



Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the world, that face of the true Sun, which is now hidden by a vase of golden light ! so that we may see the truth and know our whole duty.

# THE ARYAN PATH

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## THE NEED OF OUR WORLD

Spirituality is on its ascending arc, and the animal or physical impedes it from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution only when the selfishness of the *personality* has so strongly infected the real *inner* man with its lethal *virus*, that the upward attraction has lost all its power on the thinking reasonable man. In sober truth, vice and wickedness are an *abnormal, unnatural* manifestation, at this period of our human evolution—at least they ought to be so. The fact that mankind was never more selfish and vicious than it is now, civilized nations having succeeded in making of the first an ethical characteristic, of the second an art, is an additional proof of the exceptional nature of the phenomenon.

H. P. BLAVATSKY ( *The Secret Doctrine* II. 110 )

In these days of penury and woe people wish to simplify life, implying that they must disentangle themselves from the want of things. Not given to philosophic reflection they do not analyse the character of their wish: they conclude that some thing must be done to those many things which they want, instead of perceiving that it is their want which needs attention, treatment, modification.

The old sages of India divided the whole round of human evolu-

tion into two—*pravritti* and *nivritti margas*, the paths of involution and evolution. The soul involves itself in nature, matter, *prakriti*, acquiring and adding to its storehouse of possession numerous objects, with a view to use them as vehicles through which experiences are procured. Then ensues the second half of the pilgrimage: experiences gained through vehicles having become part and parcel of the soul, it begins to throw out all and sundry vehicles retaining only its



own sphere of memory—the One Vehicle. Memory is called the mother-faculty. In the process of acquisition the soul becomes dependent on these many vehicles, even when they have become unnecessary. Through acquired habit man clings to his possessions of the past; at the same time, because of his own development, through the cycles, he keeps on discarding those possessions to free himself. This dual process causes the perplexing period of transition.

This phenomenon in the large cycle of evolution of the human kingdom repeats itself in the small cycle of the pilgrimage of each soul, and again in the still smaller cycle of every incarnation. In the early part of his life man labours to collect wealth of every kind; in the second half he struggles to dispose of what is gathered.

To conform himself to the processes of nature a wise man follows the injunction of the ancient Law Givers, and wilfully and willingly he parts company with the things of the world when "he sees his grand child playing at his knees". He learns to be dependent on only one vehicle, in this instance, his own body, in which are now stored all the experiences of his life. Not wealth, but the power to make wealth is his. With that one vehicle he retires, (he is named *vanaprastha*, forest-dweller), to emerge a little later to serve his fellows (and then he is named *sannyasi*).

In the olden days men practised, life after life, this willing and conscious giving up of possessions. Now it is considered fashionable and even righteous to die in harness, *i. e.*, in the condition of entanglement in worldly affairs. Men have lost the habit of giving up, and the very faculty is atrophied. This giving up is not merely donating out of one's super-abundance; it is the result of superb self-reliance—man is no more dependent upon things and beings, but lives in himself and exerts for others with his spiritual resources. Such was the rule of the old world; it should become the ideal for the modern world.

Nature is methodical and slow in its processes and none of our faculties unfold suddenly as by a miracle. We cannot suddenly become self-dependent, and live without the aid of a hundred things, when through centuries we have learnt to be dependent upon millions of them. Men and women of our civilization have made their own lives more woeful. They have defied Nature for several centuries and have precipitated among themselves the abnormal and unnatural manifestation referred to in the text with which this article opens. Nature is not revengeful; and our present world-depression is but Nature's attempt to re-adjust her disturbed harmony. We will not aid her by persisting in our old ways; therefore, President Hoover's plan—buy a new motor-car and prosperity will drive in—will not work. Nor will the other extreme



prove fruitful—to abstain from things wanted, when the craving for them persists, and is even dwelt upon. Disband your factories, destroy your machines, and be contented in loin cloth, and with a spinning wheel—that will not work either; for, masses of mankind are not ready, have not arrived at that turn of the spiral of evolution when they can live thus. Even modern India is not experienced enough to do this. To force a man to give up things when his desires are not extinct but only slumbering is unwise; very soon the devil in him will let itself loose. In the case of a nation such an imposition will result in lawlessness and chaos.

The philosophy of giving up must be promulgated as one worthy of immediate study. Mass-mind has to be prepared, and individuals must put into motion some Divine Ideas which purify and elevate. But such promulgators have their own lower natures to contend against, their own wants to control and their own desires to discipline. They also cannot afford to do violence to their natures by extreme measures. Their lives must flow evenly, if they are to effect that change in the mass-mind. They must learn so that they may teach.

What?

To begin with there are three Divine Ideas which should be studied and dwelt upon, so that they may move the minds of an increasing number of men and women. W. Q. Judge, who served humanity by promulgating

Divine Ideas, presented them (*The Irish Theosophist*, February 1895) thus:—

Among many ideas brought forward through the theosophical movement there are three which should never be lost sight of. Not speech, but thought, really rules the world; so, if these three ideas are good let them be rescued again and again from oblivion.

*The first idea* is, that there is a great Cause—in the sense of an enterprise—called the Cause of Sublime Perfection and Human Brotherhood. This rests upon the essential unity of the whole human family, and is a possibility because sublimity in perfectness and actual realization of brotherhood on every plane of being are one and the same thing. All efforts by Rosicrucian, Mystic, Mason and Initiate are efforts toward the convocation in the hearts and minds of men of the Order of Sublime Perfection.

*The second idea* is, that man is a being who may be raised up to perfection, to the stature of the Godhead, because he himself is God incarnate. This noble doctrine was in the mind of Jesus, no doubt when he said that we must be perfect even as is the father in heaven. This is the idea of human perfectibility. It will destroy the awful theory of inherent original sin which has held and ground down the western Christian nations for centuries.

*The third idea* is the illustration, the proof, the high result of the others. It is, that the Masters—those who have reached up to what perfection this period of evolution and this solar system will allow—are living, veritable facts, and not abstractions cold and distant. They are, as our old H. P. B. so often said, *living men*. And she said, too, that a shadow of woe would come to those who should say they were not living facts, who should assert that “The Masters descend not to this plane of ours”. The Masters as living facts and high ideals will fill the soul with hope, will themselves help all who wish to raise the human race.



# WHAT DOES DEATH MEAN TO YOU?

## I.—THE ABSTRACT IDEA

[ **Max Plowman** is known for his works on Blake ; he is a man of mystical insight ; he follows the advice of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and meditates on Death and records the result of that meditation in an essay, in three instalments. "What does death mean to me?" "A change in the mode of living. It means freedom from the limitation of sense perceptions in the exercise of pure imaginative consciousness." In this first part Mr. Plowman examines the attitude of mind engendered by science, proud and positive but capable only of making a weak and negative response.—EDS.]

The title calls for apology, for the question is personal, indeed it is almost impertinent. My apology is this. I want, if possible, to avoid the generalisations which current intellectual sophistry is ready to offer in place of conviction. What people think about death is usually not very interesting because so often it is nothing but a *réchauffé* of opinions, and therefore, properly speaking, not thought at all ; on the other hand, what they feel in the presence of death is more than interesting, it is deeply moving. I want if I can to find out what people feel about death. I want to present as simply as possible my own convictions. I want to get below the rationalism, indifference and cynicism which, over large portions of the globe, at present obscure the truth.

The question invites a tremendous effort of self-examination. For my part, I know that unless I can give a true record of my own experience and make a simple interrogation of my own consciousness, I shall have nothing profitable to say. And the temptation to abstraction is fierce. Yet

ultimately, what does it matter to you or to me what a million men have thought about death ? Each of us has to die his own death. The only wisdom of final value to us is that which we have learnt by experience, or has been so absorbed by consciousness as to have become our own. In the face of death, all dogma, all precept is but the echo of a distant sound. To discover what death means, it is our own hearts we have to search, our own experience we must plumb, the evidences of our own senses that is required.

What does death mean to me ? As a matter of *fact*, it means simply nothing. If I am to rely upon the evidence of my senses, they report that death means individual nothingness. I have reason to believe that a shell once dropped on the parapet of a trench in France and that its explosion threw me across the trench. I say I have reason to believe this but my evidence of the fact would not be accepted in a court of law, for it is merely what I was told when I awoke four hours later gazing at the sky.



Of the event itself, and of those four hours, I was, and am, as unconscious as a child unborn. So far as the record of consciousness is concerned, I was dead, and that death was a blank, a gap in existence without dream or impression of any kind. And the experience of seeming obliteration has been repeated under the influence of an anæsthetic. My senses report that death is a nothingness.

A moment's consideration will show that they could not well report anything else. Any sense destroyed reports a nothingness where before there was sensation; we do need experience to teach us that animate life is dependent upon sensation. But—and here we enter upon the fringe of the whole vast problem—I know that my life, here and now, is not purely a matter of sensation. Consciousness, though it acts by means of the organs of sensation, is greater than they and is in large measure their governor and director; and the creative imagination, which is the activity of consciousness, is positively independent of sensation. So it appears that, here and now, I am in possession of greater faculties than can be bounded by sensation. What is the meaning of these? If they have being, then they have importance. If they have life that is not bounded by the senses, then I am more than a sense-organ, and if I am more than a sense-organ then it is useless to appeal to the senses for the last word concerning death.

Let us attempt to be even simpler. Why do we embrace life and shun death? Because life is pleasant and death painful in its action. Man wants to be happy, and so long as life holds the prospect of happiness he clings to it. He will cling to it even after the conscious prospect of happiness has gone, for the unconscious instincts have formed the habit of pursuing happiness and will continue the pursuit long after the conscious mind has abandoned hope: the suicide has to murder his instincts before destroying himself.

And what is the simplest and most elementary form of happiness? Surely the gratification of the senses, to be observed in the child at its mother's breast. Here is happiness at its human source—the appeasement of hunger. That is what all life is, the appeasement of hunger. The whole of human life is just the sublimation of this simple desire for enjoyment, the lifting of this passion for self-gratification from elementary to higher and higher levels of experience until metamorphosis takes place and the love that “seeketh only self to please, to bind another to its delight” becomes the love that

seeketh not itself to please  
Nor for itself hath any care,  
But for another gives its ease  
And builds a Heaven in Hell's despair.

Life is only desirable to us while we want to exercise, in one form or another, the hunger of love. For love is life, and there is no life apart from love.

It would be unnecessary to state



such platitudes were it not for the fact that abstract ideas have become the bane of modern thought. Death is abstracted from life and regarded as pure phenomenon: it becomes an intellectual idea, and people capable of holding the idea deceive themselves into thinking they have faced death. They have, on the contrary, merely thrust reality from their minds in order to contemplate their own substitutes for it. The sovereign way to destroy the real idea of death is to abstract all thought of love from life, and then to regard death as a fact unrelated to feeling. For apart from love, death is quite meaningless. But so is life. Why then should we persuade ourselves that it is honest to regard death dispassionately? Louder than any other, death challenges love. Do we answer that challenge by pretending that love is not involved?

During the last half-century the effort to abstract the idea of death and treat it from the standpoint of science has become implicit in most of our western literature. Just because death has not objective existence this pseudo-scientific effort is, of course, entirely vain. Strictly speaking, science does not know of death, but only of change, for science uses the word death only to connote a natural process, common to every form of life—a part of the cycle of life to be observed in all nature. Seed, shoot, bud, flower, fruit, seed, is the complete cycle: why regard any one of these changes as climacteric?

Apart from human consciousness there is no reason why death should not be regarded simply as a fact; and science, being concerned with facts, and having nothing to do with the effects of human consciousness upon fact—science, in short, being objective, or not science—is right to regard death merely as a fact. The matter for wonder is that human beings, in their craving for factual certainty, should have failed to see that the most momentous issues of their lives must remain for ever outside the reach of science—the strange thing is that man, with all the creations of his own imagination surrounding him, should fail to observe that what gave birth to each one of these is an activity of life beyond the reach of science. This only serves to show how bewitched by the dicta of science western man has become: in a scientific era he can only receive instruction from science. With the foundering of his religious faith, crazily overweighted with dogma and bearing charts of a mythological world, he found himself in such a sea of despair he clutched at every straw of fact floating above the flood, and forgot, that the use of his own limbs might prove his saving. We are still moving on the tide of reaction to the acceptance of religious dogma for truth, and part of this reaction takes the very reasonable form of disbelief in any kind of authoritative statement about death, other than that which science pronounces. For my part I would not change that



movement if I could: I would only accelerate it by restoring belief in the validity of faith. Agnosticism is the natural and honest attitude to dogma that stands by its historic truth and has proved to be historically untrue. Agnosticism is an admirable attitude, provided it is maintained in humility; for it places the burden of conviction upon faith (which is the only ground of religious conviction) and thus prevents pseudo-religious credulity

from attempting to palm off the evidence of reason as valid for faith. But agnosticism is a negative and becomes detestable when it grows proud and wants to claim for itself the attributes that belong only to a positive. Yet this is what it has done recently, and the assumption usually goes unchallenged. Rationalism has arrogated to itself the status of religious belief and made its own inherent limitation the bound of truth.

MAX PLOWMAN

Science regards man as an aggregation of atoms temporarily united by a mysterious force called the life-principle. To the materialist, the only difference between a living and a dead body is, that in the one case, that force is active, in the other latent. When it is extinct or entirely latent the molecules obey a superior attraction, which draws them asunder and scatters them through space.

This dispersion must be death, if it is possible to conceive such a thing as death, where the very molecules of the dead body manifest an intense vital energy. If death is but the stoppage of a digesting, locomotive, and thought-grinding machine, how can death be actual and not relative, before that machine is thoroughly broken up and its particles dispersed? So long as any of them cling together, the centripetal vital force may overmatch the dispersive centrifugal action. Says Eliphas Levi: "Change attests movement, and movement only reveals life. The corpse would not decompose if it were dead; all the molecules which compose it are living and struggle to separate. And would you think that the spirit frees itself first of all to exist no more? That thought and love can die when the grossest forms of matter do not die? If the change should be called death, we die and are born again every day, for every day our forms undergo change."

—H. P. BLAVATSKY, *Isis Unveiled*, I, p. 480



# THE DOCTRINE OF NON-VIOLENCE

## A STUDY IN THE GITA

[ G. V. Ketkar, B. A., LL. B. is one of the two founders of the *Gita* Dharma Mandala, the other being the blind Karma-Yogi, Bhide Shastri, about whom an article appeared in our last number.

Mr. Ketkar argues his case cogently, and there is force in much that he has said; we, however, do not wholly agree with all his contentions and deductions.

We are among those who have the weakness to believe that not only the *Gita* but the whole of the *Mahabharata* has an allegorical background. In the ancient world history and myth were two devices simultaneously used—one to describe events, the other to illustrate moral and spiritual verities locked up in them. If Mr. Ketkar finds serious difficulties in assigning parts to characters and in interpreting events, if the Epic is to be read as an allegory, he will find that task equally arduous, if not more so, when he insists that the *Mahabharata* must be taken as a piece of pure history.

Further, we draw our readers' attention to a Note appended to this very interesting article, the subject of which should be further discussed.—EDS.]

"He who is free from the sense of egoism and whose Motive is untaintable, even if he kills all people he does not kill nor is he bound."

—*Bhagavad-Gita* xviii, 17.

This is a free translation of the verse which is a riddle to many; among them particularly to Mahatma Gandhi who is the outstanding exponent of the modern school of absolute *Ahimsa*. Their difficulties are rooted in the very setting of the *Gita*—a battle-field, blowing of conches, flying of arrows and Krishna's repeated injunctions to Arjuna to fight the battle. For them, as Sitānāth Tatwabhushan says in his *Krishna and the Gita*, it is an "awkward setting".

