THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

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THE PUNISHMENTS, therefore, which are inflicted with justice on the wicked, it is proper to refer to the order which leads everything in a becoming manner. Such things, however, as happen to the good without justice, as punishments, or poverty, or disease, may be said to take place through offences committed in a former life. For these things are woven together, and are pre-signified, so that they also are produced according to reason. — PLOTINUS: *A Discussion of Doubts relative to the Soul.* Trans. by Thomas Taylor.

BIOLOGY AND EDUCATION: by Magister Artium

THE London *Athenaeum,* which may probably be regarded as the foremost literary review in the English language, has recently enlarged its scope and broadened its basis, so that it now takes in a wider range of subjects such as interest the great reading and thinking public. We believe we are right in regarding this change as an inevitable concession to the demands of the times; and that the *Athenaeum,* in common with other papers, has felt the necessity of providing something more than matter of mere learning and academic interest. Six of the recent numbers (4513-4518) contain a full report of a series of three lectures on "Biology in Relation to Education," by Miss Hoskyns-Abrahall, delivered at Crosby Hall in March. With the exception of a necessary allowance for the omission of stereopticon views, these lectures are verbatim, and they afford interesting matter for comment in these pages.

The lecturer is somewhat diffuse, and though her lectures constitute an important contribution to the ever-growing body of thought on the topics in question, she cannot be said to have arrived at a very definable practical conclusion. She makes a strong plea for the necessity of reforming education in accordance with a more enlightened conception of human nature; but it may well be doubted whether what she says is calculated to dispel the prevailing uncertainty and confusion, or merely to lead to more uncertainty and confusion, more theories and more experiments. Before we may safely harness education to biology, we need to be a little more sure of biology; nor can we say

otherwise of psychology or of any of the other branches of speculative or tentative research that may be concerned. Nevertheless much can be said in praise of these lectures, for the lecturer is intuitive and says many things well worth quoting. It it this that lends a singularly unequal quality to the address; for we find that Pegasus is continually soaring aloft, and as continually being brought back to earth (or to the laboratory) again. Whether the intuitive "person" was thus struggling and alternating with the academic person, or whether entourage had anything to do with the matter, we can only speculate; the result has been to provide us with a field from which we may glean abundantly and with restraint.

A meed of praise is also due to the learned lecturer for her fearless championship of the ancients; a thing which, done in such influential surroundings and under the auspices of so authoritative a journal, cannot fail to bring grateful recognition to the hearts of Theosophists who have long labored in that very cause against the belittling and neglect of so many self-satisfied champions. A hand-shake of greeting goes out to a fellow-worker in the cause of championing what was great and wise in humanity; all who can accord this recognition to the wisdom of the past may without vanity claim to be themselves wise to that extent at least.

Many other Theosophical, or quasi-Theosophical, teachings are also advocated (not, of course, as such), and this again will be welcome to our readers; but we shall see how great is the need of a deeper study, in order to convert into practical wisdom that "little knowledge" which is proverbially such a dangerous thing.

The subject of Râja-Yoga education will be well to the fore in our minds as we review these remarks; but again it will be apparent that the problems which Râja-Yoga education has solved practically are those which herein are merely suggested and speculated upon.

Multiple Personality

The first topic treated is that of multiple personality; and we are shown how very complex a thing is that which we call personality, and how absurd and unpractical it is to speak of a pupil, or to train him, as though his nature were a unit.

Beginning with a definition of the Latin word *persona,* which means a "mask", the lecturer discourses on the ancient use of masks in the drama. The masks "served both to reveal and to conceal the

character of the being playing behind it." This etymology of the word "personality" is very important because it indicates so well the actual nature of personality. *Persona* means something that one "speaks through" — that is, a dramatic mask. As the lecturer points out, its ancient place is today taken by the make-up of the actor and the scenery of the stage. But the important point is that what we call our personality is a mask through which the real man speaks and enacts his part. Or rather, it is a whole collection of different masks.

"Diversity Behind Unity" is the next heading, under which the lecturer says that the Egyptians imputed at least *ten persons to every human being.* Multiple personality forms a main part of her theme; and this multiplicity is considered under the several headings of successive personalities, simultaneous and co-existing personalities, and latent personalities. Multiple personality was considered by some of the ancients as a normal state of existence. If there are ten persons in each one of us, in which of the ten is *Me*? is a question that naturally suggests itself. The obvious answer is that reality is to be sought in unity, and illusion in multiplicity. It is a contrast of the One with the many. Yet we must not forget relativity: a king may be supreme among his subjects, and yet in a company of kings he is but one of the crowd. In the same way small units compose larger units, and so on indefinitely.

The lecturer next illustrates the subject of multiple personality by reference to those well-known experiments, hypnotic and otherwise, on patients whose psychological integrity was disorganized, or could be made so by hypnotism. In particular the instance is cited of the young woman, Miss Beauchamp, whose personality became disintegrated into six. It is very interesting that three of these separate personalities represented, as the French doctor said, the three main factors in human character, namely, the saint, the self-seeker, and the devil. The saint was occupied with high moral ideas; the self-seeker was engrossed in selfish interests and deaf to the interests of others; the devil was impish rather than wicked, bent on thwarting the wishes of the saint or the self-seeker indifferently and on making life unpleasant for them. [1] William Q. Judge once published in *The Path* (Vol II) a translation from the German mystic J. Kern-

1 Bereft of his theological and dogmatic attributes Satan is simply an *adversary;* — not necessarily an "arch fiend" or a "persecutor of men," but possibly also a foe of evil. — *H. P. Blavatsky,* in *Lucifer,* Vol. V, No. 28, p. 271.

ning, telling the story of a girl who was troubled by two such personalities, one a saint, the other a rough brutal character. But *both* of the personalities were intrusive; neither was the real character; the saint, as well as the demon, was a usurper and had to be expelled. And the patient was taught how to asert her true self against the intrusion of either. This is very important, as it shows that there can be pseudo-moral, but really selfish, elements in our character, which need to be removed. In this story, as soon as the girl begins to try and expel her obtrusive personalities, they combine against her and make a compact of equal sharing. This is even more instructive. Very often the reason why we fail to expel the coarse elements from our nature is because these are in secret compact with certain other personal prejudices, of the nature of self-righteousness; and in clinging to the latter, we also bind ourselves to the former. And so doubtless in the case of Miss Beauchamp: the "devil" seems to have been the most useful character of the three, though none was the real Miss Beauchamp.

Apart from pathology, we can discern this multiplicity of personality in daily life. For instance, says the lecturer, "The child at school is one person, the child at home is another." Which raises the question, Whether of the twain is to dominate?

Experiments are quoted wherein parts of the body are isolated from the rest by local anaesthesia. The idea is that under these circumstances the separate personality which runs that particular part of the body becomes isolated from the master-personality of the entire body; the physiological fact is accompanied by a corresponding psychological fact. Thus, the hand being rendered "insensible" — that is, anaesthetized, so that the patient cannot feel anything that may be done to the hand — a pen is put into the hand, and the hand forthwith arranges itself for writing. In another case the hand was moved up and down twice, or ten times, or any given number of times, without the patient being aware of that fact. Yet the patient, being asked what she was thinking about, said that she was thinking of the number two or ten, etc. These and other experiments show that each function may have a separate personality, normally combined with the entirety, but capable of being isolated; and also that the separate personality reacted curiously on the entire personality.

The affected hand of a person suffering from anaesthesia was

trained to write the word " Paris." Then the conscious person was requested to write the word " London "; but wrote instead the word " Paris." This is quoted as showing how our mind, which we call our own, may be influenced; a very important lesson. Rightly does the lecturer insist on the importance which this has for criminal psychology and for the subject of uncontrolled impulses. A further experiment, however, proved that the rational mind does exert a counteracting influence over the irrational impulse; for when the patient was made, as above, to write a word wrongly, it was found that after a time she came to hesitate at the mistake and finally corrected it.

In connexion with the doubleness of our vision, some curious facts are cited. There are two kinds of visual centers in the cerebral cortex one kind is monocular, the other is binocular. The former kind is used when one eye alone is acting. Now suppose the right eye cannot see a certain color — say violet. Open both eyes, and the color is easily distinguished, and that though the violet patch is not within the field of sight of the left eye. Thus, by the addition of the faculty of the left eye, the right eye has been enabled to see what it could not see before.

We cannot quote all the interesting cases of dissociation of the personality which are given, but must call attention to the remark that " where consciousness is absent, there is not of necessity unconsciousness." This sounds contradictory, but what follows makes it clearer. When a person *appears* unconscious, we have no reason to assert that he is not conscious in some other way — and perhaps in a greatly extended way. This may help some people to understand why the goal of attainment held in view by some oriental schools should be described as " unconsciousness " or even " extinction." It is extinction of the lower and lesser modes of consciousness, but the awakening to a greater consciousness.

The bearing of bodily movements upon the training of the " automatic " factors in our consciousness is considered, especially with reference to *dancing* and *eurhythmics*. This is a very important subject, and one much considered in Râja-Yoga training. It is well known by close observers of human nature that bad mental habits and bad traits of disposition go hand in hand with bad and careless physical habits, such as attitude, uncontrolled movement, tricks, etc. By carefully attending to these latter manifestations, whether in our-

selves or in our pupils, we are greatly helped in overcoming the faults of which they are the signs. Therefore ordinary physical drill, however apparently mechanical it may seem, can be of the greatest service in eliminating personal kinks.

As a biological illustration of unity in multiplicity, the case of unicellular and multicellular animals is considered; which raises the interesting question, Where does separateness of personality set in? In the same connexion the process of subdivision of the germ cell is described. Professor Bergson has been lecturing in England on the human personality, and he attaches great value to the teachings of Plotinus, saying that in certain important respects they have never been advanced upon. H. P. Blavatsky likewise attaches great importance to this Neoplatonic teacher. A doctrine of his was that the lower self of man is multiple, and the higher or true self unitary; and this is the Theosophical teaching. The bearing of this doctrine upon practical education and self-mastery is obvious: what we have to do is to bring out the true Self in domination over the many fictitious selves. The attempt to define personality is likely to lead us into an abstruse discussion. If it is dual, and of the nature of a picture caused by rays of light streaming through a transparency, then what is represented by the light, and what by the transparency? The practical point, as recognized by the lecturer, is to take the unstable nature of the child and train it to constancy by causing the higher personalities to supersede the lower. Thus *character* is built.

The Ancients Understood Education

In the second of these lectures the lecturer states her objects in giving them, which are that they may lead to some reconsideration (1) of our ideas and methods in education, (2) of our treatment of the suffering, more particularly the insane, (3) of our treatment of the dead. All these are very prominent items in Theosophical work, as readers of this magazine well know. The attempt to apply knowledge to conduct is so obvious a duty as to require no special mention or commendation, except to express the regret that we still treat our pupils, our insane, and our dead in accordance with the light (or darkness) of other days. Science is, however, even now in a speculative and changing condition; and the attempt to apply it might be considered as tantamount to making our needy fellow-creatures the subject of experiments. Nevertheless the idea cannot

be too highly praised, for surely this is the true aim of science. The lectures are in the "Science" columns of the *Athenaeum,* which they distend to most unwonted length; and they are certainly more likely to be useful than dry academic reports of proceedings. The earnestness of our age compels a practical purpose in everything that seeks the appreciation of the reading public.

The errors of our treatment of the young, the infirm, and the dead, are due to ignorance of biological facts, says the lecturer. Ignorance also of facts not usually included under the term biology, we add. And next comes an admission which Theosophists will surely welcome as crowning their long efforts to diffuse Theosophical ideas. With regard to the multiplicity of "persons" in what are generally understood to be single individuals, the lecturer says

> The ancients, long before the time of the Egyptians and even of the people of Knossos, were well acquainted with these facts, and lived their lives and practised their therapeutics with a definite view to such a development of each individual as should insure that each "person" as it advanced into prominence should have its chance, and no more than its fitting chance — the development of the different characters being guided in strict accordance with the ideal. . . . At a certain stage, when the decisive moment came, the child or adolescent was in a condition of equilibrium, and able to make a definite choice between God and Mammon. But the preparation of the child necessitated a knowledge far beyond our present ken.

Our next quotation is the following:

> The fundamental error of the present day is the too exclusive pre-occupation with "objective" material phenomena of one or two kinds only.

We even say that things not perceptible to the physical senses do not exist; and even if we do not actually say this, we act as if we thought it and make it the basis of our education. But all our real advantages have been won by the use of higher faculties than these. So says the lecturer, and proceeds to speak of *intuition.* In this connexion we would remark that there can be other kinds of *objectivity* than the objectivity of the physical senses; and that H. P. Blavatsky insists strongly on this point. Whatever is perceived is objective, whether the faculties that perceive it are physical or not. Thus thoughts are objective to the mental power of apprehension; while, on a still higher plane, the entire process of thinking may become objective to a faculty that is yet more internal than the faculty of ratiocination.

Next, in regard to education, we come upon the following, which

sounds like an echo of much that has been written in these pages.

Still less — *far* less — would I advocate any scheme of education, pleasurable or otherwise, which depends in any but the slightest degree upon apparatus invented *ad hoc*. I could not exaggerate the strength of my conviction that dependence upon expensive external apparatus of itself marks a scheme of education as radically, as fatally unsound.

Many people will doubtless be disposed to agree that we cannot build fine characters on an exclusive diet of blackboards all around the room, living pictures, patent anatomically constructed seats and desks, and artful devices to lure the jaded attention of the child by sugar-coating every homeopathic dose of instruction. It might even be conducive to better results if the children were educated in a barn, with a short supply of books, and disciplinary methods, provided the real essentials were not neglected. In short, we pamper far too much; and this is largely due to our blind worship of the physically objective. Everyone feels that the essentials of education have been somehow largely overlooked, and there are efforts to rectify this omission. Naturally we find fads, and plenty of them. All of them have good points, and bad ones too. This reminds one that there is use for conservatism, if only as a steadying force during the experimental stages of reform. Illusions as to the true nature of "freedom" will be abundant; and the equally urgent claims of guardianship and protection may be overlooked. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," runs the well-known maxim; and if we are to secure liberty for the child, we must watch and guard, or that liberty will be taken away. The duality of human nature needs to be much more clearly formulated than is usually the case; and this, too, has its clearly demonstrable biological equivalents.

The Sympathetic Nervous System

The sympathetic nervous system next comes in for attention. The lecturer has asked, "What is the physical instrument of 'intuition'?" And answers, "Nervous system." She champions the cause of the sympathetic system as against the cerebro-spinal system. The latter is inhibitory and exercises undue predominance, she thinks, both in fact and in theory. On this we would say that both sides of man's nature must be developed symmetrically. Man is compact of impulse and self-control. Impulse may range all the way from brute instinct to lofty aspiration and enthusiasm. Control is needed all the time. We have the undeveloped man, in whom the sympathetic system is not

very active or responsive, and the cerebrospinal system exercises an unpremeditated inhibitory action. We have the man of sensitiveness and impulse, whose sympathetic system is very active. At first it controls him, and he does not control it; later he learns to control it; not to crush it out, but to guide it. Above the wayward and unstable genius stands the greater genius who is master of himself. We cannot enter here into the large subject of the relations between these two nervous systems and between their psychic counterparts; suffice it to say that the Will in man has its centers through which it can control his entire mechanism and all the thoughts and emotions that sweep over those complicated chords. It is better not to dwell too much on the merely anatomical aspect of the matter. There is great risk in the attempt to develop the plexuses and nerve-centers of the sympathetic system, because thereby we render ourselves unduly sensitive and arouse latent forces which we are unable to control.

Instances are quoted of abnormal perceptions due to the sympathetic system. The astronomer Professor Heis relied on his naked eye and drew up star atlases and published important books on astronomy without using a telescope. Other people have been able to see into the ground or into the human body, or to sense the existence of underground water. And so forth. Thus the nervous system acts as a great sense-organ to the soul. The soul means, of course, the perceiver. According to the Theosophical teaching of the Seven Principles of Man, there is the model-body (*linga-śarîra*) within the physical body, while the sub-human being which uses both is the *Kâma-Rupa* or animal soul. These principles the animals have in common with us. But, as just said, it is more important at present to dwell on the need for education in conduct and self-control, as that is what mankind most lacks. Any detailed knowledge of psycho-physiological mysteries would certainly lead to great abuses. But what a vast store of knowledge awaits mankind when it shall have become self-disciplined enough to use it advantageously!

The treatment of the insane is discussed by the lecturer, who points out the need for more sympathetic treatment than is even now (much as we have advanced) accorded to them. And on the subject of the preservation of balance, the following is eminently quotable:

> For the welfare of the soul, nothing is more necessary than unity and steadiness of aim; a definite plan in accordance with which the divers persons [fic-

titious " selves "] are to be subordinated to one another; a definite ideal towards which their action and interaction are bent.

The great defect of modern education, she adds, is that it has no ideal. And, as a conclusion to this second lecture, we have this:

Behind the mask, and using the " persons," severally or together, as its agents and vehicle, is the soul, which does not in this mortal body come to the full fruition of its powers.

Magic Potency of Sound

The third lecture, entitled " Mors Janua Vitae," begins with a recapitulation of previous remarks; and the lecturer makes some interesting suggestions about the power of sound, of which the following may serve as a preliminary sample:

It is more than a mere fanciful expression to say that probably the forms of living things on the earth are produced by the earth's vibrations — that is, the earth's voices.

And this by a learned scientific lecturer, and in the *Athenaeum!* Would that H. P. Blavatsky were present in the flesh to see this day! How unorthodox were such views in the days when she so definitely stated her unpopular opinions; and who would have dared to say these things then? Yet the dynamic force of her thoughts has graven them deeply on the consciousness of men, and it is as though the seeds she planted were springing up. To continue:

Every true form has its note; every note being sounded, will write itself in sand. . . . I believe we have here the true origin of patterns on vases and other objects true enough in form to give forth a note that could write itself. The maker of the vase drew upon it the visual form of its own music. Possibly this further signified that the vessel should be used for some particular liquid or other preparation. No doubt these fine scientific correspondences were, from our point of view, early lost; still, some careful examination of vase-forms has led me to suspect that the very earliest examples we have were decorated on this principle.

