

# ÆMAS

Point out the "Way"—however dimly,  
and lost among the host—as does the evening  
star to those who tread their path in darkness.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

## THE ARYAN PATH

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### Æ

In the passing of George William Russell (Æ) on the 17th of July, 1935, the world lost not only a poet with a genuine spiritual message but also a painter, a patriot and a practical mystic. He worked for the unity and autonomy of his beloved country, its repudiation of the meretricious and the tawdry in modern civilization and the revival of Ireland's ancient culture.

Æ was a dynamic character, a worker of tireless energy, but he told James Stephens, who wrote of his passing in *The Observer* for the 21st of July, "that he was not originally robust physically or intellectually, nor of a fundamentally decided character, nor of an especially psychic nature. That he made himself over from very little by a gradually increasing interest in and application of the thought and methods of the Vedanta. He held that to meditate on the ideas of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and to practise the psychological discipline

systematised by Patanjali must astonishingly energise any person, and that these ideas and this discipline had transformed him from a shy, self-doubting youth to the cheerful, courageous personage he certainly became."

The energy of the man was thus poured out in many channels, but all of his activities flowed from the perennial spring of his spiritual vitality. It was contact with the genuine Theosophy of the ancient East, of which he learned through Madame H. P. Blavatsky, that released and sustained that fountain of energy. Like an under-current, crystal and clear, his conviction of the realities of the Spirit runs through all of his work.

Most of the voluminous press notices on the death of Æ referred to his early contact with Theosophy. Some, however, said and most implied that that contact represented but a stage in his development, a stage later transcended.



The tone of some papers was apologetic for this phase of Æ's life. Referring editorially to his early volume, *Homeward Songs*, *The New York Times* of July 19th remarked:—

Though these early lyrics appeared in a theosophical magazine, he thoroughly despised the cant and humbug and abracadabra that so long poisoned the word "theosophy."

Undeniably "cant and humbug and abracadabra" have flourished under the name of Theosophy, but the Editor of *The New York Times* seems ignorant of the very existence of genuine Theosophy, which differs from pseudo-theosophy as day from night.

It is to place on record the facts of the unbroken relationship of Æ to the genuine Theosophy from which he drew his inspiration from his first contact with it until his death, that we publish the following article by his friend, Captain P. G. Bowen.

In an unpublished letter in our hands, written the 17th of October, 1922, Æ couples a condemnation of the Theosophical Society, "which seems to me now in some moods to be a nursery of the Black Art," with words of appreciation of

"that great and wise man, William Q. Judge whose very memory seems to have been forgotten by present day Theosophists. I think he was a true adept in that sacred lore and I have never found in those who came after H. P. B. and Judge the same knowledge, wisdom and inner light."

The same letter continues: "The Theosophical Movement has overflowed from the Theosophical Society and I think better work can be done by Theosophists in working in other movements and imparting to them a spiritual tendency. I have tried to do this in the economic and cultural movements I have been connected with in Ireland. But I retain membership of a little mystical group here which works on the lines of the old T. S. before it became the home of psychism and dogma. I have watched with interest so far as I could the economic and spiritual movements in India, a country which I regard as a kind of spiritual fatherland and whose influence on the thought of the world must, I think, grow greater because in no literature is there such a reservoir of divine truth as in the Indian."

## Æ AND THEOSOPHY

The death of George William Russell, better known to the public and even to his friends by his pen-name, "Æ," has deprived the world of the most outstanding example of a practical Theosophist

known since the passing of W. Q. Judge. His life was a perfect answer to the criticism so often urged against Theosophy, that however beautiful the ideals it teaches they cannot be realised or



applied, and that he who clings to them must remain an unpractical dreamer. Far beyond the average devoted Theosophist Æ was a Mystic, yet this did not prevent him from winning world-wide recognition as an economist and statesman; on the contrary it helped towards this achievement, for it gave him a sure knowledge of universal laws which he applied to the solution of many problems which perplex the world.

Doubtless he will become the subject of biographies which may attempt, more or less successfully, to appraise him as a man of letters, or a man of affairs; but his true life history can be written only by a Theosophist who knew the real man, and shared his ideals. I who write make no pretence to be such an one, for, apart from some casual contacts forty years ago, when I was a mere youth, and he a young man beginning to achieve recognition as a writer, I knew him only during the last few years of his life. Yet though our earthly friendship was brief it was very real and deep, not, I felt, and he insisted, a new growth, but one with roots extending into a remote past. He therefore confided in me very fully concerning his attitude towards, and relationship to, Theosophy, and of those prominent, and gave me many illuminating details of the early history of the movement, and of those prominent in it from out of his own extensive first-hand knowledge. From this material I select the following items as likely to interest readers of the THE ARYAN PATH and

perhaps be of some help to the Cause of true Theosophy.

The Dublin Lodge, T. S., was founded by Charles Johnston in 1886. Æ was not one of its foundation members, but was introduced into it a year or two after its establishment by his friend and fellow poet, W. B. Yeats. Although, according to himself, at this time a diffident and inarticulate youth, Æ assimilated Theosophy with almost miraculous speed, just as though it were "a familiar lesson temporarily forgotten, but now recalled with fuller understanding." Within a week he was taking part in discussions with old students, and giving lectures on his new-old studies.

His grounding in Theosophy was received from W. Q. J.'s articles in the *Path*, and H. P. B.'s in *Lucifer*. Through them he was led to the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and other Eastern classics. Then came the great series by H. P. B.: *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Voice of the Silence* and *The Key to Theosophy*. Having (to quote his own words) "bathed in these I marvelled what I could have done to merit birth in an age wherein such wisdom was on offer to all who could beg, borrow, or steal a copy of those works." He added: "If a man stole my *S. D.* because he valued its contents I should commend him and feel I was serving humanity by doing so."

Æ's direct contacts with H. P. B. were few, and not intimate, achieved through the good offices of Charles Johnston and Mrs. Johnston, whose aunt H. P. B. was. Of his impressions of H. P. B.



he would say little: "I was too immature—too small, and she too remote—a Cosmos in an ailing woman's body." It was through her message that he knew her, as she would have the world know her.

Æ never tired of expatiating upon the "miracle of *The Secret Doctrine*." Once I was present when an acquaintance, a prominent member of a leading Theosophical organisation, urged the claims of a certain modern book to be a preferable substitute for the *S. D.*, containing extended teachings. He smiled gently—he was gentle and tolerant to all and "suffered fools gladly"—and said: "Man, I would recommend your author to study the *S. D.* seven hours a day, from now until 1975 and if he has dug out the last of the wisdom hidden within it, by then, I will hail him as the next Messenger."

When W. Q. Judge visited Dublin in 1892, Æ had his first meeting with the man whose writings had already impressed him as illuminated teachings. I quote from a letter, his own account of the occasion:—

" 'I suppose you expect me to talk,' W. Q. J. said, and began to speak in a quiet conversational way. Before a minute had gone I became convinced that he was addressing his remarks to me exclusively. More than that he was answering my unspoken questions, and unravelling problems that had long perplexed me. When he stopped I was overcome with compunction that I should have thus monopo-

lised his attention; but on mentioning my feelings to others I found to my amazement that almost all had felt exactly as I had."

To Æ, and to practically all the members of the Dublin Lodge, W. Q. J. became a spiritual Hero. Without a dissentient voice being raised, the Lodge followed him at the time of the deplorable "split". At his untimely death a few years later Æ penned a tribute in *The Irish Theosophist* which deserves quoting *in extenso* as showing how a great man and a great Theosophist appreciated a great Teacher:—

It is with no feeling of sadness that I think of this withdrawal. He would not have wished that. But with a faltering hand I try to express one of many incommunicable thoughts about the hero who has departed. Long before I met him; before even written words of his had been read, his name like an incantation stirred and summoned forth some secret spiritual impulse in my heart. It was no surface tie that bound us to him. No one ever tried less than he to gain from men that adherence which comes from impressive manner. I hardly thought what he was while he spoke but on departing I found that my heart, wiser than my brain, had given itself away to him; an inner exaltation lasting for months witnessed his power. It was in that memorable convention in London two years ago that I first glimpsed his real greatness. As he sat there quietly, one among many, not speaking a word, I was overcome by a sense of spiritual dilation, of unconquerable will about him, and that one figure with the grey head became all the room to me. Shall I not say the truth I think? Here was a hero out of the remote, antique, giant ages come among us; wearing but on the surface the vesture of our little



day. We too came out of that past, but in forgetfulness; he with memory and power soon regained. To him and to one other we owe an unspeakable gratitude for faith and hope and knowledge born again. We may say now, using words of his early years: "Even in hell I lift up my eyes to those who are beyond me and do not deny them." Ah, hero, we know you would have stayed with us if it were possible: but fires have been kindled that shall not soon fade, fires that shall be bright when you again return. I feel no sadness, knowing that there are no farewells in the True: to whomsoever has touched on that real being there is comradeship with all the great and wise of time. That he will return again we need not doubt. His ideals were those which are attained only by the Saviours and Deliverers of nations. When or where he may appear I know not, but I foresee the coming when our need invokes him. Light of the future æons, I hail, I hail to thee!"

Æ himself drew my attention to this tribute, assuring me that thirty-five years of thought and study had served but to show with greater and greater clearness that "W. Q. J. was one of the great revealers of all time."

After the death of Judge, Æ found himself less happy in his membership of the T. S., until, upon its merging into the Universal Brotherhood under Katherine Tingley, he felt compelled to resign. He was convinced, he declared, and events have amply justified the conviction, that with the passing of W. Q. J. the cycle ended, and the "flood of spiritual Light which had filled the world since 1875 faded into deeper and deeper twilight." The various leaders and teachers that emerged "show-

ed nothing of the Divine Fire so evident in H. P. B. and W. Q. J.: they were not even minor stars such as we all might be, and should be; but merely waning moons."

But he remembered H. P. B.'s injunction to "keep the link unbroken," and to this end gathered round him a few earnest seekers under the name of *The Hermetic Society*. Led by him this group met weekly, with very few breaks, down to 1933, when, on leaving Ireland on business which, in fact, prevented him from ever again resuming permanent residence there, he delegated his leadership to myself. By this time we had had many intimate conversations, and had achieved a perfect understanding. The idea of uniting the Theosophical Lodge which I represented with the *Hermetic Society* was discussed and mutually agreed to. Opposition on the part of some of the older members of both bodies prevented it from materialising, however, and a compromise was effected by the formation of the body now known as *The Druid Lodge* linked with the *Hermetic Society* for study purposes, though nominally distinct organisations. Æ hoped that when he again resumed residence in Ireland both bodies would formally unite. He did not live to see it, but it is likely to come about in the near future.

An early letter which he wrote me concerning the *Hermetic Society* is extraordinarily interesting and significant. Space does not permit me to quote it in full, but the



following passages are particularly germane to the present article.

Speaking of present-day Theosophical organisations he says:—

H.P.B. indicated that there would be a new Teacher in the latter end of the present century; and the main thing is to keep a familiarity with her teaching as widely spread as possible until the new Messenger appears. I am convinced that once the Messenger appears all the real Mystics will gather round him, just as an atom of pure crystal flung into a bath where the elements are in solution will start the process of crystallisation.

Of the *Hermetic Society* he says:—

Sometimes it had a large membership and sometimes a small. It waxed and waned and waxed again, and I felt inwardly satisfied that they all more or less passed through a bath of Theosophical ideas. I had no private doctrine, nothing but H.P.B., W.Q.J., the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Upanishads*, *Patanjali*, and one or two other scriptures. . . . . I did my best to keep to the study H.P.B. and W.Q.J. initiated. . . . I could get little or nothing out of Annie Besant and Mrs. K. Tingley. . . . neither seemed to me to have surety and wisdom of deep knowledge. My own writing is trivial, and its only merit is that it was written in a spiritual atmosphere generated by a study of H.P.B. and the sacred books.

It would be a blind soul who could study Æ's writings and call them "trivial." He did not, except in his numerous articles in *The Irish Theosophist*, which ought to be collected in a volume, write of Theosophy under that name, yet he never wrote a line of poetry or of prose that does not breathe the spirit of true Theosophy. His *Candle of Vision*, a work greatly neglected by students to their loss,

deals wholly with the Inner Life. Its great value lies in the fact that it was written by a Theosophist who besides being a natural seer was also a practical observer who subjected his visions to minute analysis, and claimed no sort of infallibility.

Few, if any, among the followers of H.P.B. have made Theosophy a more living power in their lives than Æ did; nor was there one more charitable to the weaknesses of others. The ideal of a Universal Brotherhood of men was the ruling spirit in his life, and he worked for it in his own way, caring nothing how others worked if they worked wholeheartedly for the same ideal. His attitude was one which makes easy membership in the average Theosophical Society impossible to its possessor; for societies are apt to make loyalty, to their own private ways and doctrines and leaders, the King of all Virtues, and to regard with tacit, if not outspoken, disapproval those who are loyal only to Truth. Mr. Frank O'Connor, the Irish author who delivered the graveside oration at the funeral of Æ struck a true note when he put the words of the wise old Eastern poet into the mouth of his departed friend:—

*He saw the lightning in the East, and longed for the East. Had it been in the West he would have longed for the West. But I seeking only the Lightning and its Glory care nothing for the quarters of the earth.*

P. G. BOWEN



## MAN AND HIS FELLOW ANIMALS

[In the following article **Edmund B. d'Auvergne**, author of *Human Livestock*, which was reviewed in THE ARYAN PATH for April, 1934, rightly blames the church for much of the callousness towards animal suffering, in the West.

The Aphorisms of the Tibetan Karma-pa Sect quote the reply to a disciple who asked his Master why animal suffering had so greatly increased. "Lay not nature under the accusation of this unparalleled injustice. . . . It is the unwelcome advent of the Peling (Christian foreigner), whose three fierce gods refused to provide for the protection of the weak and *little ones* (animals), that is answerable for the ceaseless and heart-rending sufferings of our dumb companions." Hunting and fishing are fashionable amusements to-day, while reeking shambles and vivisection laboratories further challenge our claims to civilization.

As men gradually develop compassion the problem of treatment of animals will solve itself, but meanwhile the poor brutes should be protected. Legislation may help to some extent but of even more lasting effect will be showing the intimate relationship of man with the universe. The ancients taught that every being possesses consciousness. The divinity that comes to full expression in the Perfected Man exists as a potentiality in the lower kingdoms. Every form is an expression of the One Life. The realization of this unity is the self-compelling basis of right action. A sin against one is seen as a sin against all, an act of cruelty injuring not only its victim but all beings, including its perpetrator, who receives besides the direct painful repercussion of his act. Man is higher than an animal because he has self-consciousness and the responsibility that goes with it. *Noblesse oblige*.