It had already made some of the old commentators uneasy, for they wanted to show that the *Gita* propounded spiritual inaction. In the first place, they said, that action is possible or advisable only

for those who are imperfect in knowledge, and Krishna's call to action was due to imperfection in Arjuna. But then how explain people like Janaka, who were perfect in knowledge, and attained salvation through action; further Krishna himself does incessant work (*Gita* iii, 23). These passages are either set aside as *obiter dicta* (*artha-vāda*) or the action referred to is regarded as technically inaction and non-work. Secondly they argue: Arjuna was on the battle-field for the purpose of fighting; want of true knowledge was the difficulty, and that was supplied by Krishna. Arguing in this round-about way they conclude that Krishna aimed not to induce Arjuna to fight but to remove his ignorance. This looks like making a world of difference between six and half-a-dozen. But this tortuous argument has prevailed among generations of Shāstris.



A shastraic injunction (विधिः) must be for something which is not already in existence. But Arjuna's preparedness for battle was already in existence. Therefore the Shastris conclude that the words like युध्यस्व (fight) do not form technically an injunction. They must be construed as something tolerated, condoned, or assumed (अनुवादः)

There are other devices. It is needless to enter into them. The above are typical and are given in order to compare them with the methods used by modern advocates of absolute *Ahimsa*. Their problem is harder than that of the old Shastris, but their ingenuity is greater. With one stroke they set aside the setting of the *Gita*: It is an allegory. The battle was not a real battle, just as the traveller in *Pilgrim's Progress* was not a real traveller but a Christian's soul striving for salvation.

They think it unnecessary to explain the allegory with reference to the whole Mahabharata. If the war in the *Gita* is allegorical the whole of Mahabharata must be shown to be an allegorical description of the conflict in human mind. This is impossible to demonstrate. Nor do they explain the allegory even with regard to the whole of the *Gita*. If "Kurukshetra" is the human mind, what places are to be given, for example, to *Bhishma* and *Drona*? If all the Kouravas are to be taken as passions and evil tendencies, how is it that they are mentioned nowhere except in the first

chapter?

The advocates of absolute *Ahimsa* realise the difficulty, as is evident from their explanations of other references to "fighting". If fighting and killing imply overcoming inner passions why argue that Arjuna was asked to fight only because he was a *Kshatriya* or warrior by caste? The overcoming of passions is necessary, surely, for *all* minds.

But all these devices notwithstanding, the general statement in the seventeenth verse of the eighteenth chapter stares us in the face. It is expressly stated that the action of a man, who has attained a certain mental development, and whose motive is pure and noble, though it outwardly looks like murder is not really murder; no responsibility for killing really attaches to that man. But Gandhiji, in his recent translation of the *Gita* (अनासक्ति योग) has found a curious way of getting round this passage. He says that it is impossible for a man to be absolutely free from egotism and to have absolutely a pure motive (बुद्धिः); therefore this verse must refer to God; as man never reaches this ideal, this verse is not to be applied to human beings at any stage. But the context opposes this view. There are five elements present in all human actions good or bad, and these produce actual accomplishment (xviii, 13-15). These actions are done by man—the specific word for man (नरः) being used in the fifteenth verse. In these circumstances, a man with egotism,



who regards that he himself alone is the doer, is ignorant. (xviii, 16). Immediately follows the verse in question. After dealing with the ignorant man in the preceding sixteenth verse, this seventeenth deals with the action of a man of true knowledge. The subject of *human* action is continued and in the following verse are enumerated the inward and outward constituents of *human* action. Mahatma Gandhi's explanation of the seventeenth verse, therefore, does not fit the context.

Gandhi's difficulty in this passage arises from the insistence even on *outward* non-killing or non-violence. Those who believed in absolute outward renunciation met with similar difficulties in the past. They stressed Arjuna's lower stage of spiritual development in order to justify their own interpretation that absolute outward renunciation must precede true knowledge (सर्वकर्मसंन्यासपूर्वकम् ज्ञानं). Gandhiji proceeds to argue from the other end and regards the ideal as beyond the reach of humanity—like the straight line in geometry which is unobtainable in practice.

These tortuous ways of getting round the clear statement in the *Gita* are all the more regrettable, because they are so unnecessary. They are pressed into service as a device to conform the *Gita* to the dogmatism of superficial and external *Ahimsa*. Similar ways of interpretation were in old times used to bring the *Gita* in conformity with the absolute external renunciation. But both *Sanyasa*

and *Ahimsa*—Renunciation and Non-violence in the *Gita* are essentially inner processes. Action has to be judged by the inner motive and not by its outer results. The action itself is far less important as compared with the purity of motive which is made steady and unperturbable by Yoga. The key to the mystery of action and duty is supplied in the following:—

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते संगोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।

सिद्धयसिद्धयोः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय ।

बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥

—गीता, अध्याय २; ४७, ४८, ४९

Let, then, the motive for action be in the action itself, and not in the event. Do not be incited to actions by the hope of their reward, nor let thy life be spent in inaction.

Firmly persisting in Yoga, perform thy duty, O Dhananjaya, and laying aside all desire for any benefit to thyself from action, make the event equal to thee, whether it be success or failure. Equal-mindedness is called Yoga.

Yet the performance of works is by far inferior to mental devotion, O despiser of wealth. Seek an asylum, then, in this mental devotion, which is knowledge; for the miserable and unhappy are those whose impulse to action is found in its reward.

—*Bhavadgita* II; 47, 48, 49

The *Gita* includes *Ahimsa* in its enumeration of virtues belonging to the state of perfect spiritual knowledge (xiii, 7). *Ahimsa* has also a prominent place in the list of godly qualities (xvi, 2). Thoughtless and ignorant action, with regard to its violent and



destructive consequences, is condemned as belonging to the quality of darkness (xviii, 25). But with all this Arjuna is repeatedly asked to fight. How is this contradiction to be explained? Killing as an outer action must be distinguished from the inner motive behind it. Human law regards man as responsible for the consequences of his act. Natural law takes also into account the purity or impurity of his motive. The enigmatic sentence "killing kills not" may be expanded as follows:—"killing to all outward appearances; but inwardly incapable of evil because absolutely pure in motive and completely selfless."

The rule that man is responsible for consequences of his actions holds good generally; but it fails in the ultimate analysis. Circumstances outside human control come in the way and influence the outward results of action. If the action is pure in motive, completely selfless, prompted only by the desire to do good to all beings, the external form and the outward result of his actions are really immaterial. The man of pure motive is not affected by the results of his acts.

Mahatma Gandhi himself by his non-violent method of resistance provides an excellent illustration of the proposition laid down in the seventeenth verse of the eighteenth chapter. A non-violent civil resister invites violence on himself and his followers, and at times on the general public. The natural and probable consequences

of civil resistance is violence—violence done by the other side but provoked by the non-violent resister himself. All this one-sided *Himsa* will be destroyed if the civil resister would refrain from resisting evil non-violently! But he has to choose this lesser violence in order to combat a greater violence. In his usual way Gandhi would say that the civil resister is responsible for all the one-sided unavoidable violence that results. The *Gita* on the other hand will say that if the non-violent resister is completely selfless and pure in motive, the responsibility of all this violence does not lie with him. Though in a very external sense he seems to be responsible for it, in reality he is not responsible. With regard to him it can be said that "He kills not, nor is he bound".

*The point at issue, let it be noted, is not between violence and non-violence, as it is often misrepresented. It is between the external, outward and superficial non-violence and the real inward and ultimate Ahimsa. Real Ahimsa is rooted in the selfless and pure motive and the desire to be good to all (सर्वभूतहिते रतिः). Acting with this motive, men who guide the destinies of humanity in an imperfect and perplexed state of society are often faced with two evils. Indeed this is not a very common situation but neither is it so rare as Gandhi would suppose. Arjuna was faced with such a situation. The four-fold division of duties (चतुर्वर्ण्य) was the mainstay of the social*



structure as it then existed. Arjuna had to fight for the right cause lest the whole structure would collapse. This was a greater anarchy (संकरः) than that which would follow from the loss of life, to which Arjuna referred in the first chapter. This greater anarchy Krishna describes in the twenty-fourth verse of the third chapter.

The real definition of non-violence (अहिंसा) is given by Dnyaneshwara in his Marathi commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gita* viz., "In thoughts, words and deeds one should be guided by the sole motive of doing good to all—this is the essence of *Ahimsa*." Those who insist on outward and superficial aspect of *Ahimsa* and stretch it to impossible limits are bound to be perplexed, like Gandhi. If anything is unobtainable in this world like the geometrical definition of a straight line, it is Gandhi's ideal of absolute external non-violence,—so different from the ideal that we find stated in the seventeenth verse of the eighteenth chapter.

It may be urged that this plea of pure motive is liable to be misused by evil doers to support their own violent actions. But everything is liable to such misuse. In the analysis of moral responsibility of action, we cannot stop at a certain point and say that we will not proceed as any further analysis is liable to be misused. Every sinner weaves a web of plausible excuses for his evil conduct. But that should not deter us from stating facts or

evaluating moral ideas and ideals. Satan will quote the Bible to support himself. Shall we twist the Bible in order to make it uncitable by Satan?

The *Gita* is not against the ideal of absolute outward *Ahimsa* but it begins in the world of motive and ends in the world of actions. It is therefore unnecessary to twist the meaning and the setting of the *Gita*. It is doing metaphysical *violence* to the *Gita*. Some of the exponents of absolute, outward *Ahimsa* have styled old historical heroes as "misguided patriots". They may go a step further and call Krishna a misguided *Awatar* and the *Gita* a misguided gospel. This course, though wrong, would be more honest than the efforts to twist the unmistakable and obvious significance of *Gita*'s setting and teaching.

It is very cruel to accuse those who explain this right and proper significance of the *Gita*, with advocacy of violence. *For the point at issue is between an external and internal definition of non-violence.* According to the *Gita* what may at times appear to be violent and cruel is often kind and non-violent. Outward appearance is due to seen and unseen circumstances (अधिष्ठानं दैवं च). The inward significance is more essential than the outward. This is brought out clearly in our verse. Importance of a particular view is often expressed in this pointed manner. Mahatma Gandhi sent, for instance, the following typical message to the *Gita* number of



*Kalyan*, a Hindi magazine published at Gorakhpur: "If tons of *Gita* study are placed in one scale and an ounce of *Gita* practice in the other, the latter will outweigh the former." Well, this does not mean that Gandhi is against *Gita* study. Similarly in the passage in question the *Gita* points out that "tons of outward *Himsa*

will not outweigh an ounce of inward *Ahimsa*". This does not mean that the *Gita* sanctions indiscriminate or hasty action. It means that the ultimate criterion of judging the responsibility of an individual for the results of his actions, is the purity or otherwise of his motive (बुद्धि:).

G. V. KETKAR

### MOTIVE AND ACTION

#### A NOTE ON THE ABOVE

The central idea discussed in the above article is highly important not only in national affairs but also in the personal life of every individual. Theosophy fully agrees about the supreme value of motive; motive is the soul of action. But Mr. Ketkar gives unqualified support to the doctrine that any and every action becomes righteous if the motive is pure, unselfish and noble. Theosophy would qualify this extreme view and say that not only intention and motive but also the execution of a deed and the method employed have values which must be taken into account.

First, a noble and unselfish motive or a worthy intention when not acted out produces one type of undesirable result. Many are the people who pave their way to hell with good intentions. If inner motive and intention were all in all, such people ought to find themselves very soon in a heaven of peace, wisdom and prosperity; but they do not. Why?

Secondly, how to evaluate the motive of another, when it is so very difficult to decipher one's own? If actions belong to the plane of effects motives belong to the plane of the invisible but ever potent Causality. Who can raise his mind to that level and see the vision? He who has freed himself from the pressure and influence of effects; in short an adept.

H. P. Blavatsky describes this world of Causality as "the subtle, yet never-breaking thread that is the action, agent and power of Karma, and Karma itself in the field of divine mind". (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, p. 25)

She adds, "Once acquainted with this no adept can any longer plead ignorance in the event of even an action, good and meritorious in its *motive*, producing evil as its result; since acquaintance with this mysterious realm gives the means to the Occultist of foreseeing the two paths opening before every premeditated as unpremeditated action, and thus puts him in a position to know with certainty



what will be the results in one or the other case."

But as we deal with the world of effects in which mortals live, move and have their being, we must learn and teach not only to make our motives pure, unselfish and enlightened, but also to take care that tangible results of our deeds are not evil, and capable of multiplying evil. Purification of motive ( हेतुः ) is a path in itself; and the *Gita* is not silent about it; Buddhi—the discerning power which is related to our motive ( हेतुः )—is threefold, material, psychical and spiritual (*Gita*, xviii. 30-32). Part of the discipline which brings forth untaintable motive consists in the right per-

formance of present action, which involves not only motive but also the method of action, and its tangible results. This is so important that it is necessary to quote in full these verses.

The discerning power ( Buddhi ) that knows how to begin and to renounce, what should and what should not be done, what is to be feared and what not, what holds fast and what sets the soul free, is of the *sattva* quality.

That discernment, O son of Pritha, which does not fully know what ought to be done and what not, what should be feared and what not, is of the passion-born *rajas* quality.

That discriminating power which is enveloped in obscurity, mistaking wrong for right and all things contrary to their true intent and meaning, is of the dark quality of *tamas*.

—*Gita*, xviii, 30-31-32

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।

बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ ३० ॥

यया धर्ममधर्मच कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।

अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३१ ॥

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता ।

सर्वार्थान् विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३२ ॥

—श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु अष्टादशोऽध्याये ।



# DRUIDISM

## I

[ **W. Arthur Peacock** sketches the interesting belief of a prehistoric people. We append notes which tell what Theosophy has to say on the subject.—EDS.]

Much has been written concerning the glories of Ancient Rome, the wonders of Ancient Egypt, and the wisdom of Ancient Greece. The discoveries of recent years in the Valley of the Kings have served to focus attention upon the Pyramids of Egypt and upon the religious faith associated with them. The philosophy of the Orient has been explained to the Occident and the literature dealing with the religions of the East has in recent years been considerably added to. Such learned men and women as Godfrey Higgins, Gerald Massey, Max Müller, Sir Edwin Arnold, Madame Blavatsky and Wallis Budge have each endeavoured to tell of the wonder, beauty, and reason of the religious faiths that were nourished by the peoples of the ancient Indian, Persian and Egyptian civilisations. Yet while much has been accomplished in this direction, little has been done to explain the faith of Ancient Britain or the monuments associated with its religious worship.

Men wander towards Salisbury Plain and gaze upon the great monument of antiquity. At once they are interested. They become eager to learn what is known regarding it. "Who built it," they ask. "Who were the Druids?" "In what did they believe?"

They buy a local handbook but this adds little to their knowledge. They turn to the bookshelves of their local libraries to find that even here little help is forthcoming. Literature dealing with the Ancient Faith is scarce. It has been written for a few since only a tiny minority have displayed an interest in the ideals of belief and have sought to unravel the mysteries of the past. That this should be is regrettable, for the religion of the Ancient Druids was one that was established in wisdom and in beauty. Rightly, Theodore Watts Dunton spoke of it as "the mysterious poetic religion, which more than any other religion, expresses the very voice of nature".

