotions that lead to self-sacrifice and not to self-aggrandisement ; and that the accumulated energy of the good emotions may lead the physical body to do only such actions as are harmonious with the will of Īshvara.

The means of developing Spirituality are the famous four Sādhanas (means). The difficulties and failures in the attempt to practise them daunt and discourage the aspirant, but these very failures can be utilised by the thoughtful. The first of the Sādhanas is Viveka—in full, Ātmânâtma-viveka, separation of spirit from matter. The definitions of spirit and matter are not difficult to understand. Spirit is characterised by pure consciousness Samvit, and matter by the want of it. The understanding only of this and of the various modifications (Parinâma) of matter is not Viveka. Spirit by itself and matter by itself are pure abstractions of the mind and not actual entities. Everywhere in the universe, “from Brahma to pillar,” all is spirit-matter. Īshvara is spirit-matter, but in Him the spirit is omnipotent in the regions of matter He deals with, for He is Satyasañkalpa.

Matter does not obstruct his will, but serves as its plastic vehicle. In the perfect man, spirit has completely mastered the grades of matter that constitute the field of human evolution, and has its three Shaktis fully developed—his Jñâna perfect in these

spheres, his Will all-powerful, and his Action harmonious with the purposes of Īshvara.

In the ordinary man spirit and matter are in conflict. Spirit recognises the unity of all life and the identity of the individual self with other selves and the Universal Self; matter struggles for diversity of sensation, and separation of the life of each body which it forms. Spirit seeks the unification of wills, matter for the refraction of the one Will into many separate lines of energy. Spirit works for harmony, matter for discord. The aspirant for the spiritual life lives in the centre of this conflict. Every experience of his is an expression of this conflict. He must analyse every such experience and learn to discriminate in it the action of spirit from that of matter. This is Viveka. The specific means we adopt for developing Viveka is meditation.

Meditation is the attempt to realise the pure consciousness which is pure spirit. Our consciousness at any moment is a complex of various elements contributed by our bodies—held together loosely by a weak thread of the Self, or in the language of Vedānta, illuminated by a ray of Ātmā. Thus the physical body contributes the consciousness of life, the body of desire colours consciousness with emotion, and the mind furnishes it with the protecting wall of Ahaṅkāra.

In meditation we try to put away these material elements, and intensify the spiritual elements, and thus realise the nature of pure spirit. Failure in meditation is due to the rebellion of these bodies, their refusal to be put away, and the consequent impossibility of filtering the pure consciousness from extraneous elements. When we thus fail in meditation, we can analyse the causes of failure and trace it to some inordinate hankering for sensation, some ill-controlled emotion, or to inability to distinguish between Manas, which is atomic and material, and spirit, which is immaterial and unrelated to space. If the cause is found, the battle is won; if the cause is not found, the mere attempt to discover it, and the consequent separation of spirit from matter in thought, is a step in Viveka and will help the aspirant.

Outside meditation and in the ordinary worldly life Viveka ought also to be practised. Life is the result of the joint play of

spirit and matter. Every experience furnishes materials for the practice of Viveka, for the study of the action of spirit and matter. We must train ourselves in criticising life while living it; we must, as it were, raise a dæmon inside us who will coldly observe and analyse our experiences while we ourselves undergo them. "Learn from sensation and observe it, because only so can you begin the science of self-knowledge." Even while we are being hurled on by the overpowering fury of the seductions of sense, this dæmon that we have raised within us for our help can weigh, observe and test them, and derive the lesson that they are absolutely different from the real Self. Thus every instant can the student grow in Viveka till he reaches the last stage of all—the perfect never-failing recognition of himself as spirit, till he definitely unifies himself with his Âtman.

The next of the four practices is Vairâgya—in full, Iha-amutra-phala-bhoga-virâgya, the cessation of desire for fruits here and there. Vairâgya is, unfortunately, generally misunderstood. It is not abstention from the duties of life, for action belongs to the physical body and Vairâgya is a mood of the mind. It is not indifference to the *things* of the world, which are not the fruits here referred to. All actions have various consequences. They affect ourselves and they affect our fellow-beings. These consequences persist during life and after death.

Our actions cause pleasure or pain to ourselves as well as to others, and these pleasures and pains are re-experienced in the worlds on the other side of death. The pleasures and pains which return to us from our actions are called the sweet and bitter "fruits here and there." Vairâgya is that mood of the mind which enables a man to perform all the duties of life irrespective of the pleasures or pains they cause to himself. He cannot help feeling them, so long as he has a normal nervous system; if he should destroy the sensitiveness of his nerves by a mistaken view of Vairâgya, he only delays his progress by depriving the spirit of its organ of expression.

Vairâgya, then, does not teach inaction, nor even indifference to the pleasurable or painful consequences which flow from one's actions to oneself, but the cultivation of a higher motive in the conduct of life than the securing of selfish pleasure or the

avoidance of pain to oneself, and the fearless discharge of duty in spite of the pleasures and pains that strew its path. This is the central lesson of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

The *Gītā* also teaches that Svabhāva, the nature of our bodies, the cumulative force of the desires stocked in the past and built into them, will inexorably force them into certain grooves of action, and we have to train ourselves not to be affected by them. When thus the joys and sorrows of the personality are transcended, *i.e.*, thus eliminated from the factors that govern conduct, action will become perfect, and perfect action is the result of perfect Vairāgya.

How, then, can this Vairāgya be developed? Most of our actions are not directly ours but belong to the bodies. “Guṇāḥ guṇeshu vartante.” Actions take place under the operation of unalterable laws, material and moral, though we attribute them to an immediate act of the will, and derive pleasure or pain therefrom. They belong to us only in the sense that we have in the past massed desire upon desire in particular directions, and thus made the action inevitable in the present. Constant contemplation of this fact is necessary before Vairāgya can grow. Frequent failures in its realisation are inevitable, and, in a sense, necessary. Nature never progresses by leaps. Steady growth requires frequent pauses for rest, and also for purposes of taking stock, and this is the use of failure.

The above analysis of conduct is not exhaustive. There are, indeed, a few actions in every man's life, a few rare brilliant deeds, in doing which he feels he transcends his bodies, and these are due to a sudden accession of spiritual strength, a sudden inflow of energy from the depths of his being. This is due to true Bhakti, the opening of the heart to the play of Īshvara, the cancellation of the individual will before the Cosmic Will. This represents the highest level to which Vairāgya can rise. Experiences of this type can be but few and far between, oases in a vast dry desert. The many failures in the search for this experience make the rare successes possible. Otherwise human nature could not stand the strain.

We shall next consider the third Sādhana, called Samādi, Shaṭṣampatti, the acquisition of the six virtues, character-build-

ing. Virtues are built on permanent moods of emotion. Whenever we feel an emotion there is stored in the *Súkshma Sharíra* a certain quantity of energy, proportionate to the intensity of the emotional experience. When this store increases above a critical point it becomes a permanent mood, and this cumulative emotion-pressure is character.

Truth, for instance, is based on the intellectual recognition of the unity of life and the desire for realising that unity; the combination of this intellectual and this desire element constituting the emotion of Love of the Self on which Truth is built. If we constantly contemplate that unity, and cultivate the desire for the Self manifested in all beings, we acquire the virtue of Truth.

Character-building is thus the deliberate choice of good emotions, and the intensification of them by steady contemplation. This is, of necessity, a slow process. No virtue is permanently acquired till the emotion-pressure is raised to the critical point. Failures are the sign-posts indicating to us in what directions the required emotions have not been sufficiently intensified; without these failures self-training would have no meaning.

There remains the last *Sâdhana*, *Mumukshatva*, desire for release. We must first consider from what should a man be released? From *all* manifested life? This spiritual suicide is impossible, for manifestation is consequent on the primal desire. "*Kâmas tad agre samavartata*"—"Desire first arose in it"; and it is clearly impossible for the individual will to transcend in power the Cosmic Will.

Does *Moksha*, then, mean release from manifestation in the sphere of human evolution, the *Triloki* of thought, desire and action? It is, perhaps, possible so to concentrate oneself on the desire to cancel all one's human activities (the only ones we know at present) and develop enough will-power to cancel the "will to live" on the human planes. This is the ideal of *Moksha* which the popular *Advaita* preaches. But what is the good of such a release? In a future scheme of evolution, a path to self-consciousness corresponding to the stage of man will have to be trodden.

What, then, is *Moksha*? The spirit within us is perfect in

wisdom; but our bodies are only partially developed and even that part so controlled by past Karma as to be useless for being vehicles for the manifestation of Jñāna, and hence the man is ignorant. The spirit is will, but the bodies present obstacles to its flow; hence the man is powerless. The spirit is harmony, but the bodies break up the harmony into harsh discords; hence human life is felt to be full of misery.

Release consists in the perfect subjugation of the bodies by the spirit. The spirit works always for unity, and such Moksha as enables it to play freely on the bodies should be desired always by the aspirant.

In certain Theosophical Manuals it has been contended that desire for liberation is selfish and should be suppressed early in the path. This is true only of Moksha conceived as release from activity on the human planes. Real Moksha is the root of all altruism, for the spiritual consciousness is that of unity. Desire, then, for the liberation of oneself from the slavery of the mind-body and the desire-body should constantly spur the aspirant on in the spiritual life. He will forget it frequently, and this is but proper in the early stages; for an abnormal sense of bondage will paralyse his energies. We become aware of our bondage not during our active moments but later, when cool contemplation supervenes. Gradually the desire for release becomes an ever-increasing factor of our thoughts till, in the far-off future, release itself is secured.

The spiritual life, then, is not a new routine to be added to our daily life; it offers no dogma to be piously believed, no round of ceremonial, new or old, esoteric or exoteric, to be gone through; but it is a deliberate taking in hand of one's own self and a steady training of it, through success and failure, by utilising every experience, great or small, good or evil, till the individuality becomes a perfect organ in the hands of its Master. Then Man will be Mukta, free; for the innate Shaktis of the Spirit—Jñāna, Bala, and Kriya¹—will have been fully developed, will have free play in his bodies, and the object of human evolution will have been achieved.

P. J. SRINIVASA IYENGAR.

¹ *Shvetāshvatara Upaniṣhad*, iv. 8.

CONCERNING THE PLEROMA

AN ESSAY IN GNOSTICISM

(CONCLUDED FROM P. 455)

BUT to return to Valentinus, we read¹:

“The Father Himself, then, as He was solitary, projected and produced Nous and Aletheia, that is, a duad which became mistress, and origin, and mother of all the Æons computed by them (as existing) within the Pleroma. Nous and Aletheia being projected from the Father, one capable of continuing generation, deriving existence from a productive being, (Nous) himself likewise, in imitation of the Father, projected Logos and Zoë; and Logos and Zoë project Anthrōpos and Ecclesia.”

This is the emanation of the Ogdoad; arranged tabularly (and for several reasons this arrangement may be advisable) the process appears thus:

The Ineffable	
Profundity	Ideation
Mind	Truth
Reason	Life
Man	Church

It will have become apparent that the names given to the foregoing members of the Ogdoad are themselves of two kinds. Those in the left-hand column are masculine (in Greek), while those on the right are feminine. Or, in other words, the three later Dyads of the Pleroma are similar to the first Dyad—male-female, positive-negative—and the law of polarity, or syzygy, which prevails throughout the emanations of the Divine Mind, is here represented as a fundamental principle.

At first sight the names given to these eight Æons will

¹ *Ref. All Her.*, VI. xxiv.

appear to be entirely arbitrary, having no manner of reason for being so called or for the order in which they occur. But I venture to think that this is not so in reality; in fact, this sequence of names represents, perhaps, one of the greatest achievements of the Gnostic mind in the domain of speculative philosophy. Here, indeed, we seem to touch upon one of their "methods" of work, if I may so express myself.

The Gnostics, adopting the theory that man was an epitome of the Universe, and that he therefore contained within himself all the elements making up the world-structure, proceeded along the lines of analogy, presuming that the knowledge of Man could stand as a symbol of the knowledge of God. Therefore we perceive them bending their minds to the analysis of human nature; and this is particularly the case with the subject of our present enquiry; for if man were made in the image of God then the human mind would be the pattern, or miniature, of the Divine Mind. This, indeed, seems to have been the root of all their speculations; and this, therefore, is the natural solvent to their complex enigmas. By this method of correlating the microcosm with the macrocosm we are enabled to see the meaning of their marvellous legends; to perceive somewhat of the silver lining fringing the obscurity of these metaphysical clouds.

Let us, ourselves, then, adopt this line of investigation.

It is impossible for the human mind to imagine creation as the product of Unconditioned Being; to it, this must ever appear as the work of Mind of some nature, even as all human activities are the work of human minds. Thus the gulf between Absoluteness and the manifested worlds had somehow to be bridged over, and that was effected by the Pleroma; its four dyads being, in fact, nothing else than four stages in the process of unfolding from the Primæval Unconscious Cause to Creative Intellect.

Now, the members of the first Dyad, as we have said, were termed Being, the conscious Focus of the Divine Mind; and Ideation, the Content of that Mind. But as to what that Content is in reality it is all but impossible to express any but an erroneous opinion; we may not, however, be altogether mistaken if we suppose it to be something analogous to Abstract Memory,

the memory of Self, which renders possible the consciousness of identity. For it is easily perceptible that memory, in this rudimentary form, is imperative on any conscious being whatsoever. This Ideation is, however, far more than Memory; it is also Potentiality, the Womb of the future Universe.

It will tend furthermore to elucidate the problem before us if we bear in mind that this Ideation, the "negative pole" of the Divine Mind, though regarded from without and spoken of as a Unity, is, looked at from within, the unlimited Aggregate of Potential Ideas, an Innumerable Complexity. This fact helps to render the subsequent evolutions more intelligible, and explains, *ipso facto*, why the last "negative" term of the Pleroma should be called the "Assembly," or "Church."