This is rehabilitating the ancients handsomely — and in the matter of scientific knowledge, too, which is certainly unusual. Science was supposed to be our own great achievement. If the ancients are to supersede us in science as well as art, where are we? At their feet. However, a true student will be willing to learn from any source whence knowledge may promise to come; nor will prejudice induce him to attribute ignorance where there is knowledge, or knowledge where there is ignorance. He will be truly just to all.

The Need for Theosophy

We think we have now conveyed sufficient of this interesting series of lectures, and space scarcely permits of a special attention to other points left unnoticed. It remains to add some more remarks in comment. Everyone will admit the necessity for a better understanding of human nature on the part of educators; but how many are willing to allow education to rest on speculations about the sympathetic and cerebro-spinal nervous systems? Here is the crux of the whole matter; we find a most eloquent plea for greater knowledge, but whence is the knowledge to flow? We not unnaturally fear that we find ourselves still as much as ever in the hands of theorists. Perhaps we had better study those ancients a little more deeply and effectively, with a view to regaining some of the knowledge they left behind. It need scarcely be pointed out that one of the aims of Theosophy has been to rehabilitate the ancient sages and to reinstate that Knowledge-Wisdom to which the wise in all times have had access. The efforts of H. P. Blavatsky in her books are directed to proving that such a Gnosis or Secret Doctrine actually existed and does exist, that it is uniform and invariable in all essentials, and that it is the masterkey to all problems. If we are to speak sincerely and from knowledge, we are bound to confess that this offers the only available solution to the problem of education.

In dealing with multiple personality, more stress should be laid on the great Master-Self which dominates and harmonizes all those conflicting lower elements of which the lecturer so ably discourses. Plotinus was right; without this Master, the whole thing becomes a hopeless jumble. The same idea is symbolized, the world over, by the figure of a rotating wheel — the Svastika or Thor's Hammer. The four spokes, bent at the ends to show rotation, represent the changing elements in our nature; the point of rest and balance is at the nave. Better "persons" may supersede worse "persons," but yet no one of them is the true Self; they are all *personae*—masks. That which is changeless and permanent in us must necessarily lie beyond all that is changeable and impermanent. The real Self cannot be revealed through a mere form; but its power may be felt in the voice of Conscience, its Wisdom may inspire right action.

And as to the means of teaching the young or the feeble to gain control of themselves: here is one of the places where the soaring aspiration of the lecturer comes tumbling down upon the dissecting-

table, for surely the sympathetic nervous system and ganglia will not do what is required. In fact, the sympathetic nervous system is a most powerful and wayward creature to tame; nor has antiquity found symbols too strong by which to represent it. The Adversary himself is not more wily, more intelligent, or more powerful than the sympathetic system and the forces which play over it. The only safety lies in developing aspiration and self-control by equal steps; otherwise we shall get the miserable unbalanced genius or the young hopeful that dies prematurely of self-induced consumption.

The child has to be taught to obey a law higher than that of its personal wants; how else can it ever gain self-control? That law is the voice of its own higher nature. By helping others before self, by overcoming temper and self-will, the child is building up its own body in the right way — and that without any knowledge of biology either on its own part or on that of its teacher. Later on will come the time when detailed and biological knowledge will come easily and with profit; to anticipate that time would be as foolish as the policy of those who so mistakenly advocate the burdening of the childish mind with "knowledge" that is anything rather than protective.

Another interesting part is that headed "Mors Janua Vitae," which began, as above noted, with some reflections on the power of sound. Further on, the general idea expressed by the title is dwelt upon; but there are great gaps, which Theosophy could have filled. Death is truly the gateway to life; but to what life? If current theological ideas and scientific scepticism or agnosticism are alike unacceptable, upon what are we to fall back? At death the Soul, or real man, is liberated from imprisonment in the body and from limitation by the earth-bound mind; of the conditions of that existence we can say but little here. In explaining the ancient teachings on the subject, H. P. Blavatsky, in *The Key to Theosophy,* describes the bliss of the Soul in the state called (in Tibetan) Devachan, and points out how necessary it is that there should be such a release and rest after the stress of this life. The lecturer also thinks, as Theosophists have so often said, that we need not wait until death in order to develop the Soul-life within us. In this case, it may be noted, the phrase "Death the Gate of Life" acquires a new meaning; for it means that we must die daily to the old in order to be daily born anew — a thought which should be familiar to religious minds.

IS REINCARNATION CONTRARY TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE? by H. T. Edge, M. A. and F. S. Darrow, A. M., PH. D.

Few movements for human betterment have been so much misrepresented by the enemies of progress as the Theosophical Movement founded by H. P. Blavatsky in 1875. Attempts have been and are occasionally still being made to confuse issues, as in the statement not infrequently heard that Theosophy teaches the rebirth of the human soul into the bodies of animals. This is erroneous, indeed, it is absurd; for the doctrine of reincarnation, or the rebirth of the human soul into human bodies, emphasizes the impossibility of the human monad descending into bodies incapable of expressing human faculties.

Another error is to suppose that Theosophy is out of tune with and antagonistic to what early Christianity held of Truth.

The foregoing are two distortions, if not actual perversions, of fact; which the letter mentioned below has given the opportunity of correcting. Three writers on the literary staff of THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH have been selected to present certain facts bearing on the subjects named. — EDITOR

REGARDING the correspondence columns of the press as being indicative of the thoughts of the people, a letter on "Christianity and the Doctrine of Reincarnation," written by a man of professional standing to the editor of a well-known English weekly review, is worth noting. He speaks of these times of general upheaval, when the fundamentals of religion are being everywhere discussed; and asks:

> What has been the attitude of the Christian Church, since its foundation, towards the doctrine of reincarnation? Do the fundamental truths of Christianity, of necessity, call for the exclusion of the idea of reincarnation as a means of spiritual purification?

This can no longer be regarded, he thinks, as a mere academic question that can be shirked. Many members of the Christian Churches are seeking guidance in the matter, and, finding none,

> are being led into the hazy paths of Theosophy, where the deep mysteries of life are reduced to terms of the phenomenal, mechanical plane, and made superficially clear and convincing for beginners.

One gathers from the above that the writer's notions of Theosophy are — to borrow his own epithet — extremely hazy. His description of Theosophy is not merely untrue but it is the exact opposite of the truth. For who has ever protested in language more earnest and insistent, against this very reduction of the mysteries of life to mechanical and phenomenal terms, than H. P. Blavatsky herself? This particular thesis may be said to constitute the soul and

spirit of her masterpiece, *The Secret Doctrine,* but especially of the third part in each volume, wherein the materialism of certain modern schools of thought is impugned. Indeed this is the theme of all her writings and of her entire life-work, as it is also of the writings and life-work of her followers. This circumstance is well enough known to readers of this magazine and to all who have even a slight acquaintance with Theosophy. Theosophy is essentially and *par excellence* a movement—*the* movement—for combating the inroads of mechanicalism and dogmatic materialism. For that express purpose was the movement planned, inaugurated, and carried out. And yet here we have a writer describing Theosophy as the polar opposite of what it is, and identifying it with the very forces for whose neutralization it was founded. Well may we say that it is not Theosophy, but his own ideas, that are hazy.

We can scarcely exculpate him from the charge of superficiality in his Theosophical studies, yet a certain amount of excuse is to be found in the fact that a great deal of *pseudo-Theosophy* is prevalent, and he may have been grazing in these pastures.

The completest modern exposition of what Theosophy is, is found in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society. Not that these teachings are dogmatic; on the contrary, they are expository — expository of the Wisdom-Religion or Secret Doctrine of antiquity, of which she was a declared exponent. She interprets the teachings of the great philosophers and teachers of antiquity, and shows that these are all based on the one great master system — the Secret Doctrine or universal Religion that underlies them all. These teachings are contained in her books, and have been promulgated by her successors. The same teachings are promulgated today by the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society (Point Loma), under the Leadership of Katherine Tingley.

But, naturally enough, there exist many imitations of Theosophy. There are cults and coteries which issue publications and give lectures under the name of Theosophy. In this way anxious inquirers, who have heard of Theosophy and wish for the help and enlightenment which it bestows, may be discouraged from pursuing their inquiry further.

Let it be understood, then, at the outset, that for the purposes of this discussion Reincarnation is to be taken in the sense wherein it is defined by H. P. Blavatsky and her followers. It must also be

presumed, for the sake of those interested in a sensible argument, that the student of the subject has some slight acquaintance with the teaching, and has gotten beyond those trivial objections which may arise to the mind of a person upon first hearing of it. Nor can we waste time in the fruitless attempt to console those who have a quarrel with the facts of life and who desire to fasten this quarrel upon Theosophists for teaching Reincarnation, when, in fact, Reincarnation is offered as an *explanation* of the facts of life.

We proceed, therefore, to the writer's question as to whether the fundamental truths of Christianity call for the exclusion of Reincarnation. This must be answered in the negative, on the ground that we believe that the fundamental truths of Christianity *include* the doctrine of Reincarnation. If, instead of the fundamental truths, we say the doctrines of this or that church, or this or that period in ecclesiastical history, then the answer must depend on what those doctrines are. And that is a point which we cannot be expected to answer categorically. It is a question that would more properly be laid before the responsible authorities of the churches concerned. We can speak only of our own view of Christianity; and, as said, it appears to us that Reincarnation is an essential part of the fundamental truths of that gopsel.

It is freely stated now in most churches, and by the divines themselves, that the Divine revelation is not fixed and frozen but progressive. Such is now conceived to be the more reverent attitude. One must sympathize with the churches in their anxiety to hold fast to that which is certainly true and their fear that liberty may run to license. They have an arduous task to perform in steering their craft clear of the rocks of dogmatism while at the same time avoiding the quicksands of laxity. They must go slow, and must move with the times while never losing sight of their mission. But yet their progress has been definite, as we can see by noting the advances that have everywhere been made during recent times. They realize that not a few of the doctrines supposed to be essential parts of Christianity are in reality largely due to the faulty understanding of bygone ages of Christians, whose services were perhaps valuable to the ages in which they lived and to the minds to which they had to appeal, but are not necessarily adapted to our present needs. And they are feeling their way to a larger conception of the scope of Christianity; in which they have the sympathy and best wishes of all Theosophists.

It is more than likely that, before long, representative divines will have so far changed their attitude as to consider a belief in Reincarnation by no means so incompatible with their views as it may seem to be now. If they can only succeed in digging deep enough into the foundations of their own religion, they will discover that this ancient but forgotten tenet is their own rightful property and heritage, and that they have no reason whatever to be afraid of Reincarnation.

This leads us to ask the question: "To whom would a belief in Reincarnation be likely to seem obnoxious?" Reincarnation teaches that the Soul of man is the real man, and that this real man dies not with the body. It teaches that the Divine laws of the universe deal towards every man with absolute justice — which is the same as absolute mercy. It teaches that man can, by summoning the aid of the Spiritual Will, recover himself from the evil consequences of his ignorance and folly. No doctrine is more reverent and ennobling than that of Reincarnation, which exalts alike our conceptions of Deity and of man. Who, then, could be interested in the suppression of such a teaching?

Does it not behoove Christians to search deeper into the foundations of their faith, if perchance they may thereby discover that bygone ages of narrow-minded people have altered the original message and eliminated doctrines which they regarded as unsuitable? We are bidden rely on ancient authority; but at what precise point in history are we to stop? Perhaps, if we went back a little further than usual, we might find authoritative support for views that a later date condemned.

In considering the existence of beliefs in the pre-existence and rebirth of the human soul in the Christian world from the earliest times of that religion until the present day, we have first to bear in mind that this subject has not yet been adequately studied. On the contrary, it has been avoided. This circumstance alone is enough to account for the general ignorance of the matter, and also for the prevalent idea that no such beliefs have even existed in the Christian world. Nevertheless there is abundant evidence that these beliefs were widely held, and that they have played a most important part in the history of Christian doctrine. But this is a chapter of religious history that yet remains to be properly written, and there is no doubt that before long it will be written. All that is needed for the dis-

interring of this buried information is that scholars shall give to the task the same care and patience that they have bestowed on other researches.

Another important thing to bear in mind is that many early writings have been "edited" by subsequent generations of commentators who were desirous of suppressing such facts or statements as did not agree with their own ideas as to what the orthodox doctrine ought to be. It is well known to Bible students that even the text of that collection has not been free from such emendations; but though we can sometimes detect added passages, what means have we for knowing what has been expunged from the record? In the case of many of the early Christian writers, we can detect this process of editing, by means of certain inconsistencies in their statements; and the careful sifting process of scholarly criticism would make it possible to arrive with certainty at important conclusions in this regard.

Next, we must bear in mind that there existed a number of varying forms of the doctrine of re-embodiment. The Gnostics, practically all of them, seem to have believed in some form of re-embodiment and in the pre-existence of the soul. The Manichaeans may be regarded as "heretics," yet precisely for that reason we may cite them in support of the contention that such beliefs were widely prevalent. They first came into prominence in the Roman Empire as a body of believers in the third century A. D., although their doctrines had been taught for centuries before in Syria and Mesopotamia, and they continued under various names and in various places, throughout the Middle Ages, to keep alive in the Christian world the ideas of pre-existence and rebirth. Among these later believers should be classed the Paulicians and Priscillians in Spain, the Bogomiles in the East, and the Cathari or Albigenses in France. To realize how widespread were these beliefs during the Middle Ages, one has but to read the Acts of the Inquisition which have been published by Ignaz von Döllinger. (*Beiträge Zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters,* München, 1890.) Among the famous scholastics, John Scotus Erigena and St. Bonaventura are cited as believers in pre-existence.

Origen, one of the early church fathers, vehemently combats the belief in the transmigration of human souls into animal bodies, which he rightly regards as degrading. (*Contra Celsum,* vii, 32; *ibid.* viii, 30.) This is popularly known as Metempsychosis. Yet

Origen was himself banned and anathematized by one of the Councils (the Council of Constantinople, about 543 A. D.), for teaching doctrines logically tending to the venerable doctrine of Reincarnation. He also taught that the soul went through various grades of progress and purification. He believed in pre-existence; the soul had pre-existed in a spiritual body; but, having the gift of free-will, it had fallen into errors which required purification in an earthly life. After this purging, it would return to its former condition. Origen also taught that all men had the Christ in them and could become Christs (cf. *In Ioh.* vi, 3ff.; *Contra Cels.* iii, 28). This alone will show to what extent widely accepted doctrines were modified in later days, and should make one hesitate in conclusions as the authority for beliefs.

Any quotations which we can give here must of course be regarded as purely illustrative, for, as said, the amount of matter available to research is enormous, and one can merely indicate its quality. As showing how the beliefs in question were prevalent among the Jews, we may cite Josephus, who says:

> The Pharisees are esteemed most skilful in the exact interpretation of their laws, and are the first sect. They ascribe all things to fate and God, and yet allow that to do what is right or the contrary is principally in man's own power, although fate co-operates in every action. They think also that all souls are immortal, but that the souls of good men only are removed into other bodies, while the souls of bad men are punished with eternal punishment. (*Jewish Wars:* Bk. II, ch. 8, §14. Whitson's translation, revised by Shilleto.)

> Do you not know that those who depart out of this life according to the law of nature, and pay the debt which was received from god, when he that lent it us is pleased to require it back again, enjoy eternal fame; that their houses and posterity are sure, and that their souls are pure and obedient, and obtain the most holy place in heaven, from whence in the revolution of ages, they are again sent into pure bodies; while the souls of those whose hands have acted madly against themselves are received in the darkest place in Hades. (*Ibid.* Bk. III, ch. 8, §5.)

The following quotation from Philo the Jew may serve as another instance.

> Now of these souls some descend upon the earth with a view to being bound up in mortal bodies, those namely, which are most nearly connected with the earth, and which are lovers of the body. But some soar upwards, being again distinguished according to the definitions and times which have been appointed by nature. Of these, those which are influenced by desire for mortal life, and

which have been familiarized to it, again return to it. (Philo Judaeus, *On Dreams being sent from God.* Ch. 22.)

The subject may conveniently be considered under three periods, as follows. (1) Early Christianity, lasting till the Synod of Constantinople in 553, which officially declared "heretical" the teachings of the great Origen in regard to the nature and destiny of the soul. This was certainly the case in 543; *perhaps* in 553. (2) From 553 to 1438, when Georgius Gemistus, surnamed Plctho, visited Florence and was instrumental in reviving the philosophy of Plato in the west and in calling into being the Platonic Academy of Florence. (3) The modern period. In the first period many important writers and prominent teachers openly declare their belief in the teachings; in the second, the believers consist almost entirely of so-called heretical sects and schismatics; in the third period we find from time to time protests against the too narrow and dogmatic teachings of ecclesiastical sects, and attempts to reinstate some of the forgotten teachings of Christianity.

During the first three centuries, pre-existence, as an intrinsic part of the old mystery teachings, was quite generally accepted. Many traces of it are still to be found in the Christian Bible. The Jews around Jesus believed in the reincarnation of their great prophets, and Jesus seems to have concurred in the general belief. There is the well-known case of the man who was born blind, when Jesus was asked whether this man sinned or his parents, that he was born blind. (*John,* 14, 2.) Clearly the man could not have sinned except in a previous life. Yet Jesus does not deny the belief or rebuke the believers for holding it. The Greek father, Cyril of Alexandria, says:

> The disciples, affected with vulgar native ignorance of things rightly taught by us (!), believed that the souls of men pre-existed and lived before the formation of the body, and that, having voluntarily transgressed before the body, they were at length united to it, receiving birth in the flesh in the form of punishment. (*Comment. in Joan. I,* VI, c. 1, tom. iv, opp. p. 588, ed. Paris.)