Few faiths have been more misrepresented or so little understood as that of Druidism. Julius Cæsar spread the notion that the Druids were savage and ignorant men and that idea has been handed down and generally accepted through the years. H. G. Wells in his *Outline of History* (Vol. I, 78) paints a typical picture and reveals his attachment to the Julius Cæsar idea. He says:

Away beyond the dawn of history, 3,000 or 4,000 years ago, one thinks of the Wiltshire uplands in the twilight of a midsummer day's morning. The torches pale in the glowing light. One has a dim apprehension of a procession through the avenue of stone, of priests,



perhaps fantastically dressed with skins and horns and horrible painted masks—not the robed and bearded dignitaries our artists represent the Druids to have been—of chiefs in skins adorned with necklaces of teeth and bearing spears and axes, their great heads of hair held up with pins of bone, of women in skins or flaxen robes, of a great peering crowd of shock-headed men and naked children. They have assembled from many distant places; the ground between the avenues and Silbury Hill is dotted with their encampments. A certain festive cheerfulness prevails. And amidst the throng march the appointed human victims, submissive, helpless, staring towards the distant smoking altar at which they are to die . . .

that the harvest may be good and the tribe increased.

To paint a picture of our ancestors as savage and ignorant men is very easy. To prove its truth is much more difficult, for the word of Julius Cæsar lacks confirmation. A more balanced view is advanced by Professor Wingfield Stratford in that great scholastic work *The History of British Civilisation*. He comments:—

First impressions are notoriously the strongest and the earliest authority on the Gaulish cult, which was said to have been derived from that of Britain is furnished by the memoirs of the Roman proconsul, Julius Cæsar. A soldier politician, writing up his own career as a conqueror of Gaul, was not likely to be the most sympathetic commentator on his victim's religion. It is as if the young Arthur Wellesly had inserted into an account of his campaigns two or three paragraphs dealing with the Hindu religious philosophy. Would not he have summed up the matter in a sentence "The Nation is exceedingly devoted to superstitious rites". . . .

The best proof after all that a lofty faith did exist in England hundreds of

years before the coming of the Romans, is that such a faith is still able to speak to us in language more direct and conclusive than that of any book. The great Temple of Stonehenge whether it be Druid or pre-Druid, represents an advance in constructional technique, beyond the larger and probably even more imposing Avebury. Stonehenge is as eloquent in ruin, as Amiens and Westminster, and he must be dull indeed who can stand in the shadow of those enormous trilithons and fail to realise that the men who compassed the immense achievement,—so immense that even modern writers have been found who attribute it to magic—of transporting and erecting this, for all mundane purposes, quite useless edifice, must have had dreams and aspirations, and a leisure to indulge in them that we, of a hustled and nerve racked generation, may well envy them.

What were the essential tenets of this lofty faith? Dr. Stukeley has written that the best way to appreciate the wonder of Stonehenge is to enter it blindfolded. It was in this manner that the novitiate was led into the circle in olden times. Not until he reached the heart of the Circle was the bandage removed. By this means the lesson was taught that just as the pupil seemed small beside the great trilithons so too was man when compared with the universe around him. From the heart of the Circle the pupil looked to the Prostrate Stone which lies between the Circle and the Gnomon or "Hele" stone at the entrance. It is this stone which modern Journalists have labelled "The sacrificial stone" and upon it, it is said, were laid the victims of the Druids.

A perusal of Druid ideals leads



to another explanation, an explanation which shows that there was beauty and wisdom associated with this ancient faith. To the Druids this stone was known as the stone of Mor-Morthair, the stone of Motherhood. Says the Ancient Ritual:—

She who has given all she had to give looks back from the place of sacrifice to the glory of beyond. The Mother Spirit looks with joy upon the Circle that her Son has drawn around the Place of Brightness and Delight and rejoices in the task of her life. This Prostrate Stone is the symbol of the great sacrifice of self. Here self is sacrificed that goodness may abound. By the death of self upon the Sacrificial stone, the Spirit now directs towards the Circle of life's hope. When self is lost in highest thought of life, true happiness is found. Blessed are they who cast all selfishness aside beside the Stone of Sacrifice and climb to heights of thought in which perfect peace is found.

Much of the Druid instruction has been lost for it was principally of an oral character but the fragments that have been preserved serve to emphasise the wisdom, broadmindedness and tolerance of the ideal. It was believed that life had its origin in a point of existence called Annwn, the utter darkness. From this point man passed by a regular graduation until the highest conceivable state of happiness was attained. The teachings of Islam have much in common with the Druid ideal.

There are times when reading the *Koran* it seems as though it is the Bardic teachings that lie before us.

The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, are car-

dinal teachings of the Druids. The Druid Conception of the Infinite was one of All-Love and of All-Mercy. The ordinary evangelists would find little to their liking in the old philosophy. The idea that a man's death upon a cross would save the world would not be countenanced by the Druids. The doctrine of salvation by deputy found no place within their teaching. They taught that every man must bear his own burden and that as men sow so do they reap. The Druids believed that the law of eternal justice prevailed through all, that every man and woman had their place in the great scheme of things, that nothing happened by mere coincidence or chance, but that all things revealed the great purpose. Much within their teaching is in full keeping with the religious ideals of Egypt, India, Persia and would serve to prove that in days far away there did exist a great Universal religion, the ruins of which still stand in the form of the megalithic monuments of Persia, Brittany, Egypt, Ireland and elsewhere to remind us of our indebtedness to the past.

I am tempted to make many quotations from the old Bardic teachings in order to show the excellence of the earliest religious ideal to be nourished in this country. But I will rest content with just the following which perhaps will do something at least to prove that Druidism was not the out-birth of savage minds.

Three things which do not become a godly man: to look with one eye; to



listen with one ear; and to help with one hand.

The three measuring rods of every man: his God; his devil and his indifference.

The three foundations of piety: active justice, perceptive truth and energetic love.

The three necessities of goodness: knowledge, consideration and happiness.

In these days Druidism has become numbered among the forgotten faiths of other days. Only a tiny section of the community give consideration to its great message. Only a few seek to unravel the great mystery of its

ruined shrines. This much, however, is certain, Druidism was a faith wedded to reason. It was not a narrow, sectarian teaching but a Universalist faith. Of that faith Madame Blavatsky has rightly written:—

“On the dead soil of the long bygone past stand their sacred oaks, now dried up and stripped of their spiritual meaning by the venomous breath of materialism. But for the student of occult learning, their vegetation is still verdant and luxuriant, and as full of deep and sacred truths.”

W. ARTHUR PEACOCK

## II

[H. P. Blavatsky's writings yield a wealth of information, from which the following is extracted.—EDS.]

**Druids.** A sacerdotal caste which flourished in Britain and Gaul. They were Initiates who admitted females into their sacred order, and initiated them into the mysteries of their religion. They never entrusted their sacred verses and scriptures to writing, but, like the Brahmans of old, committed them to memory; a feat which, according to the statement of Cæsar, took twenty years to accomplish. Like the Parsis they had no images or statues of their gods. The Celtic religion considered it blasphemy to represent any god, even of a minor character, under a human figure. It would have been well if the Greek and Roman Christians had learnt this lesson from the “pagan” Druids. The three chief commandments of their religion were:—“Obedience to divine laws; concern for the welfare of mankind; suffering with fortitude all the evils of life”.—*Theosophical Glossary* (“Druids”).

The thirteen Mexican serpent-gods bear a distant relationship to the thirteen stones of the Druidical ruins.—*Isis Unveiled*. I, 572

The Druids of the Celto-Britannic regions also called themselves snakes. “I am a Serpent, I am a Druid!” they exclaimed. The Egyptian Karnak is twin-brother to the Carnac of Bretagné, the latter Carnac meaning the serpent's mount. The Dracontia once covered the surface of the globe, and these temples were sacred to the dragon, only because it was the symbol of the sun, which, in its turn, was the symbol of the highest god—the Phœnician Elon or Elion, whom Abraham recognized as El Elion. (See Sanchoniaton in “Eusebius,” Pr. Ev. 36; Genesis xiv.) Besides the surname of serpents, they were called the “builders,” the “architects”; for the immense grandeur of their temples and monuments was such, that even now the pulverized remains of them “frighten the mathematical calculations of our modern engineers,” says Taliesin.—*Isis Unveiled*. I, 554



The Druidical circles, the Dolmen, the Temples of India, Egypt and Greece, the Towers and the 127 towns in Europe which were found "Cyclopean in origin" by the French Institute, are all the work of initiated Priest-Architects, the descendants of those primarily taught by the "Sons of God," justly called "The Builders."—*The Secret Doctrine*. I, 209

These "hinging stones" of Salisbury Plain are believed to be the remains of a Druidical temple. But the Druids were historical men and not Cyclopes, nor giants. Who then, *if not giants, could ever raise such masses* (especially those at Carnac and West Hoadley), range them in such symmetrical order that they should represent the planisphere, and place them in such wonderful equipoise that they seem hardly to touch the ground, are set in motion at the slightest touch of the finger, and would yet resist the efforts of twenty men who should attempt to displace them.

We say, that most of these stones are the relics of the last Atlanteans. We shall be answered that all the geologists claim them to be of a natural origin. . . . Let us examine the case.—*The Secret Doctrine*. II, 343

In the gods of Stonehenge we recognise the divinities of Delphi and Babylon, and in those of the latter the devas of the Vedic nations.—*The Secret Doctrine* II, 379

The mystery veiling the origin and the religion of the Druids, is as great as that of their supposed fanes is to the modern Symbolist, but not to the initiated Occultists. Their priests were the descendants of the last Atlanteans, and what is known of them is sufficient to allow the inference that they were eastern priests akin to the Chaldeans and Indians, though little more. It may be inferred that they symbolized their deity as the Hindus do their Vishnu, as the Egyptians did their *Mystery God*, and as the builders of the Ohio Great-Serpent mound worshipped theirs—namely under the form of the "mighty Serpent," the emblem of the eternal deity TIME (the Hindu Kâla). Pliny called them the "Magi of the Gauls and Britons." But they were more than that. The author of "*Indian Antiquities*" finds much affinity between the Druids and the Brahmins of India. Dr. Borlase points to a close analogy between them and the Magi of Persia;—(But the Magi of Persia were never Persians—not even Chaldeans. They came from a far-off land, the Orientalists being of opinion that the said land was Media. This may be so, but from what part of Media? To this we receive no answer.)—others will see an identity between them and the Orphic priesthood of Thrace: simply because they were connected, in their esoteric teachings, with the universal Wisdom Religion, and thus presented affinities with the exoteric worship of all.

Like the Hindus, the Greeks and Romans (we speak of the Initiates), the Chaldees and the Egyptians, the Druids believed in the doctrine of a succession of worlds, as also in that of seven "creations" (of new continents) and transformations of the face of the earth, and in a seven-fold night and day for each earth or globe (See "*Esoteric Buddhism*"). Wherever the Serpent with the egg is found, there this tenet was surely present. Their *Dracontia* are a proof of it. Their belief was so universal that, if we seek for it in the esotericism of various religions, we shall discover it in all.

—*The Secret Doctrine*. II, 756



## THE VISION OF JOHN KEATS

[John Middleton Murry's intimacy with the mind of Keats is revealed to the careful reader of his *Keats and Shakespeare*. In the following article he presents the psychological Drama of the Soul which lived in the masque of John Keats a little over a century ago.

We are not told why Keats should have passed through so "extraordinary" an experience, and that "so quickly and so young". Esoteric Science teaches that every human soul very quickly passes through its own evolution in previous lives, just as the foetus rapidly passes through æons of evolution in the short period of nine months. It also teaches that, on occasions, Chelas under training on their way to the Great Perfection, incarnate in a state which is described as that of a "resting-adept"—so named because these souls are resting for a while from the arduous duties of their real vocation and even its memory, while engaging themselves with creative activity, generally in the realm of high art or philosophy. Was Keats a resting-adept? Or was he but a reincarnation of the soul approaching the Path to the Holy Ones—purifying himself through suffering, and strengthening himself through service of human minds?

The sub-headings are our own.—EDS.]

In the brief and wonderful life of John Keats there is a definite moment at which he became a *great* poet—a moment at which this boy in years of twenty-three, passed suddenly into the company of Shakespeare, and reached a height which no English poet, save perhaps Shakespeare himself, has attained. This moment is the writing of the great *Odes*—"To a Nightingale," "On a Grecian Urn," "To Melancholy". They were written in the spring of 1819—between the middle of April and the end of May. There was one equally great Ode to come after, in September, "To Autumn". But the crucial happening was in the Spring.

It looks miraculous. It looks miraculous when we leave a swelling bud overnight and come down to the garden in the morning to find it burst into flower. Yet, if we had had patience to watch it

through the night, the discontinuity which makes the apparent miracle, would have been continuous. *Natura non facit saltus*: Nature never makes a leap, says the old profound maxim. But, alas, we are not always in a position to watch Nature at her work. Sometimes the fault is in ourselves: we lack the patience and disinterestedness. Sometimes, above all in the case of the growth of those natural beings called men, the natural process is hidden from our most patient vision. There is a silence which we cannot penetrate—those "silent workings of the spirit" of which Keats himself spoke.

These "silent workings of the spirit" are not supernatural. They are merely hidden from our eyes. There is nothing supernatural in the sudden emergence of great poetry; nothing supernatural in what we are accustomed to call



"inspiration," even though the word itself records a time when it appeared to a more naïve understanding that the "spirit of prophecy" was "breathed into" the living man. Great prophecy, great poetry always look miraculous; but that is because we take the simple miracle of existence for granted. We do not say, or think, that the bud is "inspired" to burst into flower. For us, creatures of habit, it just flowers. The happening is ordinary; we have seen it happen ten thousand times. The miracle, the inspiration, is reserved for the happening with which we are not familiar. And least familiar of all to men is that attitude of great prophet-poets which denies the familiarity of anything. It is a queer paradox—the queerest of all: that the prophet-poet then seems to men most miraculous when he denies the miraculous.

Behold, the lilies of the field! They toil not, neither do they spin; but Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

There goes the miracle of Solomon! Solomon the wonder, Solomon the legend,—a candle-flame against the magnificence of the tiny lilies the gaping peasants were treading underfoot while they listened.

To see the world in a grain of sand  
And a heaven in a wild flower—

Such are, said William Blake, "the auguries of innocence". And innocence *denies* the miraculous, just as the earlier innocence of the child has no conception of the

miraculous. For where everything is miracle, nothing is miraculous. That is why the prophet-poet Jesus said "Except ye become as little children ye can in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven". For what he meant by the Kingdom of Heaven was simply the condition in which everything is miraculous because nothing is miraculous. It seems astonishingly simple to me, and yet I find that others have great difficulty in understanding the condition.

It is easy enough to get thousands of men to-day to agree that nothing is miraculous; it is, indeed, an axiom of modern thinking. In such a mere negation the modern mind is at home. But when you add: "Because everything is equally miraculous" the cheerful acquiescence passes into a stony, and uncomprehending stare. If I say, what I profoundly believe, that "Nothing is supernatural," I am modern and acceptable. If I go on to say, "*Everything* is natural," a slight unease is apparent. If I go further and say, everything that is, is natural, *as it is*; but becomes unnatural, a chimera of the brain, when you have turned it into something else, something that is not," then the hard bright modern mind looks at me askance, as though I were an active enemy. I am not that; I am simply a man who sees, very plainly, that you can only blot out from the human mind the miracle of the supernatural by opening men's eyes to the miracle of the natural. You can drive out worship of the thing that is not,



only by initiating men into worship of the thing that *is*; religion must be annihilated; but it can only be annihilated by Religion.

**"Grow as the flower grows"—*Light on the Path***

Keats was a poet-prophet. He was one of those who initiated men into the worship of the thing that is; who fought, thus positively, against the worship of the thing that is not. In order to initiate men into the worship of the thing that is, you need to have been initiated yourself—to have initiated yourself. This is a slow and painful process. The extraordinary thing about Keats is that he accomplished it so quickly and so young. One might almost say: too quickly and too young. Keats' life is a wonderful, natural happening; but it is also the most completely painful life of which I know. To watch it, to re-live it, as one must if one is to watch it truly, is a torment almost beyond human endurance. I confess that there are whole months when I am *afraid* to read Keats' letters—the letters of the man who said, so simply, the simple truth about great poetry: that "if it come not naturally as the leaves to a tree, it had better not come at all".