And now an interaction takes place between Being and Ideation—or rather, these two poles, being in mutual relation, react one on the other; and, thus reacting, are variously modified, through absorbing the distinctive qualities of their opposites. Each member of this Dyad is at once positive and negative to the other, and each receives within itself the image of the other while in its turn impressing upon it its own likeness. Being is thus affected by Ideation, reflecting the latter within itself; or, in other words, Being becomes aware of the infinite memory-relics (which are yet germs of future things) surrounding it, as it were, on all sides. These—spoken of collectively as Ideation—through being reflected in primitive Consciousness, modify that Consciousness, which now appears as Mind; no longer pure Self, but Self which is cognisant of Not-Self in its most elementary form—which, as we have said, may be termed Abstract or Self-Memory. This gives to Being the sense of continuity or identity.

But similarly Ideation has been modified by Being. The abstract Content of Consciousness receives a certain afflatus, or effluence, from the Focus of the Divine Mind, and from possessing a merely hypothetical existence, now becomes possessed of a *real* existence; instead of bare potential Memory it is now actual Memory; the Ideas composing the Content have now a definite, instead of an indefinite, relation to the Centre, and thus Ideation appears as Truth, *That which really is*.

Thus Being and Ideation, mutually affected, are called Mind

and Truth ; and these are the names of the second Dyad. But, be it remembered, this is no *new* antithesis ; it is but the original " Pair of Opposites " appearing with attributes gained by mutual contact ; and if this fact be grasped the confusion in the mind of him who would contemplate these mysteries gives way to a clear understanding ; for the Pleroma is forever one, the Living Æon, the Son eternally in the bosom of His Father.

But, further, that which took place in the case of Being and Ideation now takes place between Mind and Truth ; for the members of this Dyad interact in a similar fashion and modify one another. Mind (the Focus of Consciousness) regarding Truth (the Content of Consciousness), which is a numberless host of Real-Existences, is affected thereby ; and becoming aware of the *reality* of the surrounding Ideas, and the true relations existing between them internally and with regard to itself, Mind acquires the power of reflection and appears as Reason. This, however, is not the logical, inductive faculty, but rather that state, induced by the contemplation of Reality, in which the Mind is in closest contact with Truth.

Ideas, having a real existence, are presented without sensible media to the Focus of Consciousness and this contact adds, to the already-existing awareness of Ideation, an awareness of true relationship and actual being, which converts *conscious* Mind into *reasonable* Mind.

At this stage the Self, having already perceived the memory-relics linking him to the past, perceives that these have a direct reference to himself ; and thus a farther step towards conscious, individual existence is taken. Added to the vague consciousness of identity, characteristic of Mind, is now a certain knowledge of Self-existence and a certain power of Self-reflection, characteristic of Reason.

But this more intimate contact of the two poles of being has not been without effect on the negative pole—Truth. The Real-Existences or Ideas, on receiving the Influence of Mind (a living principle) are now regarded as *living* ideas. These, taken collectively, are called Life, which, with Reason, gives us the third Dyad of the Valentinian Pleroma.

In speaking of " living ideas," however, I do not intend to

imply any kind of personal or individual existence, but rather to indicate a fuller degree of consciousness than that understood to belong to Truth proper. What is, however, exactly connoted by the term Life in this respect is not at all apparent to us at present.

And now a last interaction takes place—the last step on the road from Unconditioned Being to Creative Mind; and that last step is the acquirement of *Individuality*; or rather, Individuality, latent from the first, now becomes an actual attribute of Mind. For Reason (impersonal) contemplates the multitude of living Ideas, called Life, and absorbs their chief characteristic (Life) and is affected by it; thus affected, Reason appears as Man; the *living Reasoner* in contradistinction to Logos, *abstract Reason*.

This “Man,” however, is not the earthly man, but his ideal Prototype, the “Man in the Heavens”; for the Gnostics regarded the Pleroma not as Impersonal Mind, but rather as the Divine Personality of the Godhead; as the expression, in supreme, conscious Individuality, of That which lay beyond all consciousness and individuality whatsoever.

But the negative pole of this third pair is similarly affected, and the living Ideas, composing the Field of Divine Consciousness, at this stage receive the further effluence of Being, the transforming touch of Reason; consequently becoming a host of *living, reasoning Intelligences*—the Assembly, or Church; this, with the Divine Man, forms the fourth and last Dyad of the Pleroma.

It will have been observed that in this last modification a perfectly similar result has been obtained in both members of the antithesis; for Reason receives Life, and Life receives Reason. But we do not discover, as might be expected, an Assembly of identical Existences, for either pole still retains its fundamental, distinctive mark. That is to say, the positive pole is still *unique*, still the Focus of the Divine Mind; while the negative pole is still *complex*, still the Content of Universal Consciousness; so that the Pleroma at this final stage of unfolding, or revelation, presents the appearance of Cosmic Mind, whose centre is the Creative Intellect, and whose Content is an endless Assembly of living and reasoning Ideas; called by the Gnostics variously:

Light-Sparks, Æons, Limbs of the Ineffable, etc. But, be it well observed, these Ideas are consubstantial with the Creator; not so much His creation as joint manifestations with Him of the "God beyond being."

It is these "Limbs," cast forth into the world of matter, that are the evolving, conscious units, which at a certain stage of progress are called "Men"; and the doctrine of Divine Humanity, and the notion that Christ, the only-begotten Son of the Ineffable God, is the Elder Brother of the race, become illuminative with a new light. For the Logos is at once the Revelation of the hidden Deity and the Creative Mind of Nature, "through whom all things were made"; and Mankind, or rather the spiritual Ideas dwelling in man, are likewise Sons of God—lesser in power and dignity, but containing within themselves the whole potential Godhead. This belief ennobles all forms of life, and more than atones for all manner of human degradation.

Thus, having analysed the "Living Æon," and shown how its two primordial aspects interact one on the other, we again synthesise, reducing the "First-born Ogdoad" to the "Self-born Dyad"—the Creative Intellect of the Cosmos, and the divine Essences, through whom and for whom the Creation is to be brought to birth. But, be it again remembered, these are but the revelation in thought of the One Existence lying beyond all thought; and when the Great Wheel shall have turned upon itself, and the Breath of the Universe shall have been indrawn, "when all things shall have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all."¹

And here, perhaps, a word of warning may not be out of place. We have spoken of this unfolding of the Divine Mind from its hidden Cause as of a process in *Time*, as even did the Gnostics of old; as though, in the first instance, the Father had been alone and, at a given point in time, the Son had been begotten, had arisen out of the heart of Eternity; and then had *gradually* awakened, so to say, to full individual existence. And we, blinded by what Goethe calls the "Zeit-Geist," are obliged to speak, and even to think, of it in this fashion; but, in reality,

¹ *I. Cor.*, xv. 28.

it is not so. There was no point of Time when the Divine Mind of the Cosmos was non-existent in the fulness of its being; the Son is eternally being begotten in the bosom of the Father. Neither does the process of development, which constitutes the basis of the doctrine of the Ogdoad, take any *time* in its accomplishment; it was accomplished from Everlastingness and is for ever being accomplished. This fact must never be lost sight of; but for the sake of speaking clearly, at least intelligibly, we, who are prisoners of Time, must clothe Eternity in Time-vestures of Thought; and speak of the Forever-Present under the symbols of Duration. And, as we are bound by Time, so are we by Space; and we speak, of necessity, of the Pleroma as springing, or arising, from the Depth beyond Being; but neither does it *arise* nor is there any *Depth*, nor *Height*. These again are but figures, not so much symbols as travesties, whereby we conceal our conceptions of the Space-less. As the Divine Mind is beyond Time, so is it beyond Space; as it is an "Everlasting Now," so is it a "Universal Here." Nay, the whole Godhead is entire within the minutest particle; though Space itself could not contain it. We must believe, with Carlyle, "that Time and Space are not God, but creations of God."¹

This is the doctrine of the Pleroma, held in one form or another by all the schools of Gnostics; and elaborated by Valentinus into the complex, yet logical, system we have examined. In brief, it was a bold attempt to analyse the Mind of Deity—the Personality, so to speak, of the Only-Begotten Son, the Logos; who, for His self-expression, cast forth His transitory shadow, the multitudinous Universe, in which we—eternal Ideas in that Supreme Mind—dwell for a while to return one day, the richer for our garnered experience; and others yet, for ever and for ever, seeking the expression of That which is inexpressible, shall "fall" into Matter and pass from the World of Real Being into that of Phantasmal Existence.

But the limits of this paper do not permit me to enter into the details of this absorbing side of Gnosticism, sometimes known as the "Sophia-Mythus"; nor into a consideration of that other great manifestation of Deity, which is called the Holy Ghost—

¹ *Sartor Resartus*, Bk. III., Ch. viii.

the spiritual Energy which, springing from the depths of the Ineffable, proceeds through the Spaces of the Intelligible World, downwards into Matter, and constitutes the bridge by which the Ideas in the Cosmic Mind descend into manifestation, and by which the perfected "Light-Sparks" again reascend into the Bosom of the Logos. This is the Fountain-head of all power in the Universe; the Mainspring of Evolution; the sublime Influence which broods over the human Soul until the divine light of the Gnosis be born in it.

I have attempted an explanation of one of the most abstruse questions in Gnostic Æonology, and it is only an attempt; but if I have succeeded in presenting a somewhat new (albeit most ancient) interpretation of the Valentinian Ogdoad in a clear and not too inefficient manner; if I have succeeded in suggesting a new line of thought to students of the Gnosis; then I have accomplished my purpose, and it but remains for me to plead, as an excuse for the many errors I may have committed, the extreme difficulty of the matter in hand, the almost total absence of reliable material on which to base our conceptions of the great Heresies of the first two centuries of our era, and finally the paucity of knowledge, as it exists at the present time, with regard to the more recondite phases of the great Christian systems of the Ancient Wisdom called Gnosticism. As yet students of this subject have done little but "collect material," a favourite pastime with a certain class of minds; few having done anything worth mentioning towards a reconstruction, or even a systematic interpretation, of these Gnostic notions. But it has seemed to the present writer that here alone lies the hope of future Christianity; enclosed within the marvellous and all but incomprehensible mysteries of Gnosticism lies a vast well-spring of religious Philosophy, awaiting only the magic touch of some keen Thinker and spiritually illumined Mystic to set the abundant waters flowing.

J. REDWOOD ANDERSON.

THE PATH OF THE COMET

FROM A PALMYRA LEAF BROUGHT FROM OLD MEXICO

THE following interesting extract from a letter of our contributor M. F. W. will give our readers the story of the leaf and its rendering.—EDS.

“The leaf was found in Old Mexico, in an old ‘dug-out’ which had evidently been used as a tomb. It was in the Aztec language, and the story was in three parts. The first two were not readable, as the palmyra was torn and I could make out consecutively only a few sentences. The few that were readable were very curious indeed, but I will not deal with them now. I half translated them by my knowledge of the language, and the other half was done ‘clairvoyantly.’ Not trusting the latter way I kept them with me, hoping to find in some out-of-the-way place some one who knew the language thoroughly. In a very curious way I heard of an old man called ‘Yrisarri,’ and took the whole leaf and translation to him. He was delighted with the latter, and we made out some of the other part between us. I had the translation in a book lent to a friend at the time when everything else was lost in a fire which destroyed all the curios I had gathered from the Indian tribes. And this is how it was saved.

“The whole palmyra was evidently an account of a most appalling catastrophe, when a falling star came upon the earth. The other part spoke of a man in a scarlet cloak who was a Ruler of the Circle and the Point, and lay in the Square. There was more information given which I pieced together. It had to do with the pyramids; at least we took it to mean that.”

A RENDERING

THE fixed star, with quiet and gracious dignity, reigns among the glorious spheres. Harmony and Balance are her watchwords, as she gazes upon all the other orbs around her. Enveloped in

her glittering robe and wearing the diamond and light sapphire in the centre of her forehead, she gleams as she chants the morning and evening rhythm. Nothing appears to disturb the eternal repose with which she is surrounded, as she moves in the eternal law and order of the rank and height to which she has been appointed among the Rulers of Light.

Suddenly springs into being the Wandering Comet, dishevelled, of ruddy appearance. From the vast depth of heaven she hastily hurls herself into the immense circles of space. Across the peaceful and radiant paths of the shining stars she sweeps with her powerful will. She dares to face the luminous and shining blades of the great Solar Guards like one distressed, who pursues ever the desire of her dream, eternally seeking her lost love, seen while she slept under the Gru-gru tree. She dares to penetrate the most sacred places of the Great Luminaries of the Day.

Once more torn by her desire, she escapes, breathing forth fires which consume her, trailing her glowing meshes behind her. Stars shrink and shudder at her approach, constellations fly before her terrible conflagrations! There is universal consternation!

Finally the most glorious of the fixed stars bearing the great gems in its forehead is compelled to speak in the name of all the universe of stars to the headlong, heedless, violent vagrant!

"Alas, my sister!" says the Shining One. "What have we done to thee that at thy appearance all the stars grow pale, that thou comest with thy fire-creating terror, and destroying harmony? Why dost thou not chant and swell the eternal rhythm, clothed in the pure white flame radiating all the colours of the splendid gem? Why float thy tresses alive with fire, strewn upon the whirlwind which thou raisest in thy flight, through the great grey mists of the evening?"

"Ah! If thou would'st but take thine own position in the spheres, how infinitely more glorious wouldst thou become. Thy face would bear no longer that look, gained by thy headlong flight in the darkness of the night. All the stars would love thee, and far from shrinking from thee would rejoice in thy nearness to them. Then wouldst thou be at one with them, by the eternal

immutable laws of Order, Harmony and Beauty! Thy voice would swell the eternal choir of rhythm and love!"