*Ahimsa* (harmlessness) cannot be carried to fantastic extremes—breathing and eating destroy forms of life—but we should destroy no more and no higher forms of life than necessity requires. And we can certainly abstain from cruelty. Man must be "at peace with the beasts of the field," to use Job's phrase, to make possible a general era of fertility and peace. We bid god-speed to every agency that combats cruelty.—EDS.]

Men seldom judge correctly the relative importance of the things passing under their own eyes. We are apt to estimate the effect of the explosion by the noise it makes. But the loud avalanche often does no more than change the face of a cliff, while the river slowly and silently broadening its channel may change the destinies of a nation. The eighteenth century at this distance of time is rightly remembered for the declaration of the rights of man. The nineteenth century,

usually regarded by us who live so close to it, as pre-eminently the age of scientific discovery and of world industrialization, may appear to posterity chiefly remarkable in Europe, at all events, by the assertion of the rights of woman and by the admission of nonhuman animals to a measure of protection by human society.

This year in England we have celebrated, very modestly, the foundation, one hundred years ago, of what is now called the Royal



Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. That event coincided roughly with the passing of the first British Act of Parliament for the protection of animals—a measure which was all but overwhelmed in the House of Commons by a torrent of ridicule. Preoccupied with projects of electoral reform the vast majority of the public looked on the new law as an idle concession to a trivial sentiment. To-day, in many countries, the parliamentary vote appears an idle privilege hardly worth discussion; whereas, before the nineteenth century was ended, there was scarcely a single country in Europe which had not extended some scanty measure of protection to its brute population. In the year 1894, a clause requiring all animals to be stunned before being slaughtered was deemed worthy of inclusion in the Swiss Federal Constitution. The voice of humanity made itself heard even above the raucous shouting of the party politician—in 1929, there appeared in the manifesto of the Labour Party a promise of wider consideration for the creatures who could never be constituents. The promise, *en passant*, was not kept. A bill to raise England in this respect to the level of Switzerland was defeated in the Commons, largely owing to the exertions of Mr. Macquisten, a Scottish member, and of the Rev. Gordon Lang, a Labour M. P. In Germany, on the contrary, what is called humane slaughter was made com-

pulsory by Adolf Hitler immediately upon his accession to power. Much has been done by the Nazi Government to restrict vivisection and to discourage blood sports. Notwithstanding, the press and public, uninterested in moral issues, are blind to the deep significance of this changing attitude of the law. Few perceive that bird and beast have ceased to be things and that civilization has abrogated the powers conferred on Noah.

Man, it was remarked by a wise friend of the writer, seldom knows what he does or why he does. Whence comes this developing tenderness for creatures, which the Hebrew Bible says are to be for us as the green herb beneath our feet? "Kindness to animals" to-day is vaguely but universally applauded in all but a few Latin countries. Even the Scottish member just mentioned, while opposing an act of elementary humanity towards sheep and cattle, protested amid the laughter of the House that he was fond of animals. The charge of cruelty to a beast is hotly resented by Englishmen of all classes. This kindness is not taught by the old and most authoritative of the Christian churches. Rome positively affirms that the lower animals have no rights, any more than plants and stones and that the man who delights in their torment sins only venially.\* In Spain, not many years ago, efforts to train children in habits of kindness to animals were frowned on

\*Addis and Arnold, *The Catholic Dictionary*.



by the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo as savouring of heresy. This doctrine is not likely to be expounded from Roman Catholic pulpits north of the Pyrenees. The scholastics' argument that creatures cannot have rights because they have no duties rings hollow in the ears of civilized man. Morality is not necessarily contractual, nor based on a system of give and take. It is the expression of the divine in man.

This kindness to animals, which our grandfathers approved as an amiable habit to be inculcated in children, is the inevitable extension of that concern for others which is not only the basis of morality but morality itself. For thousands of years, pity was confined to the members of one's own community. The Romans, indifferent to the sufferings of their slaves, held it sweet and glorious to die for the Republic. But there were already thinkers who asked why sympathy should be confined to the citizen. Terence proclaimed the humanity of the slave. In Galilee, Jesus preached the brotherhood of man without distinction of race. Plutarch, going further, condemned the killing of animals for food and blamed the man who would sell when it was no longer useful the horse or ox that had worked for him. The swelling stream of pity was frozen by the narrow religion of the stepfathers of the Christian church. There was no virtue, it was held, in love for one's fellows, still less for the brutes that perished. But beneath the glacier, the stream trickled. The ice has

cracked. Soon it will be universally realized that the only bounds of pity are the bounds of suffering itself. What would be said of the man who declared he was moved only by the suffering of his fellow townsmen?

The practical man scoffs. The pseudo-scientist speaks of the battle for life. Kill or be killed, he maintains, is the law of being. To trust only our eyes, he would seem to be right. But our vision may guide us more surely than our eyesight. This is an age, pre-eminently, of lofty aspiration. We will the good if we cannot achieve it. Already the will to peace among men, to end wars between nations, is a force with which statesmen have to reckon. There was a moment when the abolition of Negro slavery appeared utterly beyond the power of states to compass. Human conscience proved stronger than the fact. Our children may find a path to the goal towards which we can only turn our eyes and hands in longing.

Cold comfort this, perhaps, to those whose hearts are wrung by the agonies of speechless beasts. But we can at least prepare the way. Existence depends on a compromise between the will to live and the will to let others live. I hold it as certain that for vast multitudes in our generation, animal food is a necessity if not for actual existence, at least for the maintenance of many of our finer faculties. The mere taking of life, I do not regard as necessarily evil. Every creature must die, and it is



actually possible to assure the beast we slay for food an easier death than he would meet with at the hands of nature. The first duty of the humanitarian should be to insist on the use of the humane killer in the slaughter houses of all the world, for every kind of beast and bird. This law, at this limited stage of our development, at least we may formulate with precision—kill not without absolute necessity (the relief of the victim's own pain being a necessity) and inflict no pain. Let us flesh eaters bind ourselves by such a bond as Portia forced on Shylock. Let us answer the schoolmen's argument by executing the contracts into which we have implicitly entered with the animals that serve us. Even the learned compilers of *The Catholic Dictionary* should be at pains to deny that if we exhaust the strength of a horse or ox in our service, we owe it some return. Yet the Christian farmer unhesitatingly ships off the horse which may have supported him and his family, to be stabbed to death and cut up for cats' meat at some foreign port. The capitals of Europe are adorned by the monuments of glorious warriors mounted on prancing steeds. It would be instructive to enquire the fate of the

steeds which carried these valiant men to victory...( Here let it be said that a protest against the traffic in worn-out horses has been registered by a class of men not generally suspected of being interested in ethical questions—the English jockeys ). The dog and the cat slink starving along the streets of many cities. What protection does the law extend to them? Whose business is this? But if you take an animal from out of its natural environment, surely, Mr. Moralist, you automatically incur responsibility for its subsequent fate? I suggest such a qualification of the ecclesiastical ruling before stated. I propose it as the basis of a world-wide animals' charter.

The beasts of the field rend and tear each other. What shall be done with them? How impose on them the truce of God? Few, very few animals, are cruel for cruelty's sake. Ours it must be to restore order in chaos. The task is a heavy one, the problem to our limited intellects here and there insoluble. Yet such is man's mission and he must go forward with it. Not by the mere pursuit of knowledge nor by the conquest of matter, but by the enforcement of the Peace of Eden will Man attain to the Godhead.

EDMUND B. d'AUVERGNE



# TRUTH AND FREEDOM IN RELIGION

## CREEDAL CHRISTIANITY AND THE LIBERAL CHURCHES

[ Because the liberal churches are claimed to be free from priestly pretensions and sectarian aims, the Reverend **Leslie J. Belton, B. A., M. Sc.**, Editor of *The Inquirer* and a distinguished Unitarian, claims that they should be exempt from the condemnation of organized religions in our editorial of June, 1935. We are opposed neither to religion itself, which is a way of life based upon inner conviction—essentially a matter for individual practice—nor to organization *per se*, as, for example, for study of the world's great scriptures and for free and fearless search for the truth as to the ultimate essence of things and the laws governing their activities. Religious organization, however, is an anomaly and tends inevitably towards crystallization of concepts and reliance upon priestly authority. The best of religious organizations appeals to the emotions rather than to the mind, judges the man more or less by the churchman and exhibits a fatal tendency to take the part for the whole, to evade for its tenets the tests it applies to other faiths and to shift the emphasis from individual feeling and conduct to ritualistic performances. We believe that the sum of human misery will never be diminished until the day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of truth, morality and universal charity, the altars of all its false gods.—EDS. ]

THE ARYAN PATH for June contained an editorial entitled "Religions and Religion" in the course of which the question was asked: "Is there a necessity for any organized separative religion to persist as a competitor of other creeds in any part of the globe?" In answer to this question the writer maintained that while "Religion is necessary for the well-being of man" and is "perhaps the most pressing need of our civilization," the existing organized religions have failed to meet this need; "organized religion," he said, "*whatever its name*, narrows the mind, engenders blind belief and fanaticism and divides man from man" (italics mine).

The writer of the present article has no wish to champion the cause of sacerdotalism; he shares to the full the conviction that dogmatic

creeds (whatever their justification or significance in the past) are in effect "intellectual extinguishers" which in the interest of Religion, should be cast aside or relegated to an ecclesiastical museum. That the Christian churches, with some exceptions, still regard the creeds of antiquity as repositories of the faith that was "once and for all delivered unto the saints" is sufficient evidence that institutionalized religion has become a drag upon the intellect of man. The fact that the historic creeds (in the Church of England provision is made for their regular public recitation) are still recognised as embodying the essential, unchallengeable doctrines of the Christian faith, and the opposition which any attempt at revision immediately arouses, are signs of the rigid traditionalism and reli-



ance upon external authority which still characterize the churches in spite of a century of critical scholarship and research. Because sacerdotal religion destroys self-reliance and compels submission to an imposed doctrinal "scheme," it strikes at the very roots of personal religion: it exalts an institution over the conscience of man and restricts the exercise of reason within limits prescribed by the doctrines it proposes in all their purity to maintain. Christian sacerdotalism vests with peculiar authority a priestly caste whose succession, it is alleged, can be traced back to the Apostle Peter; and so exhaustive are its presumptive rights that it condemns to outer darkness the unregenerate—all those whose spirit it cannot suborn.

The case against the semi-magical rites and doctrinal infallibilities of sacerdotalism is, for many of us, one with the case against irrationalism and intellectual inebriety in every form. The cause of Religion is best served, we believe, not by those who claim to possess an infallible body of truth (whether they be Catholic Institutionalists or Protestant Fundamentalists) but by those who maintain an attitude of philosophic calm in the midst of the ceaseless agitation of competing sects. For such people Religion is a way of life, an adventure in experience, a pilgrimage; they heed the prophet rather than the priest and they have little interest in proselytism; they believe rather with Thomas à Kempis that "He

to whom the Eternal Word speaketh is set free from many opinions."

Creedal religion is everywhere on trial to-day and the claims of the churches to an exclusive revelation are increasingly assailed, and not by sceptics alone. Among the critics are people who, though they oppose traditional Christianity, would have no hesitation in claiming the Christian name. Some range themselves with the critics because they have their own bread to bake, their own peculiar brand of "revelation" to fling into the market of opinions. But many people (their entire *Weltanschauung*, be it remembered, is indelibly coloured by the Christian dye) are genuinely seeking a purified Christianity, which shall be free alike from creedal fetters and priestly claims. Their call is for an adventurous Christianity that shall exalt the conscience and reason of Man and lay under contribution the best thought of modern seers and of the teachers of every age. Moreover, those to whom this "new," ideal Christianity appeals are making a discovery, and the inspiration of this discovery both strengthens their opposition to traditional Christianity and gathers their loyalty into a new focus. Christians are re-discovering Jesus of Nazareth. That perhaps at first glance may not appear very startling; for even orthodox Christians after the manner of the "heretic" Renan have their pictures of the historic Jesus painted in imaginative colours on the sparse canvas of the historical



records. But what is startling is the way in which even humble members of the churches are coming to realize how great is the gulf separating Jesus of Nazareth from the church he is assumed to have founded.

The Religion of Jesus and the Christianity of the churches are not the same thing; in some respects they are utterly dissimilar and opposed, so opposed that if Jesus were to return to earth he would be denied the right of membership in his own church. That is the discovery which many churchgoers are making to-day. The Christian church—for all its current insistence on what is called the social gospel—has condoned manifest evils in the past (such as slavery); it has persecuted the heretic and stoned the prophet; the church has reared upon the teaching of Jesus a conglomerate mass of material which in the course of time has fused and hardened into systematized Christianity—into the Christianity which in England as late as the year 1934 re-affirmed the Creed of Nicaea (A.D. 325) as the test of Christian fellowship.\* This decision was lamented by many individual Christians, even within the Church of England, as a retrograde step, but apologists are ready to defend it. There are able and redoubtable defenders of the Christian Faith for whom Christianity is essentially a syncretistic religion only to be fully understood and appraised in terms

of historical development. For such thinkers the divergence between the Religion of Jesus and traditional Christianity is not a matter of surpassing importance: Christianity, they suggest, is what it has become. (Clearly, much depends upon what is meant by the term "Christianity"; it can be used in such diverse ways.) But enquiring minds are now discovering that this argument from "historical development" can be used for specious ends, that it can be made to accredit any departure of the church, no matter how foreign to the spirit of Jesus whom they profess to follow.

Significant in this connection is a lecture recently delivered and since published, under the title "Christianity as a New Religion," by Dr. Percy Dearmer, Canon of Westminster. "The scientific spirit," says Dr. Dearmer, "has through the long labour of many scholars enabled us to discover the Jesus of history in a way undreamt of a hundred years ago." Dearmer acknowledges the divergence of Paul's theology from the teachings of Jesus, and he notes the harmful results of treating the sacred writings as "oracles dictated by God." He summarizes the Religion of Jesus under four headings: (1) The Kingdom of Heaven; (2) The Fatherhood of God; (3) The Brotherhood of Man; (4) Eternal Life. These, he tells us, represent the sum and substance of the Message of Jesus, and *this* is Chris-

\* At the Convocation of York on June 7th, 1934, following the controversy arising out of two invitations to Unitarians to preach, one at a statutory, the other at a non-statutory service in Liverpool Cathedral.



tianity—a new Religion!