It would not be difficult to quote other early fathers in proof that it was recognized and admitted that the disciples believed in the soul's pre-existence.

As to the New Testament itself, the statements in regard to pre-existence and rebirth would doubtless be more extensive and explicit, if we had those treatises in their first or original forms. But, as

stated above, we know that they have been "edited" in the interests of various sects which may at different times have considered themselves orthodox. Moreover we have no record of Christ's *esoteric* teachings — those which he gave to his disciples when they were alone together. In his public teachings he used veiled language and kept many things back; but he refers to more intimate teachings which he gave to his immediate followers. It must be admitted that the teachings in the New Testament, however excellent so far as they go, are very limited in scope and leave many questions altogether untouched. Christians have frequently argued, when defending the Old Testament account of creation against scientific critics, that the Bible makes no claim to be a scientific book. May we not apply this argument to the New Testament also and conclude that questions on which it is silent are open? Or must we take the attitude that man is forbidden to speculate upon all matters not contained within those pages? What does the Bible teach about the pre-existence of the soul? Is the pre-existence of the soul denied? Or is it tacitly assumed? There are insuperable difficulties in the way of accepting a belief in the future immortality of the soul while at the same time denying its pre-existence. Or what does the Bible teach in explanation of the fact that every man is born into this world with a latent character, and with a destiny? These are problems which must either be answered or left unanswered, and many feel today that the latter alternative is impossible for them. Such teachings must have formed part of Christ's private instructions to his disciples, of which we have so far no record. These disciples, together with many intelligent people, such as Nicodemus, would certainly have consulted him on the mystical beliefs so prevalent in his day.

To continue the references to the period of early Christianity: St. Jerome asserts of pre-existence and reincarnation that —

> This . . . doctrine was anciently believed in Egypt and the East, and now prevails in secret. (*Epist. ad Demetriad.* tom. i, p. 987.)

Rufinus, in his letter to Anastasius, states that —

> This opinion was common among the primitive fathers.

Origen says, in commenting upon the Biblical phrase, "sent from God," that it was the universally accepted or Catholic doctrine that

> if the catholic [i. e. universal] opinion hold good concerning the soul, as not propagated with the body but as existing previously and for various reasons

clothed in flesh and blood, this expression, "sent from God," will no longer appear extraordinary as applied to John. (Tom. ii, *Comment. in Joan.* §24, p. 82; tom. iv, ed. de la Rue.)

And apparently it was maintained as a tradition by Clement of Alexandria, Origen's teacher.

Among the early church fathers who taught or directly alluded to the doctrines of Pre-existence, and of Re-embodiment, as concerning the origin and destiny of the human soul, may be named Clement of Alexandria (see Photius, Cod. CIX), Pierius (see Photius, Cod. CXIX), Pamphilus, Nemesius, and Synesius. And if the Defense of Origen, written by Pamphilus and Eusebius, were entire, we could probably cite in this connexion many more among the famous doctors of the early church. For it is expressly said that these authors employed many quotations from the Fathers in proof of pre-existence. (Car. de la Rue in *Admonit. Apologiae Pamphili,* tom. IV, Opp. Origin., p. 15.)

Nemesius says:

> If anyone because of the soul's introduction after the formation of the body, supposes that the soul is produced after the body, he errs from the truth. Neither does Moses say that the soul was then created when it was introduced into the body, nor is it according to reason. (*Lib. de nat. hom.,* c. 2, p. 73, edit. Felli.)

Synesius, the pupil of Hypatia, when requested to accept the bishopric of Ptolemais, declared:

> Assuredly I can never believe that the soul is an after-birth of the body.

Even that most bitter of the opponents of Origen, Methodius of Tyre, can be quoted as supporting pre-existence (*Orat.* II, p. 74, edit. Combefisii, in *Auctar.* Biblioth., PP. noviss). Among the prominent early Latin fathers can be named Arnobius, (*Adv. gent.,* lib. I, 29, lib. ii, 16), Hilarius (*Enarr. in Ps.* LXIII, p. 774), and Prudentius, who sings:

> O Savior, bid my soul
> Return at last to thee believing;
> Bind, bind anew those all unearthly vows
> She broke on high and wandered grieving.
> (*Cathem.* Hymn X, 161 seq.)

Even Jerome and Augustine at one time in their career believed in the above teachings in regard to the nature and destiny of the soul, although they later attacked that which they had earlier believed.

During the third or modern period, many are the famous names in Christendom which could be cited in illustration of the belief in pre-existence and rebirth; beginning with that of Georgius Gemistus or Pletho, in whose company may also be named such men as Marsilius Ficinus, Giordano Bruno, Jerome Cardan, and the great French physician Fernelius (Jean Fernel). In the 17th century the Cambridge Platonists, all of whom were sincerely attached to the best Christian traditions, constitute a very prominent group of believers, including such men as Doctor Henry More, Joseph Glanvil, and Bishop Rust. At Amsterdam in 1671, Christopher Sand the younger wrote one of the best works on the pre-existence of the soul that has ever been composed; and in the 18th century there are many who could be enumerated, such as Soame Jenyns, whose work in defense of the Christian religion was long regarded as one of the best treatises of its kind ever published, and Chevalier Ramsay, who wrote "Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion" (Glasgow, 1748). In the 19th century may be mentioned Edward Beecher, brother of Henry Ward Beecher; Professor Francis Bowen of Harvard, the author of "Christian Metempsychosis"; Professor William Knight of St. Andrews; and Professor McTaggart of Cambridge University. If we gave a list of philosophers who have argued in support of pre-existence, it would include almost all the best names. But surely enough and more than enough has been quoted to prove the justice of Professor Bowen's words:

> The doctrine of metempsychosis* may almost claim to be a natural or innate belief in the human mind, if we may judge from its wide diffusion among the nations of the earth and its prevalence throughout the historical ages. (*The Princeton Review,* May, 1881, p. 318.)

And the words of Dr. Thomas Burnet can be seen to be literally true:

> But though we cannot certainly tell under what circumstances human souls were placed at first, yet all antiquity agrees, Oriental and Occidental, concerning their pre-existence in general, in respect of these mortal bodies. And our Saviour never reproaches or corrects the Jews when they speak upon that supposition. (*Luke* IX, 18-19; *John* IX). . . . The doctrine of pre-existence and revolution (or rebirth) of souls . . . was very ancient and universal, if any ever was so, since it prevailed not only through all the East but also in the West. . . . This doctrine, I say, as if sent down from heaven, without father,

* Professor Bowen uses the word in the sense of Reincarnation, not transmigration.

without mother, and without any genealogy, has made its progress through the universe. (*Sacred Theory of the Earth,* London, 1726, II, The Fourth Book, Preface. *Doctrina antiqua de rerum originibus,* etc., made English by Mr. Mead and Mr. Foxton, London, 1736, ch. XIV, p. 239.)

Before adducing a few more illustrative quotations from the modern period, we may refer to those given in the following articles: "The Nature and Destiny of the Soul," in *The International Theosophical Chronicle,* Feb. 1913; "Theosophical Thoughts from the New England Transcendentalists," in THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH, June, 1913. As said before, the critical history of these doctrines has never been written; but the materials at hand for such a history are most extensive. The bulk of the material lies in old Latin, French, German, and Greek works. We know of a private library which contains literally hundreds of volumes having to do with this subject, many of them dealing entirely with it and nothing else. Obviously it would require time and patience to work through all this.

GEORGIUS GEMISTUS, SURNAMED PLETHO (circa 1350-1450)

Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople, in describing Pletho's lost treatise on *Laws,* which after Pletho's death the Patriarch caused to be publicly burned, says:

In speaking of the immortality of the soul, Pletho seeks to prove according to the principles of reincarnation that the soul re-enters into a body and is reborn after certain regular periods of time. (*Ex epistola Gennadii ad Josephum exarchum,* publ. as Append. XIX, in *Pléthon, Traité des Lois,* par C. Alexandre, Paris, 1858, p. 439.)

GIORDANO BRUNO (circa 1550-1600)

O thou being, quaking before the icy dawn of death,
Does the Styx affright thee, the darkness, of void name,
The welcome theme of poets — the perils of imagined worlds?
Know when the flaming heat, when of age the lingering weakness
Has given the body to dust, it knows neither sorrows nor pains.
Never shall die the soul, but rather the earlier dwelling
Exchange for newer habitation, and live and work therein.
All must change, but nought is destroyed.

(*Della Causa, Principio ed Uno,* 1584.)

A Letter of Resolution concerning Origen and the chief of his Opinions, London, 1661. (Though published anonymously, the author was Dr. George Rust, Bishop of Dromore in the Kingdom of Ireland).

The Letter is largely concerned with a statement and defense of

Origen's belief in pre-existence. For statements in regard to, and for numerous quotations from, the Cambridge Platonists, who include Rust, Glanvil, More, etc., see the article entitled "The Nature and Destiny of the Soul," published in *The International Theosophical Chronicle* for February, 1913, pp. 57-68. All the members of the Cambridge Group were D. D.'s and are perhaps among the most influential of all members of the Christian Church who have not been attacked as heretics, in modern times. They were at the height of their influence about the middle of the 17th century.

Lux Orientalis or an Enquiry into the Opinion of the Eastern Sages, concerning the Praeexistence of Souls, Being a key to unlock the Grand Mysteries of Providence in relation to man's sin and misery. London, 1662. (Published anonymously, but the author was "Rev. Joseph Glanvil, Rector of Bath, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty, King Charles II.")

From the Contents: Praeexistence cannot be disproved. Scripture saith nothing against it. . . . Praeexistence was the common opinion of our Saviour's times. How, probably, it came to be lost in the Christian Church.

The countenance that Praeexistence hath from the sacred writings both of the Old and New Testaments. Praeexistence stood in no need of Scripture-proof.

Seven Pillars on which the particular Hypothesis stands.

A Dissertation concerning the Pre-existency of Souls, wherein the State of the Question is briefly unfolded, and divers Arguments and objections on both sides alledged and answered, and a free judgment concerning the Summ of the Controversie allowed to every one, London, 1684. (Published anonymously.)

(From the preliminary statement.)

The Preexistency of Souls asserted,

First, By an exposition of the Hypothesis itself.

Secondly, By a confirmation of the Hypothesis — which is derived partly from reason, and partly from allegations of authority and testimony.

Thirdly, By a refutation of contrary arguments.

(In Eight Chapters.)

Chap. III. Containing Argument Drawn from Authority and Indeed chiefly that of Scripture.

Chap. IV. Containing Arguments drawn from Holy Scripture, to prove the Preexistency of the Soul of the Messiah.

Chap. V. Containing Arguments taken from Humane Authority, yet are such as in their kind are sacred.

Chap. VI. Containing Arguments derived from the authority of the Philosophers.

CASWAY

If then we may suppose the several Globes, and masses of matter, in the several systems around us, to be prisons to lapsed Spirits, and places of punishment, as well as places of probation, then, from the suns, the centers of the several systems, to the highest heaven, as in ours, superior to the Orb of *Saturn,* as far as the highest and most eccentric comets range in their aphelions, we may suppose the heavenly situations to be more glorious, and consequently to be inhabited by beings of more supereminent powers, the higher they are situated; according to their behaviour, or obedience to the Divine Being, they may ascend, or descend, to, or from, the superior Heavens, and their pleasure may be inlarged or diminished, and the superior orders may have a power of degrading and repelling them from their Society. (*A Miscellaneous Metaphysical Essay, to which is added some Thoughts upon Creation in General, upon Preexistence,* &c. By an Impartial Inquirer after Truth, London, 1748. p. 157. Author thought to be R. Casway.)

RAMSAY (THE CHEVALIER)

The Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, unfolded in a geometrical order, Glasgow, 1748-9, 2 vols.

(Chevalier Andrew Ramsay was a Scotsman, and a Roman Catholic, the tutor for a time of the Young Pretender at Rome, but nevertheless he was a strong believer in pre-existence and published much in support of the idea, not only in the above work but also in his *Travels of Cyrus.*)

Human pre-existence is maintained and argued at length in vol 2, pp. 236-246 and elsewhere. At the end of the second volume are "Remarks about the Condemnation of Origen in the fifth General Council." These remarks begin thus:

It is commonly said by the schoolmen that the doctrine of Pre-existence and restitution were condemned by the Fifth General Council held at Constantinople during the reign of Justinian in the 6th century, an. 553, but there is more than one reason to doubt of this.

A Pre-existent Lapse of Human Souls Demonstrated from Reason; shewn to be the opinion of the most eminent Writers of Antiquity, sacred and profane; proved to be the Ground-work likewise of the Gospel Dispensation, and the medium through which many material Topics, relative thereto, are set in a clear, rational, and con-

sistent Light, by Capel Berrow, A. M., Rector of Finningley, Nottinghamshire, London, 1762.

This work is dedicated "to His Grace Thomas, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of all England." The dedication begins thus:

My Lord:

My aim in publishing the following work, is to illustrate truths, in which Christianity is, as I humbly apprehend, essentially interested. I need not, therefore, I hope, apologize for throwing it under your Grace's patronage.

A freedom by which I am the less apprehensive of giving offense, from the idea I entertained of your Grace's zeal for the honour, dignity, and furtherance of the Gospel Dispensation, to which I flatter myself, the performance will not a little contribute.

From the Table of Contents.

Chap. I. A pre-existent state of souls deducible from several passages in Holy Writ.

Chap. V. A pre-existent lapse of human souls the belief of the most learned and ingenious among the ancient philosophers, the *Greek* and *Latin* fathers, and some very eminent writers of a more modern date.

Chap. VI. A lapse of human souls, as above-considered, a branch of Christian theology.

Chap. VIII. A pre-existent guilt in man, arising from a prior association with apostate powers, the very ground-work of the gospel dispensation.

Primitive Religion Elucidated, and Restored in a supplementary Abbreviation of a Late Dissertation on the Original Doctrines of the Metempsychosis, by a Divine, of no Church, Bath, 1776.

Forty years' meditation, study and reasoning, have brought me a full conviction, that there is no other *hypothesis* which can, consistent with piety, reason, or philosophy, reconcile the *creation* of that miserable being *Man,* with the wisdom, justice, or benign attributes of God, or afford any probable cause why and to what end or purpose, the material universe was created and constructed. The doctrine is far from being *new,* it is as antient, (if we may be allowed the expression) almost as *time itself,* it was promulgated by the first sages, which enlightened this globe, when in all likelihood, one universal faith, and worship of the Deity prevailed, and the *concomitant doctrine* of the *Metempsychosis* was received with general assent by the inhabitants of the whole earth, as the earliest records of all nations testify. How mankind, at least the greater part of them, came to lose sight of these sublime doctrines, which hourly have the sanction of every appearance in nature, for their support, is the wonder! (pp. 33-34)

SOAME JENYNS, ESQ. (1703-1787)

The opinion of prae-existence is no less confirmed by revelation than by reason, and the appearances of things, for, although perhaps it is nowhere in the

New Testament explicitly enforced, yet throughout the whole tenour of those writings it is everywhere implied. (*Disquisition on a Prae-existent State in The Works of Soame Jenyns,* London, 1790, III, p. 203.)

EDWARD BEECHER, D. D.

A brother of Henry Ward, was a stout defender of Pre-existence, although also a stout believer in orthodox Christianity. His ideas are developed at considerable length in the following works:

(1) *The Conflict of Ages, or the Great Debate on the Moral Relations of Man and God,* 3d ed., Boston, 1853.

The author states that he has been led to adopt the doctrine of pre-existence "as alone effectual to harmonize the conflicting powers of Christianity" (p. 363), and almost the entire book is written in support of pre-existence.

(2) *The Concord of Ages, or the Individual and Organic Harmony of God and Man,* New York, 1860.

Arguments for pre-existence are also scattered throughout this volume, and in Book V, *On Christian Philosophy and Logic,* Chap. II is entitled "The Validity of the Argument for Prëexistence," pp. 404-428.

(3) *History of Opinions on the Scriptural Doctrine of Retribution,* New York, 1878.

Many references to pre-existence are found throughout the volume.

The Doctrine of Pre-existence and the Fourth Gospel, by William J. Potter, in the *Radical,* April, 1868, pp. 513-525.

For quotations from the above article and for very many other quotations indicating a believe in pre-existence and rebirth by others of the New England Transcendentalists, most of whom were or had been Christian ministers, see THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH, June 1913, pp. 379-392.

The Doctrine of Metempsychosis, by Professor William Knight, in *The Fortnightly Review,* edited by John Morley, September 1878, pp. 422-442.

The doctrine of Metempsychosis is theoretically extremely simple. Its root is the indestructibility of the vital principle. Let a belief in pre-existence be joined to that of posthumous existence, and the dogma is complete. It is thus at one and the same time a theory of the soul's origin and of its destination, and its unparalleled hold upon the human race may be explained in part by the fact of its combining both in a single doctrine. It appears as one of the very earliest beliefs of the human mind in tribes not emerged from barbarism.

It remains the creed of millions at this day. It is probably the most widely-spread and permanently influential of all speculative theories as to the origin and destiny of the soul. (p. 424)

The ethical leverage of the doctrine is immense. . . . It reveals as magnificent a background to the present life, with its contradictions and disasters, as the prospect of immortality opens up an illimitable foreground, lengthening on the horizon of hope. It binds together the past, the present, and the future in one ethical series of causes and effects, the inner thread of which is both personal to the individual and impersonal, connecting him with two eternities, the one behind and the other before. With peculiar emphasis it proclaims the survival of moral individuality and personal identity, along with the final adjustment of external conditions to the internal state of the agent. (pp. 433-4)

Christian Metempsychosis, by Prof. Francis Bowen, Harvard University, in *The Princeton Review,* May 1881, pp. 315-341.