The Comet replied to her Shining Sister :

"Dost thou believe, O beautiful one, that I break up Order, and induce Discord at will? The Creator appoints *my* path in space even as thine own is appointed. If it seems headlong, fiery and wild to thee, is it not because thy sight is limited and thy shining light small, that it cannot penetrate to the vast circumference of space.

"My fiery locks are in themselves a sign of the Creator. I am the Great Disciple of the Sacred Sun. I am myself incessantly bathed in burning heat that I may give it to undeveloped worlds, which I sweep in my flight, and that have not warmth enough to make them glad, and to the worlds, which grew old, and are desolate, worn out by their solitude.

"If my radiance is less calm and my surroundings more fierce, burning and harmful; yet am I one of the noblest-born of Heaven's daughters. Straight from the great Centre of the Sun came I forth! Fierce and terrible was His radiance as I leapt into being.

"Leave me to work my destiny, even though it be one of incessantly fierce discord. Terrible perhaps it seems to thee as it scars and scorches everything it is forced to touch. Leave me alone, lest thou also be struck. Even if thou dost not understand, yet shall I continue my career of destruction under the great impetus of the Breath Divine. Happy indeed are the stars which repose in the Peace of the Spheres!

"I am the restless Immortal Wanderer who cuts the circles. Everlastingly alone I break their eternal Harmony, lest they stagnate even as they move.

"By my caresses I amalgamate, disturb, and disunite. Yet eternally is my gaze on the all-powerful, all-beautiful Sun, to which I am ever attached.

"In my own heat I shall ever burn; my own flame will ever torment me. Many lights are needed in the Temple of the Creator.

"In such burning, in such fiery flame, lies the eternal sacrifice!

“ Art thou Cold ? I will make thee Hot !

“ Art thou Faint ? I will Revive thee !

“ Art thou Hard ? I will Break thee in pieces !

“ Art thou in Despair ? I will feed thee with my Flame !

“ For ever the Fiery Breath moves in the Eternal Infinite. His Flame started me. To Him on Whom my eyes are everlastingly bent do I return.

“ Farewell, O Sweet Sister, bar my way no longer, lest thou be scorched ! Back !

“ Let me sweep the Infinite Spaces, alone !—and thus to the uttermost fulfil my divine mission, and mine own destiny !”

M. F. W.

THE TRUE INWARDNESS OF REINCARNATION

(CONCLUDED FROM p. 410)

WE are now ready to take a second logical step nearer our conclusion. These manifestations of the One Eikon are the Monad expressing himself in time, space, and matter. Now comes the great question, What is Matter ?—for which we have prepared ourselves by allusion to the law under which Matter arises—the law of *Entsagung*—the law of Limit.

Futile indeed is any attempt to understand reincarnation without having carefully thought out the philosophy of this mighty abstraction ; but I should be foolhardy indeed were I to attempt to do more than offer a few broken reflections as to the line on which perhaps this mystery may be profitably studied. To me, Matter is the first and highest expression of the law of Limit. The primal limitations of the Logos—Time, Space, and Matter—are three, as His hypostases are three ; we may term them the hypostases of His object-side. They arise, as I have said, when He, the Knower, the Willer, the Actor, knows, wills, and acts. And they arise as the result of His thinking Himself as this, and not that. In other words, He defines His Conscious-

ness by these limitations. The widest limitation of Consciousness is the abstraction we term Matter.

Now, a moment's reflection will show that a certain "drawing apart" is required before the content of the mind of the Logos can exist as a separate "this" and "that." Differentiation demands and implies a limiting-wall between the objects differentiated which shall not only draw apart, but also keep apart. We appear to have three distinct stages in the beginnings of the world-process; in the first there is Thought; in the second, the separation of Thought into Things (*thinks*); in the third, the preservation of the differentiated "thinks" by the barrier-wall of Matter. If we look at the problem carefully, however, we shall discover that this three-fold process is, in reality, one; there being no thought without "thinks," and no "thinks" without a keeping-apart. Matter, then, is practically identical with Differentiation.

Co-existent with matter, the primal Limitation, are two further limitations, progressively concrete. These are Form and Body. Body is the concrete representation of Form; Form is the activity of the Monad brought to a definite and specific expression. The triad Matter, Form, and Body represent progressive degrees of *Entsagung*, and constitute a trinity in unity which may not be severed for thought. When one arises, all arise. And as each member of the triad is the result of the activity of the Universal Monad working under the law of Limit, it follows that the popular dichotomy of soul and body, spirit and matter, is as philosophically absurd as it is necessary and convenient.

If we must differentiate between the Self and the body in ordinary parlance, let us not carry this error into the realm of thought. The popular idea of a vehicle or sheath in which the Self alternately comes and goes, as a man gets in or out of his coat, is useful up to a point, but it must not be pushed too far. For the Self is not "inside" anything, though it cannot exist as a self without the limiting-wall which promotes and protects its growing individuality. Neither may we think of it as being *enclosed by* the wall, as a fluid within a jar, or a flame within a lamp; it is both flame and lamp, fluid and jar in mutual and

eternal inter-dependence, there having never been a moment in its age-long existence when it did not wear its appropriate body, *that body which shall be its own* until the cycle passes away. When, therefore, we sometimes speak as though the Self were precipitated into a body at human birth, we are misrepresenting a wonderful truth—the truth that under the law of Limit the Self is merely adding a more concrete representation of its one, original, spiritual body,—the twin-aspect of itself on the Divine plane, and its unchanging complement through a great cycle of manifestation.

Now how do we usually think of Matter? As a sea of some sort of rarefied gas in which the universe swims? Or as an indefinitely extended ocean of infinitesimal granules called atoms which, when clustering thickly enough, become solid, and knock us down? These may be among the *appearances* of matter, and probably from the point of view of one who studies matter along the lines of the sense-perceptions, are correct enough. A sense-impression is true—as a *sense-impression*; *i.e.*, when we affirm that matter can be heard, felt, seen, touched and tasted, we are referring to certain very real elements in our experience which have been experienced in the way we describe—as touchings, tastings, feelings, hearings, seeings. More than this no one may with safety affirm. A table is a solid aspect of something that is not-me, or so I think,—but this vaunted solidity is after all but a sensing. It is certainly true that I do not voluntarily create the sensing, for one of the mysteries of matter is that it is something one comes upon, if I may so speak, and discovers—something which initiates from without the sensing that arises from within. *I* do not initiate the phenomenon of matter, for the phenomenon, though not existing independently of me, exists for me, and on account of me; it is so closely allied to me that its vibrations are instantly converted into a modification of my own consciousness—a mystery of mysteries. What, then, can be the nature of this something which I certainly do not create, but which I discover, and having discovered transmute into my own essential being—without which, indeed, I could have no being at all in any intelligible sense of the word?

As a matter of fact we cannot think matter save as a modifi-

cation of the One Consciousness under self-imposed limits. Very briefly let us work out the conception from foregoing principles, for if we can think matter, we can think matter that reincarnates.

Let us, with the Hindus, start the evolution of matter from an original Atom—that Anu which is a synonym for Brahma Himself. Brahma-Anu is the Universal Monad under His twin aspects of Life and Form. From Anu the ultimate Atom, which may be equally the smallest of the small and the largest of the large (for it is non-spatial), proceed the innumerable categories which determine the material universe: one Atom, the mighty seed of all matter and all planes; one Atom, the potential reservoir of all vibrations, or vibrational tendencies; the great Eikon of the universe on its Form side; the mysterious innermost centre, the Âdi plane, of which the succeeding planes are manifestations. For there is strictly but one Plane of Matter, as there is but one Centre of Consciousness in the universe, all others being modifications of the One, the overtones of its fundamental note. Planes are merely degrees of otherness and outerness imposed by the Universal Monad for purposes of manifestation, and are not to be regarded in an absolute sense, still less as possessing reality apart from the consciousness of which they are a modification. The “reality” of a plane is entirely a question of standpoint, the “outermost” matter of a higher plane becoming the “innermost” of the plane below.

But of what substance is Anu, the fundamental Atom-Monad of Nature? The tendency of modern science is to the conclusion that the ultimate of matter is not a substance but a thrill. And what if that thrill be the thrill of thought? What if thought itself be the modification of a consciousness higher than thought? Suppose we define an atom as a unit of will limiting itself voluntarily within a definite ratio—its Tanmâtra. Let Anu be the Logos binding Himself under *Entsagung*. He who is all things marks out His All-consciousness into areas of special differentiation; these differentiations caused by Limit we call the “matter” of the kingdom or plane, and we become acquainted with the life-processes only at the point at which they cease to reveal themselves more fully along a given line.

Now apply this principle to the individual monad. He, too, is Brahma-Anu, tuned to the Tanmâtra of the greater Universe, and automatically repeating the limits imposed on his nature by the Universal Monad. He thinks forms, *i.e.*, he focusses his activities within definite limits. And his Anu, or monad of form, is what we term the permanent atom.

Now the permanent atom brings us to the heart of our thesis, to the secret of the inwardness of reincarnation. We have worked down by slow but logical steps from the Logos to the monad, from the monad to the permanent atom, showing, to the best of our power, the principle linking the three great concepts—that of manifestation by the method of *Entsagung*, or Limit. It only remains to show the sense in which the permanent atom, the monad of form, is the true reincarnating entity in a cycle of lives.

To be consistent with the monistic basis of our argument, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that as there is but one monad for a cycle of human manifestation, so there can strictly be but one permanent atom as centre for the series of forms in which he seeks expression. That atom is the real organ of the monad on his own plane, and gives rise by reflection to the permanent atoms of the succeeding planes by methods analogous (we suppose) to those previously discussed in reference to the reflection of the Eikon in his eikones. Let us not forget our great central principle: the welling out of manifestations from one interior centre; the appearance of personæ from the One Monad, of planes from the One Plane, of atoms from the One Atom. The work of the permanent atom on each plane is to do what the One Centre does everywhere—to serve as a nucleus for ever-changing form.

But a word is necessary as to the philosophy of the permanent atom, whose existence plays a large part in the intelligent comprehension of the principle of reincarnation. I have stated in the early part of this discussion that Form is as permanent as its antithesis Life—an assertion that is conceivably open to challenge. Let us develop this idea a little further. Body we have declared to be the expression of Form, and Form the expression of the Monad in manifestation. The Monad presumably

comes into manifestation on his outbirth from the Logos at the commencement of a great cycle; his activity on the Anupâdaka plane is, indeed, the starting-point of the whole process of what we call "incarnation" on the five-fold levels of matter. So his "body" is coincident with himself, and inseparable from himself, and will be his until the seven-fold universe has run its mighty course. But the twin aspects of the monad, Life-Form, are distinguished by different characteristics. While Life is *continuous*, Form is *periodic*. The essence of periodicity is change.

But, as Kant says, it is only the permanent that changes; *i.e.*, it is from the recognition of the permanent that arises the apprehension of change. And in Form there is a principle of permanence, a stable centre, if we may so speak, around which the fleeting and discrete elements in a series of forms are brought into systematic relation. In other words, the forms that change are unified by the permanent fruitage which is the product of their infinite diversity. This fruitage, which is but another name for the total experience of life on all the planes, has its reservoir in the stable centre of which I have spoken, and the experience being permanent, the reservoir also is permanent. Let us term this one stable centre for all forms and series of forms the permanent atom, and if we can grip the conception of that atom philosophically, *without materialising it*, we shall fringe the secret of a great many mysteries. We shall discover, among other truths, that, while forms are transitory, Form is, and must be, eternal,—in other words, that an indefinite series of destructions and renewals will have one underlying principle of unity which is the same throughout the whole cycle of manifestation—a principle which will not only be the root-atom of the incalculable millions that ceaselessly disperse and regather about the human centre, but also the Root-form of the entire series in which the monad seeks a transient self-expression.

Now the theory of the permanent atom is something more than an assumption; on the physical plane it has become a clearly recognised fact. Says Professor Thompson: "More clearly than even a dozen years ago scientists now recognise that the germ cells, and especially their nuclei, form the material basis

of inheritance ; that there is genetic continuity between the germ-cells of the parents and those of their offspring." Weissmann, Hertwig, Strasburger, Kolliker, have argued from the importance of the nucleus in metabolism, in fertilisation, in maturation, and in cleavage, that the centre of the vital processes in the embryo is practically immortal, proceeding directly from the ancestral germinal cell passed from father to son through long generations. The germ-plasm, developing by means of a process of successive assimilations, is the reservoir of the accumulated tendencies of an ancestral line since the formation of the first member of the species.

What are we to think as to its ultimate constitution ? This mighty speck which holds the secrets of a future race, is it material ? In what conceivable fashion may character, tendency, mental idiosyncrasy, imagination, love, reside in a point of albumen ? We cannot even dimly understand the way in which it contains the shape of a family nose, or that most subtle of inherited features, a tone of voice. "We confess," continues Professor Thompson, "our inability to solve the old problem : How are the specific characters potentially contained in the germ-cells, and by what mechanism do they attain expression in development ?"

Occultism has perhaps a clue to the mystery. It suggests that we regard this plasm as the *Monad on his object-side*—the Monad of Form expressing itself on the physical plane under the characteristics peculiar to that plane. Philosophically, we may not, I think, distinguish between the monad and the permanent atoms, save in the sense in which we distinguish aspects in the monad himself. He, the continuous, the permanent, with the whole range of a seven-fold universe in which to manifest, does so through temporary forms built about imperishable centres. It is obvious that on each plane he will have a specialised centre, temporary in character though built around a permanent core. This core will be the one permanent form for the whole cycle, the Anu, or spiritual atom, expressing itself on the lower planes as the permanent atoms of those planes. In other words, the germ-plasm, or physical permanent atom, is the direct reflection, or expression in a coarser type of matter, of the spiritual

permanent atom, the Monad on his object-side, so that impressions made upon the plasm are impressions garnered for the Monad, *never to be lost*.