How Canon Dearmer reconciles his interpretation of Christianity with his position as a dignitary of the Church of England is a question that lies not within my province to ask. He is not alone among Anglican scholars in seeking to reform the church from within; some of them, indeed, are pressing, though with scant success, for a revision of the church's creeds. It is worth asking, however, whether the present trend in certain quarters towards an affirmation of the Religion of Jesus in contradistinction to the Christianity of the churches (foreshadowed in the Liberal Christianity of nineteenth century scholars like Harnack and others), with all the difficulties such a *volte face* involves, is likely to lead to any weakening of sacerdotal Christianity or, on the positive side, to a new understanding of non-creedal Religion unhampered by sanctified dogmas and the sacramental system. The signs are not propitious. Though the churches of almost all denominations are being influenced by Modernist reassessments of Christian doctrine; though within Protestantism only a few numerically negligible groups have failed to come to terms with the theory of organic evolution, about which such vigorous battles of speech and pen were waged fifty years ago; though the findings of critical scholarship (especially in regard to the textual criticism of the New Testament) are slowly permeating the churches and influencing pulpit utterance,

there exist in my belief no grounds for assuming the near approach of a second Reformation. The leaven is slowly working but institutional Christianity remains firmly entrenched—and this despite the churches' undoubted loss of hold over the masses, evidenced in the decline of attendance at services of public worship. On the other hand, there are signs of a new and encouraging readiness, even within the churches, to treat the non-Christian religions, with more sympathy and justice than was once the case, and the disparaging term "heathen" is rarely on the lips even of missionaries. But along with this gain (due largely to the comparative study of religions initiated in the last century) there goes an implicit assumption that "Revelation" finds its absolute completion in Jesus, the Son of God, and in the church which bears witness on earth to the truth he embodies and reveals. This assumption, it is obvious, gravely hampers the efforts of those who, in England as elsewhere, are now trying to promote interreligious fellowship, for such efforts become of little avail if one religion adopts an attitude of superiority toward all the rest. Christians of the "liberal" school are practically alone, within organized Christianity, in their readiness to meet adherents of other religions on a basis of spiritual equality, and there are exceptions even among them. Thus a few words about Liberal Christianity may conclude this brief conspectus of some of the



major trends in the religious thought of England to-day.

The avowedly "liberal" churches, in virtue of their free (i. e., non-creedal) basis, are in a position to accept without danger of internal dissension the accredited results of modern scholarship and research. These churches are "liberal" in that they express the heterodox and progressive mind of Christianity; they are "free" in that they exact from their members subscription to no formula of faith.

At this point I venture to ask, reverting to the quotation with which this article began, whether, if "Religion illumines the mind, unfolds intuition, and unites man to man" (THE ARYAN PATH, June, 1935), it is true to the facts to say that every organized religion, *whatever its name*, "narrows the mind, engenders blind belief and fanaticism and divides man from man"? The Brahmo Samaj is in its organization diffuse and weak, but the Samaj is not without beneficent influence; and charity bids us assume on good grounds, that, in the spirit of Ram Mohun Roy and Keshub Chunder Sen, its present adherents have sufficient intellectual courage to seek and sift the Truth wherever it is to be found. Likewise in England and America, in scattered religious societies and notably in the Unitarian churches ("liberal" tendencies are likewise evident among Congregationalists and Quakers), there are large-hearted men and women who in fealty to Truth, reject the pretensions of sacer-

dotal Christianity and the doctrinal creeds of the church; men and women to whom fanaticism is anathema, whose sole aim it is to unite mankind on the broad basis of a religion that shall be enlightened and free.

Institutional religion is so often the enemy of Religion—an opiate for the people. So much is readily granted; a molten faith becomes "moulded" according to rigid patterns and the moulds in which it hardens are handed down from generation to generation as a precious heritage, intact and unimpaired. That is the root condemnation of institutional religion. It ignores the hunger of the soul. But if there exist religious societies which still retain, rightly or wrongly, the time-honoured name of *ecclesia*, whose witness and message are fortified—as needs must be in modern life—by some degree of organization; and if, furthermore, these churches are free from priestly pretensions and sectarian aims, surely it is generous and just to allow them a place in the Spiritual Sun. Such churches exist and they are loosely associated in the International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom with headquarters at Utrecht, in Holland. Though in comparison with the orthodox churches of Christendom their numbers are few and their organization weak, they are exerting in diverse ways and with varying local emphasis, an influence for truth and freedom in religion of which the world is sadly in need.

LESLIE J. BELTON



# RELIGIOUS POLICY IN INDIA

## III. SOCIAL REFORM AND LEGISLATION

[This is the last instalment of V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar's series. Last month he wrote about the influence of indigenous movements on the religious and social life of the people. The work of the constructive social reformer in India has been very difficult and in that connection we draw our readers' attention to a very interesting survey by its Editor in *The Indian Social Reformer* of 7th September last, entitled, "Forty-five Years." He rightly mentions that "the strength of social reform was never that of numbers and material resources. It was the strength of ideas." Great causes have always been moved by ideas.]

It has been urged with increasing vigour that it is the duty of the Indian Government to purge society of its inherent weaknesses and obvious evils. It is contended that social legislation initiated by Government is highly desirable and even necessary. This view, which is generally promoted by Indian social reformers, has raised a storm of protest from the Sanatanist (orthodox) sections of the Hindu community, who have begun to assert themselves and have been gaining rapid strength. Recent trends in Indian politics which are the outcome of impact with Western culture and education have developed a new outlook on our religious and social life; the old citadels of orthodoxy and conservatism are being vigorously attacked. The weakness of this movement is that no alternative scheme of social life has been chalked out. The most thoughtful are not prepared to see India become fully Westernized as the glaring defects of Occidental society are fully visible.

Social reform or social legislation can be used in a restricted as well as broad sense. In its restricted

sense social legislation comprehends the measures intended to subvert such age-long practices and institutions of Indian society as are deemed to be vicious and opposed to national growth. No lover of Hindu culture will accede to such drastic changes as have been put forward by too enthusiastic reformers being brought about by the machinery of legislation. Hasty changes in any ordinary scheme of life are fraught with danger, and they would be worse applied to the realm of socio-religious institutions. We do not stand to gain if we thrust reforms by means of legislative measures on an unwilling people and an equally unwilling Government. Behind a bill there may be many motives. One important section of public opinion asserted that the recent Temple Entry Bill had really a political origin. It may or may not have had. One ought to study the pros and cons of a measure before it is put on the legislative anvil.

There is again the other side of the question, viz., whether a heterogeneous legislature constituted as it is to-day of representatives of



many different religions and creeds is a competent body to legislate measures of a socio-religious character, affecting the personal laws or social usages of another community. Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar, the veteran Liberal leader of South India, who discusses this in his Preface to the Kamala Lectures, holds that if legislation is much in advance of public opinion, it is bound to fail.

We shall examine in the light of these observations one or two social institutions which are often the targets of promoters of social freedom. Well-meaning social reformers want to abolish entirely the structure of caste. If we carefully analyse the history and services of this institution of religious and social life we can better discern its value. The Government of India under the Crown has not interfered with caste or religion but at the same time does not recognise caste in secular affairs. For administration of law and justice, for admission into educational institutions and for employment in public service the Government of India observes no distinction of caste or creed. Again, no distinction is noted in transport service such as buses or railways. The healthy aspect of this nonrecognition of caste in secular affairs has greatly contributed toward breaking its rigidity and promoting social integration of different communities.

It is a mere notion that abolition of caste, the warp and woof of Hindu society, would lead to a permanent and broad-based national

unity. Unity does not mean uniformity but the harmonious interdependence of different classes and sections of society. In the words of Auguste Comte, the great French Positivist, the spirit of caste is a mere extension of the family spirit. It is true that we must aim at progress in all directions, but, as Sir Henry Cotton remarked, it is rash to sacrifice an admirable and valuable institution for any "Moloch of progress."

That caste is not incompatible with democracy has been proven by the research of scholars who show that popular assemblies representative of different sections of the people flourished for centuries in ancient India. Prof. Rhys Davids in his *Buddhist India* pointed to the existence of a republican form of government in the epoch of the Buddha. No one can deny that the social fabric of the Buddha's country consisted of castes and asramas. On the evidence of Panini and Katyayana, K. P. Jayaswal, the eminent lawyer and historian of Patna, shows that "a Hindu republic had Brahman members, Kshatriya members and other castes, i.e., the personnel of the Sanghas was not composed of one caste or tribe." (*Hindu Polity*, pp. 34-35.)

In my *Hindu Administrative Institutions* (Madras University, 1929) I have shown that there were representative institutions known by the names of Paura and Janapada (Nagara and Nadu in Tamil literature and inscriptions). It is said in the *Mahabharata* that an assembly consisting of thirty-nine



members represented the interests of various castes in the country. There were four Brahmans, eight Kshatriyas, twenty-one Vaisyas, three Sudras and one Suta. (Santi Parva, Ch. 85, 7-11) The wealthy community of the Vaisyas, who naturally contributed a substantial revenue to the State had a larger representation in the assembly. Even in the cabinet, which consisted of only seven or eight, the law-giver Manu fixes four Brahmans, three Sudras and one Suta. (See the Commentary on VII. 54) Thus we cannot fail to notice the democratic character of ancient Hindu political institutions.

Students of the Chola history will recall similar popular assemblies during the medieval period of South Indian history. It is not surprising, therefore, that British statesmanship has not interfered with the institutions of caste. It is highly commendable that when such a bill is introduced by a member of the Legislature, Government circulates it broadcast and elicits public opinion, before acting on it. Sometimes the Government warns the member to think twice before seeking to wipe out in a day a custom of centuries. When a measure of socio-religious nature comes up, the Government usually remains neutral, in some cases opposes it as having no basis in moral conviction and rarely, if ever, votes for it at all. It may be that social reconstruction is necessary. But there remains the plain duty of Government to handle the situation delicately. It is a serious work and we should not be carried

away with momentary enthusiasm. It must be realised that Indian national unity, if it is to be successful, must be achieved through group unity. Herein alone lies the genius of India.

Social legislation is a broad term and comprehends factory legislation, abolition of slave traffic, and other humanitarian measures rooted in ethical fundamentals. Some of these measures were put in force during the last days of the Company's Government, and were acquiesced in by the intelligent section of the population who were keenly alive to the necessity of removing gross and inhuman customs and practices. One such measure was the abolition of Suttee. Bentinck, who made this practice illegal, was strongly supported by the Indian intelligentsia of Calcutta. But it did not become universally illegal until 1857. It was given to Wellesley to treat as a penal offence the dedication of children to the sacred waters of Sanjor Point and the exposure of the old and infirm on the banks of the Ganges. Another practice that was not directly connected with any form of religion but still passed under its cover was that of Thuggee; this was a form of highway robbery in the name of Kali. These disturbers of peace were curbed largely through the vigilant efforts of men like Sir William Sleeman. It was Dalhousie who fought courageously the evil of infanticide by designating it murder. Another humanitarian measure of Dalhousie's was the legalisation of remarriage of



widows by an Act of 1856, though this has remained very much a dead letter even to the present day.

From 1858 down to now the harmonious co-operation of the three great world religions, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity has led the educated Hindu to test every religious usage in the light of reason and humanity. Thus viewed, infant marriage and untouchability are looked upon as outrages and an increasingly strong and enlightened public opinion is brought to bear on these problems. Even the orthodox feel the paralysing effect of premature maternity of girl wives. In 1891 the Government enacted the Age of Consent Bill making consummation of marriage for a girl before the age of twelve a criminal offence. In 1925 a statute was passed declaring the age of consent for married and unmarried girls as thirteen and fourteen respectively. This minimised to some extent the evils attached to the Devadasi institution and now the Sarada Act has penalised all marriage of girls under fourteen. In 1923 the extension of civil marriage without loss of rights to the Hindu, Sikh, Jain and Buddhist was recognised by the Special Marriage (Amendment) Act. The right of adoption was however not allowed in these cases.

Similarly the question of the untouchables has been engaging the best minds of India and in the

cause of their moral and material elevation, all castes and communities are alike interested. Their economic status and low standard of life have evoked fellow feeling from other religionists. There is no lack of sympathy on the part of Government, which ameliorates their condition by admitting them to State-aided and managed schools and by throwing open to them all public roads, wells, and rest houses. Much more still remains to be done and it is hoped that the factor of time will work toward the destined goal.

To recapitulate: we can see the persistent continuity of the Government's endeavour to eradicate gross social abuses with courage and resolution. But where Government feels that a certain institution or usage is of an intensely religious character and cherished by the people, and that any interference with it would retard rather than aid the progressive welfare of the community at large, it guarantees its protection from any undue violation. The upholding of social obligations by the Government of India from its early days demonstrates beyond doubt its anxiety to maintain peace and order, and that it shares the majority view that religious and social reform, in order to be effective, must come from within as a spontaneous and natural growth, and not be forced from without.

V. R. R. DIKSHITAR



## A WESTERN FALLACY CONCERNING PEACE

[Merton S. Yewdale traces the root of war to human lust and hatred. He argues that war is absence of Spirit and can only be abolished when men labour for the expression of the Presence of Spirit.—EDS.]

The great Powers of the West are again preparing for armed conflict; and it is all too clear that the next major war will be not only more devastating than the last, but more merciless and more inhuman. It is as though there never had been a World War, as though the League of Nations and the World Court did not exist. Only the Peace organizations continue to have faith in the League and the Court as instruments to preserve peace.

When the League of Nations and the World Court were formed, the modern world was led to believe that they were new devices to prevent war. In reality, the idea behind them is nearly five hundred years old. In 1462, the King of Bohemia planned a federation of Christian nations, together with an international parliament to discuss matters of common interest, and a tribunal, supported by an international military force, to hear and settle disputes between the various nations. Yet there were only twenty-five years of the sixteenth century, and but twenty years of the seventeenth century, during which there were no major military operations; and since that time warfare has been almost constant in the Western world.

Such distinguished men as Henry IV of France, William Penn, Leibnitz, Turgot, Bentham, Kant,

Victor Hugo, Cobden, Garibaldi and the late Czar Nicholas variously devised peace plans, which included international congresses, armed tribunals, international trade agreements, reduction of military and naval armaments, laws and usages of war on land and sea, and extension of the scope of international law. They all failed to bring lasting peace. The two Hague Tribunals failed. The Briand-Kellogg Peace Pacts have also failed. The only new feature in the modern peace movement is the greatly increasing numbers of men who declare that they will not go to war, even in defence of their own country.