If metempsychosis is included in the scheme of the divine government of the world, this difficulty [i. e. the one caused by the inequalities of life] disappears altogether. Considered from this point of view, every one is born into the state which he has fairly earned by his own previous history. He carries with him from one stage of existence to another the habits or tendencies which he has formed, the dispositions which he has indulged, the passions which he has not chastised, but has voluntarily allowed to lead him into vice and crime. . . . (p. 321)

The child is the father of the man, who often inherits from him a sad patrimony. . . . (p. 322)

Nothing prevents us, however, from believing that the probation of any one soul extends continuously through a long series of successive existences upon earth, each successive act in the whole life-history being retributive for what went before. For this is the universal law of being, whether of matter or mind, everything changes, nothing dies in the sense of being annihilated. (p. 234)

There is ample room and verge enough for the action of metempsychosis within the limits of the human race excluding the brute animal kingdom altogether. (p. 234)

The doctrine is full of solemn warning then, but it is also full of consolation. (p. 338)

Human Pre-existence, being Chapter IV of *Dogmas of Religion,* by John McTaggart Ellis, McTaggart Doctor in Letters, Fellow and Lecturer of Trinity College in Cambridge, London, 1906, pp. 112-139.

There are various features of our present life which can be explained more satisfactorily on the theory of pre-existence than on any other. (p. 120)

We may say then that, in spite of the loss of memory, it is the same person who lives in successive lives. (p. 130)

We shall, if my theory is right, have many lives — perhaps many millions of them, and perhaps an infinite number. (p. 134)

> Death is not a haven of rest. It is a starting-point for fresh labours. (p. 138)
>
> And surely death acquires a new and deeper significance when we regard it no longer as a single and unexplained break in an unending life, but as part of the continually recurring rhythm of progress, as inevitable, as natural, and as benevolent as sleep. We have only left youth behind us, as at noon we have left the sunrise. They will both come back, and they do not grow old. (pp. 138-9)

In view of all the preceding evidence we think there is ample justification for the view taken by so many earnest and intelligent Christians — that the Gospel is not to be shut up and cramped within the limits imposed by any particular age or school of theological opinion. Many students of Christianity have raised the question whether the Divine revelation is not progressive; but another question comes before this. Have we in our possession the whole of the original "revelation?" The illustrative quotations just given point to the conclusion that there is ample ground for believing the contrary. What *did* Jesus really teach? Or what *is* Christianity?

Again, there seems to be ample room to include the doctrine of reincarnation. But it must be understood that the genuine teaching of reincarnation is meant, not superstitions and travesties. Properly stated, reincarnation is a most sacred and serious subject, and no doubt it will take its place as such when the stage of flippancy has passed. If we are to understand the life which we find ourselves called on to live, we must regard it as but a fragment of a great whole. During the few fleeting years of our occupancy of a single bodily tenement our character has time to accomplish but a small fraction of its evolution; all the more so in the case of those cut short by premature death. The existence of this marvelous Ego that we feel within ourselves would be an intolerable farce if that single brief period marked the whole of its existence. So capable and reverent a man as Gladstone thought that the soul must continue to progress after death, and that it could not progress without having to pass through educative experiences similar to those which it goes through here. Nor could he find anything in Christian doctrine to confute his belief. And many others think with him, for the contrary position is hard to defend.

But these thinkers need something more to complete their ideas. Where and in what body does the soul undergo these experiences?

II — by G. v. Purucker, M. A., D. LIT.

Φθέγξομαι οἷς θέμις ἐστί· θύρας δ'ἐπίθεσθε βέβηλοι πάντες ὁμῶς.—An Orphic Fragment

THE question "Is Reincarnation contrary to [early and present-day] Christian Doctrine?", may be answered with a decided negative. Speaking with more definiteness, it may be said that it is not only not contrary to Christian Doctrine but, at least in the earliest period of Christian belief, actually formed an integral part of it, if we may trust the statements of the fathers of the church. Not perhaps, reincarnation as it is taught in philosophic fulness today by the Theosophical Movement; but certainly there existed a form of palingenesis or of re-embodiment of the human soul, which combined with the widely accepted doctrine of its pre-existence, formed a consistent whole setting forth both its ante-natal and post mortem life and its periodical descent into physical existence. That this doctrine was secret and traditional, we shall see hereafter, and this, we must assume, was the cause of its being so fiercely combated later under the colorless tenet of simple pre-existence, into which it faded. But there is a vitality in the tenet of palingenesis, re-embodiment, reincarnation, under whatever form it may be taught, which will not be extinguished, and which, like an immortal seed, stirs to life under the most adverse circumstances. Attempt to kill it, it will not die; mutilate it, it still lives on; forget it, it resurrects anew in good time. One of the most universal of beliefs, however it may be transmogrified and under whatever strange garments it may appear, we find it in all ages and among all men. Well may we exclaim with Horace, quoting his "older race of words" replaced with a newer and fresher stock, to come into their own again at some later day, that the various forms of soul palingenesis found in different ages and in different families of men, represent various efforts of the soul to express its destiny.

> Prima cadunt; . . .
> Multa renascentur quae iam cecidere, cadentque
> Quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
> Quem penes arbitrium est et ius et norma loquendi.
> (*De Arte Poetica*, 61-72.)

The learned writers of the preceding article have covered a vast field; yet this very extent of territory opens the way to the labors of others in the same direction. They say truly that so far as the history of the tenet of rebirth and pre-existence in Europe during Christian times is concerned, its treatment has been deplorably in-

sufficient with regard to the form under which it was held by early Christians. Yet this is not for lack of an apparatus criticus, for the materials at hand, at least, if not an actual apparatus, are extensive.

It is intended to gather together a number of facts and indices bearing on our subject, in the following lines, which will be summarized at the conclusion. We propose, in condensed form, (A) to touch upon the nature and history of the biblical writings; and (B) to briefly refer to the nature of the controversies which finally succeeded in smothering Jerome's "secret doctrine," in its mutilated form of bare pre-existence, at the Home Synod, held at Constantinople about the year 541, under Mennas the Patriarch, in conformity with the imperial rescript issued by Justinian.

(A) It was formerly the common opinion among those who were neither biblical interpreters nor scholars, and indeed, among very many of these latter, that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, and that the other books of the Old Testament were written by the authors whose names most of them bear; and that the New Testament was composed of gospels written by the apostles of Jesus, and of other tracts composed by men whose names stand at their heads. With the awakening of the intellectual faculties in the Renaissance, the bible began to be critically examined; for men thought, if it is true, examination can only make its pure gold shine brighter; and if it be false, or any part false, it cannot be the word of God. So thought Galileo, who in 1613 wrote his memorable letter to Castelli, professor of mathematics at Pisa, and who says that while he accepts the bible as infallible, yet its interpreters could err, as in astronomy, which the bible makes no pretense to teach, only mentioning the sun and moon, and once or twice only the planet Venus under the name *Lucifer;* and if the bible writers had intended to teach astronomy they would have done so, and not ignored it. He was warned to stick to mathematics, and to leave theology alone.

The researches into biblical history and the labors of critics have made this seem mild in comparison to what many eminent scholars have written as the result of years of the most painstaking investigation. The reader is referred to the voluminous literature on the subject; but it may not be out of the way to suggest a few lines of study.

As regards the Old Testament, its careful preservation against corruption is well known, for so scrupulous are the synagog author-

ities that there shall be no mutilation of the scriptures, that they destroy every copy so soon as it begins to show signs of wear; and the careful copying of the text is carried by some so far as to appear excessive. But this was not so in ancient days, as is proved by a number of facts. For instance, the Samaritan Pentateuch is well known to vary in many points from the Hebrew Massoretic text; secondly, the Alexandrian version of the bible, which is in many parts at wide variance from the Hebrew, and which resembles the Samaritan more closely than the Massoretic Hebrew, but which yet differs from both considerably. This version is commonly called the Septuagint, or version of the Seventy, from an absurd legend that it was translated by 72 men in 72 days, who did their work in 72 separate cells, in Alexandria, whither they had been called by Ptolemy Philadelphus to make a translation of the sacred books of the Jews, and that the translations agreed word for word one with the other. This story is abandoned by everybody, probably, today. The variations from the Hebrew which it shows can be explained by alteration, by additions, by amputations; mere vagaries of translating do not suffice, and it is only reasonable to suppose that the work was done some hundreds of years before the beginning of the Christian era from a text having affinities with both the Samaritan and the Massoretic Hebrew as it now is called. This Alexandrine version was the one most in use at the time that Jesus is supposed to have lived, and was the bible commonly used by the writers of the treatises forming the New Testament; it was adopted by both Jews and Christians.

As regards the New Testament, the evidences of a developing text, not of a fixed and universally accepted standard as is commonly thought, are legion. The so-called "higher criticism" has collected a formidable mass of evidence to this effect. The standard of literary honesty and of respect for the rights of authorship were, to say the least, at a low ebb during the first centuries of the present era. This is shown, to take one proof, by the reiterated and vigorous denunciations of the heretics by the fathers of the church, as may be found in their writings; that they did what they accused the " heretics " of doing, we know from their own statements. See below and the references to Jerome, Origen, and Rufinus. Those were not the days of printing, where the stamped text multiplied by thousands makes falsification difficult, if not impossible; but manuscripts were laboriously copied out by hand, sometimes in a kind of shorthand, which

in itself was a frequent cause for later misreading and consequent misunderstanding.[1]

As an example, we may take the diatribes of Tertullian and Epiphanius against the Gnostic Marcion, whom they, in common with other fathers, violently accuse of adulterating and mutilating Luke's Gospel. This was accepted for centuries, until the dawn of biblical criticism, when the subject was really investigated in a spirit of fairness, and some scholars actually took the stand that Marcion's gospel was the original Luke, and the gospel of the Fathers was the adulterated and interpolated one. (Tertull. *Adv. Marc.*, iv, 2-6; Epiph. *Haer.* xlii, 9, 11; Schmidt, and Eichhorn. Cf. Schleiermacher, and Schultz.) What is more, both of these fathers accuse Marcion of amputating parts of Luke which are not in the Luke that has reached us, but in Matthew! Did, then, these passages exist in the Luke of the two fathers? If so, what has become of them? Amputated? Or were the two fathers in several instances so exceedingly careless that they mixed up two gospels?

Let us turn to Origen for confirmation of the statement that even the gospels were changed, with apparent small regard for any sacredness that they might be supposed to have had. In Matthew, xxvii, 17, Origen found *Jesus Barabbas* in the manuscripts he was working on; but he also found that the name *Jesus* was omitted in many copies; and he omitted it in the copies he uttered, because, he says, "it seems wrong that the name Jesus should be given to an evil-doer." This is curious logic, because Origen was a good Hebrew scholar, and knew much better than the vast majority of the church-

1. It should be remembered that the analogy between this mutilation of MSS and the work of a modern editor who revises and edits an already published book to bring it up to date or to excise matter which might actually be objectionable, is not real. In our days, the thousands of published copies are always at hand for the mere researcher or bibliophile to examine or study, while a modern editor rarely, perhaps never, omits calling attention to his work on the title page as "revised" or "edited" or both; so far there is similarity, as may be seen further on where reference is made to the work of Rufinus; but today it is practically unheard of for anyone deliberately setting to work to mutilate a book, for merely sectarian or religious ends. Today, a work which is disliked or disapproved of is simply let alone; it is not copied in a mutilated or interpolated form by those inimical to it, and then published as the author's work. This is the difference. Ancient MSS were costly productions, especially when of lengthy works, and their multiplication was comparatively slow; they were purchased by comparatively few, in consequence, and a change made and then published as the author's was extremely likely to be copied by others. Our cheap books, within the reach of all, and the volume of production which the printing press has enabled us to attain, as well as the stamped text, raise an insurmountable barrier against literary fraud or the unscrupulous hands of enemies.

men of the day that Jesus, Ἰησοῦς in Greek, was but a rendering of the Hebrew Ieshua', and Joshua, Jehoshua, etc., were other forms of the same idea. Josephus mentions at least thirteen people bearing the name Jesus, most of them living at the beginning of or near the Christian era. Some of these Origen would certainly not have considered as "good men." But Origen was evidently disturbed; and the reason for this we may find in the following fact: *Bar-abbas* is the Grecized form of the Syriac *Son of the Father!* So that the passage in Matthew would then read, *Whom will ye that I release unto you, Jesus, son of the father, or Jesus who is called christos?* We are told that this Barabbas was the leader of an insurrection against the Roman domination, and was then in prison. Compare the tale told of a certain Carabbas by Philo Iudaeus in his treatise against Flaccus. The incidents of the mock homage, the crown, robe, and scepter, are very curious. Carabbas would seem to be a MS corruption of Barabbas. The scene of the Carabbas story was placed in Alexandria by Philo. We leave this to the thoughtful consideration of the reader.

Thus we find Origen operating on Matthew, although the reading was supported, if we take Origen's words fairly, by the majority of the MSS, "many copies" only, omitting the name of Jesus. What is more, twenty-one different MSS have reached our day having the name Jesus Barabbas; it is the form in the Armenian version and in the Jerusalem Syriac. Origen thinks that the "heretics" interpolated the "Jesus" to confuse the Gospel history; but it is far more likely that the word was omitted before Barabbas than that it was inserted. Drs. Wescott and Hort, the eminent English biblical exegetes and churchmen, place the reading *Jesus Barabbas* among the "List of Noteworthy Rejected Readings," both of Matt. xxvii, 16, and Matt. v, 17.

Wescott and Hort also give, in their edition of the Greek Testament, page after page of "Suspected Readings"; and page after page of "Rejected Noteworthy Readings." If so much is rejected, how much has been left out before? How much added, which is now accepted?

We refer briefly only, because it is generally known, to the "Three Heavenly Witnesses," interpolation, in John's first epistle, ch. 5, vv. 7 and 8. The common, or Authorized Version, has the following, the interpolation, for convenience, being here printed in italics:

For there are three that *bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one; and there are three that* bear witness in earth, etc.

Now these words are of late date, doubtless inserted by some transcriber in the attempt to manufacture a "proof" of the Trinitarian theory. They are found in none of the earliest MSS and only in a small number of Latin MSS of late date; from which they were translated into subsequent Greek transcriptions of earlier MSS; only four instances occur, if the writer is not mistaken, and all of them posterior to the beginning of the 15th century. The Revised Version has simply dropped these words entirely.

And as briefly we refer to the suspected verses at the end of Mark's Gospel, from verse 9 to the end, inclusive. Wescott and Hort in their Greek edition of the New Testament, enclose these twelve verses within double brackets, as " Noteworthy Rejected Readings," while the Revised Version also calls attention to them as suspicious, and points out that other "authorities" *have a different ending entirely.* These twelve verses are not found in the oldest codices, nor in many of the "authorities." How they found their way into Mark, is a question one may leave to the labors of scholars.

It is thus clear that the " text " from the earliest times has been more or less unsettled, being added to, shortened, changed, to suit various minds. And, finally, it should be remembered that the two oldest Greek codices date only from the 4th century, the Sinaitic in Petersburg, Russia; and the Vatican MS at Rome. Two others are the next oldest, dating from the 5th century, the Codex of Ephraem in the Librairie Nationale, Paris, and the Alexandrian, in the British Museum. Who wrote these? Where were they written? What caused them to have their present form and to contain their present readings — in other words, what was their literary pedigree, and from what sources were they composed? These questions, too, we leave to the proper hands, simply remarking that as yet no satisfactory answers have been given. And, lastly, not all of the now accepted treatises which compose the New Testament were formerly received by early Christians, as the Apocalypse, which was rejected by some; also Jude, 2d Peter, and others. The formation of the Canon as it now exists was a matter of time; it was a case of development. It was at the 3d Council of Carthage in North Africa, that

we first find the New Testament as it now exists. That was in 397.[2]

(B) The time has gone by when it was allowable, on account of the inchoate ideas commonly prevalent on the subject, to use as synonymous terms such words as *rebirth, pre-existence, metempsychosis, metensomatosis, reincarnation, palingenesis, re-embodiment, transmigration.* Properly used, not one of these words means precisely what any one of the others implies; and the differences between some of them, as between pre-existence and metempsychosis, or between reincarnation and palingenesis, are not merely important from an academic standpoint, but run to the origin of the whole conception. To

2. The reader is also reminded that there existed a widespread sect in Asia Minor whose adherents were known by the name of *Alogoi,* on account of their rejection of the logos-doctrine. Epiphanius tells us that they "refused to accept the logos of God, as preached by John," (li, 3, xxviii), and the same writer also tells us that "they say that the book of John is not accordant with the other apostles" (31, 4); they went further and asserted that the gospel of John "falsified" (li, 18). Like all other sects, the Alogoi considered themselves strictly orthodox; accepting Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they rejected John and also the Revelations. This sect flourished as early as the middle of the second century.

The most conscientious and painstaking labors have been spent to ascertain who wrote the gospels, when they were written, in what language, and what their pedigree. The vast learning of German and English scholars especially has been poured out to those ends, and the question has been attacked from almost all possible angles. The brilliant scholarship of German critics particularly has exerted every faculty; and yet the results are deplorably small. The age of probable composition of all of the first three gospels is thought to be somewhere in the last quarter of the first century, with some scholars preferring a date during the first quarter of the second century; the language was probably Greek, and Alexandria, that wonderful nursery of religious speculation, the source whence were drawn not only familiar expressions but also ideas. To Alexandria may be referred as well the gospel of John, possibly with even more certainty.

Irenaeus was positive that there must be four gospels and not more than four, because were there not four quarters to the world and four principal winds? Must not the gospel therefore accord with the scheme of Nature? (iii, 11, viii). Justin merely speaks of the "Memoirs of the Apostles," and his quotations do not always agree with the present gospels. If the present gospels existed in his day, the discrepancies are remarkable.