"Naturally," not easily. As in the physical order the birth of a child is natural, nothing more natural, but comes with labour and pain; so in the subtler organic order, to which the birth of great poetry belongs, travail and suffering are the condition of delivery. In Keats the suffering and the travail are terribly concentrated. It all happens in less than a year.

There were three brothers, without father or mother, bound to each other by intimate and passionate affection. Tom, the youngest, was fatally ill with consumption; George, the eldest, had fallen in love with an adorable girl. To be able to marry her, he had to emigrate to America. That is how things stood in June 1818; this is how Keats felt about them:—

Now I am never alone without rejoicing that there is such a thing as death—without placing my ultimate in dying for a great human purpose. Perhaps if my affairs were in a different state, I should not have written the above—you shall judge: I have two brothers; one is driven, by the "burden of Society," to America; the other with an exquisite love of life, is in a lingering state. My love for my Brothers, from the early loss of our parents, and even from earlier misfortunes, has grown into an affection "passing the love of women". I have been ill-tempered with them—I have vexed them—but the thought of them has always stifled the impression that any woman might otherwise have made upon me. I have a sister too, and may not follow them either to America or to the grave. Life must be undergone. . ."

(*Letter to Bailey*, 10 June, 1818)

George departed for America. John, to have something to distract his mind from his own misery, went with his friend Brown on a long and arduous walking tour in Scotland. In two months he was back in London, himself seriously ill with what he must have known, though he dared not admit it to himself, was consumption. His



darling Tom, with whom he lived alone in Hampstead, was nearing the end. For three months Keats endured the agony of watching him slowly die. While watching, he wrote "Hyperion"—the beginning of his poetic greatness. On December 1st Tom died. The pressure lifted, straightway Keats fell in love with Fanny Brawne. Another month, and the consumption is at his throat again. It begins to be clear to him, though he dares not admit it, that he will never marry Fanny. Fate will deny him everything. There is nothing that will not be taken from him. Then he writes "The Eve of St. Agnes"—a dream of his love's fruition, a dream which he *knows* is a dream. It is, with "Hyperion,"

**"Woe to them who live without suffering"—*Secret Doctrine***

The whole of this letter, even its seeming irrelevancies, is relevant to this process of initiation. It is the story, told from day to day, of the re-birth of a great soul. In this essay I can do no more than emphasize two of its crucial moments. The first comes on the 19th of March. He has had a letter from a friend telling him of a misfortune. And Keats begins to muse.

This is the world—thus we cannot expect to give away many hours to pleasure. Circumstances are like clouds continually gathering and bursting. While we are laughing, the seed of some trouble is put into the wide arable land of events—while we are laughing it sprouts, it grows, and suddenly bears a poison-fruit which we must pluck. Even so we have leisure to reason on the misfortunes of our friends; our own touch us too nearly for words. Very

the greatest of his long poems. Then comes silence, then the *Odes*.

But fortunately for us, fortunately for the world, this silence—this "tedious agony" as he called it—was only a poetic silence. Keats could write no poetry. But he could and did write a long and marvellous letter—taken up one day, dropped the next, begun on February 14th and ending on May 3—a letter it must be of 25,000 words, almost a book in itself, and assuredly for sheer simple profundity, one of the greatest books in the English language. It is the record of Keats' initiation into the worship of the things that *are*—of the things that are happening to him.

few men have arrived at a complete disinterestedness of Mind. . . .

The seed of trouble (as we have seen) had been put into the wide arable land of events for Keats. The poison-flower that he must pluck was before him: the certain premonition of death was there before his mind—death that would rob him of all he desired, all he deserved—"verse, fame, and beauty". His misfortunes were touching him "too nearly for words". He could not speak of his love even to his brother, he could not utter himself in poetry any more.

We see, then, what is at the back of Keats' thought in his dream of the possibility of "complete disinterestedness of mind". He conceives the possibility of



becoming completely detached from himself. The mere conception, at this moment of absolute despair, of suffering almost unimaginable, is heroic. John Keats suffers agony; yet he whispers to himself: May there not be something in John Keats that can watch his suffering, lucid and unperturbed? And, of course, by adamant spiritual law, the conception of the possibility makes it straightway reality. Immediately, Keats has a marvellous vision of human life. Men are, he sees, fundamentally creatures of animal instinct.

The greater part of men make their way with the same instinctiveness, the same unwandering eye from their purposes, the same animal eagerness as the Hawk. The Hawk wants a Mate, so does the man—look at them both, they set about it and procure one in the same manner—they get their food in the same manner. The noble animal Man for his amusement smokes his pipe—the Hawk balances about the clouds—that is the only difference between their leisure. This it is that makes the amusement of Life to a speculative (*i. e.* a “contemplative”) mind—I go among the fields and catch a glimpse of a stoat or a field-mouse

peeping out of the withered grass—the creature hath a purpose and his eyes are bright with it. I go amongst the buildings of a city and I see a man hurrying along—to what? The creature has a purpose and his eyes are bright with it. But then, as Wordsworth says, “we have all one human heart—”. There is an electric fire in human nature tending to purify—so that among these human creatures there is continually some birth of new heroism.

This is profound, and it is profoundly beautiful. Nor would it be profound, were it not profoundly beautiful. “Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty,” Keats was in a little while to declare, in one of his two greatest Odes. Here we see what he meant by it. If that vision of human life were not beautiful, it would not be true. Utter that same truth cynically, with hatred, and it ceases to be true; utter it wonderingly, with love, and it is true. And because it is beautiful and true, it is *complete*. Keats sees that “there is an electric fire in human nature tending to purify—so that among these human creatures there is continually some birth of new heroism”.

“Stern and exacting is the Virtue of Viraga”

—*Voice of the Silence*

Obviously; for this birth of new heroism is taking place in Keats himself at the very moment that he is writing. He does not know it; but we *see* it. It is the birth of the heroism of utter detachment, of that complete disinterestedness of which he has conceived the possibility. On he goes, therefore. Nothing can stop

him now. The new birth has begun. Its process is inevitable.

Even here, though I myself am pursuing the same instructive course as the veriest human animal you can think of—I am, however, young—writing at random, straining at particles of light in the midst of a great darkness, without knowing the bearing of any one assertion, of any one opinion—yet may I not in this be free from sin? May there not



be superior beings, amused with any graceful, though instinctive, attitude my mind may fall into as I am entertained with the alertness of the stoat or the anxiety of a deer? Though a quarrel in the streets is a thing to be hated, the energies displayed in it are fine; the commonest man shows a grace in his quarrel. (Seen) by a superior being our reasonings may take the same tone—though erroneous, they may be fine. This is the very thing in which consists poetry, and if so it is not so fine a thing as philosophy—for the same reason that an eagle is not so fine a thing as a truth.

Still more profound, and more profoundly beautiful. But people find it hard to understand. Keats has become utterly detached from himself, at the very moment that he is making his supreme discovery. These are, I sometimes think, the most astonishing words in the whole great English language—the extreme pinnacle of English poetic consciousness—universal and miraculous. *Keats is himself become that Superior*

*Being whose existence he imagines.* He sees that Keats in this very moment of supreme poetic striving is simply an animal, straining instinctively (with the anxiety of a deer) “after particles of light in a great darkness”; he sees Keats, now at this instant, as a graceful animal. He thus sees Keats the poet. He sees that his reasonings, though erroneous, may be fine. He sees that poetry, which is this instinctive attitude of the total being, is not so fine a thing as Philosophy. But *what* is this Philosophy? Why, nothing but what Keats, the Superior Being, Keats detached from John Keats the poet, is doing now. He has achieved the final vision. He is become a completely disinterested—not a Man, for the man Keats is what the Superior Being is watching,—a completely disinterested Spirit. He *is* Spirit.

### “Look inward: thou art Buddha”—*Voice of the Silence*

Suddenly, he says: “Give me this credit—Do you not think I strive—to know myself.” We do, we do! There is no such marvellous act of self-knowledge, of self-annihilation recorded in the whole history of English literature.

Within a month he had begun the composition of the most wonderful sequence of *great* poems in our language. Within a month he had consolidated his victory. He knew what had happened to him. He had passed through the “Vale of Soul-making”; he had been re-born, with that “eternal rebirth of the

soul” of which the mystics speak. He writes:—

The common cognomen of this world among the misguided and superstitious is “a vale of tears” from which we are to be redeemed by a certain arbitrary interposition of God and taken to Heaven. What a little, circumscribed, straightened notion! Call the world if you please “The Vale of Soul-Making”—Soul as distinguished from an Intelligence. There may be intelligences or sparks of the divinity in millions—but they are not Souls till they acquire identities, till each one is personally itself. Intelligences are atoms of perception—they know and they see and they are pure, in short they are God. How then are Souls to be made? How then are these sparks which are God to



have identity given them—so as ever to possess a bliss peculiar to each one's individual existence? How but by the medium of a world like this? This point I sincerely wish to consider because I consider it a grander system of salvation than the Christian religion—or rather it is a system of Spirit-creation. . .

I will put it in the most homely form possible. I will call the *World* a School instituted for the purpose of teaching little children to read—I will call the *human heart* the *horn book* read in that school—and I will call the *Child able to read*, the *Soul* made from that *School* and its *horn book*. Do you not see how necessary a World of Pains and trouble is to school an Intelligence and make it a Soul? A Place where the heart must feel and suffer in a thousand diverse ways. Not merely is the Heart a Horn book, it is the Mind's Bible, it is the Mind's experience, it is the text from which the Mind or Intelligence sucks its identity. As various as the lives of Men are—so various, become their Souls, and thus does God make individual beings, Souls, identical Souls (*i.e.* souls having an identity or "individuality") of the sparks of his own essence.

Thus the Soul for Keats, is, integral with the Body; it is the total organism as shaped by life. But if that were the whole truth, every man or woman would possess a soul. Keats does not mean that, or believe it. He is sketching "a grander system of *salvation* than the Christian religion". No, that man or woman alone achieves a soul who does not deny his heart; who feels deeply and does not rest content till his mind and his heart are at one. The mind must be obedient to the heart. If the mind tyrannizes over the heart, and denies its promptings, there is no soul achieved. The Soul is the *achiev-*

*ed* unity, what I have elsewhere called "the metabiological unity," of Man. Mere biological unity, which all living men must needs possess, is soullessness. The soul is the re-integrated man.

There is nothing mysterious, nothing magical about it. What Keats is trying to tell his brother is to him self-evident. "Do you not *see*?" he cries. And, indeed we have only to look; but, for some reason, that looking is difficult. There is nothing esoteric about the truth. If it were esoteric, it would not be true. But it takes some discovering. You can't have it for nothing; neither can you have it for money. "It is bought with the price of all that a man hath."

We have seen how Keats paid the price. All that he had, all that he was, was put away from him. He withdrew from himself; and since it was impossible that *he* should withdraw from himself, it was an Other that withdrew from him—an impersonal Other, a Superior Being, who watched, with a lucid and tender love, the poet John Keats "straining after particles of light in the midst of a great darkness". John Keats strove, with absolute courage, absolute self-devotion, after "particles of light". That Other who watched him was the Light itself. And it dwelt in John Keats.

To that Light it was all utterly simple, as it is. Whenever a man sees that it is all utterly simple, the Light dwells in him. For that moment of simple seeing



he is become the Light. He is not himself any more, but only the Light: the Light which veritably sees that

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty—that is all  
Ye know on earth and all ye need to know.

And that, I am convinced, is the secret, the open secret, of the riddle of life. It is too simple for words: not too difficult, but too simple for words. So it seemed to Keats. He went on:—

It is pretty generally suspected that the Christian scheme has been copied from the ancient Persian and Greek Philosophers. Why may they not have made *this simple thing even more simple* for common apprehension by introducing Mediators and Personages in the same manner as in the heathen mythology abstractions are personified? Seriously,

I think it probable that this system of Soul making may have been the parent of all the more palpable and personal Schemes of Redemption among the Zoroastrians, the Christians and the Hindoos. For as one part of the human species must have their carved Jupiter; so another part must have the palpable and named Mediator and Saviour, their Christ, their Oromanes, and their Vishnu.

Well, it may be that the end of that dispensation is coming nearer; and that a new dispensation is beginning in the only place where it can begin—in the heart and minds of individual men, who, like John Keats, have sacrificed their all in straining after particles of light in a great darkness, and by that simple act of heroism have become the vehicles of the Light itself.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY

This earth, O ignorant Disciple, is but the dismal entrance leading to the twilight that precedes the valley of true light—that light which no wind can extinguish, that light which burns without a wick or fuel.

Saith the Great Law: "In order to become the KNOWER of ALL SELF, thou hast first of SELF to be the knower." To reach the knowledge of that SELF, thou hast to give up Self to Non-Self, Being to Non-Being, and then thou canst repose between the wings of the GREAT BIRD. Aye, sweet is rest between the wings of that which is not born, nor dies, but is the AUM throughout eternal ages.

Bestride the Bird of Life, if thou would'st know.

Give up thy life, if thou would'st live.

—THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE



## A NEW PATH TO RACIAL AMITY

[ **Jagadisan M. Kumarappa** is well known to our readers. In this article he pleads for a cause very dear to **THE ARYAN PATH**.—EDS. ]

The most outstanding achievement of the past century is the creation of a neighbourhood out of the far-flung countries of the world, and the most stupendous task awaiting the present century, we may venture to say, is the task of converting this neighbourhood into a brotherhood. But is it possible to create a single fraternity out of the many and heterogeneous racial groups? True, the contributions of science have helped to break down the physical barriers; but then, what of the other obstacles which, having sprung up, militate against the union of the different races of mankind? In place of the natural boundaries, artificial modes of exclusion, such as the immigration laws, prohibitive tariffs, passport regulations and the like, have been put up, and men go on living as though the old limitations were still real. These new obstructions, being artificial, are, as the poet Tagore says, not only a burden to the people but by the might of their dead material create deformities in their moral nature. Hence such obstacles tend to keep the different races spiritually apart though they have come physically near.

Modern nationalism is the strongest democratic passion and it is that that is really driving the nations to ruin. Moved by this

passion the intellectuals in every country are doing their best to exasperate national hatreds, spread untruthful propaganda and sell their brains to the War Offices and Navy Departments of their respective governments. It is small wonder, therefore, if the nations of the world are controlled by evil passions which induce destructive influences. For instance, race pride generates contempt and hatred of others; greed for wealth and power makes the strong exclude the weak from the benefits of their civilization; commercial and political avarice exploits the helpless and their lands; suspicion and distrust of other nations,—equally powerful,—eats away the heart of international friendship and co-operation. In brief, by creating a social atmosphere which continually emanates such collective ideas as are prejudicial to inter-racial understanding, nationalism is breaking up the wholeness of human society. It is depriving man of the greatness of his purpose and his society, of the beauty of its completeness. Therefore international jealousy, commercial gluttony and rivalry, the race for armaments and the revolt of subject races are threatening the world with a universal disruption.

When we are thus menaced by the spirit of nationalism, is there any way of ushering in the reign



of peace, of creating a brotherhood of races? In spite of the disquieting aspects of the present world situation, one must admit that there are signs of the coming of a better day. Just as the French Revolution rejuvenated Europe in thought and life, so also the Great European War released new thought currents and spiritual forces. As a result thinking men everywhere have been, and are, seriously preaching for ways and means to usher in a new era in international friendship. Dr. Tagore is perhaps the first among them to point out that universal peace could be established only by helping mankind to realize a unity wider in range, deeper in sentiment and stronger in power than ever before. Since our problem is great and complex, we have to solve it on a bigger scale by a larger faith, to realize the God in man on a sure and world-wide basis. And for the purpose of this New Age, it is necessary, he maintains, to establish education on the basis, not of nationalism, but of a wider relationship of humanity, and to create opportunities for revealing different peoples to one another.