There is hope in this widespread proclamation, because it is a courageous affirmation of peace, and not merely a weak rejection of war. But there is not much hope from such things as investigation into the causes of war, ratio of armaments, and taking the profits out of war; for these are negative and presuppose the inevitability of war. All the academic study of the causes of war must lead to but one conclusion: that the fundamental cause of war is covetousness—a spiritual disease that infects a single man in a nation or a group of men, who in turn communicate it to the entire people by means of propaganda. That a spiritual disease can be cured by man-



made remedies, and that war resulting from that disease can be averted by man-made organizations, such as Leagues of Nations and World Courts, is the great fallacy of the Western world.

If we examine the inner structure and inner working of man, we shall see not only how covetousness begins, but why it is the real root of war. Man, in living true to his spiritual destiny between heaven and earth, is not a piece of pottery into which the rich forces of Life enter, to be kept there and sealed up forever as personal possessions. On the contrary, man is a cosmic medium, who receives those riches and gives them back to Life purified and moulded to earthly form, by the Universal Spirit which runs through him. Flowing through his heart, it enriches his life emotionally, which he in turn pours out upon his fellow men in generosity, compassion, and deeds of goodness. Flowing through his mind, it illuminates his life spiritually, which he devotes to his fellow beings to obtain justice for them and to enable them to have a fuller understanding of their relation to themselves and to the Universal Spirit.

Thus when man is filled with the Universal Spirit, which runs through him like a stream of pure water, his heart and mind are kept clear and healthy, and the expression of his life is in accord with heaven: he desires that every man shall have a share of earth and the necessary things of life; and he asks that every man shall

have full freedom of thought and belief. Such is the Way of Heaven, and of peace.

But man is not always satisfied with the Way of Heaven; and in his conceit he thinks he can dispense with heaven and proceed by his own power. Accordingly, he begins to assert himself—to infuse his will into his own heart and mind, thus at first retarding and finally completely preventing the flow of the Universal Spirit into him. No longer is he compassionate and just, but avaricious and autocratic. For when a man's heart is filled with himself, his desire is to acquire the material possessions of other men. When a man's mind is filled with himself, his desire is to impose his ideas and beliefs on other men. To desire to take the possessions of others and to dominate and command their minds, is covetousness. In the personal life of man, it is egotism; in national life, it is despotism; in international life, it is imperialism. Covetousness is the Way of Man—and of war.

Piling up riches is the result of covetousness, in which there is no lasting satisfaction—only an increase of the covetous desire. Said the Psalmist: "He heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them." When a man has something of worldly value, he gets no spiritual joy of it until he has given some of it away: The covetous man or nation gives nothing away—only takes. When the stronger takes from the weaker, there can be but one ending—war. Likewise, when the stronger im-



poses its will upon the weaker, there is also war.

The history of the Western world is a record of groups of peoples, nervous, restless, aggressive; ever plundering and proselytising each other; ever seeking by war to establish a unanimity of ideas, beliefs, doctrines, and customs—fatuously believing that unanimity by autocracy brings peace, and never learning that Heavenly, not earthly, unanimity is the basis of peace. For it is through the Universal Spirit that man gains inner peace; and when all men are at peace within themselves, they are also at peace among themselves.

From the time of the Christian era, the Western nations have been almost continually embroiled in war, with the result that they have come to regard war as positive and peace as negative; war as the work of strong, courageous men, and peace as the work of weak, timid men; war as the regular thing in life and peace as merely the interval during which nations recover from the previous war and prepare for the next. For the chief aim of the people who came West was to gain homes for themselves by driving out those who stood in their way. When finally they all had settled homes and had built up their commercial organizations, they then began to fight for each other's markets; and so they have continued to this day.

The Western nations were cradled by war, they lived by war, and the peoples of to-day have inherit-

ed the war spirit of nineteen centuries. It matters not that Ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Chaldea, Persia, Macedonia, Greece and Rome, lived and died by war; the Western nations still continue to war against each other, and with ever-increasing ferocity.

For the first fourteen hundred years and more of the Christian era, practically no effort was made to halt war. In the last five hundred years, many efforts have been made—and they have all come to nothing. The significant fact is, that they have all been man-made; that is, men, by means of human reason, have tried to devise a plan of human relations that would banish war—an earthly thing, and automatically bring about lasting peace—a heavenly thing.

So far it has been ineffectual, and it always will be, because the progression is in the wrong direction. You cannot make earthly plans to gain spiritual things. On the contrary, you must first receive the spiritual things, and then the things of earth will right themselves. Unspiritual men can make war by themselves, because war is the absence of spirit. But they cannot make peace by themselves, because peace is the presence of spirit. Nothing is clearer than that no purely human arrangements will ever prevent war, and that there never will be a permanent peace until every man gains more knowledge, not of the earthly relations of men, but of his own relation to the world of spirit—the Universal Spirit. Peace



begins with man's relation to the Universal Spirit; not with his relation to his fellow men. For as soon as man is in harmony with the Universal Spirit, he will thereby be in harmony with every other man; and as the Universal Spirit is peace, so will man be at peace with his fellows.

The way to the Universal Spirit is open to every person. Yet the Universal Spirit, with its great rewards, is not to be gained by going out after it. Man goes out towards the earth; but he must wait for the Universal Spirit to come to him—and he must be worthy of it. Therein lies man's relationship to the Universal Spirit and to earth. Man, as the medium standing between Heaven and earth, receives the illumination from the Universal Spirit, which guides him in his life among his fellow men and among the things of Nature. When man has attained this, he has achieved a spiritual equilibrium, which not only brings him into the right relationship with heaven and earth, but gives him a pure spirituality that raises him above race, color, religious, philosophic and political doctrine, caste, or any other human distinction or limitation.

It enables him to live at peace among all kinds and conditions of people, without feeling that he must try to convert them to his individual way of life; for the higher spiritual harmony dissolves all earthly differences. It causes him to look upon earth, with its

material resources, as something to be developed for the sustenance and delight of man, and not something to be plundered for selfish aims—personal power and profit. It permits him to understand that earth is something entrusted to him of which he is a custodian, and that his stewardship is to be judged by the helpful and unselfish use he has made of earth's riches.

When men stand in this right relationship to Heaven and to earth, they have attained ease—and ease is peace. When this relationship is upset by men becoming detached from the Universal Spirit and selfishly drawn towards earth to exploit it for personal advantage, then there is no longer ease, but dis-ease—and dis-ease is war. The dislocation of the spiritual equilibrium is the cause of war—and war is therefore a spiritual disease.

It is by contemplation and meditation upon the Universal Spirit that man prepares himself to receive its light. It is not an aggressive, forward movement toward the Universal Spirit, dictated by human reason, but a spiritual patience in which man waits in quiet confidence for illumination and guidance which will surely come. This patience is faith dynamic. When men have surrendered and opened themselves to the incoming of the Universal Spirit, not only there will be perpetual peace on earth, but even the idea of war will be forever banished from the minds of men.

MERTON S. YEWDALE



# ANTIQUITY OF THE HINDU ZODIAC

[ S. V. Viswanatha, M. A., here makes a valuable contribution to the study of the Hindu Zodiac.—EDS. ]

Astronomy is the oldest of sciences. The celestial orbs could not escape notice and were objects of observation from time immemorial. It is impossible to adduce wholly adequate historical proof of the relative antiquity of the system as observed and utilized by the various prehistoric nations, though it seems clear that the science could not have originated with the Greeks, as generally supposed, but must date from several millennia before them.

## I

Volney proved in his *Ruins of Empire* (1790, p. 360) that as Aries was in its fifteenth degree in 1447 B. C., the first degree of Libra could not have coincided with the vernal equinox later than 15,194 years, B.C., so the Greek Zodiac cannot be older to-day than 17,129 years. Dr. Schlegel in his *Uranographie Chinoise* assigned to the Chinese astronomical sphere an antiquity of 18,000 years.

The historian of astronomy finds references to the Zodiac in the Book of Job, which speaks of the making of Arcturus, Orion and the Pleiades (*Ash, Kesil and Cimah*) and the chambers of the South (IX. 9), and of Mazzaroth—the (*Twelve Signs XXXVIII 32*). As the *Book of Job* is claimed to have preceded Homer and Hesiod by at least a thousand years, this Arabian authority should silence

the claim that the Zodiac was borrowed by the Arabs from Greece. And if the Zodiac was known in the days of Job, how could the civilized and philosophical Hindus have been ignorant of it?

After an elaborate examination of the materials available, the famous French astronomer, Bailly, declared that the Hindu astronomical systems are by far the oldest and that from them the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and even the Jews derived their knowledge. Bailly proved that the Hindu tradition of the conjunction of the planets at the beginning of Kali Yuga in February, 3102 B. C., was based on actual observation, as it coincides with the evidence of modern astronomical tables.

Another famous French *savant*, Erard-Mollien, arrived at the conclusion that everything proves that these Zodiacal figures have been transmitted to the Greeks by the Chaldees, who got them from the Brahmans. (*Recueil de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, 1853).

The above represents part of the evidence assembled by Madame H. P. Blavatsky in her *Secret Doctrine* against the alleged priority of the Greek Zodiac.

## II

A westward movement of Indian culture is getting to be fairly recognized. To mention a few of



the many pieces of evidence in support of this\* :—

The westerly migration of Vedic religion and mythology is indicated in a few passages of the *Rig-Veda* which refer to Indra and Nasatya having fled to far-off lands ( VI. 41. 1; VIII. 4. 2; VII. 20. 22 ), and corroborated by the names of Hindu deities met with, for example, in the Boghaz Keui inscription—Indra, Varuna, Mitra and Nāsatya. The Akkadian prayers to the Sun and Fire appear to be exact reproductions of Vedic passages (*Rig-Veda*, II. 6; III. 59. 19).

O Sun, thou hast stepped forth from the background of heaven, thou hast pushed back the bolt of the brilliant sky; above the land thou hast raised thy head. O Sun, thou hast covered the immeasurable space of heaven and countries.

Thou who drivest away the evil Markim ( cf. Vedic *Marka* ), who furthest the well-being of life, who strikest the breast of the Wicked with terror, Fire, the destroyer of foes, dread weapon, that drivest away pestilence.

That the Akkads, who were far earlier than the Chaldeans, derived some of their ideas from the Vedic Aryans appears beyond doubt. And *The Secret Doctrine* points out that the names of the Akkadian months were derived from the names of the signs of the Zodiac. ( I. 649 ) Is it unreasonable to suppose that in this Akkadian borrowing the astronomical ideas of the Hindus should have been included?

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* ( Vol. II, s. v. "Astronomy" ) has this :—

The theory of the ecliptic does not appear to have been perfected until after 539 B.C. . . . The researches of Bouche, Leclercq, Cumont and Boll have enabled us to fix with a considerable degree of definiteness the middle of the fourth century B. C. as the period when Babylonian astrology began *its triumphal march to the west* ( Italics mine ), invading the domain of Greek and Roman culture, [ though ] in the hands of the Greeks and of the later Egyptians astrology and astronomy were carried far beyond the limits attained by the Babylonians.

The following extract from *Isis Unveiled* ( I. 576 ) appears to be of interest in this context :—

It is strongly contested that the Akkad tribes of Chaldea, Babylonia, and Assyria were in any way cognate with the Brahmans, of Hindustan; . . . They were simply emigrants on their way to Asia Minor from India, the cradle of humanity [ and ] a tribe of the earliest Hindus.

Even Max Müller was constrained to say (*India—What Can It Teach Us?* p. 130 ) In regard to Vedic astronomy :—

We may sum up without fear of serious contradiction that no case has been made out in favour of the foreign origin of the elementary astronomical notions of the Hindus as found or presupposed in the Vedic hymns.

### III

A distinction is generally made, though it does not appear well-founded, between the lunar and solar Zodiacs, the former based on the *nakshatras* in the path of the Moon and the latter on an artificial division of the ecliptic into twelve parts, based on equinoxes, solstices and precession. It is also held that the early Hindu astronomers were acquainted only with the asteris-

\* Vide my *Racial Synthesis in Hindu Culture*—Introduction.



mal Zodiac, while the Babylonian Zodiac was solar.

In the *Taittiriya Brāhmana* (I. 5. 2) it is stated that the *Krittikas* (Pleiades) were the first of the *Deva-nakshatras*, that is, those situated in the northern portion of the heavens with reference to the ecliptic, as against the *Yama-nakshatras* which were assigned to the southern half. Why were the *Krittikas* given the first place in the age of the Brāhmanas? It may be, this constellation should have been observed to mark the vernal equinox, on the analogy of the *Aśvinyādi* reckoning which came to be recognized later. A passage of the *Kausitaki Brāhmana* (XIX. 3) speaks of the winter solstice coinciding with *Māgha Amāvāsyā*. The *Maitrāyanī Upanishad* (VI. 14) states distinctly enough: "The sun turns south from the Maghās." In the *Satapatha Brāhmana* (II. 1. 3) we have the fact noted that *vasanta*, *grishma* and *varshā* are the three seasons of *Uttara-ayana* and *śarad*, *hemanta*, *śīśir* of the *Dakshina-ayana*. The (*Taittiriya Brāhmana* (III. 10. 4) also mentions the characteristic feature of the two *ayanas* as lengthening of the night in the one (*Dakshina*) and that of day in the other (*Uttara*). Though this may not accord with the course of the seasons as understood generally, there is clear indication that the Brāhmanas knew of the equinoxes and solstices.

The solar year of 360 days, called "the twelve-spoked" was well known in the periods of the *Rig Veda* (I. 164. 11) and the *Atharva Veda* (IV. 35. 4). The *samvatsara*

*satra*, perhaps the oldest known form of "sacrifice," lasted for a year of 360 days. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmana* (XI. 6. 3. 8) we read: "There are twelve suns, for there are twelve months," each month representing the Sun in one of his twelve aspects and all with different names symbolical of the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

The planets played a prominent part in Indian literature and popular belief at least from the time of the *Taittiriya Āranyaka*, which contains the *Nava-graha-mantra* used in the worship of the Sun, *Sūrya-namaskāra*.