But there was at one time current throughout the Christian world a large number of writings which are now called apocryphal, but which at that time enjoyed high consideration in many parts, perhaps even higher than the faded-out writings which have come down to us as the canonical. Such were the now-called *Apocryphal Gospels,* of which there exist a couple of dozen or more; the *Apocryphal Acts* of which we have possibly a score or more; different *Revelations;* and many other writings, such as letters. The consideration and wide diffusion of these, even so late as the 7th century, may be seen by the fact that Muhhammad in the Qur'ân writes of Mary and Jesus in terms that are not found in the present gospels but are found in different ones of the so-called apocryphal gospels, whence he drew the legends. As in the formation of birds out of mud, their coming to life, and being made to fly, ascribed to Jesus, which is found in *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew,* ch. 27; in the *Gospel of Thomas,* ch. 1; and in the Arabic *Gospel of the Infancy;* or where Jesus causes a palmtree to bend down to gratify his mother's desire for some of its fruit, *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew,* ch. 20.

be more definite, each one of these words expresses some one aspect or side of the soul's character and activity; or, to put it in mathematical form, each of these words is one of the members in the general term. This "general term" is usually called by Theosophists "reincarnation," and it answers well enough, although a more comprehensive word, which is perhaps better all around, is "re-embodiment." The value, however, of " reincarnation," is that it is precise in meaning, and sets forth the capital fact that the human soul periodically lives on this earth in bodies of flesh, in human bodies; for it may as well be said at once that the ancient doctrine of palingenesis, which is perhaps the most venerable and the most widely diffused in both place and time of any religio-philosophic conception known to man, distinguishes very sharply between the rebirth of the human soul in human bodies, and the re-embodiment of animal monads in the animal ("brute") world.

It is, of course, a commonplace that " metempsychosis " is usually supposed to mean what is loosely called the "Pythagorean theory" of re-embodiment in animal bodies as punishment for evil and subjugation to appetite in a former life. But this is a widespread belief and may be shown to be held, and to have been held, by both highly civilized and barbarous peoples.

The explanation of these words, as is obvious, could hardly be set forth with adequate development in a note on a more restricted albeit related subject; and for this reason we rest content with calling attention to differences of meaning, and to the necessity for precision in the use of the above words and others of similar nature. Reincarnation as used in Theosophical works is not synonymous with the popular idea of the metempsychosis; nor is pre-existence to birth of necessity identical with either of the two former. The subject is vast and of extraordinary complexity, largely on account of preconceived opinions, which the majority of mankind hold with astonishing tenacity; but also on account of the sacred nature of the theme, which has caused it in past ages to be openly taught only in the secluded chambers and silent retreats of initiation crypts or halls. The human soul does *not* incarnate in the sub-human kingdoms, for the simple reason that these kingdoms are not human; the animals (" brutes ") do not incarnate in human bodies, for the simple reason that the animal monads are not (yet) human. This ought to be plain enough to anyone, and we leave it there, only remarking that the

popular idea of "metempsychosis" has reference to another subject-member of the general term. It may be added that while the Neoplatonic School taught the truth of the soul's re-embodiment, thus carrying the doctrine well into Christian times, in a form closely similar to that used by most of the Gnostics, by the Manichaeans, probably by the Mithraists, yet where we find it most developed in exposition just there we find the distinction most clearly drawn between what is popularly called transmigration, and what is today commonly called reincarnation. Iamblichus, Porphyry, Hierocles, Sallust, all unite in denying that the *human* soul migrates post mortem into the bodies of animals ("brutes"). The truth is, as alluded to above, that these different words convey certain meanings to those who know how to understand them properly, while to those whose training has not given them the proper insight and means of determining accurate conclusions, the subject presents almost boundless confusion.[3]

Now the two words to be especially considered here are *Pre-existence* and *Reincarnation.* The citations from writers both ancient and

3. It may be asked how it is that eminent followers of the great Athenian such as the above deny what their master asserts with such circumstantiality in the *Phaedrus,* 249. Certainly Plato's words are positive, definite and direct. The proper answer is plain enough, surely: Study both Plato and the writings of the greater minds of his school. There has been altogether too much "explaining away," in these questions, and not enough sympathetic exegesis. Who does not know that Plato's whole style is allegorical? Not merely the "painted page" but the painter's thought should be studied, if the real sense of the traditional school is to be grasped. But, again, when we say "allegory," we do not understand mere "fantasy" or "fertile imaginings." Who can believe that Plato meant that the soul grows wings, and casts them off, or has them broken; or that primal man was literally cut in two as an egg is divided by a hair? (*Symposium,* 190). Was a symbol of the soul (i. e. of the ψυχή) ever conceived finer and more expressive than that of the butterfly? But is the soul a butterfly in actuality, because, like that ephemerid, the archaic wisdom pictured man's intermediary self flitting from flower to flower, from pleasure to pleasure, from sensation to sensation, sucking life's cloying sweets? From experience is born wisdom; and hence the *bee* was made another symbol of the soul, and honey its garnered store of wisdom. Behind the ψυχή stands the Thought Divine, the νοῦς, towards which the volatile and unstable soul ever yearns, and with which, in good time, it will again be reunited, broken-winged and cloyed with "sweets" it may be, but reunited at last to its inner divine prototype. But woe to the soul, if the body of physical yearning weigh heavier in life's scales than its aspirations toward the impersonal spirit! Then, indeed, Tartarus awaits it, and gloom, and possible extinction — drowned in life's turbulent and sullen waves, the hapless soul must seek anew the sunlit heights.

We repeat again that the so-called metempsychosis is misunderstood. A man cannot by natural law incarnate in a brute body, because the brute offers no adequate vehicle for expressing the faculties of man; and, again, the animal cannot incarnate in human form for the reason that its faculties are inferior to the human vehicle. Figs do not grow on thistles nor plums on thorns, in Nature. And Plato knew this as well as any one. The metempsychosis, in consequence, has reference to another branch of the real psychology; but one ventures to think that this aspect of the ancient wisdom will not be trumpeted abroad.

modern given by the able writers of the preceding article show the strong appeal to men of discernment and intellectual power of the doctrine of the soul's re-embodiment in human form, and equally noticeable is the supposed virtual synonymity of the several terms used by them to describe palingenesis. From this, we again remark, has largely arisen the obfuscation so prevalent when the subject is discussed. Reincarnation of necessity presupposes pre-existence; but this latter word, as history shows, does not of necessity presuppose the periodical descent into human bodies of the human soul. This is amply seen in the works of Origen, the great Christian father, writer, mystic; than whom, perhaps, no other single character ever exercised a greater influence on the syncretistic system that early Christianity was. From his teachings arose the fiercely debated Origenistic Controversies, which lasted from Origen's time, about the beginning of the third century in round dates until the Synod or Council at Constantinople about 541, where the doctrines and Origen himself were formally anathematized. This is above three hundred years; how much longer Origen's ideas on the pre-existence and fall of the human soul were cherished by his followers is uncertain. Probably for many decades.

Just what Origen's ideas were, it is a little difficult to say, because, while the works which have come down to us go no farther than to declare the necessity of the soul's pre-existence, and its fall into a fleshly body for purposes of purgation, finally to resume a spiritual body, perhaps also at some distant time to be again subject to a fall, we yet know that Origen's works were consistently tampered with by "orthodox" writers who unblushingly confess their mutilations. Witness Rufinus. This man undertook a translation into Latin of Origen's work on *First Principles*, Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, in which the great Alexandrian most fully develops his system, if such it may be called. Now we have extant only the Latin version of Rufinus, the Greek having mostly perished. Rufinus tells us that he is but following the example of Jerome in making his translation — of Jerome, who had translated more than seventy treatises of Origen and who spoke of him in the highest terms as second only to the apostles, and who, says Rufinus, finding many "stumbling blocks in the original Greek so smoothed and changed them in his translation that a reader of the Latin would find nothing out of tune with our religion." Rufinus even speaks of "the rule of translation observed by my predecessors,"

and he continues: *"this example we follow as best we can, . . . carefully omitting all those expressions in Origen's work which are inconsistent with each other."* What these "inconsistencies" were, we readily understand! He then goes on to set forth that Origen's books had been corrupted by "heretics and evil-minded persons," and that it was necessary for him (Rufinus) to "restore" them; and in the preface to the third book of the *Principles,* this mutilator repeats his intention even more boldly. A few of Rufinus' suppressions may be seen by comparing his work with Jerome's letter to Avitus. The above will be found in the Prolog to Rufinus' Latin translation of the *Principles.* The publication of this translation so exasperated Jerome that he in his turn executed a complete somersault and denied his former admiration of Origen; denied, too, that the matters in dispute in Origen were interpolations; and says that Origen had by implication been condemned at Nicaea. To this Rufinus replied with equally vigorous language; and finally pope Anastasius, then Bishop of Rome, was drawn into the vortex. This was in 399; Anastasius condemned Origen's heretical ideas. This quarrel between Rufinus and the far more powerful Jerome was but one phase of the Origenistic Controversies, which lasted until the Home Synod at Constantinople above mentioned, and possibly until the Fifth General Council held at Constantinople in 553, both convened by mandates of the Emperor Justinian. But Anastasius was not the only pope who condemned Origen's heretical ideas, among which were at that date reckoned his pre-existence of souls, their fall from a spiritual ante-natal state into fleshly bodies, etc. Pope Leo I, called the Great, in his Letter xxxv, expressly states that in his belief, Origen's condemnation on account *of his doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul,* was proper. (See Migne, *Patrologia,* vol. liv, p. 807.)

The last phase of this dreary quarrel was reached in Justinian's rescript convening the Home Synod at the Capital. Mennas was then Patriarch of Constantinople. Justinian's letter contains ten anathemas, which condemn Origen's heresies, and which are too long to quote and are partly outside of our present subject. But the first contains our subject and consists of a brief summary of what we today find in Rufinus' translation of Origen. It runs:

> Whosoever believes or sets forth publicly that the souls of men pre-existed, that is to say that they were once divine things and spiritual powers, which fell [from their high estate] because they tired of contemplating God; and because

of the chilling of their love were then called souls[4], and in retribution therefor were cast down into bodies, let him be anathema.

The condemnation was unanimous, it appears, for even Origen's followers attending the Synod, and who were men of wide influence, were forced to sign the decree. Whether Origen was condemned twelve years later at the Fifth General Council, is a matter of grave doubt; authorities take differing views; but at any rate, the decree of the Home Synod, as it was called, was also thereafter signed by many bishops in other parts of the Empire.

Yet Hieronymus, commonly called Jerome, a greater man than Rufinus, and the writer to whose labors the formation of the bible called the Vulgate is due, was at one period of his life so possessed with admiration of Origen that the words he uses in praise of the great Alexandrian seem extreme. There is no question that he followed the lead of Origen in many matters. Jerome was abnormally sensitive to the charge or even to the suspicion of heresy; so when the controversial fever was at its height he forsook his former position, and although still using Origen in part, complains of his heretical opinions. He, like Rufinus, had scant sense of literary honesty; and the method he followed in his translations, may be judged from his own words to Vigilantius (*Ep.* lxi, 2):

Quae bona sunt transtuli; et mala vel amputavi vel correxi vel tacui. Per me Latini bona ejus habent et mala ignorant.

that is, *What was good I translated; and the evil I either cut off, or corrected, or suppressed. Through me, then, the Latins have what is good of him; and the evil they know nothing of.* That Jerome, at

4. That is, were called ψυχαί, which is thus evidently derived, doubtless properly, from the verb ψύχω, *to breathe, to blow;* with the secondary meaning of *to chill, to make cool;* closely connected with the tertiary sense of *to become dry* or *to make dry.* This idea is purely Platonic, for the ψυχή as the vehicle or organ of the νοῦς, is referred to not infrequently in the Platonic Dialogs. And that the highest part of man, his innermost or celestial root, is an integral part of the kosmic Intelligence, which found its finest being and purest bliss in the single contemplation of the working of that Intelligence which was itself: that due to its characteristic faculty of free-will it became in the course of time and destiny one of the sparks or streaming beams from the Divine Source actuating and inspiring the material world, which thus became its "fall," and the "cooling of its love" for its Source, and that thus it became a "living soul" from being a Thought Divine —all this is as distinctly Neoplatonic as it certainly also is fundamentally Gnostic. Indeed, there are numerous passages in the theologizing Plotinus, for instance, which echo this thought entirely. It is matter for small wonder that eminent churchmen today should turn to the great Neoplatonic teachers for help and strength. Such a brave and truly religious spirit is shown by Dean Inge, who has recently lectured on the subject. See another article in this issue, where the eminent English churchman's views are noticed. Let us hope that he will not pause half-way. After all, he is but journeying back home.

least at one period, had a lurking belief in the doctrine of palingenesis, if he did not actually teach it, is abundantly clear from his words in his letter to Demetrias on Virginity, where he states that it was a very ancient belief, esoteric and handed down by tradition among the Christians, and that it was taught to a chosen few in secret. It would be of great interest to know under just what form this traditional and esoteric teaching was set forth. Naturally then, Origen's belief in the pre-existence of the soul met sympathetic welcome in Jerome; but may it not also be asserted that Origen taught the ancient doctrine of palingenesis under the form recognized by these early Christians? There is much to support that view. Even in the mutilated Origen that has reached our day, we find a suggestion of something more than mere pre-existence in chapter lx, secs. 5 and 7 of the *First Principles,* concerning the ante-natal struggle of Jacob and Esau, and in the selection of Jeremiah before birth. Again, in the Apology for Origen, written by Eusebius and Pamphilus, we know that it was urged that Origen did not teach that the souls of wicked men pass for punishment into the bodies of animals. This is good testimony that it was commonly thought that Origen had so taught. Again, Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, like Jerome, from an admirer of Origen became an opponent, the same fear of heresy actuating the coat-turning; and about the year 400 convened a synod at Alexandria, where Origen and his books were condemned, amid bitter opposition. Then in a circular letter to the bishops of Palestine and Cyprus, Theophilus sets forth as causes for condemnation the usual charges, the gravamen of the accusations seeming to be about the same as in the quotation above from Justinian's letter. In an Easter Letter, Origen, who is now styled the *Hydra of all Heresies* (hydram omnium haereseon), among other things is accused of teaching that man dies many times, and that in consequence the soul and the body of man undergo constant transformation by being joined together and separated. This does not contradict the Apology, which merely combats the belief that Origen taught the popular form of palingenesis called "metempsychosis." Finally, it is not unworthy of note that Origen was also condemned during his life at Alexandria, by Demetrius the bishop, with other bishops and priests assenting. He was expelled from Alexandria, but was allowed to retain his priesthood. Was this for doctrinal causes? or for accepting ordination in a foreign diocese? Anyhow Origen had already written his

First Principles; and the condemnation was ignored by the bishops of Arabia, Phoenicia, Palestine, and Achaea. His school was continued at Alexandria and grew in power and influence with the years.

We now pass to another prominent figure in early Christian history, Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, Gaul. His birth has been placed at some time between 97 and 140, making him the elder of Origen by some forty-five years if the latter date is accepted. His work *Against Heresies,* is often puzzling both in style and subject-matter; but for the purposes of church history, Christians consider him as an author of unusual interest. His work has perished in the original Greek excepting the first book (incomplete) which has been preserved by extracts of length made by Hippolytus and Epiphanius. Moreover, the Latin version, of which only three MSS exist today, is written in Latin of the most wretched and barbarous character, so that the author's meaning is often purely conjectural. One translator says of it that *it is often necessary to make a conjectural retranslation of it into Greek, in order to obtain some inkling of what the author wrote.* This being the case, Irenaeus is not the best of authorities, especially in translations where the sense is derived from a *conjectural version* — of the translator! However, in Book II ch. xxxiii sec. 2, he makes the mistake of attributing the invention of the doctrine of palingenesis to Plato, for it was a commonplace among the ancients that Pythagoras was the principal disseminator of this doctrine so far as the public was concerned; and further on, sec. 5, denies both the pre-existence of the soul, and presumably, therefore, its rebirth on earth. He teaches the direct creation by God of each human soul, and its perpetual existence thereafter (Bk. II. ch. xxxiv). It would have been interesting to have found some support in Ireneaus of the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul and its periodical return to earth as we see it must have been held by other early Christians. As a Greek father, his tendency would naturally have been to mysticism and a keener intellectual penetration than history shows to have existed among the Latin writers; was his barbarous and perhaps unscrupulous Latin translator at fault? We query, and pass.

We now turn as briefly to Clement of Alexandria, who lived at about the same time as Irenaeus, and who has left us writings bearing strong stamp of the Neoplatonic school. He was the teacher of Origen, who also, by the way, was a pupil of the popularizer of the Neoplatonic school, Ammonius Sakkas. Possibly Clemens himself

attended at one time Ammonius' lectures; the supposition is tenable. His work is valuable for the light it throws on the opinions of his day; but concerning our subject, his remarks are few. In his *Address to the Greeks,* ch. 1, he speaks of men, i. e. their souls, as *existing before the foundation of the world, in the vision of God, the rational beings of the Word of God, with whom we date from the beginning, for "in the beginning was the Word."* This is pure pre-existence, which is certainly to be ascribed, as shown, to Origen. In another place Clemens speaks of the Pythagoreans' metempsychosis in a way which is obscure. (*Strom.* Bk. vii. ch. 6). But both Clemens and Origen make a point of the fact that there were esoteric or secret teachings among them, which it was improper to publish abroad. (Clem. Alex., *Strom,* Bk. v, ch. ix; Origen, *Con. Cels.* Bk. 1, ch. vii; and in the same work, Bk. vi, ch. vi, he says that Jesus taught his disciples secretly an esoteric doctrine, *which has not been preserved, because the evangelists thought that it could not be properly communicated to the multitude either in writing or in speech.*) Gregory Nazianzen too, a writer of the 4th century and bishop of Constantinople in 380, in his first *Invective* against the noble-hearted Emperor Julian, sec. 117, guardedly says that "there are among us too certain secret doctrines, which I do not deny." All this proves an esoteric doctrine in early Christianity, based, it is supposed, on Jesus' secret teachings.