So long as the different nations and races remain alien to each other in sentiment and culture, there will continue to be these unhappy barriers which now exist between governments. And, as a consequence, the different countries must continue to constitute hostile and often fortified camps, each viewing its neighbours with apprehension and enmity. What does

an American, for instance, know of the Japanese civilization or, for that matter, of Indian culture? How can an Australian understand or sympathise with a Finn or a Lett, of whose thought and habits of life he has little or no knowledge? No doubt, some efforts are being made by national leaders to bring about unity and better understanding through leagues, treaties and the like. Certainly such attempts are praiseworthy, and do deserve every encouragement from well-meaning people. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that unless and until the different races have a more sympathetic understanding of other peoples' cultures, these measures can, at best, produce only an artificial and, therefore, a fragile security. Universal and lasting peace can be attained only when human beings the world over have gained that sympathy which only a greater solidarity and unity of culture can bring about.

True it is that different nations do have varied accidental interests,—and there they can seldom meet, but they also have a region of common aspirations,—the region of culture,—where they can all meet. Hence culture, being the achievement, not of the nation but of the people, is free from conflicting interests, and as such provides a common meeting place, for racial and international co-operation. Many thoughtful men have now become keenly alive to the importance of cultural co-operation as a means to the promotion of goodwill and racial understand-



ing. The Committee of Intellectual Co-operation, for example, was created as an organ of the League of Nations for the purpose of promoting the real unity of nations in the affairs of the mind. The Assembly of the League seeks through the C. I. C. not only to explain to the young throughout the world the principles and work of the League of Nations but also to familiarize them with the idea that international co-operation is the normal and healthful method of managing the affairs of the world. Prof. Alfred Zimmern, the Director of the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation holds, like the poet Tagore, that the problems of the modern world demand a special kind of education in which world-consciousness is substituted for national consciousness; further, he maintains that only through a widespread understanding of the differences in national viewpoints can real international co-operation be attained. With these objects in view he brings together every summer a group of the best students from thirty or forty countries to study in Geneva the problems of racial amity and of international friendship. Lectures on these problems are given by men of unquestioned reputation, and the fact that the school is held in Geneva is considered in itself significant, for it enables the students to study the present-day problems in the laboratory where experiments in international co-operation are being made. The work of this Institute has met with marked success

during the decade of its existence and it must be said to its credit, the problems of international relations have not yet been approached elsewhere in so broad a manner.

Similarly the Institute of International Education was founded in the United States immediately after the War for the purpose of cultivating friendly relations between America and the foreign countries through educational agencies. With this objective, the Institute has been organizing and encouraging such activities as the exchange of professors and other intellectuals, the establishment of interchange of student fellowships, the planning of conferences on international education and the publication of books and pamphlets on the systems of education obtaining in different parts of the world. It has also been instrumental in establishing many of the present exchange fellowships between Europe and America. In like manner several Cultural Associations have already been organized in the Latin American Republics for the purpose of promoting goodwill and encouraging more amicable alliance between the two Americas.

It is rather significant of the times that thoughtful citizens everywhere are very responsive to the idea of forming societies for cultural co-operation. The Hungarians, for instance, have organized an Hungarian Society in order to further the exchange of students between the Hungarian and American universities.



There are similar organizations for the cultivation of friendly relations between Italy and the United States, prominent among them being the Italia America Society and Casa Italia. In recognition of Italy's contributions to the progress of mankind, Italian students and professors are invited under the auspices of these Societies to study and lecture in American educational institutions. In turn, American students are asked to enjoy the intellectual hospitality of Italy; they are awarded fellowships to enable them to study architecture, sculpture, painting, classics and musical composition. Such associations for the exchange of cultural hospitality exist to-day in Russia, Germany, Poland, Scandinavia, France and Great Britain. These are only a few among the many organizations which are trying to promote racial amity through cultural co-operation.

The reader is perhaps now ready to ask: What about the sharing of culture between the East and the West? Though there has not really been much of that between these two hemispheres, yet a large number of students migrate from the Orient to European centres of learning. Within the last few years our student migration even to America has increased steadily. It is but natural that England, France and Holland with their Asiatic possessions, and Germany with her traditions of scientific scholarship, should have not only been interested in the Orient but also

produced outstanding Orientalists and schools of Oriental Learning. But to America the Orient was not of any special interest, as she was, until recently, too much concerned with her own domestic problems. But the recent realization that Europe and America must learn more from and about the Orient has awakened a new interest in things oriental. Hence studies in Oriental culture are being popularized in many of the leading educational institutions in America. A recent investigation of more than five hundred seats of learning revealed that one hundred and eleven of them are now offering courses on the literature, philosophy and religions of the East with a total enrolment of more than six thousand students.

But where is India, the mother of philosophy and religions, in this movement for the exchange of cultural hospitality? Having played so important a rôle in the history and rise of civilization, is she not to be the fountainhead of Indian wisdom and Oriental culture? In ancient India our universities served two great purposes: they were, first of all, seats of learning where students acquired knowledge from the best products of the Indian mind; and secondly, they were centres of India's cultural hospitality where foreign students who came in quest of knowledge were welcomed as guests. But alas! our modern educational institutions are India's "alms-bowl of knowledge". There is not a single university to-day in the whole



country, with the exception of Visva-Bharati and perhaps Calcutta University, to really fulfil one or both of these functions. Even to specialize in Indian philosophy and literature a son of the soil is obliged to go to Europe! Could intellectual poverty be any greater and cultural degeneration any worse in any civilized country?

The introduction of Western learning into India at the expense of her own culture, the utilitarian objective of training Indian youth for carrying the white man's burden and the woefully low economic condition of the country have, no doubt, reduced India to this shameful state. But are we to continue to live shamelessly in this condition of cultural degradation? It is no wonder that the reproach of this situation and the pressing need for an Indian seat of learning drove the poet to set himself the task of founding an Indian University,—a centre of culture to help India concentrate her mind and to be fully conscious of herself; to seek the truth and make that truth her own wherever found; to judge by her own standard, give expression to her own creative genius and offer her wisdom to the quest which comes from other parts of the world. It is with such ideals that the poet brought Visva-Bharati into existence as the seat of Indian culture and centre of India's intellectual hospitality. During the eleven years of its existence, distinguished savants and students from different parts of the world have

already been there as guests to share India's cultural achievements. By this most outstanding educational experiment, the poet has shown us how education should be not only Indianized but used to bring about a union between East and West. It is upto the rest of our universities to follow this guide-post and give effect to such ideals in the future education of India.

The Occident and the Orient are necessary to each other since they emphasize different and, not infrequently, complementary aspects of truth. The Western continents have been engaged in securing protection against physical death. On the other hand, the striving of the Eastern peoples has been, as Tagore points out, to win for man his spiritual kingdom, to lead him to life everlasting. *European society needs to-day the monastic ideal of the East, the ideal of self-discipline, and the peoples of the East need the Western ideal of citizenship, of the science of corporate living.* By their present separateness, East and West are alike in danger of losing the fruits of their age-long labours. For want of that union the East is suffering from poverty and inertia, and the West from lack of peace and happiness. In view of the spiritual impotency of Western civilization,—as disclosed by the world war,—many of the eminent sons of the West are feeling that the Occident must draw some benefit from the spiritual wealth of Asia. Observes



### Professor Darwin Fox:—

The merely material and intellectual results of Occidental civilization we cannot but confess to be astonishing; but in its tremendous and perfectly calculated mechanism we observe a fatal and monstrous *defectus* of all cultural aptitude. It is precisely on this account that the West is inevitably drifting towards a dreadful destination: we have basely bartered our spiritual heritage for a mess of machinery, and we have but to lift our eyes in order to behold the result. . . . . Now, it is just at this critical point in our history when a noble *Aryan* Table of Values needs for our very salvation to be re-discovered and imposed, that the intensive study and appreciation of Hindu culture becomes a paramount necessity.\*

In order to disseminate the Aryan culture of India throughout the countries of the West, Prof. Fox suggests the establishment of foci or Nurseries of Hindu Culture in all the leading cities of Europe and America. When the West is thus turning towards the East

instinctively, how pitiful it is that we, of the Orient, are unaware of its claim for succour, and fail to recognize the honour of the call to serve humanity at this hour of need!

In view of this newly awakened interest in Oriental culture, a greater effort must be made not only to revive our culture but also to establish a larger number of such cultural centres in India, China, Japan and other countries of Asia to provide common meeting ground for East and West. The recent developments indicate that we are entering upon a new era and we see the dawn of a day when there shall be no longer any East hostile to the West, nor West at enmity with the East, when, through cultural sympathy and co-operation, man's spiritual ideals will create out of the world-neighbourhood a brotherhood of races.

JAGADISAN M. KUMARAPPA

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\* Hindu Culture, THE ARYAN PATH, ( November, 1931 ) pp. 781-82.



## FIVE LIGHTS AT THE CROSS ROADS

### III.—SIMON MAGUS

[**Geoffrey West** continues his biographical studies of important teachers who left their impress on the early years of the Christian Era. He has already written on "Ptolemy Soter" and "Apollonius of Tyana"; in our September issue will appear his essay on "Hillel"; the last of the series will be on "Simon Ben Yohai".

Those who know the history of Simon Magus have the two versions before them, that of White and of Black Magic at their option; to learn how he was "the great Power of God" one must understand his doctrine of Syzygies.—EDS.]

Apollonius had at least a biographer, and a friendly one; his contemporary, Simon the Magician, had only discreditors, controversial antagonists concerned to destroy his influence by decrying his character and his creed. The Early Christian Fathers named him the first heretic, sponsor of a powerful and dangerous Gnosticism, and in an age of bitter rivalry, when charge and counter-charge were the accepted missiles of theological discussion, they excelled themselves to paint in him the first lineaments of Antichrist. What we know of him we know in spite of his enemies, and in such a case we are bound to take the man they give us, study him in his completeness, and then, conscious of their prejudice, strip away the obvious intention, the purely negative detraction, and estimate what remains, the positive personality and teaching, at its worth.

Simon, we are told, was a native of Samaria, born in the village of Gitta some score of miles from the city of Caesarea, probably a few years before the commencement of the Christian

era. He studied in Alexandria, and there became so proficient in magic as the favoured pupil of a teacher of the Hemerobaptist school (a sect of the Essenes much influenced by Gentile learning) that on his master's death he vindicated his claim to the vacant chair by a marvellous display of his powers. Before 38 A. D. he had returned to Samaria and by demonic aid gained such notoriety as a holy man and magician that it was said of him: "This man is that power of God which is called Great." About this time came into Samaria, Philip the evangelist making many converts. Simon himself saw no more in Christianity than yet another sect whose magic powers he might add to his own, and to that end became Philip's disciple. Next came Peter and John, bringing the Holy Ghost to the converted by the laying on of hands, and Simon in his impatience offered them money to initiate him to their full knowledge. Peter replied with righteous indignation: "Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain this gift of God with



money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right before God." Simon perceived his error and repented, begging: "Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me."

But his repentance, if sincere, was short-lived. Mortification followed; he "shed vain tears" and sought to be revenged upon the faith that had rejected him. Very soon he had regained his independent prestige in Samaria, and in the reign of Claudius was winning fame and followers in Rome, so astonishing the citizens by his marvellous powers that they too named him a god and set up a golden pillar or statue in his honour. He was now accompanied by a Phœnician prostitute bought in a brothel at Tyre, claiming divine honours for them both, in order, it is alleged, to conceal from his own disciples the true nature of their licentious relationship. Himself he declared to be the power of God which had appeared in Samaria as the Father, to the Jews as the Son (that is, in the person of Jesus), and to the Gentiles as the Holy Spirit. His companion Helen he named "the first conception of his Mind, the Mother of all, by whom in the beginning he conceived in his Mind the making of the Angels and Archangels," and who at his will had descended to the Lower Regions to generate these Powers by whom the world was made; whereupon they detained her there, unwilling to be thought

"the progeny of another," so that "she suffered every kind of indignity at their hands to prevent her re-ascending to her Father, even to being imprisoned in the human body and transmigrating into other female bodies, as from one vessel into another". It was at once to save her and to bring knowledge to men that he had come into the world; and he claimed to speak with an authority higher than that of the prophets, whose instructors were, he said, the rebellious angels of the left-hand path. Evil was not of God but of the world, and therefore whosoever believed in him and in Helen were set free from laws of the prophets to follow their own hearts—wherefore he and his followers were charged with witchcraft and immorality. They were idolators who, it was declared, gave foreign or "barbarous" names to their powers and gods.

His final defeat was brought about by Peter at Rome in the reign of Nero, despite his magic powers, which, demon-born, were phenomenal. He could cast off prison chains, fly through the air, change his form, cause statues to laugh and walk, and perform acts of divination. But Peter routed him by threatening to question the soul of a murdered boy he had enslaved for magic purposes, and he fled to Tyre and beyond. Again they met in Rome, and Simon boastfully erected a wooden tower from which to ascend to heaven in a chariot of fire. But at the critical moment Peter



uttered a prayer so vehement that the terrified demons abandoned their burden and incontinently fled, so that "the miserable fellow fell down and died". Another account, however, reveals him ending his career preaching peacefully to his disciples from under a plane tree, and displaying especial skill in the "artful misinterpretation" of the Scriptures, presenting them not as revealed truth but an allegory of dual-natured humanity struggling everlastingly toward the Divine. But even here presumption overcame him, for he compelled his followers to bury him alive that he might rise on the third day—since when, as the commentator triumphantly recorded, the world has seen him no more! After his death his followers were declared to worship him and Helen in the form of statues of Zeus and Athene, but naming them only Lord and Lady, and casting out any who addressed them personally "as one ignorant of the mysteries".

Thus far the life presented by the Christians. How much of it can we accept? The birth at Gitta surely, for all that we can gather of Simon's teaching shows him the pupil of the masters of the oral tradition in Samaria, in those days notably the meeting-ground of Jewish learning with Hellenic paganism and the older faiths of Syria and Phœnicia. His Alexandrian sojourn too, for he possessed that breadth of knowledge and understanding, that cosmopolitan syncretism, those recurrent hints of Hindu and Buddhist

learning, which especially marked the students of that great city of the Serapeum. It is impossible to resist the conjecture, indeed, that whosoever may have been his especial teacher, he also came powerfully under the influence of the great Philo. That he had followers in Rome as well as in Samaria is clear. But beyond these things we fall into conjecture—often plain contradiction. Was a statue ever set up to him in Rome? Did he claim to be a re-embodiment of Jesus? Was Helen an actual woman? We cannot say, but a study of the last problem at least suggests a significant possibility.

Fortunately we can discern the main outlines of his teaching, thanks principally to the unknown author of the *Philosophumena*, who evidently had before him as he wrote (in the early third century) a copy of the works either of Simon or his immediate followers. His quotations are in fact the only authentic Simonian writings of which we have record, all else being burnt by the victorious Christians. It is, to put it at its lowest, a remarkable teaching, the system not only of a profound philosopher but a man of wide knowledge, a synthesis of the wisdom of East and West, strongly influenced by Jewish Kabbalism, and absolutely theosophical in form, in tenor, and in implication. "I say there are many gods, but one God of all these gods, incomprehensible and unknown to all . . . My belief is that there is a Power of immeasurable and inef-



fable Light, whose greatness is held to be incomprehensible, a Power which the maker of the world does not know". That is the Unmanifested Root; the Great Silence, which, "producing itself by itself, manifested to itself its own Thought". Thus from the Silence the Word, the Spirit moving on the Waters, and from this manifested Monad the active Duad: Mind which is the Soul or male principle; and Thought, the Spirit or female principle, descending to bring into being the Angels and Powers which in turn are the makers of the world, sinking downward at last to the lowest depths of material manifestation, thence again to rise upward at the behest of beckoning Soul, retracing the long pathway towards perfection.