Next, to mention one or two of the important references to the solar Zodiac in the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*, Sri Rāma was born on the ninth day (*navamī*) of *Chaitra* (lunar month) when five (planets) were in exaltation (*uchcha*) in the house of Cancer (*Karkata lagna*). Bharata was born in the asterism *Pushya* in Pisces (*Mina-lagna*) and Lakshmana in *Aślesha* when the Sun had arisen in the Crab (Cancer *Kulira*). (*Bala Kānda*, 19) In the *Vana Parva* of the *Mahābhārata* we read: "The *Kṛta Yuga* began when the Sun, Moon, Jupiter and *Tishya* (*Pushya*) were in one and the same house of the Zodiac (*rāśi*)." Unless these and similar passages are interpolations, as some have claimed, they establish that the Hindus, at least from the age of the Brāhmanas, were aware of the signs and phenomena of the solar Zodiac. Such references were not more numerous because the *Nakshatra* Zodiac was more important on



ritualistic considerations; Vedic sacrifices depended on the course of the Moon rather than of the Sun; and the Brāhmanas were concerned more with these than with "judicial astrology" which is decidedly of a later growth and "represents the most significant contribution of the Greeks to astrology." (*Encyclopædia Britannica, op. cit.*)

#### IV.

The animals symbolising the signs of the Zodiac were Indian or Egyptian and not Greek. Sheep (Mesha) are referred to in the earliest Vedic texts. "They were verily produced from Agni." (*Atharva Veda*, IV. 14. 1) Indra himself is frequently called the "Ram" in the *Rig Veda*. He is *Mesha-vrshana*, as Agni is *Mesha-vāhana*. *Vrshabha*, the humped bull of India (*Nandi*—the temple bull) is peculiarly Indian, the *kakut* (hump) being referred to in the texts. Agni is described in one passage as a "bellowing bull" (*vrshabho rōravīti*). The humped bull is met with on seals discovered from the site of prehistoric Harappa in the Indus Valley. The lion (*Sinha*) is a wild animal of the tropics. The lion and its roar are referred to in *Atharva Veda* (V 21.1 ff.; VIII. 7.15 and IV. 36,6). Elsewhere we have: "A tiger verily is he; he is a lion and a bull." (VIII. 5.12) As regards the amphibious creature *Makara*, wrongly translated "Crocodile," I would

invite attention to the significance of the term, widely in use in India, as pointed out in my article in *THE ARYAN PATH* for December, 1934. It figures also in Egyptian mythology. "The land of the Aryas" is defined as "the tract where the black antelope roams about freely." The scorpion figures in Hindu and Egyptian symbolism and rituals. Its venom is referred to in *Atharva Veda* (VII. 56. 5). A passage of the *Rig Veda* states: "The scorpion's venom hath no strength. Scorpion, thy venom is but weak." (I.191.16)

Dr. Beer asserts that "Greek communication is obvious" in the "Two Faces," Gemini, and the "Lion's Tail," Leo. But the concept of *Mithuna* is as old as Indian cosmogony and Leo or the Lion is as old as the Island of Ceylon.

This article barely touches the fringe of a vast subject. We shall close it with a pregnant observation from *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 667-8):—

"From John Bentley down to Burgess' "Surya-Siddhanta," not one astronomer has been fair enough to the most learned people of Antiquity. However distorted and misunderstood the Hindu Symbology, no Occultist can fail to do it justice once that he knows something of the Secret Sciences; nor will he turn away from their metaphysical and mystical interpretation of the Zodiac, even though the whole Pleiades of Royal Astronomical Societies rise in arms against their mathematical rendering of it. The descent and re-ascent of the Monad or Soul cannot be disconnected from the Zodiacal signs.

S. V. VISWANATHA



# THE SONG OF THE HIGHER LIFE

## IV. THE SECRET OF ACTION AND THE CONQUEST OF DESIRE

[ Below we publish the fourth of a series of essays founded on the great text-book of Practical Occultism, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Each of these will discuss a title of one of the eighteen chapters of the Song Celestial. The writer calls them "Notes on the Chapter Titles of the Gita"—but they are more than notes. They bring a practical message born of study and experience. This particular study is on the third chapter entitled, Karma-yoga.

**Sri Krishna Prem** is the name taken in the old traditional manner prevailing in India by a young English gentleman when he resolved to enter the Path of Vairagya, renouncing his all, including the name given to him at birth. He took his tripos at Cambridge in Mental and Moral Sciences and is a deep student of Indian philosophy. Away from the world but serving it with faith he lives in the Himālayas, and is esteemed highly for his sincerity, earnestness and devotion.—EDS.]

The third chapter commences with the disciple in doubt. "If it be thought by Thee that knowledge is superior to action why dost Thou, O Krishna, urge me to this terrible deed?" The Teacher has praised the wisdom of the *Sāṅkhyas* but has then urged the necessity of action, the thing which, above all, was shunned by the followers of the *Sāṅkhya*. Lastly, He brought the discourse round once more to the praise of knowledge and described a state in which action would, at best, appear an irrelevance. Small wonder that the disciple is confused and begs to be taught clearly the one way to the Goal.

Nevertheless, the teaching is not confused; it is only that the disciple, in demanding a clear-cut intellectual presentation which shall be decisive and final, is looking for something which cannot be given. The method of a true Teacher is

not to overwhelm the mind by demanding assent to an intellectual scheme clearly formulated once and for all. Such an assent, even if given, is entirely useless as it does not lift the disciple above the level of the manas, the thinking mind. He aims, rather, by setting forth apparently conflicting but actually complementary aspects of Truth, at forcing the disciple to transcend the ordinary levels of thinking by having recourse to the higher intuitive knowledge of the *buddhi* and thus bringing to birth in his soul a new and synthetic knowledge which shall be built into his very being.

If this is not sufficiently realised the reader is apt to make the mistake of thinking that the thought of the *Gita* is actually confused or of picking out that aspect that most appeals to him and ignoring the rest. But the *Gita* is neither a confused eclecticism nor a one-



sided sectarianism. It aims at setting forth the Yoga or Path to the Goal as a coherent whole but, in so doing, it is inevitable that the mind, which loves to pursue one train of thought to its logical conclusion regardless of others, should be brought up sharply from time to time and made to grasp the other sides as well.

In answer to the disciple's query the Teacher states that since the beginning of time there have been two main types of aspirants corresponding to the duality that pervades the manifested world. Modern psychology speaks of introverts, or those whose natural tendency is to occupy themselves with the subjective, and extraverts, or those whose natural flow of energy is directed towards the outer world. Corresponding to these we have the yoga of knowledge practised by the *Sāṅkhyas* and the yoga of action of the *karma-yogis*. Urged on by the lack of balance in their own natures, one-sided exponents always attempt to show that one of these is the chief teaching and the other only subsidiary. But the duality in the universe is not ultimate. In the end all is resolved into the unitary *Ātman* and therefore no one-sided view can be the whole truth.

The doctrine of the *karma yogis* starts from the plain fact that a cessation from all action is simply impossible. Even a forcible abstinence from the more obvious outer actions will leave the mental actions quite unchecked and, in fact, more riotous because of the enforced outer inactivity. Psy-

chologically it is certain that excessive and long continued introversion will have disastrous results upon the psychic health and as Jung, I think, puts it, the attempt to escape from all entangling outer relationships will result in an eventual domination of the ego by relationships of a neurotic and inferior type. "Not by mere cessation of activity shall the Soul rise to the state of actionlessness" and therefore, since action is a necessity, we must make an effort to come to grips with it and prevent it from exerting its fatal binding power on us.

For the great objection to action as ordinarily performed lies in its connection with results. We are bound by the results of our actions and must experience the consequences whether pleasant or painful. This so-called law of *karma* is apt to strike the Western mind as mere unverified dogma or, at best, as a philosophical speculation. In fact, however, it is nothing of the kind but a fact of nature which may be experienced by any one for himself. Even on the ordinary levels of experience it is obvious that our destinies are largely shaped by our characters and they, in turn, by the sum total of our past thoughts and particularly those which have crystallised in action. The man who thinks cruel thoughts usually proceeds to cruel deeds and thus, becoming an object of fear and hatred to others, is at least extremely liable to meet with cruelty in his turn. Ordinary everyday experience can perhaps not take us



much farther than this probability but ordinary experience is not the final arbiter in these matters and he who advances on the inner path, the Path of Knowledge, becomes immediately aware that it is no mere probability with which we are concerned but a perfect and unerring law,

By which the slayer's knife did stab himself ;  
The unjust judge hath lost his own defender.

In the world of mechanics it finds expression in Newton's famous law that action and reaction are equal and opposite. The world of life is no less a unity than the world of matter, all lives being interlocked in one vast whole. It follows that any act, nay, any thought, sets up a tension in the whole which, however delayed may be the response, with utter inevitability brings about an "equal and opposite" reaction. I repeat that this is no mere intellectual speculation fitting only into the structure of some Oriental philosophy but is a profound truth of experience which may, like other natural laws, be disregarded only at one's peril. The same perception, quite divorced from "Hindu Philosophy" found expression in Christ's flashing words: "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword."

Thus, if action is inevitable, it is none the less a source of bondage and, by tying the soul to its own position, whether good or bad, in the scheme of things, prevents that self-transcendence in union with the All that constitutes the Goal.

The method proposed by the *karma yogis* was that of scrupulous

performance of the prescribed code of ritual actions which, according to Hindu custom, filled a Brahman's life and regulated his conduct down to the minutest detail. At the same time the *yogi* was to perform these actions without any desire for the fruit in the shape of worldly prosperity and heavenly bliss that the scriptures promised as the result of such actions. In this way they hoped to avoid the *impasse* created by the inevitability of action and its no less certain binding power. They rightly perceived that the binding power came not from the action itself but from the desire with which it was performed and therefore taught that if the latter could be eliminated the poison fangs of the acts would then be removed.

The righteous who eat the remains of the sacrificial offerings are freed from all sin but those who merely prepare food for their own sakes verily eat sin. *Veda 13*

This doctrine literally understood, like the detachment of the *Sāṅkhyas*, is not enough in itself. Taken literally and by itself, it fails because it reduces the vigorous creative life of action to a dead round of sterile ceremonies and smothers the spirit under a tedious formalism quite inapplicable to the ordinary actions of life. For them, action was but a necessary evil, inescapable while embodied, and they achieved peace only by making a desert, escaping desire by stifling it under tedium. To them, as to the typical follower of the pure *Sāṅkhya*, this rich and wondrous life must have been no better than a ghastly mistake which would better



never have occurred.

This mean and ignoble view of action is by no means that of Sri Krishna. In a few rapid words He sketches the *yajña chakra*, the great Cycle of Sacrifice that forms the manifested Cosmos, and shows how action is rooted in the Imperishable. Forth into all quarters of space streams in sacrifice the life-blood of the Supreme *Purusha*. But for that sustaining life the worlds would "fall into ruin" and ceaselessly does the Supreme pour Itself forth in action for the welfare of all. Round and round circles this One Life through all beings in the worlds as It weaves unweariedly the pattern of the universe and none can claim a proud independence of his brothers. The knowledge of the world that comes to us so easily to-day we owe to countless thinkers and discoverers of the past and we cannot walk down the street of a town without treading on the bowed backs of the nameless toilers of dim bygone ages. Our intellects owe their every possibility of thought to those who strove to grasp new conceptions long ago and even our eyes are what they are only as a result of long and painful struggles of which no record now remains. No record, that is, but the *debt* inscribed in the imperishable characters of the book of *Karma*, a debt that claims our actions in return and from which not the proudest *yogi* in a Himalayan cave is free, though he may choose to ignore it. "He who on earth doth not follow the Wheel thus revolving, sinful of life and rejoicing in the sense, he,

O Arjuna, liveth in vain." Verse 16

Thus action is seen to be not only a mere physical necessity of those who are embodied. It is also a moral necessity, since out of sacrificial action spring the worlds and by sacrifice are they maintained in their ceaseless whirling around and in the Central Sun.

It is important to realise, however, and that is why the instruction in the *Sankhyan* wisdom preceded the teaching about action, that without knowledge of the *Ātman* the sacrificial action is not possible in the true sense. Until the One Self, or at least Its forthshining Light is known, the abandonment of all desire for the fruits of action is in no way really feasible and remains but a matter of grand words. The Light of the *Ātman* must be known to some extent at least and, just in proportion as It is known, not as a matter of theoretic philosophy but as a vivid reality present in every moment of experience, will the disciple be able to discard any wish for the fruits of his actions. Rather will it be seen that the desire for fruits is an utter irrelevance which will fall away of itself though *only for as long as the disciple is thus centred in the Light*.

When at last, after long and persistent struggles, this centring of life in the *Ātman* is permanently established, when the disciple rejoices in the *Ātman* and is content with the *Ātman*, there will remain nothing further to be accomplished for himself and "no object of his will depend on any being."



Nevertheless, in thus escaping from "private" action, he has but united himself with the Divine and Cosmic Action and of him it will be said, as of Krishna Himself, that, though there is nothing in the three worlds that is unattained by him, yet he mingles in action unweariedly for the sake of the welfare of all. Note the word "unwearied." The Sacrificial Action in a union to which the disciple aspires, is no tiresome carrying out of dull and spiritless acts such as are too often called up in our minds by the words sacrifice and duty. We saw how at the beginning of the Path, the disciple was filled with despair at the thought of the joyless life which awaited him when all the desires which made life seem worth living should be slain. But this is an illusion which has to be dispelled. "As the ignorant act out of attachment to action, so should the wise act without attachment desiring the welfare of the world." The glow which accompanies the desire-prompted actions of the worldly, the enthusiasm and zest of youth and the tireless energy of the ambitious must all be preserved and transmuted into something higher and not allowed to drain away into desert sands. The true *vairāgi* is not a dull, dried up, "holy" person of the type that has made the very name of religion a thing of nausea to so many of us, but a tireless fountain of joyful and inspired life based on the eternal *ānanda* of the Brahman which overflows into creation out of Its own inherent fulness.

This then is the charter of action, the fact that the whole Cosmos is established on sacrifice; not on mere formal acts of ceremonial offering but on that of which these were but the outward symbol, the Great Sacrifice of which we read in the Vedas in which the One *Purusha* was offered in the fires of the worlds and His limbs scattered like those of Osiris to all the quarters of space. This is the Sacrifice which the disciple is called to co-operate in. But, though he acts ceaselessly, yet is he not bound by *karma* for his grounding in the *Sāṅkhyan* wisdom has taught him that actions are performed by the modifications of *prakṛiti* alone. His bodies, gross and subtle, act and the unwise are entangled in the acts, but he who has mastered the lesson of the previous chapter has learnt to see that the *Ātman*, the True Self, is for ever but the detached Witness, serene and impartial. Actions can no more bind Him than weapons can pierce Him and, clinging firmly to this knowledge in his heart, offering his actions to Krishna as the symbol of the Great Sacrifice, free from the fetters of selfish hope and fear, he engages with zest in the great battle against evil and sorrow, the evil of his own lower nature and the sorrow of his brothers.