Turning now to Arnobius, a writer at Sicca in Africa at the end of the 4th century, we find in his work *Adversus Gentes,* another belief regarding the soul's origin and destiny, for he confesses his ignorance of the former (Bk. ii, sec. 47), and concludes that souls are of a neutral nature neither mortal nor immortal, produced by secondary beings not by God, but endowed with immortality by the Supreme God's mercy. He teaches therefore a conditional immortality; speaks of the *Supreme* God as if he accepted lesser gods or divine beings; and in the same book, sec. 16, speaks of what is "mentioned in the more secret mysteries" as being possibly true (at least such is the inference) that "the souls of evil men at death, pass into cattle and other animals." There is close resemblance to Gnostic tenets here, and Arnobius seems to have used Gnostic arguments very extensively. He quotes largely from Clement of Alexandria who is known to have had as a teacher the great Gnostic Valentinus. Clement, furthermore, although he apparently attacks "Gnostics,"

yet is himself suffused with Gnostic opinion, mingled with a Neoplatonic coloring. The same may be said of his pupil the great Origen. Arnobius thus seems to acknowledge a mortal-immortal soul, the offspring of lesser divine beings before its bodily birth — hence a pre-existence, possibly also a certain kind of metempsychosis.[5]

5. We refer to Lactantius in a note under Arnobius, because he was a pupil of the latter, and because while he differs from his master a good deal, he is also so definite in his rejection of any form of palingenesis, as far as one can judge, that he requires little direct notice here. He flourished about the beginning of the 4th century, and was at one time the tutor of Crispus, the son of the Emperor Constantine. His main work is the *Divine Institutes;* and on account of the sweetness of his style, and his somewhat declamatory fashion of treating his subjects, he has been called "the Christian Cicero." It is needless to say that he lacked both the great Roman's intellect and breadth of view.

In book iii of the *Institutes,* ch. 18, he refers to Pythagoras, whom the entire world of culture around the Mediterranean formerly held in reverence, as "that silly old man," and as that "babbling old fellow, who, like idle old women, invented tales for credulous children." He rejects metempsychosis, of course, like most of the Christian writers; and also, if his words are not misinterpreted, palingenesis in any form. He also denied pre-existence, teaching that the soul is created at birth and is thenceforth immortal; and severely arraigns the "errors" of those who do not accept his views. This is repeated in book vii, ch. 22 and 23, where, after taking a fling at Vergil's description of the River of Lethe and the souls drinking thereof so that memory of the delights of disincarnate being shall not prevent them returning to earth-life, he says that the poets "thought that the souls were born again, and re-entered the womb, and thus returned to infancy; . . . but they will not be born again, which is not possible; but they will be resurrected and will be clothed by God with proper bodies, and will recollect their previous life." Further says he not, so far as difference of views goes. It may not be out of place to remark that the present writer is of opinion that the "resurrection" theory, which occupied so large a place in early Christian speculation, seems to have been based on that form of palingenesis which was current among them. As Origen's pre-existence is a faded-out shade of reincarnation; so the "resurrection of the flesh" seems to be a faded-out memory of an earlier and completer doctrine of the taking on of other bodies in after lives; for, indeed, the bodies we shall have, are those we are now making for ourselves, in a sense; therefore "our very own."

But Lactantius was not the greatest of theologians, by any means, although his dogmatism and fluency gained him wide currency for many centuries. He loves dearly to show his knowledge, which is not always of the best, as witness his indignant scolding of the ancients who held that the earth was round. "How can such a thing be accepted?" he asks. "Is anyone so idiotic as to believe in the antipodes — that there are men whose heads hang down, and whose feet are on earth? That those things which with us are properly placed, with them hang down? That vegetation and corn grow downwards, and that rain and snow and hail fall upwards to the earth? . . . Watching the courses of the heavenly bodies, and their reappearance, they imagined that the world is round like a ball . . . and that the stars and the sun, by the revolution of the earth, are born back to the east. . . . And the earth being round, it must of necessity have mountains and lands and seas all over it . . . and hence men and animals too would be all over the earth. Thus the earth being round, this fable leads to the invention of those antipodes hanging down [i.e., men hanging head down on the other side of the earth, with their feet "higher" than their heads]. But if you ask those who believe these ridiculous tales, why things do not fall off into the heaven underneath, they answer that such is the nature of things; that heavy bodies are born towards the center, and are attracted together at the middle, like the spokes in the hub of a wheel.

We now turn to another early Christian writer, Justin, called Martyr. His birth falls, it is thought, within the earliest years of the second century, making him thus one of the primitive Christian writers. His testimony would be thus very valuable, living as he did (accepting his supposed date as true) just after the "apostolic age"; but he is a vague and diffuse scribe, and his references to our subject are of the shortest character. In his *Dialog with Trypho the Jew,* he describes his conversion to Christianism, in romantic style, to a body of Jews whom he met at Ephesus (presumably), who, Justin still retaining his philosopher's robe, accost him and ask his opinion on certain questions. One day, he says, he was walking on the seashore, and met with an old man, with whom he entered into conversation. This old man Justin makes out to have been a Christian. In chapter iv of the *Dialog* Justin mentions the popular idea of the metempsychosis, which the old man rejects because human souls in animal or brute bodies do not recognize their punishment and cannot see God, and not being conscious of their punishment it is therefore useless. This of course does not necessarily follow; but Justin agrees. This is all, directly on our subject. Justin rejects the "metempsychosis," but whether he accepted the palingenesis of the soul in some other form he says not. Being still more or less of a Platonist, however, it is at least tenable to suppose that he may have held some such belief; or if not, that he was not one of the "elect" of whom Jerome spoke as receiving the secret, traditional doctrine.[6]

I cannot find words to say what I think of those who thus defend one folly by another; but I sometimes think that they do it in jest, or knowingly defend lies, to show their talents. But I would undertake to prove that it is impossible for the heaven to be underneath the earth, if this book did not now require an ending," etc., etc. (Bk. iii, ch. 24.)

This was centuries before the earth was circumnavigated, thus proving that the heresy of its rotundity was the truth; and that that "silly old man" and the ancient world generally, at least the educated portion, the thinkers and philosophers, were right.

6. Justin takes great pains, like so many others of the early Christian writers, to show that there is nothing new in Christianity, but only that it is "fuller, and of a more godly character" than the noblest soarings of the greatest minds of antiquity, except, perhaps, the views of Moses, and of some of the Jewish patriarchs. So in his *First Apology,* ch. 20, he complains that only "*we,* unjustly, are disliked. Why should we be, our doctrine being so much like what you yourselves hold, in so many philosophical points, albeit it is so much superior."

And as regards the fact that his "old man" rejected the metempsychosis, it would have been nothing unusual for anyone to do so, because while there existed several forms of the doctrine of palingenesis in the ancient Greek and Roman world, and while it was well known, yet despite the tremendous authority of Pythagoras and Plato and the Stoics, many only accepted it in part, or preferred other views, such as the popular idea of what Epicurus, or Pyrrho, or the Cyrenaic school taught.

As regards the Gnostics, it will suffice to refer the reader to the encyclopaedias, which all contain some sketch of the doctrines peculiar to those remarkable bodies. We may point out, however, that most, perhaps all, of the Gnostic "heresiarchs" claim to have possessed the inner thought and teachings of early Christianity, as witness Basilides, who asserted that he was a disciple of Glaucias, who was a disciple and the interpreter of Peter the apostle; that he received through Glaucias the esoteric doctrine of Peter, who had it from Jesus. Similar statements were made by others; for the word "Gnostic" itself referred to those who claimed to possess a Gnosis apart from the ordinary knowledge of the multitude. Gnosticism of course contains striking elements of Oriental thought.

In Manichaeanism, which, though certainly of Oriental origin, being apparently an engraft of Buddhism on Syrian and Greek and Persian thought, through the teachings of Manes (born circa 215), yet is commonly counted as an early "heresy" by most modern writers, we have an even more developed doctrine of palingenesis than what we find in Gnosticism; at least, more openly expressed, to judge from the fragments that have come down to us. Augustine, who was for nine years a Manichaean, but was, as he himself confesses, never admitted to the number of the "Elect," being only an "Auditor," speaks with the usual bias of the convert, against it. But Manichaeanism was at one time very powerful, was widely spread, and later widely persecuted. Yet it survived in secret, being itself an esoteric doctrine largely, in the Cathari and similar bodies in Bulgaria, Italy, southern France, and in Germany, up till the time of Luther or later. The Bogomiles were probably an offshoot of the same stock.

We conclude our brief review of Christian sources with the references to palingenesis which occur in the New Testament, and which, as pointed out, are perhaps but a portion of what once existed, for we know that even these scriptural writings were tampered with. The question as to the man born blind and the queries thereon; the statement regarding Elias "who was to come"; and the questions of Nicodemus and Jesus' answers, are nonsense on any other assumption; and that the Jews of the time were well acquainted with the general ideas of palingenesis is known to every scholar, and these queries are a corroboration of that fact if we suppose them to be genuine. Josephus points out the beliefs of the Essenes and

Pharisees in their own forms of palingenesis; while Philo the Jew, in his efforts to reconcile Platonism and the books of Moses, and from whom was borrowed the theory of the logos-doctrine, which was largely derived from Plato and which followed its own development in Christianity and which was worked on in that seething alembic of ideas, Alexandria—teaches palingenesis very clearly. (*On the Giants,* ii. 3; *On Dreams being sent from God,* xxii.)

As to Neoplatonism, its influence in forming the theological and mystical side of Christianity has not been adequately recognized. Origen, of course, was a pupil of the famous Ammonius Sakkas, who if he did not actually found the so-called Neoplatonic School in Alexandria, was yet its first prominent popularizer. Just as in Clemens we find the Gnosticism of Valentinus, modified of course by the bias of Clemens' mind; so in Origen we discern as plainly the steady stream of Platonic thought. In fact, it is to that source that we must go if we would understand the doctrines Origen fashioned in his own way; and if we would understand the strong Platonizing tendency that we may trace in all of early Christianity. Just as the main idea, the root conception of the logos-doctrine is found in Plato; just as we find it developed after his own fashion by the Platonizing Philo, whose influence in turn on the modeling of the later Christian doctrine of the logos through the intermediary current of Alexandrian speculation has been profound: so, in similar way, we trace the powerful impress of the subtle Neoplatonic Philosophy on every age of Christian development. First through Origen and his school; later through the pseudo-Dionysius. The writer of the remarkable body of teachings extant under the latter's supposed authorship (or the writers perhaps thereof) is known as Dionysius the Areopagite, and pious fancy for long identified him (or them) with the Dionysius the Areopagite whom Paul, when preaching on Mars' Hill, is said to have drawn to himself (*Acts* xvii, 34). Few hold that opinion today, probably; that the source of the pseudo-Dionysius lay in Neoplatonism is not only patent in itself, but is acknowledged by all competent scholarship.

It is a curious and rather striking fact, that just about the time that the Neoplatonic stream of influence in Christianity, as expressed in Origen, was about to meet a final barrier and check in the Home Synod under Mennas, we first hear of these Dionysiac writings, conveying an even stronger current of Neoplatonic thought into the Mid-

dle Ages. This was in 532, at the meeting between the Orthodox and the Severians, called by Justinian. The latter brought forth these writings in support of their peculiar views; at first they met with rejection; but with the passage of time the objectors ceased to object and began to use. Based on a foundation of Neoplatonic thought, modified often, it is true, almost out of recognition by the author, or authors, these writings from that time gained an ever-increasing body of supporters, until they reached their culmination of influence in the Middle Ages, after having virtually formed the complete outline of the mystic theology of the church, East and West. They are at the very foundation of scholasticism, their translation into Latin by John Scotus Erigena, in the reign of Charles the Bald, in the 9th century, and their dominating influence over Aquinas, in the 13th, and consequent fashioning of the whole system of theology of the latter by them, being facts of history. It has been said that if the pseudo-Dionysian writings were ever lost, they might be recovered in entirety from the writings of Aquinas. The influence that they exercised over Dante is plain on the most cursory perusal, for the poet's whole mystical topography: his nine infernal circles; his nine circles of the Purgatorio, inclusive of the Antipurgatorio and the Paradiso Terrestre; and his nine heavens, capped by the Empyrean, is Dionysian throughout. So we find their influence in the semi-literate Shakespeare, who speaks of the music of the spheres, each of the celestial bodies being the seat of an angelic being:

> Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
> Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
> There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims;
> Such harmony is in immortal souls;
> But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.
>
> *Merchant of Venice,* v, i.

This is perhaps one of the finest passages in the English dramatist. It would be a study not lacking in the profoundest interest to trace the stream of Mesopotamian Tsabaism (so-called) through the alchemy of the Greek mind and into Christian theology through Origen's doctrine of the heavenly bodies being rational beings, capable of sin (*First Principles,* i, 7, 2 and 3; *Contra Cels.* v, 11; ibid. viii,

67); and Clemens Alexandrinus (*Strom.* vi), and through the Neoplatonic pseudo-Dionysius.

The Italian Lombardus and the Frenchman Hugo de Saint-Victor in the 12th century; the Englishmen Thomas Becket in the 12th, Robert Grosseteste in the 13th, and Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, and Grocyn in the 15th centuries; the Germans Albertus Magnus and Tauler in the 13th and 14th centuries; Pico della Mirandola, Savonarola, and Ficino in the 15th century — all manifest the same Neoplatonic stream as modified by the pseudo-Dionysius. The later of these, of course, also felt the direct current of Greek thought which came into Europe at the Renaissance.

Not, of course, that the direct object of our study, palingenesis in some form or other, was either openly discussed or taught by these medieval luminaries, nor even Origen's faded doctrine of pre-existence; yet many of the fundamentals of the ancient wisdom were there, distorted if you will, sometimes pared down to mere outlines; but still living and ennobling in their effects. Some of these men were also devoted followers of the Qabbâlâh, such as Albertus Magnus and Pico; and it is more than merely arguable that the reincarnation as taught in the profound Jewish theosophy worked its results in their minds. To these last we may add such names as Raymond Lully, John Reuchlin, Robert Fludd, and Henry More.

To now summarize the main points in the confused and varying theories we have sketched, we note:

(1) For nearly six hundred years after the supposed date of birth of Jesus, the doctrine of pre-existence was held and taught by an influential, large, and vigorous party, which was perhaps also the most cultured in the Christian Church; and this party was led by some of the most learned, devoted, and sincere fathers of that Church, both Greek and Latin.

(2) The greatest of these, Origen, although in disagreement with other Christians of his own day, yet wrote voluminous works, which were quoted and studied for centuries after his death as almost oracular; these works were mutilated, changed, interpolated, so that what Origen really taught regarding the soul's nature and destiny is obscure; but as we find him persistently accused of having taught palingenesis if not an out-and-out form of reincarnation on earth, by his opponents, if not also some form of metempsychosis, it is not only tenable but actually probable that there was truth in these charges,

and that Origen not only taught pre-existence but the form of palingenesis existing in early Christianity.

(3) Jerome tells us positively, that metempsychosis (in some form or other) was taught to certain elect in the Christian body as a doctrine both esoteric and as derived by tradition from previous ages. This statement is also made, at least in part, by Rufinus.

(4) That the vast majority of Christian writers who touch on the subject, reject the popular idea of the metempsychosis only, probably because they failed to properly understand it; this is done by those who assert the doctrine of pre-existence and by those who deny it; Arnobius being a possible exception. This does not imply a rejection by these writers of *all* forms of palingenesis, as shown by Origen; and before Jerome wilted under the cry of heresy, by him.

(5) That a great many of the early Christian writers allude to our subject only vaguely, or reject the doctrine, apparently in any form; but these are just the ones whose intrinsic merits are the least both as thinkers or theologians, and who are usually the most bigoted or virulent against those who disagree with their own opinions. It is tenable, at least, to suppose that they belonged to that large party, the majority, who were not of Jerome's "chosen few" who received the esoteric doctrine handed down as a traditional heritage.

(6) That there existed from the earliest times, from the days of Jesus himself, certain mysteries, or secret teachings, as confessed by the New Testament, Clemens, Origen, Jerome, Gregory Nazianen, and others; and that originally, we may suppose, Jerome's esoteric and traditional teaching and these other secret teachings formed one body of doctrine, which, as civilization gradually fell before the night of barbarism which was overspreading Europe, and the imputation of heresy came to be hated worse than dishonor and cowardice, in part was forgotten and then resurrected as a heresy, or communicated to all, as the case happened to be.

(7) That not only pre-existence, but palingenesis in slightly varying forms was uniformly taught by the Gnostics, whom, with common opinion, we will here consider as Christian sectaries; and also by the Manichaeans even more forcefully.

(8) That these Gnostics and Manichaean bodies were at one time both very powerful and widely diffused, claiming to be the possessors of the true Gnosis as taught by Jesus; and that two of the most learned and earliest Fathers were taught by Gnostics, Origen

and Clement of Alexandria: this is certainly the case with Clement, and probably the truth of Origen, at least in degree.

(9) That there is very strong reason to doubt that Origen was condemned at the Fifth Oecumenical or General Council in 553; and as General Councils have been recognized among Christians from early Christian times as the final voice in matters of doctrine, and only General Councils, not local synods which were not supposed to represent the "universal church"; and as Origen was condemned among other matters for his doctrine of the pre-existence of souls and their fall into bodies of flesh by the Home Synod at Constantinople circa 541-543, this synod not being the "voice of the universal church," its decrees are not binding on the consciences of those who call themselves orthodox. That so far as the condemnation of Origen's supposed heresies by two popes is concerned, we may recollect that Leo I merely expresses an opinion on the matter (*loc. cit. ante, Ep.* xxxv); while Anastasius actually admits in a letter to John of Jerusalem that he did not know who Origen was, nor what he had written (Migne, *Patrologia,* xxi), but it seems that he recognized heresy in certain passages brought before him (*Ep. ad Johann.;* Migne, *Patrologia,* vol. xx, pp. 68 et seq.). Besides, pope Siricius, who was bishop of Rome just before Anastasius, in spite of the warmth of the quarrel, showed no disposition to condemn Origen, and Jerome even complains that he had been cajoled by the Origenists.