This drama of descent and return is absolutely embodied in the Simon-Helen relationship, as declared in the reported words of Simon himself. Must we suppose that he deliberately invented or adopted this profound æonology merely to conceal a sensual relationship with a wanton woman? His moral teachings accord with no such hypothesis. To declare evil "not in nature but institution," and thus set those who have found spiritual truth above the law, is not to abrogate morality, as the Christians ignorantly charged; it is but to proclaim the greater truth that true morality springs not from exterior social compulsion but from the inner nature, and that only such morality has spiritual significance. His doctrine of

universal correlation by correspondence and analogy, seeing Man as the Microcosm embodying the potentialities of the all-inclusive Macrocosm, thus setting salvation in self-knowledge and a certitude of unity with God, points to a life of study and self-examination; while his insistence that the way to so-called magical power must be by the right-hand path of discipline and self-purification scarcely suggests the personality of a necromancer intent upon material satisfactions.

Simon in his own day was noted for his allegorical interpretation of the scriptures. Recalling this, and having regard for the fore-going facts, may we not ask whether what confronts us here is not a clear case of unimaginative, literal-minded critics blindly or deliberately reading a purely personal meaning into what was put forward as a figurative account of the nature and creation of the world, making for their own ignoble purposes a woman from a familiar symbol, and in a most literal sense prostituting a great and universal truth to be a lie and a calumny? If Simon indeed claimed godship, then why did his followers thrust out from their communion, as "ignorant," those who addressed his image by his name? Was it not that they consciously approached divinity rather through than in him? Seize this truth, and even the contradictory charge of Irenaeus that "he allowed himself to be called by whatever name men pleased" glows with a sudden unexpected



significance as the word of a teacher who behind the Many had discerned the One, and who must seek, as Simon in fact did, to interpret the scriptures of all nations in accordance with a timeless universal knowledge effective for all men in every age. Simon has been too often named the founder of Gnosticism—a view no longer tenable. Gnosticism, even in its special Jewish form, dates back some centuries before the Christian era, and even without Simon's Alexandrian additions its fundamental theosophical likeness is unmistakable. It is a very ancient tradition we glimpse in the charge against his followers that they gave "barbarous" names to the gods and powers—a hint, surely, of that untranslatable "sacred dialect" or "mystery language" said to have been taught originally by the gods themselves to the ancient Egyptians!

Take the recorded details of Simon's life and teaching, strip

away the evident or probable controversial additions, distortions, and calumnies, and one is left with a teaching of profundity, coherence, and theosophical content, with a man of great learning, pure life, and spiritual understanding. Whether he was a "magician," or even claimed to be, who can tell? The feats attributed to him clearly do not sort with his teaching, and may well be ignorant or malicious invention, designed to show the greater powers of the apostles. It is doubtful whether we can even believe the story related in the *Acts*. If Simon did seek to buy spiritual powers with money, then he deserved all condemnation. But the problem remains whether a man of such evident spiritual knowledge as his teachings display could, under any circumstances, make such an elementary error. It is certainly sufficiently improbable to make us wonder whether it can be regarded even as an open question.

GEOFFREY WEST

For thee there is an ascent of the soul towards Divine Light, therefore shall thy heart and soul in the end attain to union with that Light. With thy whole heart and soul, seek to regain Reality, nay, seek for Reality within thine own heart, for Reality in truth is hidden within thee: the heart is the dwelling-place of that which is the Essence of the Universe, within the heart and soul is very essence of God. Like the Saints, make a journey into thy self; like the lovers of God, cast one glance within. As a lover now, in contemplation of the Beloved, be unveiled within, and behold the Essence. Form is a veil to thee and thy heart is a veil. When the veil vanishes, thou shalt become all Light.

—*Attar* by Margaret Smith. (Wisdom of the East Series, John Murray, London. 3s. 6d.)



## THE CULTURAL BOND BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN

[ **Prof. Kiang Kang-hu** is head of the Department of Chinese Studies at the McGill University, Montreal, Canada. He has written numerous volumes, not only in Chinese but also in Japanese.—EDS. ]

Because of the recent deplorable clash in the Far East between China and Japan the outside world generally thinks that these two great Oriental nations must have been incompatible in nature and age-long enemies throughout their histories. A little review of the past will reveal the untruth of this conception; on the contrary, their racial and cultural bonds are so intimate and close that a friendly co-operation and even perfect harmony between them would be not at all impossible if the international policies of both were well and wisely directed. I shall here mention only a few outstanding facts definitely recorded in our official standard dynastic histories and commonly accepted by the scholars of the two countries as silent but eloquent witnesses to my assertion.

The original name for Japan was O or O Nu, so recorded in Chinese histories. It is but a Chinese pronunciation of the name of the aborigines in Japan, Ainu, but it has a bad meaning in Chinese characters which read "short slaves". In 607 the Japanese ruler first addressed himself to Emperor Yang Ti of the Sui dynasty as "King of the Rising Sun Country," which was considered by the latter as impolite. Not until 670 of the

T'ang dynasty, the name Jih Pen was definitely chosen by Japan and officially sanctioned by China. It is made of two Chinese characters: Jih meaning "Sun" and Pen meaning "Root". These Chinese words have been pronounced by the Japanese as Nippon and afterwards translated by the Westerners as Japan. This has since become the standard name for Japan and is commonly used in China, the old name O or O Nu, still quoted occasionally by the Chinese being deeply resented by the Japanese.

From the beginning of our written history Japan was also known to China as the Three Fairy Mountains (San Shen Shan). Owing to the many mystic stories told by the early Taoist Adepts, the First Emperor of the Ch'in dynasty frequently ordered official expeditions to the Eastern Sea in quest of angels and the ancient Chinese equivalent of the "Elixir of Life". The largest group of three thousand boys and girls was led by Hsü Fu (also incorrectly known as Hsü Shih) and sailed in the year 219 B. C. They reached the south tip of the main island of Japan and never returned. This is the first recorded Chinese colonization there; many more followed and doubtless even preceded this date. The tombs of Hsü Fu and six



other leaders of the expedition in Kumano are even to-day well preserved and highly revered by the Japanese. The 2,000th anniversary was celebrated three years ago by a joint effort of both the Chinese and the Japanese government officials and prominent citizens.

The aborigines of Japan, the Ainus, claimed to belong to the Slavic family of the Caucasian race, had been gradually pushed back further north by the newcomers from Korea, China and the Malay Islands; these three elements combined and mixed with a small percentage of the aborigines to make up the modern Japanese. Of the three, the Koreans were probably the major and the Malayas the minor, but since most of the Koreans were originally from China and all of them were Chinese citizens or subjects, at least three-fourths of the modern Japanese are of Chinese blood, chiefly of the Han race. Chinese surnames are not uncommon in Japan and many of the Japanese noble and scholarly clans are traceable to Chinese origins. On the other hand, even in modern times, we have General Cheng Ch'eng-kuang (known by the Japanese title as Koxinga), the great patriotic hero of the late Ming period, and Priest Man Shu, the revolutionary poet-philosopher of the late Ch'ing period, both by Japanese mothers.

As to the cultural relation, Japan is much indebted to China, her historical fatherland. I dare say that most of Japan's culture,

prior to its contact with the West and aside from its modern material accomplishment, derives from China. In religions and philosophy, Confucianism is still the dominant teaching of Japanese individual, family and social life. Buddhism, with its various sects, was introduced from China and not directly from India. All Japanese Buddhist patriarchs were either disciples of Chinese priests or disciples of their disciples. During and after the T'ang dynasty, hundreds of Japanese government students enrolled in the Chinese Imperial University and thousands of Japanese Buddhist priests travelled as pilgrims and studied as disciples in Chinese monasteries throughout the Empire. Besides K'ung Hai of the T'ang mentioned below, Tiao Jan and Chi Chao of the Sung are the better known Japanese Buddhist scholars who stayed long in China. It was a common practice for Japan to appoint Buddhist priests as envoys to China, for Japanese Buddhists differed from Chinese Buddhists only in one thing, namely, the former were generally allowed to retain their secular relations as to family obligations and government services while the latter, except the Chü Shih or laymen, were obliged to sever all worldly connections and live apart from the world in temples or hermitages. This explains also the fact that Buddhist influence over politics in Japan has always been more direct and much greater than in China. This condition remains the same



to-day. The only Japanese life lost in Shanghai last January, which served as the excuse for the Japanese bombardment of the Chinese residential sections of that city, was a Buddhist priest participating in a street riot.

In the early Ch'ing period, Chu Chih-yü (better known as Chu Shun-shuei), a Chinese philosopher and member of the Ming royal family, who fled to Japan and spent his life in Edo, afterwards Tokio, was the tutor and advisor of the Tokugawa Shogunate and had among his pupils many great Japanese scholars and statesmen. Even Shintoism, which is supposed to be a primitive native religion of Japan, was not in its present shape till the introduction of the Taoist religion from China, and its very name is derived from Chinese words. Many Chinese heroes, including Hsü Fu, are among the Shinto deities for national worship.

In literature and art, the Japanese had no written language except that of the Chinese which was adapted since the beginning of our period of the six Dynasties. A Japanese Buddhist, whose name was K'ung Hai in Chinese and Kobo Daishi in Japanese, returned from his 25 years' study in China during the T'ang dynasty, invented the kanas (Japanese pronunciation for Chinese words Chia Ming meaning "borrowed terms") from Chinese writing and used them as phonetic guides to Chinese characters. Since then they have become the Japanese alphabet for modern and verna-

cular literature, but all important and substantial words are still Chinese. Chinese classics, prose and poetry, are standards of Japanese writers. All branches of literary and non-literary arts in Japan are greatly influenced by the precedents of Chinese schools. The historical temples of Nara and the Great Buddha of Kamakura were done by Chinese workmen. In government and society we find all systems and regulations bearing the Chinese nature, letter and spirit. Great political movements in Japanese history have been inspired or influenced by Chinese teachings. Most of the heroes in the Great Reform were followers of Wang Yang-ming's philosophy.

Many of the present-day Japanese costumes and manners are remnants of the T'ang dynasty or earlier. Japan has helped much to preserve old Chinese customs. In this respect the Japanese are decidedly more conservative than the Chinese. We often have to go to the interior of Japan to study and identify things and names recorded in our old literature which have long been lost in China and therefore the records have been rendered unintelligible to the modern Chinese.

In the Chinese Dynastic Histories, Japan was recorded as a regular tributary to China since the year 108 B. C. after the re-conquest of Korea by Emperor Wu Ti of the Western Han dynasty. In 56 A. D. of the Eastern Han, a State Seal was



granted to the ruler of Japan by Emperor Kuang-wu through the former's tribute-bearing envoy. Since that period every ten years or so we find records of Japan's official visit to the Chinese court. The tributes from Japan were usually clothes, pearls, precious stones, slave girls, etc. while the return gifts of China were in general silk, tapestries, mirrors and swords together with gold and silver money. Despite the change of many dynasties in China, even during the period of the Southern and Northern Empires when China was torn by foreign invasions, civil wars and revolutions, the Japanese tributes came frequently and uninterruptedly. In 421 the ruler of Japan was given the title Great General (Ta Chiang Chün) by a Sung Emperor of the Southern Empire and in 504 he was promoted to the rank of Prince (Wang) by a Wei Emperor of the Northern Empire. From the Chinese Dynastic Histories we learn that in paying the regular tribute, Japan was required to present through its envoy a formal petition acknowledging the supremacy of the Chinese emperor. Twice during the Sung dynasty Japanese tribute was rejected and an imperial audience was denied to its envoy on account of the irregularities of this petition.

The international relations between China and Japan continued to be peaceful and harmonious until the Mongols conquered China. The Mongols were the

most militaristic and imperialistic people of the Orient and their Kahns were ever longing for further conquest. Since Japan had been a tributary to the overthrown Chinese Sung dynasty and always friendly and sympathetic towards the Chinese people, she refused to pay homage to the new Mongol Yuan dynasty. In 1264 and in 1266 Kublai Kahn twice sent direct envoys to induce Japan to submit, and in 1267 and 1269 he ordered the Koreans to persuade the Japanese to follow their suit, but all in vain. In 1270 he dispatched once more an imperial commission which succeeded in bringing Japanese tribute-bearers for the following years. In 1275 Kublai declared war upon Japan for the first time. Despite the large fleet and the superior fire-arms commanded by Mongol and Chinese generals in three successive expeditions, Japan was not beaten and the Japanese tribute never came again to the Mongol court. This punitive measure of the Mongols and its failure altered the international situation between China and Japan.

When the Manchus established themselves in China, the Japanese first attempted a sympathetic aid to the Ming dynasty, but finally accepted the supremacy of the Ch'ing dynasty. They have, nevertheless, been less friendly and more suspicious towards the Manchus than they were towards the Chinese, and their tributes came to the court very irregularly. An equal position with, and an ag-



gressive action against China was, however, not manifested until after the Great Reform of Japan in 1868.

In spite of the racial resemblance and cultural similarity between China and Japan, there is an outstanding diversity in the histories of the two countries. China has, as a rule, been governed by the civilians, while Japan from the beginning by its military caste; since 221 B. C., during the reign of the first Emperor of the Ch'in dynasty, China has been rid of the feudal system, while Japan lived in it until the fourth year of Meiji, 1871. One reason why, while China has changed many dynasties, Japan has remained under one and the same ruling house is simply because for centuries the so-called ruling house was merely a figure-head and its actual ruling power rested upon the Shogonate, which literally means inherited military dictatorship. This great diversity has shaped the two peoples in different dispositions and characteristics which in turn determined the histories of the two nations. The causes of this diversity are numerous and complicated. Geography might be its prime and fundamental one. It is nothing strange to find two peoples of the same origin developing along diverse lines, since brothers, sisters, and

even twins often grow vastly apart. The Japanese government since the Great Reform, though having gone through many changes of political parties and military cliques, has maintained its definite policy at least in two points: First a wholesale and whole-hearted adaptation of western civilization with all its related materialism, industrialism, imperialism, etc.; and second, the expansion of Japan, territorially, politically and economically. Sometimes this policy has brought up strong reactions among the Japanese upon national and international issues, but, viewed as a whole, it has been a fixed policy throughout modern Japanese history. Both China and Japan are at present members of a world family. They are no more isolated but interdependent not only between themselves but also with all other nations. The world has become so small and sensitive that any change of international conditions between two members will certainly affect the whole.

The recollection by both countries of the fraternal if not filial relationship which subsists between them should make it possible for Japan and China to set about, in a spirit of amity, the reconciliation of their differences, so important to the peace of the world.

KIANG KANG-HU



## THE CAT AS AN EMBLEM

[ M. Oldfield Howey is the author of *The Encircled Serpent*, *The Horse in Magic and Myth*, and only last year published a fascinating volume on the subject of Cat on which he writes this article.—EDS.]