It is not, therefore, difficult to see that the permanent atoms, even of the lower vehicles, are not lost at death, but await, in the Causal Reservoir, the rhythmic call of the Monad to unfold their stored tendencies on the respective planes by means of the development of new bodies around the old centres. And the rationale of this may be summed up in a sentence, *viz.*, that *tendencies of whatever kind automatically seek to express themselves on the planes to which they are allied*.

So each new series of links or bodies provided for the Monad by his permanent atoms are strictly the expression of his fruitage in outward form. There is a very real sense in which the Monad is his body, for the connection between them is as close as that between thought and word. Body is consciousness turned outward, the powers of consciousness acting under the space limit. Bodies are merely degrees of outerness imposed by the self on its own manifestations. There is never, indeed, a moment in the whole life-cycle when it is not so functioning, *i.e.*, expressing itself in outerness of one or other degree. Body and self, as Mr. Haldane emphasises in his admirable *Pathway to Reality*, are not to be distinguished as two essentially independent entities; they are related as higher and lower. Therefore, we may not philosophically speak of the self as being in or out of its body; it is not in or out of anything, being essentially apart from time and space, but when in touch with its outward expressions it shares, and at the early stages is compelled to share, the time and space sensation.

Experience seems at first sight to contradict this assertion. But it is not really so. If I seem to leave this body in trance, and function in the "astral," have I made a distinct remove from one body to the other? No; I have functioned in my astral body throughout; I function in all the bodies of which I may be possessed at all moments, but for some reason I may temporarily cease my connection with the outermost, and so transfer that portion of my consciousness that is physical to that portion of my consciousness which is astral or mental. At death,

and in the post-mortem states, this is just what happens. My bodies fall away in succession, in obedience to their own laws, and to the vibratory limit of their permanent atoms; and with their dissolution my touch is temporarily lost with the particular plane they represent, unless I make another body at will for special manifestation on any given plane—a task requiring no little training, and a considerable degree of occult development.

But is my activity for a single moment interrupted? Do I change with the changing of my vehicles? Am I “here” now, and “there” to-morrow; have I, as monad, anything to do with hereness and thereeness, save as limits imposed by the exigencies of body? I am here and there only as I focus consciousness outward. With the gradual retreating of consciousness into the more interior vehicles the standpoint and nature of experience becomes altered, what was formerly limited by a sense of *locality* tending now towards an ever-increasing sense of *universality*.

Consciousness is, of course, dependent upon bodies, during its cycle of manifestation, and bodies it will always have of one or other degree of materiality; *its ceaseless activity is the guarantee of the ceaseless re-creation of its forms*. But the true “metempsychosis” implies that it is not I, the eternal, timeless, and uncreate, who reincarnates, passing from body to body, from plane to plane. The process consists, rather, in the arising of new appearances under the play of the permanent atom. The only way, as it seems to me, in which we can speak of the reincarnation of the Monad is that he will temporarily and periodically associate himself with a new manifestation of certain stored vibrational tendencies which represent the garnering of his life, and for which the permanent atoms appear, in a way wholly mysterious, to provide the necessary material basis.

We reach now our last, and perhaps most important, consideration, *viz.*, the function of the permanent atom as a collector of the fruitage of lives. It exists in the body as a conscious centre which has been slowly specialised for the storing and combining of the countless vibrations which correspond to human experience. This experience is not only that of the owner of the body, but of his ancestors in a direct line of succession, the permanent atoms being passed from father to child, and

so linking the kârmic heredity of the individual as individual with that of a specific line of heredity in any one life.

We thus depend in no merely figurative sense upon the experiences of the race of which we are a product. The permanent atom is no trifling granule of infinitesimal dimension, but rather a Cosmos within each body of the contributed tendencies of mankind. It is the memory of thoughts, feelings, emotions, acts, transmuted into vibrational capacities. Now it is impossible to have a vast accumulation of stored tendencies to respond to original stimuli without the need arising for the repetition of the stimulus, either original or similar. The law of all vibration is its tendency to repeat itself when occasion presents. Nature's principle is the ultimate satisfaction of tendency, because tendency is the great attractive force which eventually compels its own satisfaction. By this I do not mean that what may be done *must* be done. Tendencies are not all of one plane, and an incessant interaction of vibrations from the permanent atoms of the various bodies results in general modification. It is, nevertheless, a universal law that a tendency to vibrational response of any kind is ultimately provided for. This explains above any other reason the need for reincarnation. The physical permanent atom, with its store of countless physical vibrations, must provide for these an adequate and appropriate stimulus. That stimulus can only be provided on the physical plane, for unto the physical the things of the physical. No other vibration will awaken response.

Now this store of tendency in innumerable directions and on various planes, impressed on the living, sensitive substance of the permanent atom, is what I have referred to in this paper as the fruitage of a life. This fruitage, I repeat, is what comes over from birth to birth. It is the product of a life; and the product of all the lives in a cycle will be the new man who has been made of the twin Monad of Life and Form.

We have tried to see something of the method of this wonderful garnering; the marvellous continuity of experience in the midst of the ceaseless passing of form and body; how the same form comes never again, though its nucleus is imperishable; how that nucleus builds and rebuilds for no other reason than the satisfaction

of its stored tendencies to respond to original stimuli. The garnering process, like every other element in this ordered universe, is twofold. Energy is stored by experience, that it may grow by being used. Energy that is only absorbed into the permanent atom is useless as a permanent factor in the fruitage; *it must* recreate itself *by further output*. So activities of whatever kind initiated from without, become, when sufficiently repeated, powers that stir from within, and demand re-expression on the respective planes to which they belong. A certain transmutation of energy takes place at death, I believe, which enriches and strengthens all the bodies; there is withdrawal and mergence into the succeeding sheath which justifies my earlier statement of the imperishability even of form. Transmutation of the physical into the astral atom does, I think, occur even at our present stage, to a considerable extent, and may even justify the belief of certain schools in an ultimate passing from body to body which shall not be death, but transfiguration. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed," is one of the possibilities which the future may hold for us.

The method, then, by which the Monad becomes what it is in essential nature is the method of stored tendencies—fruitage garnered by a series of permanent centres. That all the garnerings of life should persist is imperative when we realise that out of such fruitage is to be born He whom the Christian Mystics term the Son, who shall repeat in a succeeding universe the work of the Monad, universal and individual, in the universe that now is. We are the Monad in temporary association with his fruitage, which is his acquired, in distinction to his essential, self. We seem to appropriate, and to identify ourselves with, these gleanings in the fields of time, of which we truly say we are the gleaner. And yet there is that in us which does not strictly glean, but standing apart, beyond the crush of spatial limits, controls and oversees the whole by the ceaseless outpouring of the initiating will.

So, following the great Analogue with which we started, the Monad's ceaseless activity is undisturbed by the breaking up of forms. The "I" does not come and go; it is constant, stable, and changes not with the body's changings; forms alone are

subject to periodicity, and of forms the fruitage-bearing permanent centres sound out the recalling note.

So we come again and again ; and yet we come not, for we are new every moment, passing ever on into the fulness of the Monadic life, and leaving our deeds to flower in the fields in which they were sown.

CHARLOTTE E. WOODS.

HALT ! WHAT GOES THERE ?

My mind has been concerned of late about a phrase : “ *from the Theosophical point of view.* ” I have asked myself its meaning until I am weary. Has it any meaning at all ? Is there such a thing as a Theosophical point of view ; and if so, what is it ?

To state the position fairly. Every science before its birth as a definite science has been entangled and confused with other sciences. This has notoriously been the case with Metaphysics. Strictly speaking, there is now for exact thinkers no such thing as Metaphysics. In its very origin the word was ambiguous ; and from meaning nothing in particular it has since Aristotle’s time been stretched to include everything in general. Nevertheless, under the shadow of its name, a number of distinct problems grew and ripened. Each of these was metaphysical in one sense, but none of them could be described as completely metaphysical. Among these daughters of the house of Metaphysics are what are now called Ontology, Epistemology, Psychology and Philosophy. Each of these is concerned with a distinct problem, and the group-soul term, Metaphysics, may be said to have lost its meaning. (This, however, is not to say that other problems may not arise within that ancient house.)

Similarly with the science of Political Economy. When Ruskin wrote *Unto This Last*, he was certainly dealing with something at once valuable and vague. Doubtless he knew what he meant to be talking about ; but doubtless, also, he did not realise that he was confusing and confounding a trinity of

problems. Political Economy is one thing; Æsthetics is another thing; and Ethics is a third thing. But Ruskin treated them as if they were one and indivisible. (I am not saying they are not ultimately one, but I do say they are not indivisible.) Since his day, however, the three problems have become clearly defined; and no competent thinker now dreams of discussing economics as such in ethical or æsthetic terms. (Again I must forestall the criticism that this is just what the economists do. I reply that the economics of ethics or æsthetics is a very different thing from ethical or æsthetic economics. Physiological psychology is absurd; but the physiology of psychology is scientific and valuable.)

In the two examples I have given (and they are two out of scores) it is clear that the terms came to have distinct meaning only when they began to be disintegrated. Metaphysics meant nothing until the problems of Ontology and the rest were defined; Economics could be no science until it became separated from ethics and æsthetics.

Now the question I raise is this: Is the name Theosophy like the name Metaphysics and the name Economics, as they were before their disintegration? Does Theosophy mean anything in particular? or only everything in general? For plainly it is impossible to talk of the *Theosophical point of view* (to any purpose, that is) so long as the distinguishing adjective remains undefined.

But let us approach the subject from another direction. It is understood that there is a scientific point of view. That term, at any rate, is precise, because Science implies a specific method of research. (Science, by the way, does not imply more than a method, popular usage notwithstanding.) In other words, the scientific point of view is a statement of the exact angle from which a problem is regarded. In the same way the artistic point of view is clear and definite, because the artistic point of view involves a clear and distinct method. Once more, then, the question may be asked: What is the Theosophical point of view? And the answer it is clear must involve the definition of the method of Theosophy.

I may as well say here that I believe that there not only is

a Theosophical point of view and method of Theosophy, but also that they are quite distinct and separate (as they of course must be) from every other point of view and method. I am sure in my own mind that the Theosophical point of view is not the religious, or the philosophic, or the æsthetic, or the scientific, or the psychic, or any other point of view than the Theosophic. And it is just because all these things have been in turn identified (or at least inextricably confused) with Theosophy that I raise my protest. For, doubtless with many others in the Society, I am not religious, I am not psychic, I am not scientific, I am not even ethical. And the constant assumption of my acquaintances that I must be all these things and a good many more compels at last the question why should I be ? And that other question, *What is the Theosophical point of view ?*

Well, I turn for aid to the book that presumably contains the answer, *The Secret Doctrine*. And I wander delightedly but helplessly through that colossal phantasmagoria. Like one of the saints (I make no claim to any other point of similarity), I am taken, as it were, by the hair and swung thrice times three round the world of time and space until I am dizzy. In my progress (if the motion can be so called) I get glimpses of "wonders upon wonders." There roll before me vast systems of cosmogenesis, cosmology, anthropology, anthropogenesis. I am dazzled with the light that surely never was on sea or land. I am made acquainted with words and things which no dictionary, no encyclopædia, contains. I grow breathlessly excited over the fate of ancient, prehistoric, perhaps altogether imaginary races. Mysticism, magic ; history, science ; mysteries of Tibet and the North Pole ; the myths of the world ; every religion ; Black Magic and the Hyperborean Land ; every language of Babel ; points of Aramaic scholarship ; side-thrusts at Jesuits, anarchists and the Church Fathers ;—what, in the name of Oeaoohoo the Younger, does it all mean ?

Is *The Secret Doctrine* written from *the Theosophical point of view* ? Then the Theosophist must be nothing less than Argus-eyed. (That reminds me of a remark made by Zangwill : "They are saying that England should put her foot down here, and England should put her foot down there—but, I ask, is England

a centipede?") Well, is the Theosophical point of view the fourth dimensional, or fifth, or sixth, or . . . ? I shall in another article write down what I *have* gathered from *The Secret Doctrine* : but, in anticipation, it is *not* an answer to the question raised here.

I turn to the "general body of neo-Theosophical literature" (a fine phrase that!) and look over the list of published books—I even read them. Fine confused feeding, as they say of a Scotch haggis; but what is the staple? There are books religious, mystical, historic, psychic, scientific—and unscientific—devotional, intellectual, ethical (oh, so many!)—books, one would think, for everybody. But in none of them do I find what I am seeking. Is everything Theosophy, I ask again? Is Theosophy everything, and therefore nothing?

I turn to my fellow members (with their kind permission, of course!) and what do I find? Is there one Theosophist like another? One dabbles in magic, another in mysticism; one in symbolism, another is investigating the Root-Races; here is a lady who obviously (may I say obviously?) is not scientifically equipped, applying herself to the study of Egyptology—and laying down the law about it too; and here is a man and brother, with apparently no taste for common or garden English, teaching himself Sanskrit and Chinese in order to fathom the philosophy of the Vedas and Lao-tse. (Did Lao-tse write Chinese? I'm sure I don't know.)

Well, and once more, well! (By the way, if anybody supposes I mean her or him in the above paragraph she or he is utterly mistaken. I mean nobody. I mean nothing. How can I mean anything when I do not know what *it* means?)