For let none think that the battle is won at the first triumph and blare of the trumpets. The knowledge that has been given must be practised and built into the heart by constant struggle. Again and again must the battle be fought



and he who, shutting with subtle sophisms his eyes to the imperfections still existing in his lower nature and his ears to the cry for help that sounds pitifully from suffering humanity, seeks to rest on his laurels, is unworthy of the Wisdom he has received and is doomed to fall, however proudly he may carry things off for the time.

Doubts will assuredly come tormenting the heart with the suggestion that the struggle is useless.

All things are vain and vain the knowledge of  
their vanity ;  
Rise and go hence, there is no better way  
Than patient scorn, nor any help for man,  
Nor any staying of his whirling wheel.

All beings follow their own natures. The *Ātman* is the impartial Witness of all ; good and evil are but empty words and the fight against the latter is in vain. What shall restraint avail since actions flow inevitably from the workings of Nature and the Soul is but the passive witness of the phantom show ?

But these deceiving half-truths must be conquered. It is true the play of Nature follows fixed laws and that effect follows cause with unerring accuracy. Deeply embedded in the Cosmos is the power of attraction and repulsion by which all things move and change. From chemical elements with their "affinities" to men with their loves and hates, all are bound by this power within the iron Circle of Necessity, all, that is, save he who has conquered desire and acts from a sense of duty (*swadharma*) alone. As long as the disciple

does certain acts because he likes them and abstains from certain others because he dislikes them, so long must he whirl helplessly upon the Wheel ; for, though he may be of a "virtuous" disposition, and so perform but "virtuous" acts, yet is he none the less the victim of his own nature.

But the *Ātman*, the One Self, is for ever free in Its own being ; Its apparent bondage comes only from the self-identification with Its lower vehicles, the mirrors in which Its Light is reflected. The higher the disciple climbs up the Ladder of the Soul, the more the inherent freedom of the *Ātman* will shine forth and dominate the play of Nature instead of blindly suffering it.

He who acts from the dictates of the *manas* is freer than he who acts from those of the senses, and freer still is he whose *manas* is united with the *buddhi* and suffused by its Light, the Light of the glorious Flame Beyond. Therefore, instead of allowing himself to be guided by the likes and dislikes of the senses, the disciple must constantly strive, by acting from a sense of duty alone, to rise to higher and ever higher levels of his being. Bound as he is by his nature at any given level, yet is he free with the inherent freedom of the *Ātman* to choose whether he will act from his lower nature or from his higher. True the "higher" will ever recede as he climbs and what is "higher" now will become "lower" in time ; but at each stage his freedom will increase until he reaches the Un-



reachable and all desire is dead in that blazing Unity, slain like a moth at the threshold by the touch of the frosty air without.

Thus understanding Him (the *Ātman*) as higher than the *buddhi*, restraining the lower self by the *Atman*, slay thou, O Mighty armed, the enemy in the form of desire, difficult to be overcome.

Let the disciple dwell on this concluding verse, for in its few words is contained the secret that has baffled so many ascetics and philosophers, the secret of the conquest of desire. True, it is a

secret that cannot be imparted in words, one which must be experienced in the heart; but he who has even partially understood the meaning of the words "restraining the lower self by the *Ātman*," may know for certain that his foot is on the ladder and that if he will resolutely put his knowledge into practice his further progress is assured and neither gods nor men can hinder his ultimate attainment of the Goal.

SRI KRISHNA PREM

## THE TREADMILL OF THOUGHT

How many men are running, squirrels in a cage, upon the wheel of thought! The door stands open wide into a larger air, a wider view, but men love their accustomed ways of thinking; they prefer to run upon the treadmill of familiar notions, of orthodox opinions and beliefs. Whether the doctrines held be those of religion or science, if they are blindly adopted and as blindly followed, they are no better than the squirrel's wheel, upon which, round and round, the poor beast travels without arriving anywhere but at the point he started from.

A treadmill breaks down the morale of brutes. Who has not seen one set to turn a piece of farm machinery and on it a horse

dispiritedly plodding to keep his place upon the wheel his own exertion turns. He has learned that hardest galloping on that treadmill will merely turn his hateful wheel the faster, and so he shuffles dully on. How is he different from those who give their blind allegiance to a creed, except that his performance does generate a little power?

How foolish those who fear to dare the free and open space of thought! Some even who essay it scurry back to mount the wheel again, though with its zest for them forever lost. In power of thought each man has his passport to the truth. How can he willingly remain a prisoner to blind belief?

E. H.



## THE INSTRUMENT OF HUMILITY

[ The English author and critic, J. S. Collis, rightly emphasizes the importance of teachableness, but between such genuine humility and " the ability to surrender oneself entirely to another's influence " there is a great gulf. To forget oneself in devotion to a worthy cause is noble ; but to surrender oneself without reservations to the influence of any man who has not transcended every human weakness is to court disaster. Passivity is fraught with danger and unquestioning self-surrender cannot be safely given to any in the public world to-day.—EDS.]

The " Doctrine of the Eye " is for the crowd ; the " Doctrine of the Heart " for the elect.

The first repeat in pride : " Behold, I know " ; the last, they who in humbleness have garnered, low confess : " Thus have I heard. "

—*The Voice of the Silence.*

" Many are humiliated " said St. Bernard, " but few are humble. " He might have added that few are humble because many are afraid of being humiliated. Nothing is gained by humiliation, while much is lost. History has taught us again and again what happens when one nation or one set of nations humiliates another. And when one individual is humiliated by another—then also, if the wound is deep, the result is revenge. There is undoubtedly a real fear of being humble lest we be humiliated.

But is there any point in being humble itself ? There is, provided we understand what field it is, in which we want to make it operate. We must not allow the word to dwell in the vague and amiable regions of a general principle. In so far as life is an art, general principles must always be senseless. Humility as a general principle is the most futile of all. There is no good in being humble during a physical fight, nor any-

where in the sphere of play. Actually when we come to think it out we find that there is only a limited number of fields in which the instrument can be used. I say instrument, for unless it is a tool we can have no use for it—as an abstraction ( however well-sounding ) it is only an annoyance.

There are two occasions when it is called for : in our dealings with other people, and in our mental-spiritual advance. Those are the chief fields.

It ought to be our counsel of perfection in our dealings with other people. " He was so humble that he never humiliated anyone " —I can think of no finer epitaph. Doubtless there are some over whose graves it should have been inscribed—men not perhaps known to the world yet nevertheless belonging to her greatest sons. I make no pretence of preaching here from personal success : the most I can say is that there are certain words by Goethe never very far from my mind. " No advance in understanding is possible without reverence for that which is above us, for that which is on our level, and for that which is beneath us. " I cannot think of a better definition of humility than



those words. How much they would mean in the ordinary daily life of the world if carried out, we have all sufficient imagination to guess. That word "reverence" carries me to the second field in which humility is a splendid tool. It is the field with which I am chiefly concerned in this article—mental-spiritual advance.

To possess the capacity to reverence certain other persons, to place them in a higher category than oneself, is an essential in mental and spiritual advance. Everyone does not possess this gift. But most do—in terms of hero-worship. The man who in his youth is unable to hero-worship is (more than any music-hater) really only fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. Our capacity to esteem certain men we know to be holders of a wonderful knowledge, a spiritual key, a vision that we do not possess ourselves, is of greater value than at first seems likely. For thus we are *set in motion*. If the man who is thus influencing us is really a great man or a great thinker, so much the better; but even if he is not it scarcely matters vitally for our looking upwards alone has served us, making us forget to be argumentatively and egotistically on our guard.

To be able to surrender oneself entirely to another's influence is the essence of humility; that is why humility is so rare. For such personal surrender goes against the grain. This is exactly where pride—which is indeed from Lucifer, since it separates us from the

Divine—trips up the average man. He is afraid of being thought a fool. He is afraid to be thought lacking in vision. He feels that he must "keep his end up." Hence, instead of surrendering himself to the guide, continually asking questions, allowing his Error to call forth Truth, letting silence frame unuttered answers while he questions, he argues and debates! The difference between the man who is capable of inner progress and the man who is not, is that the former unconsciously (I'm afraid it has to be unconscious) realises the immense positivity in receptiveness. It is precisely the man who is ready to eschew the argumentative mind who eventually has a mind worth arguing with. It is the man who does not care whether he be regarded as a weak character who at last comes to possess a character worth calling strong. It is the man who does not mind whether he is original or not who in the end appears thoroughly original.

For what we are talking of here is the *magic of fecundation*. Rebirth is, we must not forget, a question of birth. A child has to be born. And somehow or other there has to be fecundation. We are here discussing one facet of the problem of rebirth, conversion: that facet is the rôle humility plays when the individual meets the man who can influence him. But, it may be urged, why write as if any and every given person is in the least likely to meet another who will fecundate him in this particular way? Why pretend that in the



West (for which you are speaking) there are *gurus* to be found, when you know that there are only parsons?

The answer is that the man who has the capacity to advance inwardly is bound to meet the right person at the right time just as he reads the right book at the right moment. I do not refer only to men of outstanding genius, who are thus fecundated—Whitman by Emerson, Carpenter by Whitman, Havelock Ellis by James Hinton, Carlyle by Goethe, and so on. I refer to the less exalted person who has the capacity to advance spiritually. For with that capacity goes another—the power to sense that someone else possesses the key we want. That man will appear in the guise of either teacher or friend. And that is the man we should hero-worship for a time. The capacity to see a hero who is not yet famous, is perhaps rare; but those who possess it will be likely to possess too the active humility, the receptiveness, the power of complete self-surrender that is so necessary.

It is not a question of imitating another but of abandoning oneself to the influence of another's essence; the outcome of which is personal rebirth. Instead of leading to stupid imitation this humble path is the shortest way to originality. "Let no one be afraid that he should lose himself by this self-surrender," writes Keyserling in his *Creative Understanding*. "A man who surrenders himself naturally appears influenced for a time. But sooner

or later what has been received by him is transferred by him into his original and personal property, or sets his personal in motion, an effect never produced when one's thoughts are primarily bent on argument, for the simple reason that one's personal was, then, never involved at all. For the question with this personal is not of something pre-existent but of something to be created, of one's own spiritual child."

It is not a question of being prepared to lose your soul or your Self once, but to lose them many times, to be prepared to renounce again and yet again the whole of what you are, not to contend with others for what you are but to care only what you can become in time—that is the definition of humility that we should do well to embrace.

What is written here is not necessarily applicable throughout the whole of any given life—it is less so after the age of maturity. The age to cultivate humility is between twenty and thirty—during those years in which all is won or all is lost, those militant years when marriage, parties, games, clothes, food, pub-crawling, vanity, should be temporarily subordinated in favour of the quest. The one question that I ask myself as I gaze into the countenance of the young man between twenty and thirty who has decided to conquer and to save the world (meaning himself) is—Has he the receptivity of Humility? The answer is not always in the affirmative.

J. S. COLLIS



## NEW BOOKS AND OLD

### THE DEAD IN ANCIENT EGYPT\*

This brochure of 44 pages is an annotated reprint of the Frazer Lecture, delivered by Mr. A. H. Gardiner at Cambridge in the current year. His subject, he tells us, was suggested by a conversation with Sir James Frazer when he contended that the fear of the dead, which Sir James believed to have been almost universally prevalent in early times, was not to be found in Ancient Egypt. Mr. Gardiner subsequently came to the conclusion that he had stated his case "over-categorically," and he now attempts to summarise briefly the evidence bearing on the attitude of the Ancient Egyptians to the dead and to define his mature deductions from it.

As far as his quoted evidence goes, Mr. Gardiner may be justified in supposing that the Egyptians—or some of them—held very naïve, not to say childish, beliefs about the after-death life. They thought, he tells us, that their post-mortem well-being depended on the preservation of the mummified physical body and on funerary rites and offerings, for which the most elaborate preparations were made during life and endowments established by those who could afford to do so. Mr. Gardiner concludes that the Egyptians feared death, but did not fear the dead as such, though some dead persons, as some living, might be inimical and to be dreaded. It is only rarely, he points out, that a tomb is discovered in Egypt which was not opened and stripped of its rich furnishings in ancient times: and people who were afraid of the dead would not have dared to make a practice of violating their graves.

In their efforts to reconstruct the religious thought of Ancient Egypt from

the fragmentary records available, writers on the subject are too apt to assume that, because their civilisation is very remote from us in time, the Ancient Egyptians were necessarily a "primitive" people whose religious symbolism must be interpreted in the light of the beliefs and practices of the "primitives" of the present or immediate past. But, if we may judge the unknown by the analogy of the known, we have some justification for thinking that in Egypt, as in Greece, India and China, while the mass of the people were given to understanding the myths and allegories of the national religion literally or superstitiously, there was a wiser minority who interpreted them as symbols of mystical and philosophical truth. Among the moderns too, if we leave out of account the minorities everywhere who dissent for various reasons from the national religions, we find that the interpretation of the symbolism of those religions by their avowed adherents ranges from the loftiest down to the crudest as the minds of those adherents are cultivated or the reverse.

Plato, who was a man of extraordinary mental power and master of all the learning of his day, showed by his reference to the Egyptian priesthood that he regarded their knowledge as more mature and more profound than that of the Greeks. He would scarcely have paid such deference to men whose beliefs concerning the great problems of life and death were no more than on a par with those of the popular superstitions of his own people.

We could wish that Mr. Gardiner had seen his way to touch on the evidence, such as the Heart-Weighing ritual in the *Book of the Dead*, which

\**The Attitude of the Ancient Egyptians to Death and the Dead.* By ALAN H. GARDINER, D. LITT., F. B. A. (The University Press, Cambridge.)



goes to show that even the popular religion of Ancient Egypt had its higher side and taught that a man's post-mortem condition was determined by actions in the present life.

Mr. Gardiner tells us :—

The names of dead persons in inscriptions of the Eighteenth Dynasty are frequently followed by the epithet *wahem ānekh*, "living again," more literally "repeating life."

He explains this as pointing to belief in a vague sort of spooklike post-mortem existence in which the unfortunate shade was liable to all the vicissitudes of the earth life, though apparently without any of its advantages. But is it not admissible to read these "living again" inscriptions as implying belief in reincarnation, a doctrine in which so many of our predecessors and contemporaries have found a master-key to some of the knottiest problems of life ?