To the Theosophist the study of the esoteric interpretation of sacred and profane legends is not merely a fascinating pursuit, but a matter of paramount importance. Anciently every nation embodied its religious convictions and esoteric history in emblems and ideographs designed to hide the true meaning from the multitude and reveal it to the initiate. All the erudition and science, all the deeper emotions and philosophy of the older peoples found expression in allegory and fable, either pictured or written. Every known natural object was pressed into the service of the mystical and hierarchical language, and the higher domesticated animals because of their intelligence, strongly marked characteristics, and proximity, easily took a foremost place among the glyphs. Among them the cat stands forth with special prominence, and justly so, since we might travel far in search of an image that could better illustrate the definition of an emblem as given by Madame Blavatsky than our feline friend affords. For the cat is, and, since the dawn of history wherever she was domesticated, has ever been, "a concrete visible picture or sign representing principles, recognizable by those who have received certain instructions (Initiates)". Indeed, she is in herself "a series

of graphic pictures," and when "viewed and explained allegorically" she unfolds an idea "in panoramic views, one after the other," until we are almost bewildered by their variety and rapidity of succession. They have been taken from no single standpoint, but seem to have been selected with an eye to the revelation of the innumerable facets of the intricately cut diamond of life, so that each "not only includes several interpretations, but also relates to several sciences". The greatest of all sciences—the Science of Religion—has freely employed the plastic emblem of the cat to reveal or re-veil her mysteries. This is especially true in the most ancient and widespread of all the many forms assumed by Religion: the worship of Sun and Moon. Heliolatry and Luniolatry have survived through endless vicissitudes from a remote and prehistoric past to the present day; sometimes openly, but in other periods disguised by new titles and formula, which, as in the case of Christianity, enable them to arise with new life from the ashes of their dead or discarded tabernacles.

And always the inextricably entangled symbolism of the Solar and Lunar creeds found a common glyph in the cat, so that we are at no loss to account for the



extraordinary importance of her position in religious allegory.

The reason this animal was chosen for such honour was no arbitrary one, and its explanation becomes at once apparent if we pause a moment to consider the meaning of the name bestowed on Puss by the ancient Egyptians. For to them she was *Mau*, the Seer. They had admiringly observed that the Cat had the power to see, in what, to their human eyes, appeared as impenetrable darkness that rendered all invisible. They noted further how her eyes resembled the lunar planet in their waxing and waning, and that they shone like stars in the gloom of night, and grew more luminous as its shadows deepened. She was thus a "living pictograph of the lunar orb," the Celestial Seer of Night, and was regarded by the Egyptians as the earthly representative of their great goddess Isis, who was symbolised by the Moon. Because of this she was held in such veneration in the city of Bubastis—which was sacred to Isis in her character as Lunar Goddess—that its inhabitants were wont to assume deep mourning if one of the temple cats died. And the Cat was represented as seated on the apex of the mysterious Sistrum which Isis bore in her hand as the symbol of the world's harmony.

The Moon was the reflection of the solar orb, and thus was regarded as the Eye of Osiris, the personified Sun, during the Night. Gerald Massey is quoted by Madame Blavatsky as saying that

"the cat saw the Sun, had it in its eye by night (was the eye of night), when it was otherwise unseen by men . . . We might say the moon *mirrored* the solar light, because we have *looking-glasses*. With them the cat's eye was the mirror".\*

The Sun, because "he" saw in the darkness of the Underworld, was also thought of as a cat, and the Egyptian poet-priests depicted Isis, his sister and spouse, The Queen of Night, assuming the form of the Cat-headed goddess Pasht, that she might keep watch for her absent lord through the hours of gloom. And her office was no sinecure, for she had to struggle with his deadly enemy, Apep, the Dragon of Darkness, and hold him down with her darting paws of radiant light, until the Great Cat of the Sun could once again return and cut off the head of his foe, which because he was immortal, always grew on again. Thus she justified her titles of the Tearer and the Render, and proved that they were not incompatible with love.

Yet Isis, in common with all the lunar goddesses, had a dual aspect, one divine and the other infernal. And in both we find her imaged by the Cat. For to the ancient Egyptian, the Deity was All, and embraced the Darkness as well as the Light. The Cat, equally in harmony with Night and Day, yet further emphasized the doctrine that extremes meet, and All is One, by her habit of coiling her body into a circle for

\* *The Secret Doctrine* II, 552, 553.



repose. Apropos of this, Madame Blavatsky quotes the Hermetic axiom *Deus enim et circulus est*, and adds that Pythagoras recommended a "circular prostration and posture during the hours of contemplation".

The association of the Cat with the sacred figure of the Circle would seem to be responsible for the popular saying that "a cat has nine lives". The superstition has a mathematical as well as an occult foundation when thus viewed, since the digits that represent any multiple of nine, if added together, always total nine, and thus complete a circle; so that, in Madame Blavatsky's phrase, Nine is "the sign of every circumference". As the Trinity of Trinities, Nine was anciently considered to be the most sacred of all digits, and the Egyptian idea that all divinities could be enumerated in nines was probably the reason why nine was dedicated to both Sun and Moon, even as it was to the Cat that represented them, by all the nations that had felt the influence of Egyptian thought.

It is also possible to see in the Nine Lives of the Cat the symbol of Reincarnation, for, as *The Secret Doctrine* points out, "the whole secret of life is in the unbroken series of its manifestations"; unbroken, even by bodily deaths, because they form an integral portion of the Circle of Eternity.

We are told by Herodotus that the Egyptians were the first teachers of the doctrine of transmigration, and some of their paintings show that they believed human souls which were found wanting when weighed in the scales before Osiris suffered an ignominious return to earth in the forms of cats and other animals. Pythagoras, who is said to have visited Egypt in his youth, and studied its mysterious religion, appears to have accepted this view, and taught that souls pass from the form of an animal to that of a human being, and back again. But a happier conception is placed before us in Theosophy which affirms that it is certainly not the fact that the human soul, which has once reached the level of humanity, ever incarnates again in the form of an animal. Pythagoras, later in his life, travelled to India, where he was received by the Brahmins, and, we read in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 290) that thereafter "the Pythagoreans grounded the principal tenets of their philosophy" on Buddhist doctrine. "Can that spirit, which gives life and motion, and partakes of the nature of light, be reduced to non-entity?" they ask. "Can that sensitive spirit in brutes which exercises memory, one of the rational faculties, die, and become nothing?" To formulate the question is surely to answer it with an unhesitating negative.

M. OLDFIELD HOWEY



## NEW BOOKS AND OLD

### THE DRAMA OF LIFE\*

LILA OF ISHVARA

[Hugh I'A. Fausset's articles often have an eastern flavour, and they invariably bring evidence of clear thinking, mystical apperception and an insight uncommon among western authors. He describes the book reviewed as "a guide to Vedānta".—EDS.]

A western student, approaching without expert guidance the vast province of literature which enshrines the native philosophy of India, may well feel that he is entering a jungle in which the original paths laid down by the myth-maker, sage and visionary are so obscured beneath the growths of generations of individual commentators, that the very meaning of the term 'Vedānta' as the 'End of the Vedas' seems an ironic jest.

That the term has in fact a deep significance Dr. Das reveals very clearly. The category of End, construed philosophically, does not mean the final stage of a process, but that finality of truth which is 'the informing spirit of the whole, distilled, as it were, into its successive phases'. It is the creative and dynamic principle which is operative throughout, and so 'the End in its interpretative function is as much operative at the very start or beginning as at the *de facto* end of anything,' although it is only in the last term that its nature is perfectly revealed. This conception of 'the End' is significant of the sustained

creativity of the 'Vedānta'. It is not a speculative system abstracted from life but a reasoned organism; it is not a collection of thoughts logically connected but a visionary symphony composed of rhythms in thinking. Its dialectic is integral to an imaginative appreciation of the whole. But while a western student may feel the truth of this, he may still remain oppressed and baffled by the exuberance and fecundity of this organic growth. Nor can he find much comfort in the fact that this growth has a historic necessity. It sprang in fact out of the very compactness and abbreviation of the *Sūtras*, which in the absence of printing facilities had to be extremely terse even at the risk of obscurity and ambiguity. And this weakness invited and found a remedy in the periodical infusion of new blood from commentaries and scholia. 'Thus embodied and vitalized,' as Dr. Das remarks, 'the *Sūtras* prove to be a tower of strength and fountain-head of inspiration for the commentaries with which they appear in constant conjunction'. Never-

\* *Towards a Systematic Study of the Vedānta*. By Saroj Kumar Das. (University of Calcutta.)



theless the commentators are bewilderingly many and the inspired and true interpreter hard to find. Such a just and perceptive guide as Dr. Das is therefore of great value and the more so to western students because he is intimate with European philosophy and has adopted as far as possible its technique. Believing, too, that a philosophical study worth the name, must be either comparative or nothing, he has drawn frequent and illuminating comparisons between the Vedānta and such western philosophers as Plato, Kant, Hegel, Hume, Bradley and Russell. And above all he has significantly limited the scope of the Vedānta itself. Refusing to include within it, as some would, 'every blessed commentary and annotation, manual or monograph on the main findings of the Vedānta,' he has taken the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and the *Brahmasūtras* as constituting its canon, and the teaching of Saṃkara-Vedānta as at once the profoundest and most classically balanced interpretation of it. This does not prevent him from referring to earlier conceptual formulations of some of the main problems of the Vedānta or to some of Saṃkara's philosophic successors but not only the truth and the essence of Vedānta philosophy but 'the true ideal of philosophy, which is not, so much knowledge as wisdom, not so much logical reasoning as spiritual freedom' is contained for him in the teaching of Saṃkara.

To attempt in a short review

any summary of an exposition so vast in its reference and yet so detailed and subtle in its analysis would obviously be impossible. It is enough to say that although Dr. Das's style is occasionally perhaps unduly involved and laboured, we could not wish for a more clarifying or enlightening guide from the valleys of the *Rgveda*, in which 'the Many' predominates over 'the One'; to the ultimate heights of the *Upanishads* where 'the One,' exists eternally, unconditioned by 'the Many'.

The relation of the One to the Many has always been of course the central problem of philosophy. And since the chief criticism of the Vedānta by Western thinkers has been that it unduly drives the Many in its exaltation of the One, Dr. Das's account of Saṃkara's conception of Brahman is of particular interest and takes us also inevitably into the very heart of his metaphysics. In the *Māndūkya Upanishad* it is written of the fourth grade of reality that it is "unseen, transcendent, inapprehensible, unferrable, unthinkable, indescribable, the sole essence of the consciousness of Self, the negation of the world, the ever-peaceful, all-blissful, the one unitary principle—this indeed is the *Atman*".

Such a statement is well calculated to excite opposition in the positive Westerner. He will, as Dr. Das remarks, pounce upon it and exclaim,—“here lies exactly the danger-zone of the *via negativa*; herein is to be found a



capital illustration of a vicious abstractionism which has, with perfect logical consistency, represented Brahman, the supposed spiritual principle of unity, as an abstract colourless unity sublimated beyond the zero-point of existence, and consequently as a 'bundle of negations,' a veritable 'lion's den' that wipes out all trace of particularity". The danger, indeed, exists. Nor does Dr. Das deny it. But it is a danger which has to be faced and surpassed if life equally in its absolute reality and in its relative manifestations is to be truly conceived. "The 'Everlasting Nay' of a spiritual quest," to quote Dr. Das, "must needs be pressed to its furthest limits in order that the 'Everlasting Yea' of a blessed life can be attained. And the abiding importance and peculiar excellence of Saṃkara-Vedānta both as a philosophic system and a source of spiritual enlightenment is that it does equal justice to the absolute and to the relative, that it at once grounds all the values of life, theoretical or practical, in one consummate value, and presents them in a graded hierarchy terminating in the Supreme. Saṃkara seems, indeed, to have been pre-eminent as a philosopher in his ability to do equal justice to the claims of Rationalism and Revelation, Individuality and Selflessness. He exalted neither at the expense of the other, but achieved such a wonderful blend and balance of the two as is without an historical parallel in the whole range of

Indian philosophy—with approximations to it only in the systems of Thomas Aquinas or Abelard in the West".

That at least is Dr. Das's claim and he certainly substantiates it very convincingly. The comparison with Aquinas is particularly interesting in view of the Neo-Thomists of to-day who are commending the system of this greatest of medieval thinkers as the true corrective of the vicious rationalism from which western philosophy and western life are suffering. It is possible indeed to argue that Aquinas was the last European philosopher to satisfy justly the claims of reason and revelation and to prove them complementary. But unlike Saṃkara he did not quite transcend the anthropomorphism of a devout Catholic. And it is for that reason more than any other perhaps that the very impressive synthesis which he constructed fails to satisfy the needs of to-day. Saṃkara on the other hand transcended anthropomorphism by that very insistence upon the absolute incomprehensibility of Brahman which excites the Westerner's suspicion. But the suspicion is not justified in the case of Saṃkara-Vedānta. For while Saṃkara, as a staunch Absolutist, enthroned over his system the Spirit eternally unconditioned and pure, self-sufficient and perfect, towards which the only possible human attitude was one of ultimate agnosticism, he supplemented this conception of Brahman by his interpretations of Īśvara as Creator



and of *Līlā* as Creation. Why the Absolute should ever have lapsed from the perfection of its own integral experience and, in the words of William James, 'refracted itself into all our finite experiences,' is a question which no philosopher has ever been able to answer. And Saṁkara does not answer it except by asserting that it is a question which should not be asked. What he does however is to refuse resolutely to limit the infinite and ineffable reality of Brahman by any finite categories of human purpose or desire, but at the same time to introduce him as *Īśvara* into the natural and the moral order. To some this may seem rather an evasion than a solution of the problem. Why, they may ask, will not *Īśvara* suffice? But the answer is to be found in the history of every merely naturalistic philosophy, however inspired. Unless the unconditioned reality of Brahman is preserved whether as an incomprehensible mystery or as an absolute truth vouched for by the beatific experience of the mystics, *Īśvara* inevitably becomes not merely conditioned by, but submerged in the natural order. And the unique value of Saṁkara's system is that it equally avoids that separation of the Divine from the natural which is the vice of orthodox theology and that subordination of the Divine to the human which is the defect of intellectualism and humanism.

It is because Saṁkara as an absolutist held so firmly to the *via negativa* that his interpretation of *Īśvara*, the spiritual

principle of unity as it manifests itself through *Māyā*, is so positively true. It was this which saved him from reducing the Creative Spirit either to a moral legislator or a sublimated logician, the mistake of the theologian and the intellectual, or to a mere synthesis of natural forces, the mistake of the materialist. *Īśvara* creates at once "out of the abundance of his joy and for the fulfilment of the demands of morality". There is in him no conflict between the moral impulse and the expressive.

It is this creative spontaneity, which is moral because of the purity of its creativeness, which Saṁkara defined in the comprehensive category of *Līlā*. And here again he insisted that the notion of *Līlā* must be purged of the last vestige of a false anthropomorphism before it could truly represent divine creativity. He conceded God's activity even in the realm of *Māyā* as pure self-expression, in the sense that it was not constrained or determined by any conscious purpose. It was a Divine 'Play' which realised itself from its very nature without subserving some other end. Dr. Das comments very helpfully upon Saṁkara's use of the word 'Play' to explain the principle of creation. But he neglects to cite the example of art. The supreme moments of artistic creation afford, perhaps, the closest human analogy to what Saṁkara meant by the Divine 'Play'. For these, too, are moments of a pure self-expression, which transcends altogether the category of conscious will or



purpose, but which is at the same time rationally determined from within. And the unique significance of Saṃkara's conception of creation lay in the fact that he viewed *Īśvara* as a supreme artist, constrained in his cosmic play by no such purpose or end as the self-conscious human mind pursues, but realising in himself, with a perfect and inevitable spontaneity the purposiveness, rationality, ease and effortlessness with which the creation is sustained. And this conception of the Creator governed and corresponded with his conception of the inspired self-sufficiency of the primary or real Self. "Verily," he wrote, "that being which is not dependent or conditional on some other being, is the very essence or individuality of a being. What is, however, dependent on an Other is not the essence or individuality—for the simple reason of its extinction on the disappearance of that Other".