And then I reflect. I saw the other day a list of books studied by the Rosicrucians in Russia early in the nineteenth century. Is it credible that they read the same authors whom we—read? Plato, Pythagoras, Iamblichus, Plotinus, Hermes, Zoroaster (I think Zoroaster was among them), and the subjects of their discussions were the same as ours: On the Soul; on the Nature of Being; on the Absolute. . . . If one turns to Ben Jonson's *Masque, The Fortunate Isles*, and reads his skit on the Rosicrucians of his day, one finds the same names, the same

tales. The Kabalah (called by Jonson the Kabal), King Zoroastres, Hermes Trismegistus, Plato, Pythagoras. . . Or turn—but why should I go on? Turn anywhere where the Theosophical movement is or has ever been, and the records tell all the same thing. Everywhere, in every time, the same thing.

And everywhere the same difficulty meets me. *What* is Theosophy? Is it a creed? No. Is it a revelation? That is vehemently denied. Is it a science? But of what can it be a science? Is it a system of thought? No. Is it a temper like Platonism? Perhaps. Is it—oh, what is it?

And the *Theosophical point of view*,—is it the view of the wise? Only sometimes. Is it life seen through the pages of *The Secret Doctrine*? The images are blurred. In the name of intellect, or any other effective formula, tell me, you who use the phrase, *what* is the *Theosophical point of view*?

A. R. ORAGE.

VILLAGE WITCHCRAFT

IN a cottage near us a man is lying ill. He has been ill for five years, and the country folk say he is bewitched. I do not know who is supposed to have bewitched him, or why, or how, or anything about it.

I asked a woman near by what the idea was. She eyed me somewhat aggressively. "Oh," I said, "I believe in witchcraft right enough. I've seen it."

"And so do I," she said. "I've *proved* it. I know it's true. I'll just tell you what happened to us. We had an old woman as a lodger once; she took that big room upstairs, and there she'd sit smoking a pipe and doing nothing. Old beast she was! We hated her, and she hated us. Well, by-and-by my little boy there fell ill. He wouldn't eat, he wouldn't play, he couldn't sleep, but he'd wake up screaming that the old woman was at him. We got the doctor to him, but he didn't seem to do him no good. We didn't know what to do. So at last my husband

and I, we never said a word to a soul but we just did what everybody does for that. We put the Bible under the child's pillow, and we hung the fag hook in the doorway. Well, we felt a bit foolish, but I'll just tell you this. The boy, he picked up wonderful, and we had no more trouble with him from that night. But the old woman, she was in her bed for a week, and then she cleared herself out of this. There now, what do you make of that?"

I told her it reminded me of a thing I heard in a Huntingdonshire village about a girl who was haunted by a gipsy woman, and how they cured her.

How I heard of it was this. A woman in the place was very ill; nobody knew what was wrong with her. The doctor couldn't say. All he knew was that she wouldn't get better—a pretty safe prophecy, by the way, for a country general practitioner to make if he and the village nurse happen to be managing the case.

"What's wrong with *her*," said the old village nurse to me, "is that she's bewitched. And what's more, I know who's done it, too."

She told me the witch's name, and the causes of hatred between the two women. Then she told me one way of spotting a witch, and that was to notice if she always carried her "staff" with her. The "staff" might be anything, almost. In this case she pointed out that Mrs. C. was never to be seen without a certain pet umbrella. I recalled an acquaintance of mine who always carried a large poker in her trunk through all her wanderings.

"There you have it. She was a witch, and that was one way you could have told if you'd known. All her power would be in that poker."

Then I asked what was one to do.

"Well," she said, "I don't rightly know, but I know what we did when Mary Snow was bewitched. She lay there day after day, wasting away, screaming out night after night that the gipsy woman was in the room, basket of tins and all. So John Hicks said we might have one of his litter of pigs, and that night we all met in Snow's house; we locked and bolted the door and

covered the window. We'd lit a big fire and got a new pan. We filled the pan with this, that and the other, and set it on to boil.

"Then the butcher—he was one of us—took the young pig and cut its throat—not enough to kill it you know, but enough to make it bleed—and we hung the pig over the fire and let it roast, while the blood dripped into the fire—or the pan, I forget which. Then Tom Snow said the words and we all sat round the fire and waited. Nobody had to speak a word. We waited and waited. The pan began to boil dry. The pig hung quiet. Nobody made a sound.

"And then we heard a cat mowling a long way off. It came nearer and nearer, till at last it was mowling round the house. It jumped up on to the window sill and scratched on the shutter. It came to the door and caterwauled and scratched there fit to tear the place down, and Tom Snow went quietly over and undid the lock and bolts.

"Then we all rushed out in a body on to that cat. We hit it and wounded it too, but it got away in the end.

"Well, after that there was no more trouble. The girl got well from that day, and never saw the gipsy woman again. Oh, there's plenty of protection from witching if you know how to set about it. There was trouble about that young pig though. Parson heard about it. But we all stuck to the one tale. The butcher swore he'd cut its throat proper. But you see 'twouldn't ha' been no good if it hadn't ha' been alive."

MARGARET HOURSTON.

THE skin and shell of things
 Though fair,
 Are not
 Thy wish, nor pray'r,
 But got
 By mere despair
 Of wings.

VAUGHAN.

3

REGARDING WOMEN AND OTHERS

OF all the magazines that in these divided days find their way into our houses, "not single spies, but in battalions," THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW is that one to which confident expectation turns for relief from commonplace; it may be more or less good from month to month, but one feels hopefully that it will still be itself, that the conventionalities and small fashions which sweep like a sea-fog through the rest of periodical literature, or should it rather be said like an epidemic of something mild, perhaps chickenpox, are somehow going to fall away on its slopes, Parnassian or otherwise.

It is therefore with some dismay that one begins to recognise in late numbers a suspicion of the marshalling of those peculiar *bêtes noires* with which the popular magazine endeavours to compose an astral circus procession. Considering these remarkable beings (are they reptiles or architecture?) in detail one sees at once that the most prominent is that elsewhere extinct, or never-has-been, the New Woman. Whenever any masculine writer pauses for a moment from the vast intellectual labours and cosmic thoughts which engross his waking hours he rings the bell on his desk and summons his typewriter to take down a few smartly satiric remarks about Woman.

Quite often, if he happen to be also an Englishman, as well as a philosopher, it is specifically the American woman whose existence he piously deploras. Sometimes also it is America *per se*, or America and all its works, with which he eloquently reproaches the cosmic scheme. Of late Unitarians seem to have been coming in for a share of his unsolicited attention, and of course Theosophists are always fair game for the world in general.

Now should one individual—through complexity of karma, shall we say?—happen to unite in her own person these four

objects of popular disesteem, by being at once a Theosophist, an American, a Unitarian, and a Woman, it is easy to see that she involuntarily assumes the position of Aunt Sally at a fair, and may possibly be forgiven if sometimes she feel that the primary object of the printing-press is to " 'eave 'arf a brick " at her otherwise insignificant personality. Perhaps even the humble " punching-bag " might, if circumstances permitted, like to enter a protest against too continuous punches ; at least it mutely urges the minority plea by wearing out ; but the question occurs : Would the world after all be so very much better off if their objectors succeeded in wearing to extinction all Americans, Theosophists, Unitarians and Women ?

Let us examine the matter with a little more detail. First, as to America, it is not necessary to say much ; THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW has never shown any particular aspiration to cull the tail feathers of the Eagle which hovers above the strenuous lives of the Englishman's " honoured but contemptible cousins," as Mr. Dooley phrases it. To those who know her best, and by best is not meant exclusively, America needs no justification, but, like Emerson's rhodora, is her own excuse for being.

Neither in the pages of this journal is it needful to plead for Theosophists, or to explain with what small degree of appreciation they are greeted by an orthodox world. Well for them if public and private opinion award them nothing more trying than " the austerity of a father, the pitiless home truths of a sister, and the tart indignation of a maiden aunt."

There remain then only the small persuasion of Unitarians, and the somewhat larger one of Women, for whom to ask a more genial appreciation, or at least a brilliant flash of silence, from the editorial pen.

The former are accused on p. 445 of the January REVIEW of a lack of devotion, visible devotion, which renders their religious life merely one of formalism. We are told that their ministers deliver every Sunday the most beautiful lectures, " full of quotations from Carlyle, Ruskin and Emerson, which do not and cannot touch one soul in their scanty congregations."

This may be accepted as a fair representation of the tone of

most of the Press utterances regarding the denomination ; a recent editorial in an American review, which certainly ought to know better, distinguishes Unitarianism as a wasteful religion because chiefly enjoyed by those who do not need any ! Why, it might conceivably be asked, supposing at least that Huxley's definition of religion be not altogether rejected, and that it is really not badly described as " morality touched with emotion," why might not extracts from Carlyle, Ruskin and Emerson be an eminent inspiration to right living ? Did they not each and all insist on a high morality infused with emotion ? Surely at any rate such a " lecture " is much to be preferred to an account of a savage and bloody raid and massacre, followed by a schoolboy piece of oratory laboriously composed in the intervals of tennis-playing by a curate in his salad days ?

But, it may fairly be answered, we may read Emerson, Carlyle and Ruskin at home, and we go to places of worship for something different, for a glimpse, it may be, of a spark of a live coal from off the altar. Is not such then to be found in any Unitarian place of worship ? I know not how it may be in London in these latter days, but I can speak for one city,—and that no mean one,—where Unitarianism is still a living force, and where the prominent members and ministers of that faith do offer names for the powers of rightness and integrity to conjure with.

Turning from universals to particulars, of the two Unitarian churches with which I am best acquainted, one offers to its members a living mystery of holy inspiration ; the other an example of high, disinterested, courageous, optimistic faith and practice in the midst of discouraging circumstances which presents a continuous contagion of goodness.

In a little book which spread like wildfire over the country a couple of years ago, the sweet flowers which symbolised " good works " in the heroine's " denominational garden " were given to the Unitarians, and the specialisation seemed to meet with very general endorsement. If it be true, as Dr. Wells seems to think, that Unitarians succeed but imperfectly in preaching, may it not be that their devotion flows out in other channels ; and is that on the whole much to be regretted, considering for how long the

world has floated in a continuous deluge of preaching, and how very little effect is produced thereby ?

From the universal criticism and comment which is showered from the Press on the subject a visitor from Mars might reasonably conclude that Woman is a novelty on this planet. It is the editor's relaxation and reward, as it is the salvation of the gaping column, to offer to the waiting world, day by day a diatribe, an epigram, a reproach, an insinuation, an apology, an exhortation, a condemnation, a satire, a lamentation, a tirade, a criticism, or an innuendo, to or regarding Women. Desiring to be especially severe he soaks his dry bread of virtue with tears of sentiment concerning what Woman has, may, should or might, but what she never more can or will be.

On one side of the Atlantic writers of sorts have lately added a new string to the bow with which they harry the feminine population by devoting much of their genius for misrepresentation to the subject of Women's Clubs. Persistently ignoring the fact that through the agency of Women's Clubs much good work has been accomplished which otherwise would have remained undone, that cities have been beautified, schools improved, dirty streets and slums cleaned up, out-door breathing spaces provided for the poor, better methods of reform and correction adopted for the young, training in industrial arts, cooking and sewing given to children, and scores of other good things achieved, too numerous to mention, besides the brightening and broadening of hundreds of lives, which has come in the doing of these things ; regardless of everything but prejudice, and a strange feeling which suggests something less worthy even than that, the typical writer on Women's Clubs simply assumes *à priori* that the clubwoman of America in general and in particular is an ambitious busybody, equally noted for interfering in everybody else's business and neglecting her own.

Meanwhile women, who according to the accepted masculine canons never cease talking, and always have the last word, maintain, like the infant of Shelley's reproach, an insufferable silence. Perhaps they think with the old English poet that :

In argument with man a woman ever
Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

Or are they simply mentally repeating *en masse* the immortal words of Mrs. Poyser: "I'm not denying that women are fools; God Almighty made them to match the men."

Or, on the other hand, are they depressed and discouraged enough to accept as a fact the statement so often pressed home to them, that they are necessarily and fundamentally inferior creatures; that, as a woman writer of the early XVIIIth century put it, and was no doubt praised for it as a truly womanly woman, that the appropriate attitude of woman is dependence, because she is conscious of inferiority, and therefore grateful for support. And so, appropriately, whenever a word or a work is worthy of commendation it is described as virile, masculine, manly, while feminine, effeminate=weak, inferior—dull. (See THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW, vol. xxxvii., p. 387).¹

To break that silence of the sex might be ungracious or ill-timed; better, like the great Robinson, to "fetch a compass," and see how things look from the other side.

Said one capable woman, and, just for novelty, we might listen to her for a while: "Fully realising the advantages of almost every kind which attend on being of the masculine sex, advantages too obvious and too numerous to detail, I must confess that I have never been able to wish that I might have been a man. It seems to me that in doing so women mentally sacrifice the greater for the lesser, ideal for material benefits. But it may be that I have not, indeed, seen and known enough men by whom to judge the sex. For men are rare in the world to-day. Or, at least, the world appears chiefly to resemble a great public school, composed of overgrown boys, each with a boy's weaknesses, grown often into vices; a boy's mentality, overlaid with some business or professional training; a boy's selfishness and narrowness; a boy's conceit, dullness, and superficiality; a boy's claim on forbearance and forgiveness. Some of them are very clever boys indeed, and some of them are nice, lovable boys, oh, yes; and the wise woman accepts their words and ways with a little inward sigh and smile, 'Boys will be boys.' Looking out over the world she seems to see it full of boyishness,

¹ That is "mailed" to my address. The reader had better look at the context.
—G. R. S. M.