As to the statement sometimes heard that "the belief in reincarnation was condemned by the Fifth General Council held at Constantinople in 553," this is not only inaccurate, but probably untrue. It would first have to be proved (*a*) that Origen taught not only pre-existence, but reincarnation or the periodical rebirth of the human soul on this earth in human bodies; which, from what we have seen, may have been true in some form or other; (*b*) that the Fifth General Council held in 553 did in fact anathematize Origen and his doctrines, and this is subject to grave doubt; and (*c*) that the Fifth General Council not only condemned his pre-existence theory but also a doctrine of reincarnation; and of this there is no proof.

(10) We conclude that it must seem evident to the unprejudiced mind that some form of palingenesis is not only necessary intrinsically to the original doctrines of Christianity but that it was actually taught in form peculiar to Christianism, probably, as Jerome says, as a secret and traditional belief handed down from previous ages.

PLOTINUS THE NEOPLATONIST IN MODERN CHRISTIANITY: by T. Henry

WHEN we find so high an authority in his own sphere as the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral speaking of the inner illumination as being the bed-rock of Christian faith, and bidding us revere the testimony of the philosophical mystics, especially Plotinus, we may justly claim that Theosophy has won a noteworthy vindication since the days when H. P. Blavatsky so valiantly championed these views, then so strange and unpopular. It is in the opening pages of her *Key to Theosophy* that she explains some of the teachings of these very Alexandrian philosophers, and shows how elucidatory they are of the essential truths of Christianity. Plotinus and Iamblichus are often spoken of by her in connexion with Divine Theurgy or the process whereby the lower self is so purified that it can transmit the Light from within. Dean Inge has a very apt way of summing up the tendencies of modern thought, and we find a well-reported summary of his address (Essex Hall, London, June 3) in the columns of the *English Mechanic and World of Science* for June 12. (The report, from which we quote, is in semi-quotation style, which has the effect of turning present tenses into past tenses.) Speaking of the recent reaction from what is often called scientific certitude or determinism, towards latitude and a belief in spiritual values, the Dean said that:

> The wish was often father to the thought, even with persons of rare intellectual honesty. The desire to reach acceptable conclusions was apparent in metaphysics, unmistakable in ethics, and almost barefaced in systematic theology. . . . Now we saw a counter-revolt against Darwinism, against determinism, against intellectualism, in full blast. The root of all these new movements was the new faith in the almost unlimited power of purposive effort to ameliorate human conditions. "The gates of the future are open," Bergson had said, with his usual felicity in epigram. This was what our generation wished to believe in politics and social reform, and it had welcomed with open arms the . . . philosopher who had told them exactly what they wanted to hear. Their delight was increased when they were told that the intellect was only one, and not the best, line of progress — that something called instinct often provided a short cut to the point they wanted to reach. Thinking was hard work. What a joy to hear that it was mostly waste of time!
>
> The pride of the "intellectuals" had indeed received a blow. They had learned that the ingrained mental habits of fifty thousand years were not to be destroyed by the labors of a few university professors.
>
> For most religious persons the new attacks upon scientific determinism were very welcome, and, he thought, justifiably so.

Determinism, of course, means the doctrine that events are unalterably determined by causes within the reach of scientific investigation. The importance of the word appears when it is used in connexion with human character and destiny; for then the doctrine precludes the idea of a free-will or any real choice in man. The reaction just spoken of is in the direction of admitting the existence of an indeterminate factor in man — a free-will, a power of choice that is not determined by the aforesaid calculable causes. Perhaps it is advisable to make a comment on the use of the words "intellectualism," " intellect," and " thinking," in the above quotation. We must avoid the mistake of confounding a faculty with the misuse of that faculty, and of condemning the former along with the latter. A useful distinction may be made between "intellect" and "intellectualism," as implying respectively the faculty itself and its misuse. " Science," again, is a sacred name and must never be disparaged on the mere ground that all kinds of views, from the wisest to the most foolish, shelter under its banner. If the protest be against scientific determinism, let the determinism, and not the science, take the blame; and let materialism and animalism and pessimism be condemned, whether they be called scientific or theological or political. But let us not blame science, or reason, or intellect, or mathematics, or any other of the great faculties and sciences, unless we are the kind of people who would cut off their own head because it ached. Logic, founded on right premises, can only conduct us to the portals of truth; but wherever do we find logic? Instead we find a vast system of fallacies, often such as might be set to a school-boy as exercises, for him to point out the errors, yet forming part and parcel of the chains of reasoning by which writers and speakers on every subject attempt to support their conclusions. But logic and mathematics are jealous gods, and repay with unerring justice; and they will not accommodate themselves to faults and carelessness. In the same way we abuse that marvelous faculty the intellect, and then condemn it.

The Dean was somewhat sarcastic in speaking of Bergson, but one can readily understand that the true aim of the sarcasm is at philosophicules who skim over the surface and piece together a few fragments from the philosophers, so as to make a system suitable to their own wishes. Many great writers are thus misrepresented by their unwise admirers. Does Bergson tell us to throw our intellect into the waste-basket and stop thinking, or is this what some people want

to make out that he says? What we need is to *start* thinking, and to leave off using our brains for other purposes. To continue the quotation —

But in the Modernist movement Christian apologetics took another turn, which promised a complete deliverance from the attacks of science and criticism. The Modernists stripped the figure of Christ of all that Christians had loved to see in Him, and left them only an enthusiastic peasant, obsessed with the Messianic expectations which were common at the time in Palestine. Thus it became necessary to distinguish between two Christs — the one the historical prophet, who had few claims on the reverence of posterity, and the other the object of the Church's worship — a non-historical, dying, and rising Savior God. It was the latter idea of Christ which formed the center of the Christian religion, and it was something of a historical accident that it attached itself to the name of a "Messiah" who shared the fate of other Messiahs in the first century of our era. This theory of Christian origins was, he thought, untenable in this harsh form; but, with necessary qualifications, it was a theory which was likely to commend itself to many who did not believe in the Christian revelation.

But the Modernists were not in this position. They were, or wished to be, loyal Catholics. . . . How were they to reconcile their love for the Catholic cultus and discipline with their extremely subversive opinions in historical criticism? How could they worship a Christ whose historical career was what they believed it to have been? Christianity was, after all, a religion based on events which were supposed to be historical. It was therefore necessary for the Modernists to maintain that, in accepting the Church's creeds, which ascribed the attributes of Deity to Jesus Christ, they were somehow speaking the truth. Thus the "two Christs" were affirmed by two kinds of truth. Historical criticism dealt with truths of fact, while religion dealt with the birth of faith.

Thus, he continues, we have two truths —-a theoretical and a practical; and to our aid comes "pragmatism," which estimates the relative value of different kinds of truth by their relative interest and importance to the owner. Let us come to the point. All these posturings are avoided by returning to the common-sense of our forerunners the philosophic mystics.

Could we get any help from the philosophic mystics? It was his belief that they could.

Not the words of a Theosophist, remember, but of an eminent Anglican churchman. Think of H. P. Blavatsky's "Open Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury"!

They at least thought they had found what we wanted to find. Dr. Inge

then sketched the kind of way in which a disciple of Plotinus would deal with some of the questions that were agitating the minds of our generation, alluded to Eucken's philosophy, and in conclusion asked: Were the affirmations of the illuminated soul tragic illusions or cosmic realities? That was the question, and if they followed Plotinus and Eucken they would be in no doubt about the answer. The higher life had already been lived by very many. They agreed in what they told us about it. Why should we not receive their witness?

So we are to turn to Plotinus in order to find relief from an intolerable dualism by which we try to fool ourselves with the idea that there can be two kinds of truth. If in our turn we may be permitted to sum up modern tendencies, we will point to the following two opposed ideas: (1) That it is necessary to cast off the old and rely upon the new; (2) that it is essential to beware of the new and to rely upon the old. The Dean does not appear to think much of the multitudinous new philosophies of life by which he is surrounded. He is a conservative; he believes in the wisdom of old. But he goes back farther than some conservatives; farther even than perhaps he thinks, for he goes back to the Wisdom-Religion, of which Plotinus was a cautious teacher. Why not, let us ask in his own words, accept the testimony of still earlier sages than Plotinus? The higher life has indeed been lived before by very many. Jesus was a teacher of the higher life; and if there is anything special and unique about his message it behooves his followers to prove and manifest it. There is plenty of need for somebody to counteract the riot of speculation which is everywhere threatening to blossom into harmful policies. But something positive and energic is required, not mere passive resistance.

How comes it that the intellect should be reckoned on one side of a bitter controversy, with religion on the other? Such a strife in the heart of man reminds us of the old "war in heaven," when the Olympians were divided into camps. Is it not time for a reconciliation? The words "intellectual" and "religious" are both degraded by being so used; surely neither the one nor the other stands for what it ought. The ancient teaching, also to be found in the Christian Gospel, is that the awakening of the conscience brings intellect and wisdom; and truly wisdom is what is needed to combat specious fallacies and random speculation. The Dean is on the right track when he strives to find more in Christianity than most Christians have succeeded in getting out of it. The fault is not all theirs.

To study the ancient Wisdom and to apply it to modern needs — that is the true saving gospel.

It seems as though great teachers like Plotinus must have had some way of sending (as it were) a wireless message into the future, so that their thoughts could strike the world at a certain time in its history. Or perhaps it is the coming-up of the seeds sown by that other teacher H. P. Blavatsky, for she spoke much of Plotinus. In any case, Theosophical teachings are every day finding greater acceptance, and are found to be the key to life's problems. The Alexandrine philosophers were like a sunset glow, preceding a night; and perhaps the new dawn is now beginning.

Sometimes one wonders how the light will come to the world; and it seems likely that in proportion as more and more people accept the truths of Theosophy and begin to fashion their thoughts and mold their lives in accordance therewith,— so there will gradually emerge a new spirit, a new atmosphere, that will subtly interpenetrate mankind, giving rise to new movements towards unity and peace and concord, and inspiring wiser counsels. This would indeed be a rebirth of the Christos, and not in any spectacular fashion.

PLANT-HUNTING IN CHINA: by C. J. Ryan

A VERY interesting article has lately appeared in *The World's Work,* from the pen of Mr. Leonard Barron, editor of the *Garden Magazine,* giving an account of the adventurous journeys of Mr. C. H. Wilson, an English collector of rare plants. The following résumé of a part of the article will give some idea of his work in China in hunting for useful and ornamental plants for acclimatization in England and Northeastern America principally.

It was known at least twenty years ago that there were still some plants of economic and aesthetic value to be brought from Asia, but no special efforts were being made to find them; hybridization was considered the most profitable method of obtaining new forms. It was, however, soon found that this was an error and that marvelously beautiful and practically useful plants in great numbers were waiting to be discovered and utilized. Mr. Wilson's scientific

and practical experience in horticulture and botany caused him to be chosen to explore China for new plants, and he has devoted such unremitting energy and zeal to this work that he is sometimes known as "Chinese Wilson." His first journey to China was undertaken merely to obtain the seeds of one tree, the *Davidia involucrata,* of which interesting rumors had reached Europe. Only one specimen was known to have ever been seen, and Mr. Wilson hunted for this with a most inadequate description of its location. At last he reached the spot, only to find that the precious tree had been cut down for lumber! Resolved that his journey should not be fruitless, he collected a number of hitherto unknown Chinese plants which were received with delight in London, and which worked quite a revolution in the ideas of horticulturists and botanists. Before he returned he accidentally came upon a small colony of the desired Davidia tree hundreds of miles from the place where the original tree stood. A very limited number of Davidias are now growing from the seeds collected there, but in time the tree will certainly become very popular. It closely resembles the dogwood tree but its large and curious white flowers are nearly a foot across. They remind one, at a distance, of a flock of white doves hovering amid the branches.

Another of Mr. Wilson's notable discoveries is the brilliant scarlet poppy which he found after nearly seven hundred miles of tramping in the wild mountain country of Szechuan, in Western China. Its color is unusually vivid, and it excited great interest when it reached Europe.

While yellow, white, pink, and various kinds of red primroses are now common in the West, the almost legendary blue variety believed to grow somewhere in China has long been desired. Mr. Wilson determined to get it, and after many abortive attempts he succeeded in collecting some living plants. Unfortunately his triumph was short-lived, for an accidental splash of sea-water spray on the voyage to England so seriously injured the few that survived that they all withered away shortly after their arrival. We still have to wait for the blue primrose.

China is the home of a large number of our familiar garden and orchard plants. Mr. Wilson says:

> The great interest and value of the Chinese flora lies not so much in its wealth of species as in the ornamental character and suitability of a vast number

for the embellishment of parks and outdoor gardens throughout the temperate regions of the world. My work in China has been the means of discovering and introducing numerous new plants to Europe and North America and elsewhere. But previous to this work of mine the value of Chinese plants was well known and appreciated. . . . Our tea and rambler roses, chrysanthemums, Indian azaleas, camellias, greenhouse primroses, tree peonies, and garden clematis have all been derived from plants still to be found in a wild state in Central and Western China. The same is true of a score of other favorite flowers. China is also the original home of the orange, lemon, citron, peach, apricot, and the so-called English walnut.

Mr. Wilson speaks favorably of the Chinese people he met in the wild mountain districts. He had no misunderstandings or difficulties with them at any time. He minded his own business, paid a proper price for what he needed, and was honestly treated. He complains, however, of the behavior of certain freakish and irresponsible tourists who make it hard for those who follow them, and who, he says, deserve a jail sentence for their conduct. The natural difficulties make plant-hunting no easy task. In the higher altitudes there are few signs of civilization and little comfort. In order to ensure a proper respect from the simple villagers the traveler must ride in a chair, but the pathways are often so narrow that it is almost or quite impossible to pass another person, and great inconvenience is caused thereby. There are many dangers to be faced in the mountain passes; when Mr. Wilson was searching for the scarlet poppy a small landslide overwhelmed his sedan-chair and he was thrown out and his leg broken. Before he could be picked up a caravan of mules walked over him, but so carefully that not one hoof touched him. The nearest city was three days' journey away, and he was sixteen weeks before he could move on crutches.

Most of Mr. Wilson's recent traveling has been on behalf of the Arnold Arboretum at Boston, Mass., and he has already doubled the number of hardwood trees there. A new kind of peach with smooth stones of small size, now being propagated there, is one of his most valuable tributes to the collection.

THOSE who practise their duty towards all, and for duty's own sake, are few; and fewer still are those who perform that duty, remaining content with the satisfaction of their own secret consciousness. — *H. P. Blavatsky*

RECOLLECTIONS OF A TRIP AROUND THE WORLD: by Barbara McClung

CHINA, MANILA, AND JAVA

FROM Nagasaki, it was a voyage of two nights and a day to Tsingtau, a purely German town, set down as if by mistake on the coast of northern China. The houses and inhabitants, the street names, shop signs, and trolley-cars were all German, and only the rickshaws, drawn by Chinamen with queues, or an occasional woman stumping along on bound feet, served to dispel the illusion and remind us that we were really on the soil of ancient and venerable China. Tsingtau is built on ground ceded to the German Empire as reparation for the killing of a couple of missionaries during the Boxer rebellion; it has only been in existence some ten years, but it is a busy substantial city of 17,000 German inhabitants (not counting natives) and is a tribute to the energy of that nation. It was built on a barren waste, where not so much as a weed was growing, and it was necessary to plant thousands of trees; there is now quite a forest of young growth about the city, and it does not seem possible that the fine water front with its warehouses and docks (capable of accommodating so large a ship as the *Cleveland,* which is a rare thing in the East) and its harbor protected by a breakwater, could have been constructed in so short a time.

Three more days and nights brought us to Hong Kong, and we were greatly cheered on the way by a marked rise in the temperature, which had caused us such sufferings from bitter cold in Tsingtau. It was delightful to look out of our port-hole early one Saturday morning on the beautiful harbor, one of the finest in the world, filled with "world-end" steamers and strange square-sailed junks, while over yonder lay the city spread out over steep hills and reaching up to the cloud-covered heights. The town itself is called "Victoria," and is on the island of Hong Kong, but one never hears any name except the latter in use. It has fine buildings and splendid English shops, and the sidewalks are arcaded, as in Italian towns; this reminds one that the heat can be very severe in the summer; but when we were there the weather was cool and showery like an April at home. There were no horses and cabs on the streets, and but few rickshaws; the chief mode of conveyance seemed to be sedan-chairs, the bearers in absurd straw rain-coats that looked like moving hay-

stacks with bare legs and enormous pagoda-shaped hats that took the place of umbrellas. There is not a queue in Hong Kong, and they say it is as much as a man's life is worth to wear one in Canton, as it is a sign of royalist feeling; neither did we see any women with bound feet here (with one exception), but that is probably because there were none but the lower classes abroad on the streets. The Chinese are quite good looking, I think, with fine physiques; the women appear very dignified and sedate in their flapping trousers and long coats. They never wear anything but black or the darkest colors. For some strange reason, all the policemen are "Sikhs," (a tribe of East Indians) and they are tall, impressive looking personages with red turbans, fuzzy black beards, and splendid dark eyes. I imagine they keep good order too, for we saw one settle a squabble among some coolies with a single commanding gesture and a scornful glance from his melancholy eye.