We owe a great debt to Egyptologists for the enormous mass of data relating to Ancient Egypt which their industry, skill and learning have brought to light ; but even now our information about the Nilotic civilisation during the unknown number of millenniums through which it flourished is but fragmentary and one-sided. The science of the Egyptians is virtually unknown to us except by inference

from the material works based upon it ; their writings on history, philosophy, and mathematics have all perished. The extent of our knowledge of matters Egyptian is so remarkable that we are apt to forget the vastly greater area of our ignorance. A preponderant proportion of the data of Egyptology takes the form of funereal rituals, tombs of various types, tomb furniture, paintings and inscriptions—a fact which might tempt us to fancy that our information about Egyptian beliefs as to death and the dead was complete enough to justify us in at least tentatively reconstructing them. But, if we may venture to imagine a parallel case, would the archæologists of 10,000 A. D. be able to form a just estimate of the philosophical and religious theories of present-day Englishmen as to death and the future life, supposing our libraries had been destroyed except for a copy or two of the Church of England Burial Service, an illustrated account of the ceremonies of the Requiem Mass, and a few odd volumes of the Spiritualist periodical, *Light* ; while the only other pertinent data available were the ruins of Stonehenge, Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's, the remains of a number of solidly built family vaults and a vast collection of inscribed tombstones ?

R. A. V. M.

*On Dreams.* By WILLIAM ARCHER. Edited by THEODORE BESTERMAN (Methuen and Co., Ltd., London. 7s. 6d.)

Here are dreams from a ten years' record noted down at the time of awakening, and with them are presented certain conclusions mainly opposed to those of Freud and other writers. Some are good, as the repudiation of the theory that *all* dreams represent the fulfilment of a wish, drawn from a subconscious agglomerate of unavowable desires, and draped, so to say, with fig leaves by a dramatizing agency, the "Censor." Other conclusions of the eminent theatrical critic,

however, especially those connected with the time-rate of dreams and with the, to him, incredible life-panorama flashing before the brain just before death, merely show that his mind was not trained in metaphysics. The recurrence in many of the dreams of numerous variants of a particular image, and still more so, the two "outstanding dreams" with their atmosphere of solemn elevation and awe, suggest that something more is required as an explanation than is given, though mention is made of the dream mind which can take hold of a subject and "work things out in



obedience to principles and tendencies which may form the subject of rational and I believe very fruitful study." That state Mr. Archer considered as preceded by a chaotic condition intermediary between it and the waking state, a condition like a whirlpool of irrelevant driftwood of long-stored memories, any of which may be flung into the content of a dream thereby confusing the meaning. This comes very near to the Eastern teaching of the passing of the consciousness from *jagrat* (the waking state) through *svapna* (chaotic dream) to *sushupti* (deep sleep, the plane of the Ego, or Soul) and thence back through *svapna* to *jagrat*. The idea is also approached that some dreams are purely physiological, others psychic, the two "outstanding dreams" being of a different, let us say, more spiritual nature, but there is nothing to indicate that these and their subdivisions correlate with the various aspects or principles of man's nature.

All of this demonstrates the fact that the methods of Occult Science, employing both deduction and induction, are the most effective and the least wasteful of time and energy. Much more could be achieved by any dream-recorder who studied the general axioms given by Occult Science—as hypotheses at first—and proceeded by deduction from these universals to the particulars of his own and other men's experience. Then the induction from the particulars to the universals would be used to test if they supported the axioms given. Such a sound intellectual comprehension gives the right basis for practical application.

To take one example, ancient sciences all postulate what is now best known as the "Astral Light," "an imponderable tenuous medium which interpenetrates the entire globe, and in which all the acts and thoughts

of every man are impressed to be afterwards reflected again." The existence of this will help to explain dreams proper, the dozing dreams, the hypnagogic visions and phrases "from the blue" as well as some spiritualistic phenomena, rightly suspected by Mr. Archer as akin to the type of chaotic dream consciousness, though other factors play a part. An important point is that these involuntary astral impressions come "the moment the regulative faculty is off its guard, the moment, so to speak, that reason begins to nod." In other words, they crowd into the mind whenever it falls into a passive condition, a state whose culmination is found in the medium, with as little power left of control as the dreamer in the midst of his maelstrom. Day-dreams and dozing are not healthy indulgences.

But all this relates only to the lower nature and a quotation from one of the outstanding dreams mentioned may serve to balance the review.

The joy resulted from the discovery... of some secret which appeared to solve the riddle of existence and removed the drawbacks and imperfections of life. The discovery was not an invention, but rather a realization, which seemed to lie close at hand, yet to have been hitherto overlooked.

The curious feature of the dream was the extreme emotional elevation accompanying it, and the reiterated assertion *in* the dream that it was *not* a dream, but a glorious reality, victoriously manifesting itself on every hand.

And perhaps—who knows?—the dream may have been prophetic. For though miracles do not happen, the power of the inspired Thought, uttering itself in the magic Word, is almost limitless; and what should forbid us to conceive that one day a Word might be spoken which should cause the burden, not of sin, but of stupidity, to drop from the shoulders of mankind?

That "Word," the Knowledge that gives the answer to life, is for ever being spoken. It needs only the ears that can hear it.

W. E. W.



*I and Me; A Study of the Self.*

By E. GRAHAM HOWE (Faber & Faber, Ltd., London. 7s. 6d.)

Scientific thought, after describing a long trajectory in the void comes back to the starting point; the scientist to-day finds himself repeating what *The Voice of the Silence* led the Initiate long ago to exclaim, "In order to become the KNOWER of ALL SELF" it is still imperative to be, in the first instance, "the knower of SELF": that is the crucial human issue at all times.

This, in substance, is the implication of Dr. Graham Howe's study. It has to be admitted that Dr. Howe is not, and does not even claim to be, an original thinker. But to say this is not to detract at all from the value of what he has to communicate. In so far as his point of view is symptomatic of the undercurrents of enlightened opinion in the West outside the ranks of professional philosophers, it possesses an undeniable significance and interest. His position, broadly speaking, is characteristic of a large body of intelligent people in Europe to-day who, although they have lost faith in the institutions of religion, are still religious and genuinely desirous of finding a faith which would not be something separate from life, but be "a way of life." As a human being he is, obviously, weary with all species of "idolatry," however glamorous, which tend to pervert truths into insufferable dogmas. Having gone through scientific discipline, he is painfully conscious of the limitations of scientific approach, which, if it is to come anywhere near a comprehensive understanding of reality, must enlarge its horizon and include within its orbit "both Psychology and Metaphysics, all the phenomena of life; even the childish foolishness of sentiments and sentimentalities, as well as the urgent longings of pious hopes and visionary dreams." Finally, as a practising psychologist in intimate touch with the shipwrecks and frustrations of life, he finds no comfort in the self-complacent

optimism of orthodox psychoanalysts for whom the whole problem of living reduces itself to a mechanical categorisation and adjustment of complexes and inhibitions. The actual issue, he insists, is at once far more intricate and direct: it involves facing the immediate problem of self-integration.

But it is pertinent to ask how, if at all, can this integration be realised in actuality? Dr. Howe argues that an honest self-analysis ultimately enables us not only to understand the nature of Self as such but to discover what is historically known as the "Middle Way." Here, however, it must be made perfectly clear that he is not using the term "analysis" strictly in the signification of accepted canons. With him "analysis" is not synonymous with subdivision. In fact, the process does not necessarily involve reduction of things to their components; rather, it implies an apprehension of the "relationship" existing between the part and the whole. The application of this specialised and, in the last resort, mystical technique of analysis leads Dr. Howe to a discovery of the underlying duality of Self. This condition is not an isolated incident peculiar to human experience, but pervades the whole structure of the Universe in manifestation, expressing itself in an infinitude of phenomenal relationships, e.g., I and Me, Subject and Object, Male and Female etc. This dualism, however, is not to be interpreted as suggesting some fundamental element of conflict at the root of things. On the contrary, it represents that eternal co-existence of antitheses which is a prerequisite of harmony, and without which synthesis would be inconceivable. Dr. Howe tries to convey this supreme paradox of life through the ideographic metaphor of a circle, or a wheel, and builds up an elaborate symbolism round that image, which, though confusing at times, nevertheless remains highly ingenious to the end.

IQBAL SINGH



*The Idea of Salvation in the World's Religions.* By J. W. PARKER, M. A. (Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London. 6s.)

A comparative study of religions, undertaken with an open mind and in a spirit of unbiased enquiry, invariably demonstrates that great cosmic and ethical concepts are not the exclusive monopoly of any single creed, but the common property of all great Scriptures of the world. Such an enlightened conviction becomes a potent factor in promoting mutual sympathy and understanding between East and West.

Unfortunately this book can be commended neither for facts based upon actual historical research, nor for impartiality. The author starts with "the belief, openly avowed, that the Christian claim is true" (p. 3), namely, that Christ alone can save. While paying lip homage to the value of logic, he himself turns numerous intellectual somersaults.

The great Eastern religions including the Greek, together with the lower culture of savagery, are classed as "experience at a level below that of Christianity." The latter's superiority consists in the doctrines of a Personal God, Original Sin, and Vicarious Atonement. Except for Christ, "none before or since has been without sin." Forgiveness can be obtained only by the Grace of God\* through faith in Jesus, the intermediary. Such views can only be entertained by one who worships the dead-letter of Biblical texts.

For this personal god notion, Judaism and Islam are favoured above Buddhism and Hinduism, both of which have been deplorably misunderstood.† "Though the *Dhammapada* is one of the world's treasures of moral thought," (p. 187), it is stated to be lacking in the incentive to active service of humanity: "the Buddhist monk aims at doing nothing at all, and may well

end in complete vacancy of mind and character." History refutes both these charges.

The doctrine of Karma is also condemned because it, with Transmigration "has equally hindered the emergence of moral ideals." (p. 182) Yet it was taught by every great Teacher, Jesus included—vicarious atonement having been evolved long after Christ's own time—and reincarnation is not foreign to the teachings of Jesus, though anathematised by the Church.

Making all due allowance for the unavoidable handicaps to which the author points in his Preface—his lack of first-hand acquaintance with any religion other than that found in England and his "scholarship of a rural parish priest"—the conviction is unescapable that his study would have been more fruitful if he had brought to it an open mind. He modestly hopes that mistakes made by workers like himself in the field of comparative study of religions will help towards kindling a wider interest in the study. Alas! that very hope bears the imprint of his bias; it concludes: "so that it may become of greater usefulness to all who are seeking in the Faith of Christ the satisfaction of their spiritual need." We fear his book will have the opposite effect to stimulating genuine interest in different faiths. It naturally will find most of its readers in Christian lands, and it can only entrench them the more firmly, however unwarrantably, in their conviction of the superiority of their own views.

India does not need missionaries as the author believes. The popular Western ideas of Crucifixion, Resurrection etc. are gross materialisations compared with the lofty and even sublime ideals presented in Indian Philosophy. Every rite in Christianity is a pagan

\* Deity is described as an "eternal Being," "beyond and above His Creation as well as immanent in it."

† The deeply philosophical doctrines of Nirvana and Maya have been grossly misrepresented, Hatha Yogic practices confused with the Raja Yoga of Patanjali and Hinduism condemned as morally deficient, being monistic instead of theistic.



inheritance. The miracle-worker and the unique Saviour being no historical figure, the "faith in a certain Person, Jesus Christ" (p. 219) is doomed. True Salvation does exist however, for "Christ, the true esoteric saviour, is no man, but the divine principle in every human being. He who strives to resur-

rect the Spirit crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions, and buried deep in the sepulchre of his sinful flesh ; he who has the strength to roll back the stone of matter from the door of his own inner sanctuary, he has the spirit of the risen Christ in him."

N. K. K.

*The Substance of Adam.* By SERGIUS GORTAN ANCONA (Rider and Co., Ltd., London. 18s.)

This book is heralded as "A complete system of cosmogony founded on the Kabbala." It is a well-known fact that the Jewish Kabbalah has suffered strange disfigurements at the hands of Western occultists and Christian mystics. An author whom his publishers hail as "a seer and a prophet" as well as "a Christian Kabbalist" may be expected to take still further liberties with the already mutilated system, and the expectation has been fulfilled. When the reader encounters such amazing statements as that Rama was a Celt by race, a Druid, who decided to leave the continent of Europe and turn to the Orient with his message, where he conquered India "changing his name from Rama into Lama (Lamb)...to indicate the peacefulness of his purposes," he must feel that the so-called seer is very much to the fore and the interpreter of the Jewish Kabbalah quite in the background.

The clarity of style is not helped by such obscure expressions as "animics," "imploration" and "abysm," which, moreover, help to link it with the

large class of pseudo-occult literature to which, in spite of certain redeeming features, we cannot avoid feeling that it belongs. Many of the statements may be in fact based upon the Jewish Kabbalah, especially those which are comparable with the teachings of the Vedas, which represent one source of the former, but the romance of Rama has shaken our faith in all of the allegedly historical facts which are unfamiliar and appear to rest upon the author's *ipse dixit*. At best, they are interesting if true.

The writer's sectarian bias appears in his statement in the Preface that *The Substance of Adam* "is based on the western tradition of thought. Its purpose is to show how this tradition alone, superior to all others, has in itself the power to satisfy the reason and direct us to a supreme liberation." We are far from sharing the publishers' ambitious, not to say presumptuous, expectation that this book "will prove a new Secret Doctrine for the West." It is emphatically not worthy of mention in the same breath with Madame Blavatsky's monumental study under that title.

J. A.

*Where Is Thy Sting ?* By R. KNIGHT (Author-Partner Press, Ltd., London. 5s.)

This book is addressed "To those about to die." It aims to remove the painful sting from the majority who fear death, for both "Churchman and Atheist agree in shrinking from the fatal hour, in spite of the confidence possessed by the one and the stoicism

of the other." A sense of uncertainty is always fearful—such ignorance creates both terror and pain.

Avoiding the mistake of viewing discarnate life "exclusively from the religious standpoint" the author throws the light of Science on after-death states. Breaking away from popular notions of the hereafter his thinking is free and independent.



Orthodox dogmas and blind belief are condemned and an inquiry into the subject is invited; a meaningless life ending in annihilation is also rejected.

Without successive lives on earth, death would mean the end of our cherished hopes. The opening chapter of the book, devoted to Reincarnation, gives the true teaching of life as a school where the Soul periodically incarnates to learn.

A good attempt is made to prove the invisible—primarily the existence of the Soul; following which states after death are briefly examined. To some extent such proofs are helpful but not final in convincing others of man's immortality. That conviction, each one using the evidence provided must gain for himself.