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the restraint and dependence and contempt of the eastern zenana to the restraint and dependence and contempt of the western "civilised" home with its sticks no thicker than a thumb, and its holy places too holy for a woman to tread, and its mottoes and proverbs similar to that one above the doorway of an institute of learning for men founded by the generosity of a woman: "Let no dogs or women enter here"; remembering all these things, will not reasonable men echo the sane and noble sentiment of our latest philosopher, and, considering the, distorted media of centuries, own that not all which seems to them ungraceful or unprofitable in the "Woman's Movement" of to-day may really be so, that the fault may sometimes be not so much with her who acts as with him who sees, since: "Woman has so long lived kneeling in the shadow that our prejudiced eyes find it difficult to seize the harmony of the movements which she makes when rising to her feet in the light of day."

AN A. T. U. W.

A NOTE ON BEN JONSON'S MASQUES

WHILE reading the other day Professor Morley's convenient edition of Ben Jonson's *Masques*, I could not help being struck by the number of passages in which Jonson showed a considerable knowledge of what may be called Theosophical literature. The fact in itself perhaps is not remarkable, for it is well known that there was a Rosicrucian movement of some kind in Jonson's day, and that, as a friend of Bacon's, Jonson could not help but know something of its literature and ideas.

What, however, is remarkable is that not only Jonson knew these things but that he assumed that they were pretty generally known by the public. One of his Masques—*The Fortunate Isles*—written, I believe, in 1624, and performed at the Court, is from beginning to end a skit on the Rosicrucian movement. But in order that a satire and parody should be understood it is necessary that the original should be familiar. Are we then to suppose

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Masque is a conversation between Merefool, a melancholic student, and an invisible spirit, Johphiel, an intelligence of Jupiter's sphere. Merefool (identical in meaning, by the way, with Parsifal) is a student of the Rosy Cross. He appears on the stage talking to himself, and complaining that in spite of their promises the brothers of the Rosy Cross have given him no psychic powers. He is answered by the invisible Johphiel, with whom the rest of the conversation is carried on.

Merefool. O ho!

Johphiel (aside). In Saturn's name, the father of my lord,
What overcharged piece of melancholy
Is this, breaks in between my wishes thus
With bombing sighs?

Mere. No! No intelligence!
Not yet? and all my vows now nine days old!
Blindness of fate! puppies had seen by this time!
But I see nothing that I should, or would see!
What mean the brethren of the Rosy-cross
So to desert their votary?

Joh. (aside). O 'tis one
Hath vowed himself unto that airy order,
And now is gaping for the fly they promised him.

Mere. (continuing) . . . And have not gained the sight—

Joh. (aloud). Nay, scarce the sense.

Mere. Voice, thou art right—of anything but a cold
Wind in my stomach.

Joh. And a kind of whimsie—

Mere. Here in my head, that puts me to the staggers
Whether there be that brotherhood or no.

Johphiel, "the airy jocular spirit," then discourses to Merefool, promising him a great post in the kingdom of the Rosy Cross:

The farm of the great customs
Through all the ports of the air's intelligences;
Then constable of the castle Rosy-cross;
Which you must be, and keeper of the keys

Of the whole Kabal, with the seals ; you shall be
Principal secretary to the stars ;
Know all the signatures and combinations,
The divine rods, and consecrated roots ;
What not ?

Mere. But how ?

Joh. Why, by his skill
Of which he has left you the inheritance,
Here in a pot ; this little gallipot
Of tincture, high rose tincture.

Johphiel then goes on to explain that the condition of all this greatness is poverty. Merefool must not seek wealth, must not indeed possess wealth. He must be poor :

When you have made
Your glasses, gardens in the depth of winter,
Where you will walk invisible to mankind,
Talk with all birds and beasts in their own language,
When you have penetrated hills like air,
Dived to the bottom of the sea like lead,
And risen again like cork, walked in the fire,
An 'twere a salamander, passed through all
The winding orbs, like an Intelligence,
Up to the empyrean, when you have made
The world your gallery, can dispatch a business
In some three minutes with the antipodes,
And in five more, negotiate the globe over ;
You must be poor still.

Johphiel offers to call up before Merefool anybody he chooses to name. It is interesting as showing the similarity of Theosophy then and now, to note the names on which Merefool calls.

Mere. . . . my Greatness, then,
Would see King Zoroastres.

Joh. He is confuting a French almanack.

Mere. Then Hermes Trismegistus.

Joh. What luck is this, he should be busy too !
He is weighing water but to fill three hour-glasses,

And mark the day in penn'orths like a cheese.
And he has done.

Mere. Or Plato.

Joh. Plato is framing some ideas,
Are now bespoken, at a groat a-dozen,
Three gross at least ; and for Pythagoras,
He has rashly run himself on an employment,
Of keeping asses from a field of beans ;
And cannot be staved off.

Mere. Archimedes.

Joh. but he is now
Inventing a rare mousetrap with owl's wings
And a cat's foot, to catch the mice alone.

And so the Masque goes on. Perhaps, however, I have quoted enough to stir an interest in the problem, and to lead some of my fellow-students to investigate further this little Rosicrucian mystery.

RICHARD MAGUIRE.

FROM A STUDENT'S EASY CHAIR

THE message in some form or other sways the world's destinies and man's. Has it not always been so from the beginning ?

What is Death but a recall ? Love, but the result of the message of the soul that has found its counterpart--the twin atom with which it unites to form a molecule ?

Many a fleet-footed messenger of old has yielded up his life in one short gasp after delivering his message, the man remaining unheeded or forgotten, overshadowed by the import of weal or woe of which he was the bearer.

Thus it is also with all great and true Art, and more especially with Music. The message--the idea--is the thing, not the vehicle or the interpreter. In the world of Art, Literature, and Drama with which we are mainly concerned a yawning chasm

divides those who have a message to send from those who have none.

The behaviour of those who vie with one another in receiving or welcoming the messenger, either for his own sake or for the sake of the message, is just as characteristic; some stand rapt, heeding nothing save the message, which to them possesses so deep a meaning.

Some, overpowered with admiration for the messenger, keep their eyes upon his noble and graceful bearing, drink in with delight the tones of his beautiful voice, are moved to tears by his eloquence; they are, in short, captivated by the charm of his personality, and pay little heed to what he has come to tell them.

Others, who worship devoutly at the altar of Ego, are affected by the message, in so far only as it bears on their experiences and reflects their own thoughts and passions; they reconstruct the message to suit themselves, and at times it moves them deeply.

Others again, knowing the message itself full well, having heard it many times delivered by various messengers, are mainly interested in the interpretation or delivery thereof, and in comparing the numerous versions with each other and with the one which they themselves consider the true one.

How instructive it would be if some ultra-modern wizard, having discovered the art of taking psychological snap-shots, could be induced to try his skill at Covent Garden, for instance, during a performance of "Tristan and Isolde," and exhibit his results on a specially constructed cinematograph. What exclusive *séances* he would hold with such entrancing secrets in his possession. The private view of Dr. Richter's psychological conception of "Tristan and Isolde"—what would many of us not give for such a revelation? Unfortunately it would be too late to obtain Wagner's own.

Soul-pictures taken haphazard at intervals through the performance would be wafted before our eyes by the wizard in a psychological phantasmagoria: Wagner playing with the elemental passions in dinner dress; glimpses of the tender dignity of Mathilde Wesendonck, under the influence of whose love Wagner conceived his Love Drama, and whom Frau Wittich

suggests far more than she does Isolde ; the beatific serenity of Nirvāṇa ; the searchings of love's sweets enjoyed by the spectator only in retrospection or in anticipation ; the restfulness and comfort of dog-like fidelity and intelligent devotion ; the unrest of passion ; the eternal warring of the intensely emotional atmosphere against the conventions and unrealities imposed by the stage, and dimly felt as a disturbing element ; and so on, accompanied by the Unutterable, felt and apprehended, for which there are no words. All this would form a strangely absorbing panoramic vision.

Does it really matter to the message delivered through the Love Drama that the Tristans provided this year by the Syndicate were inadequate, that this singer or that seemed occasionally oblivious of pitch ; that he did not look or act his part, that voice production was sometimes faulty—judged by someone else's standard ?

So long as the true atmosphere is there and the message is delivered lucidly, we shall still be able to receive it and take it to our hearts if it be only beautiful and significant in itself.

Does a perfectly trained and beautiful voice which fills the hearer with sensuous delight and the admiration of technique to the exclusion of everything else, or almost everything, conduce to a perfect apprehension of the message, or does it detract from it ? If we could conceive such a thing possible, would it add to the beauty of Wagner's Love pæan to have it sung by Melba and Caruso ? My dear fellow-soul, were Covent Garden five times its present size, the announcement would be sufficient to fill it, but it would be the audiences of "Faust" and "La Bohème" who would swell the ranks. By the help of the beautiful vocal organs of their favourites, of the frequent use of binoculars, the contemplation of diamond tiaras and of Worth's and Paquin's masterpieces, the audience would live through the three Acts somehow, provided the management were obliging enough to concede lights in the auditorium. It is to be feared that on this occasion, however, the Wizard's plates might turn out to be very negative as soul-pictures.

And the messenger, there is surely something to be said for him, the ideal, the faithful interpreter ?

I am as a spirit who has dwelt
 Within his heart of hearts, and I have felt
 His feelings, and have thought his thoughts, and know
 The inmost converse of his soul, the tone
 Unheard but in the silence of his blood,
 When all the pulses in their multitude
 Image the trembling calm of summer seas.
 I have unlocked the golden melodies
 Of his deep soul, as with a master-key,
 And loosened them and bathed myself therein—
 Even as an eagle in a thunder-mist
 Clothing his wings with lightning.

There is no such thing as a faithful interpreter in Art, and more especially in Music; there is no such thing as an interpretation untinged by the individuality of interpreter or recipient, but the interpretation need not obscure the message or idea, or prevent its ringing out clear and unchanged to the listener in spite of the interpreter. The idea of a musical composition does not consist of actual sounds, they are but used to express or clothe it. Many listeners never get beyond the actual sound and mistake its sensuous impressions for ideas.

When Paderewski plays anything that appeals to him, he holds you as no other can, and makes you enjoy the beauty of the idea as he so vividly sees it himself. When he plays music that takes no hold upon him, you suddenly realise how clever he is, how marvellous his technique and fancy, and how charming his personality—to all of which the music forms a fitting background.

* * *

William Morris was for ever sending messages in all directions, and the one which rings out most often with persistent iteration from his work and his life is:

“O me! O me! How I love the earth and the seasons and weather, and all things that deal with it and all that grows out of it, as this has done (Kelmescott). The earth and the growth of it, and the life of it. If I could but say or show how I love it!”
 (See *Life*, i., p. 227.)

This is the message, which echoes and re-echoes to us from Morris's romances and poems, from his heart work and from his

life, *i.e.*, the gospel of beauty and happiness which is not the birthright of the privileged few, but of everyone who draws breath; it is the duty of the community at large to see that no man be wrongfully deprived of this birthright.

Who loves flowers, and colour, and the joyousness of life, and discovers not Morris's message woven in his tapestries, some of which, illustrating the story of the Holy Grail, were recently on view at Christie's? Flowers, as Morris saw them and loved them, fill the foreground, mounting guard on the sanctuary of the Holy Grail, attuning the souls of those who draw near; striking the note of innocent joyousness needed as a relief to the solemnity of the scene.

* * *

In the Exhibition of the New English Art Club, we are struck by at least one message delivered by a great artist: "The Jews mourning in the Synagogue," by Mr. Will Rothenstein. Unadorned by picturesque accessories, or any of the paraphernalia of pathos, we get a direct and instant impression of the dignity and solemnity of the devotion of the Jews, which appeals so strongly to the artist himself, that the onlooker is at once attracted by the evident sincerity of the work, and strangely moved by a scene entirely unfamiliar to the non-Jew, which reveals as in a flash the secret strength of the Race.

D. N. D.

You shall, when all things else do sleep
 Save your chaste thoughts, with reverence, steep
 Your bodies in that purer brine
 And wholesome dew, called ros-marine :
 Then with that soft and gentler foam,
 Of which the ocean yet yields some,
 Whereof bright Venus, beauty's queen,
 Is said to have begotten been,
 You shall your gentler limbs o'erlave
 And for your pains perfection have.

{ BEN JONSON'S *Masque of Blackness*.

CHARM

CHARM, and again but charm! My life has passed
 From out mine own possession;—wholly thine,
 My eyes see only with thy light, my ears
 Drink thy sounds only. This the charmed sphere
 Of endless mystic circlings, ebb and flow
 Of the world-spirit to a magic tune,
 My soul's the snake that hears the charmer's voice;
 Spellbound she listens with suspended breath,
 Her being all centred to one point,
 Till lost, entranced, drunken with ecstasy,
 She sinks in utter self-abandonment.

On steals the music, ever soft and low.
 If this be death or draught of poisoned life,
 Poison is then elixir, death most sweet.
 How wise the charm, how subtly penetrant!
 New inspiration quickens every sense.
 My eyes are breathed upon, their lids unsealed;
 The soul of things stands naked in my sight;
 Their sweet, mysterious essence is revealed;
 I breathe their fragrance and it thrills my brain;
 I taste the consciousness of other minds,
 Move where I will, helped by the magic wand.
 Strange secret springs are opened; I pass in,
 Inhaling weirdly ancient atmospheres.
 The subtle life of things pervades my blood;
 I see with eyes that long have passed away;
 I breathe the very air the artist breathed,
 And flashing magic circles catch my soul.
 O'er seas of time come voices to my ears,
 Perfumes as of dead roses brought to light.

I fling myself upon the stream of charm.
 The fiery stream that flows around the world,

Sucking in life, revolving ceaselessly,
 Strong and unyielding, raging terrible,
 Yet sweet, sweet, sweet ! Daughter of dazzling light,
 Hold thou me, bear me on through endless time.