We went, our first afternoon, up "the Peak," towering nearly two thousand feet above the town, on an inclined railway; there were grand views of the harbor half-way up, but at the top we were utterly lost in the clouds. We got out half-way down and walked the rest of the way back to town, through beautiful public gardens wet with spring dampness, under splendid banyan trees and past masses of azaleas in full bloom. It was so queer in the midst of this "Kew Garden" atmosphere, to see Chinamen sauntering along; barefooted laborers, carrying heavy burdens on poles balanced over their shoulders, or pretty golden-haired English children walking with their slant-eyed nurses, or palanquins with four trotting coolies bearing some European who had much better have been walking on his own legs.

Sunday night we took a boat up the Pearl River for Canton, and were delayed several hours by the heavy fog, not arriving until about 11 a.m. the next day. The experience of approaching the city by river was something never to be forgotten. Our first intimation of Canton was the distant view of a towering pagoda, nine stories high, with trees growing out of its curled and piled-up roofs, from seeds that had lodged there in bygone centuries. We moved through throngs of weird boats, with strange ribbed sails and curious hulks; there were sampans poled along by solitary figures in straw rain-coats and huge pagoda hats, and gaudily painted passenger boats worked by human beings on a treadmill — such craft, in fact, as the old

Vikings might have seen if they had sailed up the Pearl River a thousand years ago, or Alexander the Great, had he come up in his galleys many centuries before that, or even Rameses himself, with his Egyptian legions in still remoter antiquity.

We spent but a few hours in Canton, having lost so much time in the fog, and it rained in torrents most of the day. The exceedingly narrow streets and projecting roofs formed actual funnels through which the rain spouted on us, but we were fairly well protected by the tops and curtained sides of our sedan-chairs. Our bearers, three to each person, wore enormous umbrella hats sloping from a peak, to shed the water, and for protecting their clothes from the wet, they adopted the ingenious method of removing them entirely — or almost. The streets are scarcely more than five feet wide, and frequently one can touch the walls on either sides at once with hands outstretched; sedan-chairs cannot pass each other unless one party backs against the wall, and the pedestrians always have to remove their pagoda hats and hold them sideways in passing. The streets are sometimes very steep, leading up and down over steps slippery with filth, and over time-worn bridges that span reeking canals, so that it is impossible to travel any way save by sedan-chair or on foot. And oh, how those narrow lanes swarm with strange oriental flies! There are miles of open-fronted shops with patient workers bending over minute carving, lacquer-work, or feather jewelry; there are miles of stalls spread with outlandish food, with gibbeted fish and fowls and Heaven knows what else besides, dangling from hooks above; and pervading all, a peculiar Chinese smell, suggestive of drugs, incense, and antiquity, combined and intensified. We visited several pagodas and temples, and in one of the latter saw a statue of the early Italian explorer, Marco Polo, sitting among the Buddhas!

There are two and a half million people in Canton, twenty-five thousand of whom live in boats on the river. Their homes are hardly larger than an ordinary rowboat; they are partly roofed over with semi-circular bamboo coverings, and here whole families live their entire lives through. One wonders how there is room for them all to lie down at night. We were rowed from our river steamer to the landing-place in one of these house-boats, poled by a fat Chinese matron, who jostled and bumped her boat through the dense crowd of other boats, while her row of children stared solemnly at us from the back. It seems incredible that they can carry on the ordinary business of life

or administer to the barest necessities in such cramped quarters. I suppose they prepare their food over a tiny brazier in the stern; they must sleep piled like sardines under the bamboo shed; their clothes are made of such tough, durable material (it looks like leather) that one garment probably lasts a life-time; as to washing, I daresay they never do any; so there you have life reduced to its simplest terms. It makes us almost ashamed of our own endless necessities.

Across the river from the teeming Chinese city lies the *Shameen*, or foreign quarter, a refreshing breathing space, with its fine spreading trees, bordering the water front. Here are the English barracks, stores, hotels, etc., and here all European people live; a bridge connects it with the ancient town, and to cross this bridge and pass under the massive stone gateway on the other side, is to enter another world.

We returned to Hong Kong by rail, and the landscape though interesting, lacked the unique features of the river trip. The railway terminus was Kowloon on the mainland, from which place we were ferried over to the island of Hong Kong, or rather, to our steamer in the harbor. These were the only places we visited in China, as our stay there was very brief; and the following Tuesday found us on our way to the Philippines.

Two nights and a day's traveling brought us to Manila, where the sight of the American flag gave us a feeling of home. Manila is a beautiful town, clean and healthy, with good sanitation, vigilant care in regard to water, flies, and mosquitoes, fine roads, and the best and purest municipal government, they say, that a place can have. The weather was about like July at home, but with a good breeze all the time, and we did not suffer from heat. The costumes of the native Filipinos are certainly cool looking, being made of gauze; the women's sleeves are enormous, made so that they will stand out and not touch the arm anywhere, and they wear huge "Catherine dei Medici" collars of mosquito-netting. Their houses are made of woven bamboo, thatched with grass, raised about eight or ten feet above the ground, and reached by a ladder. One does not see these, of course, in the city of Manila, but we passed many native villages when motoring through the country. The chief domestic animal is the caribou, or water buffalo, an unwieldy creature with enormous spreading horns; he carries the heaviest burdens, and it is queer to see a single small boy driving a great herd of them. They make for

the water whenever possible, and they love to wallow in the wet mud until literally caked with it; after this has dried in the sun, it gives them a singular appearance.

The streets and houses of Manila are very Spanish looking, the trees and vegetation green and lovely. We met with much cordial hospitality from Americans living there, and they all seemed alert and patriotic, and very proud of their town and its wonderful progress. We were interested to visit Bilibid Prison, considered the finest model prison in the world, the most beneficial and humane. It has in connexion with it exhibition rooms, where visitors can see and buy all sorts of fine embroideries and needlework done by the women, and furniture and cabinet work made by the men. We timed our visit late in the afternoon, so as to see what they called " Retreat "; when the prisoners finish their work for the day, they assemble in the courtyard in regular military squads under their leaders, and go through various exercises and drills accompanied by the music of an excellent prison band, before getting their mess and going to bed for the night. Their bearing was more like soldiers than prisoners; and when every cap was snatched off and every head flung back at the first strains of the " Star Spangled Banner," one felt a thrill of kinship and of pride. The people of Manila are very proud of Bilibid, and they say everybody there is ready to give the prisoners a job and help them start over again, when they come out.

After a delightful two days' visit, the *Cleveland* set sail again and bore us deeper and deeper into the seas of the Southern Cross, and over the equator, to Java, an island as strange and magically bright as the " Xanadu " of Coleridge's dream. We had to anchor many miles out from shore and were carried into Batavia on a very crude steamboat. From Batavia we went directly by train to Buitenzorg, several hours distant, through lush tropical forests and jungles that brought all one's childish recollections of *The Swiss Family Robinson* rushing back to mind. No words can describe the singular brilliance and luxuriance of foliage and vegetation; it is probably caused by the constant rain and steaming damp hot atmosphere.

Buitenzorg is a charming town and well deserves its name, which means " free from care," in Dutch. We were met at the station by dozens of absurd little dos-à-dos carts, accommodating two persons each with their backs to the driver, and drawn by the smallest horses ever seen. The Belle Vue Hotel, where we stopped, was a strange

place, but we found later that it was typical of most of the hotels in Java; it was only one story high and consisted of rooms built around the four sides of a large green courtyard. Our bedroom was enormous, paved with stone tiles and with immense double doors and windows (which wouldn't fasten) on three sides. The bed was some seven feet square and I am sure at least six people could have slept on it either way without touching. There is evidently no fear of thieves there, to judge by the extreme openness of everything; most of the houses, as we noticed later, had no front walls at all, and the dining-room and office of the hotel were entirely open, front and back. The view from our room was the most beautiful that I have ever seen. Deep below us flowed a river whose sides were clothed with gigantic cocoanut palms, banana trees, and every shade of fringy riotous green, while beyond it, closing the vista, were soft blue mountains with white clouds like angels ascending and descending their sides. We got glimpses of bamboo huts through the thickets down below and there were many natives in the water, bathing and splashing and calling to each other.

After depositing our baggage, we drove to the Botanical Gardens, (considered the finest in the world) and saw white orchids clambering over trees, " Victoria Regina " water lilies, (like the pictures in Maury's Manual of Geography of thirty years ago, with the child standing on a leaf) and a lake of snow-white lotuses, most beautiful of all. We were followed by little brown soft-eyed children, who insisted on shaking hands with us, and calling " good morning, goodbye, good morning, goodbye," in rapid succession, without any sign, however, of leaving us. The Javanese are quite good-looking — the women and children at least — and *so* pleasant! The national dress of the women is the " sarong," a long, gaily-colored and figured cloth, which they wrap skilfully around them, and by some magic twist, it stays!

After a luncheon consisting chiefly of curry, with which were passed twenty-five different condiments each more astonishing and indescribable than the last, and during the process of which we amused ourselves by counting the number of tarantulas and lizards on the wall, we took an auto ride to a town called Soekaboemi. Beside the chauffeur, we had a brown "knight of the horn," who perched on the front step of the motor and played tunes on a trumpet every single inch of the way there and back, startling herds of caribou

out of the way, and causing little naked children by the dozens to come tumbling out of their straw huts to see us pass. Never did I take a more beautiful drive! Past thrifty Dutch plantations with white homesteads candidly open to the world; through bamboo woods where clustered the pretty native houses with their woven walls like fine basketry and their thatched roofs; along terraced hillsides covered with tea, and above steep ravines where rich verdure foamed in cataracts of many shaded green. Coming back, it rained quite violently for a few minutes (as it does every day in Java) and we were amused to see the pedestrians calmly pick large leaves, of the "elephant ear" variety, and hold them up for umbrellas! A little later, the rain was over, and we saw a brilliant sunset reflected in the watery rice fields.

The next morning we left Buitenzorg and went to Weltevreden, another beautiful town, with cool wide white houses, shining through mists of greenness, handsome buildings and parks, and a most interesting canal, flowing right through the midst of the town, where the natives wash both themselves and their clothes continually. The distances were very short, and an hour or so more of traveling brought us back to Batavia, and to the *Cleveland,* which always seemed like home. We had but one serious disappointment in Java, and that was the coffee; it was the meanest we had ever seen anywhere, and we decided it must be like our Georgia peaches and Tennessee chickens — they can't afford to keep the best themeslves; it pays so much better to export it. As a compensation for the coffee, we made the acquaintance of some strange delicious fruits totally unlike anything we had ever met before. Late in the afternoon we steamed away, northward again and back over the equator to Singapore.

SCEPTICISM has been the great stumbling-block for humanity all down the ages. It has ever stood between man and his divine possibilities. But when a man bestirs himself to right action, and begins to feel the possibility of a divine life in himself, then the door will open and he will find companionship and help all along the way, even in the most silent and most trying moments of his life. — *Katherine Tingley*

A RETROSPECT, AND A CONSIDERATION OF SOME PRESENT DUTIES: by H. Alexander Fussell

IT is a pleasant task to take a retrospect of past progress and to note the quickening effect of great principles upon human society, but it is especially so in the case of Theosophy and the Movement connected with it — the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society. This Movement began some forty years ago, when a mere handful of devoted men and women gathered round Helena Petrovna Blavatsky in the conviction that the truths, which she was bringing to light again, would prove to be the regeneration of humanity.

This is not the place to sketch in detail the early history of the Theosophical Society; its vicissitudes and its trials are known to most of us. It had at first to encounter the ridicule of a materialistic and egoistic generation to which it appeared as nothing more than a fantastic rehash of ancient thought and modern spiritualism. To more thoughtful people it was a sore puzzle for a fitting label could not be found for it — the scientific world of the nineteenth century had a passion for labeling things — and it would have been so reassuring, if only it could have been labeled. But all endeavors to classify Theosophy were in vain. It could not be neatly ticketed and stowed safely away under any of the known Sciences, Religions, or Philosophies. And no wonder, for Theosophy, rightly understood, is the synthesis of all Science, of all Religion, and of all Philosophy, the primeval source and fountain-head of knowledge and belief.

From the very first Theosophy was a disquieting phenomenon; it set people thinking. It was at once so broad and so deep, and it made such demands upon those who thought about it at all. It was like leaven, or like "a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," and people began to realize that here, at last was a new and powerful force that must be reckoned with. This is the reason why Theosophy has always made such firm friends and such bitter enemies. Once known and understood it was impossible to treat it with indifference, for it demanded a reconsideration of principles, a reconstruction of thought, a new attitude towards life. Moreover, it tore away ruthlessly the masks which the worldly-minded and the hypocrite so gladly wear.

Another thing that was disquieting about Theosophy: it was eminently practical. It could not be held in theory alone; it was

a call to action, to immediate and effective action. There is an appalling definiteness about it; it cannot be applied to society or to one's neighbor only. According to its precepts a man must begin by reforming himself. This done, he may reasonably hope to lend a hand in the reformation of society, and work effectively for the regeneration of mankind. The strength of Theosophy lies in its sincerity. He only is a Theosophist who practices Theosophy. And now, as always, the only criterium of a true Theosophist is devotion, loyalty, whole-hearted service, the most scrupulous honesty in regard to himself and to others.

It was no wonder that such characteristics should command respect, and so, gradually but surely, building upon the only solid foundations possible, the Theosophic Movement gained strength and adherents, until it has become world-wide, and its influence is felt in all spheres of human thought and endeavor. People the world over are beginning to recognize its worth and to see that it offers the solution of the evils from which mankind is suffering; and men's eyes are being turned to the International Theosophical Headquarters, at Point Loma, as to a beacon-fire of hope and enlightenment.

It is the intention of our Leader, Katherine Tingley, that the members of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society, especially those students gathered here at Headquarters, shall constantly endeavor to make Theosophy a living power in their lives. Here, in Lomaland, the world may see how the principles of Theosophy may be practically applied; for example, in the famous Râja-Yoga College, where the true principles of education are being exemplified; while elsewhere the practice of compassionate Brotherhood may be seen in prison-work and work among the fallen and discouraged. The promulgation of the true principles upon which alone Permanent Peace Alliance can be made between the nations of the earth, and War, with all its horrors, abolished, is only another instance of the practical bearing of Theosophy upon life.

What a change from the ridicule and opprobrium of earlier days! Theosophy is now acknowledged by many to be the most serious movement of the age, the most fraught with good for humanity, and its ideals are overshadowing the world. Its teachings often find expression in unexpected quarters and are being assimilated, unconsciously sometimes, by the greatest thinkers. There is, moreover, an acceleration noticeable in the world today in the movement towards

Brotherhood, a greater desire to draw together in friendly association, in mutual love and esteem and a breaking down of the barriers which formerly divided men and nations. All this is due to the penetration of the thought of the age by the principles of Theosophy. Again people are more eager now to learn than to criticise and there is manifest a real desire to understand before passing judgment. Men's minds are more receptive. Never before in the history of the Theosophical Movement has the world been so favorably inclined towards it.

But with the growth of the Movement and the expansion of the work, greater demands are made upon its members, both as associates and as individuals. It is easier to glory in the prospective view of a perfected world than to make the daily, hourly, unnoticed efforts that render such a consummation possible. As has been well said: "We form an ideal picture of some better state of the world, in which the commonplace and secular aspects of life have no longer any room and duties are at once more heroic and more easy, forgetting that there is no act but derives its character, its greatness, or its pettiness, from the spirit which manifests itself in the doing of it." One of the most difficult lessons we have to learn, is that the positions in which we now are, the duties we have each day to perform — furnish all that is needed for the realization of our higher selves.

Again, the success of an organization such as ours is, depends upon each member doing faithfully the duties of the position that has been assigned to him, whether it be teaching or hocing, studying, or what not. We have a Leader whom we all desire to follow, and we know that behind her and the Society are the Teachers from whom the initial impulse came, and who watch over the work. We have the right direction; the only question is, are *we* willing to follow it, and co-operate fully with this great impersonal force that is acting through us, but which is only too often thwarted and hindered by our imperfections and shortcomings. Are we sufficiently obedient to its promptings?

Rules are necessary; no organization can exist without them; that we admit. We recognize also the principle of authority. Could we but make this principle effective in our lives, that is, bring about the subordination of the lower to the higher, yielding the latter willing obedience, we should take a long step on the upward path.

Consider for a moment the different sorts of obedience. The obedience of the soldier, for instance, only concerns his actions. The commands of his superiors do not touch his inner life, and the authority, being external, ceases with the expiration of his term of service. Another and higher kind of obedience is that given by the members of an orchestra to the conductor, and which shows very clearly the immense results obtainable when each performer has complete control of his instrument and does exactly what is required of him. Eye, hand, and ear, all contribute to the production of a work that transcends the individual. Think of what could be accomplished were minds and hearts attuned and obedient to some great Master; what world-harmonies would we not produce! But there is a higher obedience still. It is the surrendering of oneself to a lofty ideal, the kind of obedience that a great artist yields to the laws of his art, and of which it is the expression. It is wholly interior; it does not need to be forced, for it is a willing joyful submission to and assimilation of that which is highest. That is the kind of obedience that is required of us as students and exemplars of Theosophy.

Most people are inclined to consider liberty as better than obedience. They do not deliberately intend to be disobedient, far from it; they consider themselves as upholders of law and order, but they wish to be free to do as they like. And they find out to their cost that the result of breaking any lawful rule is discord — be it in the orchestra, in the family, or in the state. No! there is no opposition between true liberty and obedience. We are most free when we are most obedient to the law of our being, and we face disaster whenever we desire to go our own way. Many a home has been wrecked because of the disregard of the rules of right-living, and history warns us that such disregard, if persisted in, will be a nation's undoing.

In the School then in which we find ourselves — and which, fortunately for us, is the School of Theosophy — let us be thankful for the wise laws of life that have been made known to us, and for the rules that inculcate right conduct, right methods of study, and good manners. Let us fashion our daily lives in accordance with them, gladly, unreservedly, so that we may become more efficient workers in the Great Cause to which we have dedicated ourselves.