Sleep and dreams are compared to death and after—a fitting analogy in many respects. It is also truly stated that each one, actively albeit unknowingly, is now and here preparing his life after death.

From his exposition of the subject we gather that the author is familiar with the teachings of Theosophy; and also, unfortunately, with those of pseudo-theosophy.

On the whole, however, our author's exposition will not arrest the attention nor comfort the heart of the man in the street. To those who examine its propositions from the logical viewpoint, this book will prove attractive, but it is doubtful whether it really gives consolation "To those about to die."

DAENA

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## CORRESPONDENCE

In the July issue of THE ARYAN PATH there is an article on "Punishment and Personality" by the Rev. Gordon Lang. As we know this gentleman to be a strong opponent of the Humane Slaughtering of Animals we would be

interested to know how he reconciles this attitude with the humanitarian principles expressed in THE ARYAN PATH article.

*London.*

E. M. H.



# THE LAND OF PSYCHE AND OF NOUS

*Churchmen oppose Spiritism—Other churchmen Favour it—The  
“New Way” of a Confused Dreamer—F'arousia—Consensus Philosophorum.*

The Bishop of London, Dr. Wintongram, affirmed some time since (1) that on a subject like Immortality, all of us should be “big enough to state our own views” and (2) to “respect the opinions of others who may have arrived at the same belief by quite another road.”\* It came about, however, that in the Spring of the present year a deceased clergyman, giving the name of Davids and claiming high ecclesiastical position, was alleged to have delivered a message to a certain “direct voice” medium. The imagination of the audience went to work thereon, and the communication was duly fathered on Dr. Davidson, late Archbishop of Canterbury. There is little need to add that the resulting garbled story circulated far and wide; and is supposed—rightly or wrongly—to have reached Dr. Ingram. In any case he has attacked Spiritism (1) as “a waste of time for the living,” mediumistic phenomena being “a telepathic interpretation of the minds of the sitters.” In view of these supposed facts, the Bishop has forbidden his clergy to dabble in “communication with the dead” or take part in “psychic research.”† Sir Oliver Lodge is disposed to regard the matter with

serious regret and has even suggested that the unwarranted introduction of Archbishop Davidson’s name has “thrown the subject back and undone a generation of effort.”‡ Some of us will venture to question this, notwithstanding the fact that the Bishop of Winchester has also entered the lists, asserting that Spiritism is “dangerous to the mental and spiritual health of the ordinary person”; that its materialisations are largely “a story of the exposure of false claims”; that its oral and written communications “can often be accounted for by the working of the unconscious mind”; that they are “pious and sentimental platitudes,” usually “on a lower plane than the utterances of any good and intelligent man who is still living.”\*\* All this is as old as the hills and has never deterred anyone who is drawn otherwise to research. It is to be noted, moreover, that Dr. Ingram “admits that he has no personal experience,”¶ and his sacerdotal peer is most probably in like case.

The so-called “Order of the Preparation for the Communion of Souls,” founded by clergymen to encourage co-operation between

\* See Dr. Ingram’s Introduction to *Life after Death*, edited by Sir James Marchant, K.B.E., and dealing with Christian eschatology in the light of psychical phenomena.

† *Light*, July 18, 1935, p. 450.

‡ *Ibid.*, July 25, p. 467.

\*\* *Light*, August 8, p. 506.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 503.



the churches and Spiritism—as explained on a previous occasion—is likely to survive episcopal prohibitions and perhaps even its own ill-devised title. The Rev. Mr. Tweedale—with a few others like him—will continue to testify from pulpit and platform, in books and journals, till at long last it will be found that there are no co-operating churches, after all the efforts. The Bishops will also have realised that the voice of the Anglican Prelacy is not like that of the Roman Pontiff, beyond all contradiction within his own province. The debates had by no means ended when the psychic journals were fortunately diverted into other channels by the misdeeds and exposure of a “flower medium,” caught in a flagrant act and yet finding a few of the elect to defend her cause. So also the Margery circle seems to have abandoned fingerprints in favour of messages from the late Conan Doyle, whose indiscriminate methods did so much in their day to depreciate a serious subject. He is engaged now in producing supernatural signatures through the Boston psychic; but under the auspices of a certain Mr. Button, as President of the American S. P. R., they are the sorriest exhibition produced in its recent annals by the Land of Psyche.\*

Is there a “new way,” possible and perhaps practicable in religi-

ous education? Is it likely also, supposing that it be tried seriously, to prove a “living way”? A recent essayist, the Rev. S. Udney, believes that there is and proffers it for consideration, but unfortunately in hectic terms.† He explains that it is the way of “Symbolism,” and is hence compelled to confess immediately that it is not only “the oldest in the world” but is that which the Latin-writing mystics of the West have expounded from time immemorial as the shewing forth of *invisibilia per visibilia*. He cites also St. Paul, who has told us that things unseen are understood in the light of those that are made. Mr. Udney will know undoubtedly of other voices, up and down the Christian centuries, which have contributed their golden intimations, a perennial witness without to a world that lies within. They range from pseudo-Dionysius to Bernard and Eckhart, from Ruysbroeck onward even to those modern days when Saint-Martin testified amidst the orgy of the French Revolution, and that great watchman of a later dawn, who is Emerson, proclaimed peace and unity to the developing American States. He, and the rest of them, spoke of living Symbols, of the grace of fuller life behind them, of sacramental signs and their inward grand moralities. It cannot be said that any of them appealed to children. Mr. Udney, however, thinks that the vegetable kingdom, from seed-time to harvest,

\* “Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the Margery Circle,” by William H. Button. See *Journal of the A.S.P.R.*, August, 1935, pp. 119-224.

† *The Contemporary Review*, s. v. “Symbolism: The New and Living Way in Religious Education,” October, 1935, pp. 455-461.



holds up a glass in Nature to the "actual transformation of one order of life into another," while the church calendar exhibits an analogical and "ever-expanding process in the spiritual world". To put the proposition quite roughly and crudely, it is this analogy which should be made known in the church schools—not to speak of "all schools throughout all lands"—by teachers who are "after the spirit" and "not after the letter." There is no need to point out that a strange and problematical rectification of the calendar must take place before it can set forth in logical sequence the growth of the Christ-Life in the given individual, from the pre-Advent Seed-time to Ascension Day, and not leave the balance of the year hopelessly in the lurch. It is patent otherwise on the surface that elementary and secondary schools are no more meant for the training of St. Johns of the Cross and St. Catherines of Sienna than Eton or Harrow or Winchester, or—for that matter—what are called the church schools. It is enough to ask where are those teachers "after the spirit" which the scheme postulates, where are they likely to be trained, where are the preceptors to instruct and examine, and where in fine the school-boards who would know what Mr. Udney happens to be talking about? If we remember rightly, he used to expound in other days and places the unfathomable mystery of identity between Shakespeare and Francis Bacon,

not to mention excursions in other worlds of myth beyond all common ken. He was dreaming then, and it seems to us that he is dreaming still.

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For Mr. M. Channing-Pearce\* the significance of the Sermon on the Mount is not to be separated from the significance of the Mount of Calvary. We must be prepared to recognise that "the Christology and the Christian ethic are one and indivisible." If the first is untenable, the second must pass therewith. But "an imminent Parousia," or Coming of the Kingdom, "dominated the mind and shaped the doctrine and ethic of the early Church," and this proved an illusion. We may search the eschatology and contrive, with Dr. Schweitzer, to liberate it from temporal limitations and make it valid for all time;† we may satisfy ourselves that such a "spiritual insight" did actually underpin the material faith; but the one remained implicit, while the other ruled. It taught believers to take no thought for a morrow which they would not see; to lay up no treasures on an "evanescent" earth; to cease from resisting evil, because evil was about to end; and to hate that worldly life which would forfeit the life to come. But the Parousia did not take place, "and we no longer expect it." What is therefore the present position? The answer is, that unless "the fundamental eschatology

\* *The Hibbert Journal*, October, 1935, pp. 45-56.

† *The Mysticism of St. Paul*, p. 380, quoted by Mr. Channing-Pearce.



of another life " is still tenable in some other and yet real sense, " the Christian ethic, no less than the Christian Creed " is nullified. In their place are offered us " the religion and ethics of this life," the religions of humanity, the fertility-faiths, the "incontrovertible psychology of the natural soul," the counter ethics with which those of Christianity are at war for ever. For those whom these cannot satisfy the vital question arises whether that other and yet real sense in which the eschatology of another life may be found and held either is discoverable now or has perhaps been with us from the beginning. Mr. Channing-Pearce has nothing to say hereon ; but he could have given an authentic answer on the authority of a cloud of witnesses, the Mystics of the Christian centuries. The Parousia was imminent for them ; for them the Kingdom came, in the one way which was promised by the Christian Master of the Way, though our essayist forgets about it. He said, unto those who had ears, that the Kingdom of Heaven is within.

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The Rev. Dr. E. N. Merrington proposes a far-reaching question whether there is a *consensus philosophorum*, actual or possible, expressed or implied. There is apparently a *consensus gentium*, a " common or universal agreement regarding certain accepted notions," as—for example—that " the world of perceived objects seems to have

a reality of its own independently of our perception of it."\* It does not signify at the moment that these perceptions are having their validity challenged in the foremost schools of thought, for—this notwithstanding—Dr. Merrington tends to hold that such " common consent of universal experience " may be postulated as "the basis of all our science and philosophy " so far as " materials " are concerned. However this may be, we are invited to look back upon the past and note successive attempts at transcending " the various philosophies " for their co-ordination in a larger system, a Philosophy of Philosophies, at once critical and constructive, and implying of necessity a hypothetical *consensus philosophorum*. Passing over an affirmed motive for unification which was " present in the work of Philo, Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists generally "; passing also the institution of relationship between Greek philosophers and Old Testament teachings, we are brought to those long-enduring centuries when the church imposed an un failing *consensus* between philosophy and dogmatic religion. A day came when these chains were cast off and reason rose up against faith. New sects and schools appeared, with their rival views on " the rational and the true." Kant in due course deprived the world of such easy sense of security, which at the same time carried no marks of *consensus*, nor is it to be thought that he and his " ultimate function " supplied the

\* *The Contemporary Review*, Sept., 1935, pp. 325—334.



want. It remained—we are assured—for Hegel to put forth “the most stupendous effort ever made in...the organisation of the history of philosophy” by declaring—or was it proving?—that the world is Spirit. Prof. Hocking\* has called his achievement “a world-view of vast empirical and historical richness without eclecticism.” An eclectic scheme was supplied by Victor Cousin, for whom the Schools of Idealism, Empiricism, Scepticism and Mysticism are “not false but unfinished,” and out of that which is authentic in all it is possible to produce “a complete philosophy.” So far as this survey has proceeded, we have not encountered the most shadowy *consensus philosophorum*, nor does it emerge in Dr. Merrington’s later considerations of Auguste Comte, of Renouvier and Rudolph Eucken, and of those who are still with us, like Croce, Gentile and Prof. A. N. Whitehead, not to speak of debaters whose records appear in “Proceedings” of the Aristotelian Society. Dr. Merring-

ton’s own conclusion admits by implication that no consensus has been discovered as yet, but that it remains possible. We may let it stand at this. What of its finality, supposing that it were found at last? From time immemorial the Latin Church has testified that *consensus omnium sanctorum sensus est Spiritus Sancti*. A sense of finality comes with faith therein: for others the dictum means only that those who gave us the doctrines approved by Rome were taught by the Spirit of God. We sigh and turn aside. And then as it may be, we hear perchance that choir of voices which, up and down the ages, has testified in many tongues: *Est una sola rēs*. It is not the voice of a dogma, nor of faith in a claim accepted; it belongs to a doctrine of experience. And we remember that there is now and has been from grey antiquity a *consensus omnium viatorum* who have followed the Path of Unity and found the One therein.

A. E. WAITE

\* “Types of Philosophy,” pp. 433-4, quoted by Dr. Merrington.



## ENDS AND SAYINGS

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ends of verse

*And sayings of philosophers.”*

Another volume of THE ARYAN PATH comes to a close with this issue. It is an open secret that its promoters sacrifice very heavily, not only in keeping it alive but also in enhancing its usefulness and deepening its influence. Not a few have enquired about the real purpose of this sacrifice. There is no mystery about it and we shall summarize that purpose here:—

(a) THE ARYAN PATH desires to awaken a genuine interest in spiritual culture, which is above racial, religious and geographical divisions and which possesses the power to unite the best minds who are seeking to better the conditions of human life by right education.

(b) It aims at drawing the attention of the modern man to the beauty and strength of ancient culture—especially the attention of the Occidental to Eastern culture. It also warns Asia, and especially India, while not overlooking the power and virtue of certain Western institutions, to avoid adopting such modes of life and thought as the West itself is fast discarding.

(c) THE ARYAN PATH advocates self-improvement and soul-development as the right method of human service; recognizing the place of social propaganda and political legislation in fighting poverty, selfishness and ignorance, it yet emphasises, as even more important, the way of spiritual living by the individual, not for his own salvation but as a means to the right service of human brotherhood.

(d) It fights the pseudo and sham modes of “spiritual” living advocated by irresponsible people—*e. g.* spiritistic mediums, psychics, clairvoyants, astrol-

ogers, Western “occultists” and Eastern “swamis” and their like. It does this by presenting sane and straightforward teachings, and by offering different but complementary points of view. It encourages the study of spiritual problems but the rejection of every blind belief, whether of religion, of science or of politics.

(e) Having found the ancient and immemorial Aryan Theosophy to be a reliable body of knowledge, THE ARYAN PATH takes every opportunity to put forward the teachings of that Philosophy. The words “Aryan” and “Theosophy” are used in their pristine pure sense: Aryan means noble and has nothing to do, for example, with the ignoble ideas or actions of the German Nazis; similarly Theosophy is Divine Wisdom-Religion (Bodhi-Dharma) or the Esoteric Science (Gupta-Vidya), known among the Neo-Platonists by that very name, Theo-sophia, and among the early Christians as Gnosis; it has naught to do with what passes in our midst as theosophy with its own species of apostolic succession, of spiritism etc.

The teachings of pure Theosophy are to be found in the profoundly philosophical writings of H. P. Blavatsky, whose real students in our vast world are only a few, though their number is now increasing as a result of the labours of those few and of THE ARYAN PATH during the last six years.

Our civilization badly needs the message of THE ARYAN PATH and we need the support of our readers and contributors, many of whom have been generous in the past; and we confidently look to them for making our seventh volume a rich success.







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