Ever the same old song of love or charm.
 Is love a word too high or charm too low ?
 He who is charmed must love ; no heart of stone
 Can almond blossom pierce, or scent of rose.
 Still my heart sings : Oh charm of waving corn,
 Bending beneath the passionate wooing wind,
 Oh charm of flowing water, moving cloud,
 Of green lawn, sown with golden daffodils
 That bend to meet the clear and silent pool,
 Charm of the fountain, of the flight of birds,
 Of white flower's fragrance, of the breath of spring,
 Of warm mysterious earth, of forest branch
 That creaks distorted in the wild March storm ;
 Charm of the breathing, light ascending flame,
 Charm terrible of tiger's murderous grace,
 Strange charm of words, of liquid syllables
 That come and rest with sweetness in the mind !

Last charm of all, the last and yet the first,
 One lightning flash through my dark memory runs,
 King of all charmers, author, thou, of charm !
 One deeply wronged, and yet who greeting sends.
 Who will the riddle read ? What downward curves
 Of lip and eye, saturnine, sinister,
 Passion in darkness, strength in crooked ways,
 Still on the brow the likeness of a star.
 I saw thy form and knew thee who thou wert.
 If thine the spell that leads my life astray
 Yet shall day conquer night. The sacred fire
 Reposes in the flint, works even by thee.

FLORENCE TUCKER.

No virtue is pure that is not passionate ; no virtue is safe that is not
 enthusiastic.—SEELEY, *Ecce Homo*.

HARNESSING THE ATOM

WHETHER or no we shall be able to make practical use of the mighty energies latent in every particle of matter, the existence of such energies is now beyond dispute. We are recognising that some form of life is in everything, even in things spoken of as dead matter.

Such substances as radium are but vivid examples of what is apparently going on everywhere. We can by this partially appreciate with our physical senses the movement of things. We get a hint of mighty collisions and disintegrations that are actually proceeding before our eyes. Later, we learn that all matter—lead, wood or iron—is at some stage of disintegration and is giving out energy. All the particles of matter we see around us represent stages in the mighty scheme of growth, decay, or the building up of new forms.

What we see going on cannot be stopped, accelerated or in any way checked. In nature's great drama we are little more than passive sightseers. For instance, the substance uranium is said to disintegrate in so many millions of years. In every year, that is, a piece of uranium would forcibly part with a certain infinitesimal fraction of itself. But if, instead of watching this slow though powerful action and being entirely unable to utilise it, we could make a piece of uranium split up entirely in a year; what then? Then we should have got hold of a power far exceeding anything obtained either from the roaring waterfall or angry hurricane.

Man has, then, discovered the existence of powers he cannot control, and, hence, can little use. He has, however, no "Open Sesame" to unseal the cave of wealth. When electricity was discovered as a powerful agent in producing useful effects, no means were yet at hand for transmitting or checking it; and it is just in our ability to control the power that lies its practical use. To-day's electrical science is harnessing a power that has for ever existed, but had previously withstood man's search. We now know something of this power, but what of the new power? New, that is, to us, but who can say that it was not used for some of those pre-historic miracles, unexplained by modern science? There are, for instance, existing monuments

that would require, for the lifting of their stones, forces with which we are unacquainted.

The new power is the power to be found in every grain of matter. And it seems, so far, the more minute and the more subtle the matter, the more power available.

We have all heard of the electron—that disembodied part of the atom that is said to be free negative electricity. Infinitesimally small, many millions of them must needs go to form anything we can appreciate. So far, we have not got a firm hold of these freed “bits” of electricity. We are told there are plenty about, and though scientists seem to play with them as we might with so many pounds of lead or iron, yet we cannot make them do very useful work, or perform the miracles their energies suggest. It is said that if we had just two separate grammes of electrons, and put one of these grammes at the North Pole and the other at the South, these masses of electrons would be repelled with a force of 192 million tons! And such repulsions must be taking place in the things we touch or use. Mighty collisions and bombardments are occurring, and these are probably causing the slow disintegration of everything. As a side-issue, transmutation was discovered—one element actually forming another. But the alchemy of to-day is not concerning itself with any of the new products of disintegration, but rather with the energy given out in such transmutations. If it were possible—though it is not likely—to manufacture gold out of lead, the value of the gold would be little compared to the value of the energy set free in such a change. Energy is everything, matter is its servant. The amount of energy that is just waiting to be freed must be something terrific, and we who have not yet harnessed it, may well be grateful that no evilly disposed villain has learnt the secret of control, making us, thereby, his unwilling slaves. Little wonder that the witches and other awkward individuals of old were removed with the greatest convenient speed. It is possible that many ridiculed fairy tales will need to be unearthed and placed on the eminence now occupied by authoritative prophecy. Wherever the clue to some of the forces around us and in us is to be found, we can at least foretell that when man is ready the solution will be near. Radium, and all that radium means, justified the philosophy which men were waiting to prove. It will be soon, perhaps, that man will start a new order of things by the control of subtle forces; and in that new order, when man’s lower wants are gratuitously supplied, he will be more free to attend to and gratify

those higher demands which now have largely to take second place.

Prof. Soddy gave a paper recently on the "Internal Energy of Elements," and showed how with but a little expenditure in raw material—if we knew how—the whole of London could be supplied with light and power. He said that from just a gramme of uranium there could be evolved enough energy to keep a 32-c.p. lamp burning for a whole year.

The problem then is to harness, not Niagara or the typhoon, but the atom. Perhaps to-day we are too speculative; but could the men of Faraday's time have imagined the outcome of that great scientist's simple experiment? The theory of to-day is to-morrow's practice, and then that practice gives the groundwork for another theory. The fact is, the poets were right. Their imaginations were not ill-founded, and we come to the conclusion that anything that man can possibly imagine is certain of achievement, certain of fulfilment. Meanwhile, let us work at harnessing the atom.

And all this is just spoken from the aspect of physical science. Some of us—not scientists—knew of it.

SIDNEY RANSOM.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE PATH OF ACTION

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

In last month's THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW Mrs. Besant says that "actions are the least important part of a man's life from the occult standpoint." This statement seems to me to be so strangely unlike much of her former teaching and so very crushing to all lovers of the Path of Action that I should be glad if we could have some further light thrown on the subject.

Since when have right thought and right desire held such a much more lofty position in occultism than right action? My knowledge of the various scriptures of the world is very limited, but what little I have gleaned from Theosophical study has certainly left upon my mind the impression that in all scriptures good deeds rank fore-

most among the qualifications for discipleship with all our spiritual teachers.

Mrs. Besant seems to suggest that our actions are largely the result of past evil and do not correspond to our present thoughts and ideals. Is it true that we may flatter ourselves that we are thinking and desiring so much more wisely and nobly than we act? Does it take so *very* long for the power of thought to act upon the body? It does not seem so in cases of emergency. When the true man within is really stirred thought and action become simultaneous. I have always thought that by watching our actions we could see revealed the innermost workings of our mind and motive, and that by judging these we could undeceive ourselves upon many points; that we could see ourselves in our actions as others see us, with the unprejudiced eye of an onlooker.

What does Mrs. Besant mean by the occult standpoint? One could have understood the doctrine if she had said the Jesuitical standpoint. The statement to me suggests the priest so much more than the spiritual teacher that I looked twice to see if it was really Mrs. Besant putting it forward with such earnestness or someone masking under an assumed title. Does the occult standpoint mean the point of view of those who see and are taught on the inner planes? The following teaching, which seems to me to be very instructive and illuminative, and quite in accordance with the teaching of the scriptures, I do not find at all easy to reconcile with Mrs. Besant's present standpoint. Perhaps she would comment on it.

"The buddhic envelope or vehicle of high inspiration and direct perception which surrounds man like a womb is only set in activity and made to conceive true ideas when united to the fire of action, for within right action lies concealed the true *Âtmâ* by means of which **THE MASTER** alone works through the disciple."

If only Mrs. Besant had said what a man *acts* that he *is* I should have been able to agree with her, for I believe he who acts nobly is seldom far behind in thought or motive, while he who acts foul deeds may often deceive himself into believing that his thoughts and motives are noble, but I doubt if he could ever so deceive "Those who see."

Her doctrine is indeed "hard to learn" and it is well that it should be. I believe the innermost instinct of every righteous man will rebel against it. In these days of increased interest in occultism, when we hear of new laws for every plane, let us not have our heads

turned, but as members of the Theosophical Society stand firm to the good sound doctrine that by his *works* shall a man be known. And when teachers and prophets arise, let us look first for the God-given mark of the true spiritual man—right action, holy life—the stamp of *Âtmâ*, the seal set upon every true disciple of THE MASTER. For without this sign how shall we discriminate between pupils of the Masters of Dark Wisdom teaching us much knowledge, but screening their own lack of *Âtmâ* and spirituality under the proclamation that to think and desire good deeds is greater than to act them, and those true disciples of THE MASTER whose every thought and deed *must* bear the severe scrutiny of the light of all planes ?

A man may be a pupil of many masters on any plane, he may be in contact with many great and wise souls, from whom he will learn much or little, good or evil, according to the development of his forms and the intensity of his desires, but how are we to bring ourselves in contact with THE MASTER, the ONE without a second, except through *Atmâ* or the *actualisation* of the God in us ?

Let us not dream good deeds but act them, for as Mrs. Besant truly says, action is the result of thought and desire—their consummation; and when we see right action we may know that right thought and right motive are implied, but until we see the action the virtue cannot be *real*, for reality is not a thing of this plane or that plane, but must embrace all.

In *The Secret Doctrine* we are told that the difference between adepts of the left-hand path and adepts of the right-hand path is so slight and subtle that even from the occult point of view it is difficult to draw a line of demarcation. Let us not think too lightly of action lest in our thought we change our direction from the right to the left, or gradually destroy in our minds the power to discriminate between the true prophet who *lives the life* and the priest who preaches the doctrine but for action is ever ready with excuses veiled in much sophistry and subtle reasoning.

Whether action be the least important part of man's life, or whether in this particular sentence Mrs. Besant is mistaken, to all those who are being taught on the inner planes I would venture to suggest one word: *Beware!* Should you on the inner planes be tempted with this subtle doctrine, *look twice, call again*, and notice whether the Presence that teaches that doctrine is strengthened or shudders at every repeated test.

Do not the Indian Scriptures teach that liberation is attained by

the performance of action *without motive*? So when thought and motive have been left behind, still shall we live, realising each moment the most perfect ideal which the mind can conceive, Warriors on the Path of Action.

Yours very truly,

MINNIE B. THEOBALD.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

DIETETICS

On the Physical Basis of Life. By Arthur Annesley Voysey.
(London: Thomas Laurie; 1906.)

WITH the opening sentences of this tiny booklet, we are entirely in accord. The author says, "Why should we bother about our bodies? If we were convinced that all was well with them, we should not. But we cannot be so convinced, for the evidences to the contrary are overwhelming." This, it seems to us is a sane and reasonable way of looking at what is really a very important subject, *viz.*, physical health. The physical body conditions, for most of us, the whole of our experiences in this earth life; it is our chief means of expression on this plane, and as a vehicle of the Self within, it should be kept in a condition of purity and harmony and in good working order.

Dealing with diet as one of the main factors controlling health, Mr. Voysey bases his argument on the fact that "given a certain organism, the rate of circulation of the blood varies with the amount of uric acid contained in it," and proceeds to urge the reasonableness of the now well-known theories of Dr. Alexander Haig, as a foundation for that true science of diet which, as he truly says, does not yet exist. If this is what our author means by the "Physical Basis of Human Life," we confess it appears to us inadequate. For instance, rate of circulation is not the only point, and possibly not even the chief one to consider, in regulating blood supply; and there are other important causes of impure blood besides the so-called uric acid substances. Moreover, we are convinced that the last word has by no means been said on this subject of uric acid; so that one is not yet

justified in making Dr. Haig's theories the basis of the entire science of dietetics, as Mr. Voysey almost implies. Nevertheless we must admit that they form an important contribution to that science, and should be seriously considered by all students of these things.

A useful feature of this little book is the compact table of food values appended, by means of which the would-be food reformer may guide his uncertain steps, and see at a glance where to obtain the nutriment required for body-building purposes.

B. G. T.

FASTING AS A GENTLE ART

The Best Thing in the World, Good Health. How to keep it for a Hundred Years. By J. Austin Shaw. (London: Fowler & Co.; 1906. Price 4s. 6d. net.)

MR. SHAW, finding himself once upon a time too fat, fasted for three days with great advantage. He frequently repeated the treatment, until now he is such a slave to the "habit" that he has to fast forty-five days to get rid of 21lb. We are told, several times on every page, that it does not affect his strength or his heart. He feels so exhilarated that he writes for hours and hours a day (he, by the way, runs a horticultural paper). When he has nothing else to do he produces a very common-place diary, of which three-quarters of this book consists. The rest is a collection of letters of exultation and encouragement from another gentleman with similar propensities, who also teaches the gentle art at so much a time. There are portraits of various people in various conditions of age and fasting, who all look very well. There is nothing else.

L. W.

FOUR BOOKLETS

The Church of the Future. By W. F. Cobb, D.D. (Imprinted at the Press of the Church of St. Ethelburga the Virgin.)

Tariff without Tears. Written and illustrated by Harold E. Hare. (London: C. W. Daniel; 1905. Price 6d. net.)

Buddhist Religion. By William Loftus Hare. (London: C. W. Daniel. Price 6d. net.)

Lotus Blossoms. By Maung Nee. (Rangoon: Privately printed; 1906.)

THE scope of Dr. Cobb's interesting essay on *The Church of the Future*

may be seen from the heads under which he arranges his enquiry. Accepting as his conception of the Church Dr. Creighton's luminous definition—"mankind knowing and fulfilling its destiny"—Dr. Cobb proceeds to enquire :

1. What is the destiny of mankind ?
2. How is that destiny fulfilled ?
3. How do we come to a knowledge of what it is ?
4. What obstacles must be removed before the Church can quantitatively become conterminous with mankind ?

If the questions are bold, the answers which Dr. Cobb gives to them are equally bold. Moreover, readers will be left in no doubt as to Dr. Cobb's meaning. The little pamphlet is strongly to be recommended to all those who desire to know the direction in which the best minds of the Church are moving.

Mr. Harold Hare's *Tariff without Tears* is more amusing and not more involved than other fiscal handbooks.

Number seven of the *World's Religions Series* is as good as the previous numbers. We note that Mr. Hare dedicates his booklet to Mrs. Besant.

Lotus Blossoms consists of a number of well selected and arranged extracts from various Buddhist writings.

A. R. O.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND SPIRITISM

The Unseen World: An Exposition of Catholic Theology in its relation to Modern Spiritism. By the Rev. Fr. Alexius M. Lépiciér, O.S.M. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.; 1906.)

THE writer of this book has, in treating of his subject, wisely adopted the term Spiritism in preference to Spiritualism, the real meaning of the latter being more properly applied to a higher as well as wider range of ideas than those represented by the phenomena classed under its title by modern votaries of the *séance*-room.

For the first time since the advent of Spiritism in its modern form has this movement been handled and thoroughly scrutinised from the ecclesiastical point of view by a highly trained and adequate mind, so far, at least, as the present writer has been able to ascertain. The subject is here entered upon without prejudice and with an honest desire to arrive at a true explanation of the multifarious and strangely

elusive phenomena presented, by one capable of weighing evidence and judging in an impartial spirit. Doubtless others have done their best in this direction, but they have not covered the whole field in the manner of the work now before us. One exception, however, we are forced to make with regard to certain mental facts which will be alluded to later in this article, and which perhaps come more properly under the heading of Occultism.

Father Lépiciér divides his subject into three parts: The Angelic World; The Human Soul after Death; and Spiritistic Phenomena. Under the term "angelic substances" he includes both good and bad angels, and sets forth in a clear and categorical manner their attributes as taught by Catholic theology, presumably as summed up by the great Dominican doctor, Thomas Aquinas. And here he explains one of the great causes of error in the minds of most modern Spiritists, namely, the confusion commonly made between angels and the souls of the dead, or, as he prefers to call them, souls separated from human bodies. This section of the book is well worth study and consideration.

Angels, good and bad, the writer affirms, are the only pure spirits, without material bodies, even of the subtlest nature, but finite and limited as to their knowledge and powers. Questions on these points have been "worked out by the searching minds of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church," and "Catholic theology has long since given on them precise explanations, outside of which all other statements must prove inadequate" (p. 25). This might seem to be the last word on the subject, but Fr. Lépiciér goes patiently and definitely into details as to the power of pure spirits over matter, their power over the mind of man and their manner of communicating with man and *vice versa*. From this it is shown that there is no difficulty in believing that spiritual intelligences (not human) can produce all the phenomena exhibited in the *séance*-room, movements of heavy bodies, lights, the presentation of phantastic images, and even the framing of human bodies, giving them the likeness of friends of those present. "These effects not only *may* but *must* be attributed to . . . angels of a low moral order, whom we call demons" (p. 91).

So far so good, and most students of the *Secret Doctrine* and the *Key to Theosophy* will agree in the main with these conclusions.

When we come, however, to the chapter on the Human Soul after Death, we shall be inclined to dissent from some of Father Lépiciér's statements. He says, for instance, that the discarnate soul has not the perfection of its nature, and its happiness cannot be

complete without the body, for which it retains a certain craving, and that this craving can only be satisfied by the resurrection of the flesh. The doctrine of reincarnation cannot be accepted by the Church, because by entering a new body the identity of the personality would be lost. Here the distinction between the personality and the individuality bridges this difficulty for the student of theosophy. The fact that the separated soul does not acquire new knowledge, except that of an intellectual or spiritual order, because it is cut off from the life of the senses and from earthly environments, by which knowledge of external objects can alone be conveyed, makes it impossible that such a soul can control the operations of the *séance*-room, which are concerned with dense matter. Therefore, these must be ascribed to beings of another order, who have the power of controlling matter, and not matter only, but to a certain extent the thoughts of men, and of exercising hypnotic influence over them.

Before deciding whether communication of thought can take place between incarnate and discarnate souls, Fr. Lépicié devotes a chapter to the inquiry as to the manner in which we communicate our thoughts to one another in this present life. He puts the following question for solution: "Can an entirely spiritual communication, by some mysterious means at present not fully understood, such as the concentration of our thoughts and wills, be directly carried on with other living persons in a manner similar to that in which angels and separated souls communicate with one another?" In other words—is there such a thing as telepathy? This is answered in the negative, the theory of mental vibration, on which it rests, being, after due consideration, finally rejected. The grounds given are that as the human will is powerless "to lift up as much as the weight of a straw without the use of external means," therefore, it cannot act on any fluid of a material nature, however attenuated, *at present known to science*. This is already somewhat of an admission, though the theory is said to be fraught with difficulties almost too great to be overcome. Nevertheless, this part of the subject, set forth with great lucidity by the writer, with the pros and cons marshalled with lawyer-like precision, is of exceeding interest and well repays perusal. And though no possibility of intercourse between departed souls and those in the flesh can be admitted in the natural order, since a wide chasm separates them, yet the hope is allowed that "this chasm may be bridged by God's providence through the ministry of angels"—a very different thing, be it noted, from the methods accepted by ordinary

Spiritists. Much of the difficulty attending the theory of mental vibrations disappears to the student of Theosophy through the Vedântic teaching of the "sheaths of the soul"; the attenuated matter in which it is clothed in accordance with the plane it inhabits may be conceived of as acting as a receiver for those vibrations, which are transmitted by the operator at the other end of the line. And may it not be without irreverence supposed that something analogous takes place with our prayers and aspirations when directed with all the earnestness and force of will of which we are capable?

That "thoughts are things," living creative things, has become to some of us so great a reality that we are forced to posit some working theory of how the effects are produced. And also to some of us the intimations conveyed to our mind or our inner senses, when alone or in dream, "spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost"—are so real and convincing, so consoling and abiding in their effects, that we should be belying our highest instincts to attribute them merely to imagination, whatever may be meant by that vague and unsatisfactory term. Father Lépiciér would have us believe that such effects, when not imaginary, are produced by the intermediary of some pure spirit who, perceiving our distress and longing, can impress upon our mind soothing thoughts, conveyed in imagery which seems to bear the seal and likeness of those we love and recognise. It may be so, the difference is not very great.

Spontaneous apparitions, not evocations, of the dead are also to be accounted for as taking place through the instrumentality of angels, good or bad, but the dead do not appear in person. Does this fit in with the fact that those who have made a compact to appear to a certain friend at the moment of death have frequently done so? Such apparitions and indeed all the phenomena of Spiritism are said to be permitted, though possibly not commanded, by Divine Providence for a certain end. And in this we most fully concur, for the dark cloud of materialism which hung over men's minds during the latter half of the last century has certainly been dispersed in many instances by the agency of these intelligences, though much folly and evil have likewise been due to them, and the ruin wrought to the souls of many mediums cannot be contemplated without a shudder.

No allusion is made in this work to the theory of a certain part being played in Spiritist manifestations by sub-human intelligences or elementals, an explanation, however, by no means generally accepted, and perhaps therefore not brought under discussion.

We commend to all who are studying Spiritist phenomena the perusal of this remarkable and instructive book. Though they may not agree with all the conclusions, they cannot fail to learn much from its closely-reasoned syllogisms, and they will do well to give some heed to the note of warning here given forth with no uncertain sound.

E. KISLINGBURY.

MAGAZINES AND PAMPHLETS

Theosophist, June. "Old Diary Leaves" are still occupied with Miss Edger's lecturing tour. Mr. Leadbeater's lecture on "The Reality of the Astral Plane" is concluded, giving the much needed warning that "in Western countries there are hundreds of people who have accepted dead men as their teachers, each regarding the particular entity that communicates as a kind of private archangel specially sent by God to teach him or her," and emphasising the caution of the *Voice of the Silence*: "Look *not* for thy guru in these Mâyâvic regions." C. R. Srinivasayangar gives an outline of his forthcoming work: "The Unification of the Three Schools of Hindu Philosophy," upon which we shall be glad to see Hindu criticism. "Seeker" concludes his valuable study, entitled "Stand Alone"; which title, he says, "is meant to show that the candidate who aspires to the Higher Life, to the unseen spheres of Reality, should not fly away from the busy world, but should learn to 'Stand' *in* himself, and *by* himself, immovable like the Polar Star in his one-pointed thought, far above the clamour and distraction which would rend into pieces his glorious frame of immortality." The remaining papers are: "Self-Culture," by Rama Prasad; "Selected Muhammadan Traditions"; an appeal by Mrs. Courtright for funds for a fifth Panchama Free School, to which we hope she will receive a liberal response; and Dr. Schrader's "Mahâbodhi."

Theosophy in India, June, contains the continuation of Mrs. Besant's lectures on Sir Oliver Lodge's "Life and Matter"; a useful "Word on Evil," by J. R. Mudre; the conclusion of Miss Edger's "The Development of the Will"; a dispute on Subba Row's use of "Daiviprakriti"; and S. R. Mehta's "Critical Examination of the Dasopanishats and the Svetâsvatara." The progress of the Section seems satisfactory; in the first four months of this year 212 new members were received, against a total loss from all causes of 39, leaving a net gain of 173.

Central Hindu College Magazine, June, is a good number, from which we are glad to learn that the students who do well in the religious examinations have been equally successful in secular subjects. The Girls' School is to be enlarged, and contributions are earnestly requested.

Theosophic Gleaner, June. Here the principal articles are, "How shall we be Free," by Seeker; Fio Hara's "The Eras of the Shu King"; J. D. Mähluxmivälä's curiously named "Tortures of the Personal Man"; and addresses given at the White Lotus celebration.

The Vâhan, July, gives a full summary of the very successful meeting of the Congress in Paris, at which about 450 members were present, and fifteen languages spoken. G. R. S. M. continues the correspondence on Nirvâna with a letter which all should read and re-read *until* they understand. The "Enquirer" has only an answer from B. K. as to the various views which may be taken of "Jesus, the Christ, as an historical personage," declining to enter upon the "volume of controversy" which would simply end in leaving us where we began.

Lotus Journal, July, worthily continues its running articles. The story is "The Fairy Thorn," by Miss Russell, and its moral seems to be that the ordinary young lady of the period would do best to get herself properly married instead of pressing on to the "Hall of Learning" for which she is not yet ready—a moral for which there is much to be said, but which needs a certain amount of courage to set forth to the *Lotus* public. To take even the first step towards the Gate means not only hard work but serious danger if, as the Egyptians would put it, we have not the proper pass-word. This is often forgotten, and we are indebted to Miss Russell for reminding us.

Revue Théosophique, June. M. Pierre E. Bernard's lecture on "The Soul of India" is a very important and valuable study, which all should read and which would well repay translation for English readers. Mrs. Besant and Mr. B. Keightley furnish the rest of the number.

De Theosofische Beweging, July and August (*Theosophia* not received) gives full reports of the Annual Meeting of the Section and of the Paris Congress; and the usual "Review of Reviews."

Théosophie, July, translates the "Letter from India" which appeared in our May number as its *pièce de résistance*, and gives extracts from Mrs. Besant and notes on the Congress, etc.

Also acknowledged with thanks: *Teosofisk Tidskrift*; *Omatunto*, of

which we wish we could read the Editor's "Three Objects of the Theosophical Society," and what should be an interesting paper, "Sossina, a Russian Apostle"; *Theosophic Messenger*, to which most of us will turn for its news of the San Francisco disaster and of our members involved in it. We are glad to be assured that "there is but little actual distress amongst our members, though it is indeed an hour of need with many, if only temporary," and to find that they have already secured an excellent hall and recommenced their public meetings. We heartily sympathise with the suffering and admire the energy. *Fragments* (Seattle), a good number; *La Verdad*; *Theosophy in Australasia*, May, with the report of their twelfth Annual Congress. The Secretary's report is very encouraging, showing a rise in numbers from 418 to 551. The magazine does not yet pay its expenses, but there is no idea of lessening its size or giving it up—it is felt to be indispensable to keep the Section together. A visit from Mrs. Besant is expected next year. *The Message of Theosophy* is a small but well-got-up magazine which reaches us from Rangoon, and appears already to have reached the seventh number of its second year. It opens with "Notes and News," and has articles on "Buddhism and Alcoholism," "Food and the Man," by Edward E. Long, "The Empire of Truth," by H. Dhammapala, and extracts from Mr. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant. It is a pleasing testimony of the activity and intelligence of our Rangoon Branch and we wish it all success.

Of other magazines we have to notice: *Broad Views*, July, with the opening of Mr. Mallock's serial story, "An Immortal Soul." The Editor writes of Count St. Germain, and the remaining articles are thoroughly readable. *Occult Review*, July, has not much to interest us this time; *Modern Astrology*, July, discusses the interesting horoscope of the late Dr. Richard Garnett, and Mrs. Leo's paper, "The Mission of Astrology," tends, like all she writes, to bring it into line with Theosophical views; *Notes and Queries*; *The Dawn*; *The Arya*; *The Brahmavadin*, with some very characteristic "Notes of some Wanderings with the Swami Vivekananda"; *O Mundo Occulto*; *Humanitarian*; *Psycho-Therapeutic Journal*; *The Grail*; *Theosophisch Maandblad*.

W.