The comprehensive truth of Saṃkara's teaching is perhaps most clearly revealed in the manner in which he reconciled the principles of individuality and universality, avoiding alike the false and prejudiced limitations of the personal and the 'vast inane' of an abstract and colourless impersonal. He recognised equally the infinite variety of expression possible to a true self-hood and its underlying inaccessibility and conformity to an eternal and rhythmic pattern.

The spirit inspiring and informing the Vedānta, as Saṃkara reveals it, is, in short, the spirit of the

whole, a spirit by which justice is done to each aspect of the world according to its proper rank and all are drawn into a vital and necessary union. Saṃkara's system is described as 'Non-dualism,' and the name is important as distinguishing it from a system of abstract or absolute monism. Western Philosophy since the time of Aquinas has been stricken with the disease of dualism, even as western life has been. It has lost the secret of the whole. And this is true even of such professed idealists and monists as Hegel, while the efforts of the great Kant to throw a bridge across the gulf that had opened in human experience or of Bradley in our own day failed to the extent that an excessive intellectualism prevented them from realizing fully the spiritual principle of Unity in themselves. In the materialists, the vitalists, the pragmatists, the neo-realists, or emergent evolutionists, the one-sidedness is too apparent to need emphasising. But Dr. Das often exposes it very cogently in passing and his criticism of Bertrand Russell's "free man's worship" and "gospel of unyielding despair" is both entertaining and unanswerable. The lasting virtue of Saṃkara-Vedānta is that it is free equally from anti-intellectualism and intellectualism, that its dialectic is always put to the service of an integral experience, and logical values subordinated to Spiritual intuition. It maintains the integrity and identity of Being through all the modes of its manifestation. Western philo-



sophy has become partial and disproportioned because it has lost this integrity. And such a study of the Vedānta as this is particularly valuable in an age when

'the Many' have so multiplied in human consciousness that the co-ordinating Spirit of 'the One' is almost obscured.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS\*

[ J. D. Beresford shows how the trend of modern thought is towards the invisible and the spiritual in a very able criticism of three volumes recently published.—EDS.]

Regarded from one point of view, these three books represent the typical succession of (1) observation, followed by logical deduction; (2) introspection, with an increase of self-awareness; and (3) that recognition of a unity throughout matter, time and space which is the essential of mystical experience. But although this may be a normal succession over a protracted period, figuring for us the outline of a process by which a cycle of human development rises from the sensory life through an increase of self-consciousness to a recognition of the informing spirit; if we take a kind of cross-section through a given moment, more especially in the later years of the cycle, we shall find evidence of the three stages existing contemporaneously.

It is, for instance, typical of the present period to find a writer such as Mr. Verschoye, primarily an engineer and mathematician,

pushing the observational and deductive method to the point at which what we commonly know as matter appears as no more than a temporary illusion, passing as he suggests "from material into immaterial existence". The astonishing development of physics in the past sixty years,—if we may date its beginning from Clerk Maxwell's work on Electricity and Magnetism,—has led inevitably to this result, even if the conclusion is not yet accepted by the majority of Scientists. The investigation of the structure of matter by observation and experiment, as far as that was possible, aided by the powerful and accurate instrument of mathematics, has led on the material plane to deductions that must presently accord with the intuitive wisdom of the adept and the mystic. Sir James Jeans emerges with the concept of a mathematical God, Sir Arthur Eddington with the postulation that the ultimate reality

\* *The Soul of an Atom* by W. Denham Verschoye. (The Search Publishing Co., London. 7s. 6d.)

*The Use of the Self* by F. Matthias Alexander. (Methuen, London, 6s.)

*Song and Its Fountains* by A. E. (Macmillan, London. 5s.)



is consciousness, and now Mr. Verschoyle in his final summary suggests, in a reasonably near approximation to what we regard as truth, that "the Spirit of Life and Intelligence is in all things," and that "whilst self-moulding its parts, both great and small, to a fundamental pattern, it takes on itself, as a whole, a transient individuality, a macro-cosmic semblance of that particle wherein is first plainly discerned the determinative working of the Life principle".

How, in this instance, Mr. Verschoyle arrives at that conclusion is not of great importance in this place. The gist of the matter is found on the physicist's experience that however deeply he may push his inductions into structure, the ultimate particle he seeks, the unit of matter from which he might imaginatively rebuild the phenomenal world, still escapes his tests and eludes his mathematical theories. There is, in fact, a clear limitation to the methods of science, a limitation admitted by the Scientists themselves,—and so far as mathematical physics is concerned, it seems extremely probable that in the course of the next few years this limit may be so clearly defined as to determine further research in this direction. When that point is reached, however, the long and arduous work of the investigators who have been engaged in this research will have found sufficient justification by affording a body of material proof for the assertion that matter is an illusion of humanity's pre-

sent condition.

The Use of the Self as expounded by Mr. Alexander is in the first place therapeutical. He has been engaged for a great many years in the practice of certain curative methods with results that have been acclaimed even by members of that conservative profession with which he has been frequently in competition. But what is of particular interest to readers of *THE ARYAN PATH* in this relation, is the underlying theory upon which Mr. Alexander has founded his methods. Quite early in his career, he became convinced that many, perhaps most, disabilities of civilised man were brought about not by any original fault or malformation of *the* organism, but by acquired mental and physical habits arising from a misconception of the uses of the body; and his first efforts were directed to a re-education of the patient's attitude towards his own bodily mechanisms. The technique that he developed for this purpose does not concern us here. What is of importance are his assumptions, put to the pragmatic test by the cures he has worked, as to the psychical and mental re-actions of the representative human being.

In so far as he has posited a subconsciousness, his work has been parallel in many respects to psycho-analysis, and resembles it to the extent that his efforts are mainly directed to raising the awareness of the control of bodily acts, including such semi-automatic functions as breathing, into



full consciousness. His technique, however, is completely different, as his method of "re-education" does not attempt to dissociate the psychic or mental personality from the physical in the familiar manner of analysis, but continually relates the patients' thought to the performance of the physical act as ideally conceived for the proper fulfilment of its purpose,—at which point Mr. Alexander's object is served. He does not, for instance, try to develop the Ouspenskian double-consciousness, which is, also, induced in the first stages of training by cultivating a fuller awareness of the bodily mechanism.

Mr. Alexander's present book, like the two earlier ones that have preceded it, are confined almost exclusively to our mental make-up in relation to physical function. But if we accept his conclusions in this connection, as we can hardly refuse to do, it is obvious that we may apply them to the misapprehension common to other associations of spirit and body. He writes, for example :—

The belief is very generally held that if only we are told what to do in order to correct a wrong way of doing something, we can do it, and that if we *feel* we are doing it all is well. All my experience, however, goes to show that this belief is a delusion.

This is an illuminating version of the automatism of the average man and woman. We form a conviction whether as in this case of a sensory reaction, or, in an intellectual relation, of the correctness of our reasoning in any par-

ticular. But neither the physical re-action nor the mental conviction represent anything more than an effort to obtain personal satisfaction or has any true validity apart from this particular application. We live in a self-created world of delusion, and there are few who are able to look beyond or, indeed, even to realise it.

Nevertheless with our third book we come to the experience of one who by the natural gift of his spiritual development has been in touch with the absolute. Mr. George Russell ("A.E.") was born with mystical powers. He is not to be counted with those who have acquired them by stern self-discipline and continual exercise of the will to freedom. And it may be that he will have to reap a measure of suffering in his next incarnation, as a consequence of his failure to make the fuller progress that was possible for him. He should not, for instance, have had to confess as he does here that his gift has waned with the years, that "the walls about the psyche have thickened with age and there are many heavinesses piled about it". Very early he tells us he had a "vivid sense of a being seeking incarnation . . . no angelic thing, pure and new from a foundry of souls, which sought embodiment, but a being stained with the dust and conflict of a long travel through time, carrying with it unsated desires, base and august . . . . myriads of memories and a secret wisdom". Nor need we doubt that this sense of his corresponded to an absolute reality.



But we must believe that one blessed in his early years with this intuitive vision of truth has the greater responsibility to the world and to himself. It is true that by all common standards he has lived worthily. "We run to A.E., in time of need and never run in vain," George Moore wrote of him in "Vale"; and A.E. himself who is certainly free from any handicap of spiritual pride, demonstrated his clear-sighted knowledge of himself when he repudiated George Moore's portrait of him by asking: "Why have you found no fault with me? If you wish to create human beings you must discover their faults." Is it not possible, however, that the fault, which would inevitably escape George Moore, is A.E.'s failure so to cultivate his priceless gift that it should increase throughout life, in which case surely he would never have had to confess that "the walls about the psyche have thickened with age"?

The answer to that question is beyond our knowledge, but it is permissible to pose it before we acclaim the quality of the vision that in this case has weakened when it might have grown in range and intensity. For there can be no question that George Russell is a true seer and even in this little book of 133 small pages, there is evidence enough that his vision accords, as all true impersonal visions must accord, with the truths of the Ancient Wisdom. He is familiar with the Upanishads, but he probably went to them in the first instance for the

refreshment of his own intuitions rather than for discovery. Thus in the quotation from those books of the Ancient Wisdom given here concerning "the higher transfiguration of the psyche beyond the mid-world of dream," we feel in reading that the reference is modestly given as an authority for that which was initially the writer's independent conception. And A.E.'s deductions in this connection are worth quoting. He writes:—

The words of the seer imply that there came up to that high world images of the Earth-world, chariots to his Lands, joys and rejoicings; and, taking images and ideas, the god-lit psyche makes its magical play as a great poet transfiguring the things his eyes have seen and making of them a wonder-world of his own, of magic casements, perilous seas and forlorn fairy-lands. Here, too, the soul being immortal, would bring memories of its journeyings from the beginning of time, of religions and civilisations which are all built about some divine idea, some hope of liberty, power or beauty breathed into men from the divinity which overshadows them.

Thus far that state "beyond the mid-world of dream" may be visited intermittently by the greatest poets such as he who is implicitly referred to. But Keats' inspiration from that high source is of a different quality from that of George Russell's, inasmuch as Keats' memories on his return were not related to the fountain from which they were drawn. With A.E. the place of vision is more definitely recognised and therefore upon him lies the greater burden of responsibility. Nor is



he, nor could he possibly be, unaware of it. What, he asks, are the labours of the soul returning by the way it came from those high spheres; and his answer bears the impress of the immortal truths he has learned. "The soul," he tells us, "has to make the conquest of this world, become master of the nature which envelops us, until the eternal is conscious in us, and we have made this world into a likeness or harmony with the Kingdom of Light".

Now that is a mandate which,

if it be disobeyed by those who have received it, carries the threat of future penalty. For the ignorant, the retributions of Karma are comparatively light. The road must be learnt and each failure necessitates a renewal of the lesson. If we cannot learn in ease, then we must learn in pain. But the pain is of another order from that suffered by those who have recognised the truth and failed to make advance towards that ideal state in which "the eternal is conscious in us".

J. D. BERESFORD

*What Dare I Think?* By JULIAN HUXLEY. (Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.)

*Music at Night.* By ALDOUS HUXLEY (Chatto and Windus, London. 7s. 6d.)

Julian and Aldous Huxley are typical pioneers in the modern world of intellectual endeavour. Julian has acquired fame as a biologist, Aldous as writer: both are in the van of modern thinkers, scientific in method but not averse from mystical ideas. What they write, stimulates and yet brings with it a sense of futility and underlying sadness. One asks again and again:—Why, with all this searching, do not they and the seeking crowds they represent probe deeper into the mysticism they so evidently respect? There at least they might find the satisfaction that has so far escaped them. They do wrong to be suspicious of the East.

The latest theories of the Huxleys and their newest queries are embodied in twin volumes of popular essays very recently published—*What Dare I Think?* by Professor Julian, and *Music At Night* by Mr. Aldous. The former, more amusing in conversation, is deeply serious when he writes; the latter, more often grave than gay, fills his books with apparent flippancy and cynicism.

Professor Julian calls his essays a

"challenge of science to human action and belief". He is very free with his criticism of superstition and false traditions. Evidently he agrees with Bernard Shaw that "the world is like a garden—it needs weeding as well as sowing". Here, the weeding is done with zest. What the professor particularly dislikes, is the hypocrisy and the arrogant self-righteousness of supporters of the old regime. In his *Africa View* he put into words the violent indignation he now develops. He said then, speaking of certain Christian missionaries:—

I wonder if people of this stamp realize that their ideas seem exactly as barbaric, crude, and wrong to a considerable and influential section of civilized people as do to them the ideas of the primitive tribes among whom they are working. Do they at all grasp that there exists a large and growing body of men and women, brought up in the new conception of the universe which science is revealing, familiarized with modern ideas on religion, who find religion a way of life, an attitude of mind, not a body of dogma or a system of salvation, and who believe that religion can only live if it abandons its primitive certitude and learns to change and grow—and that to them the theology which was orthodox up to the late nineteenth century is completely obsolete, as obsolete as feudalism, bows and arrows, or the divine right of kings? I will quote one instance of what I mean. The following extract from a letter was in a copy of *Ruanda Notes*, a Central African missionary journal, which I happened to see.



The pious gentleman is describing some of the horrors of a famine. "As I walked down the hill from the hospital my blood boiled because of the cruelty of it all, but the answer came to me. Sin was written across these withered bodies. Satan had dragged them down, and given death and disease as his reward." This is white enlightenment and Christian charity!

The cure for this old-fashioned hypocrisy is an honest stock-taking in our new position:—

One of the most obvious of the effects of science has been to confer upon man enormously enhanced power in dealing with the universe around him, and to hold out the prospect of a steady increase in this power. But at the same time, it has robbed him of his proud conviction of being the hero of the cosmic play, has deposed him from his seat in the centre of the universe, and relegated him to the position of an insignificant parasite produced by one of the satellites of one of the millions of stars in one of the millions of galaxies. [p. 122.]

A deep humility becomes this realisation. With it, however, we need not adopt the rejection of all religion which characterized the followers of old Thomas Huxley in the last century. The modern attitude is different. Here is what Julian Huxley says:—

By showing the baselessness of traditional theologies, science seemed at one time to be giving religion itself a mortal blow. But, when we come to look deeper, we find the unescapable fact of religious experience, which no scientific analysis can remove. Thus, by forcing religious thought to distinguish between theological scaffolding and religious core, science has actually encouraged the growth of a truer and more purely religious spirit. To put it in another way, if science has robbed religion of many of its certitudes, those certitudes were in a sphere improper to religion. True religious certitude is not in the realm of intellect at all, but concerns values and a special attitude towards them. Science has evicted religion from the universal but uneasy throne she occupied in the Middle Ages, but she has helped her to ascend her true and permanent throne of spiritual experience. After overthrowing supernaturalism, science is confronted with humanism. [pp. 122-123.]

It is in taking the next step that the moderns seem to fail. They are aware now that science cannot be the all-in-all of life. They see, too, the danger of science going on alone, in opposition to the religious spirit:—

The dangers of the opposition between science and humanism are many and obvious. The chief and central one is that scientific and

humanist thought, failing to comprehend or sympathise with one another, shall organize themselves into two separate or even antagonistic streams, so that civilization shall be two-minded, in large part divided against itself, instead of single-minded, with a common main purpose and idea underlying all variety of minor difference. [p. 138.]

But when it comes to defining the line of progress to be taken by this humanism, this natural religion, Professor Huxley is at a loss. We cannot help thinking that a careful study of Eastern scientific systems for religious development would help him to solve his dilemma. He will have nothing of revelation or tradition, but he feels the Inner Life, and yearns, as he himself quotes, "to have life, and have it more abundantly". . . . "life, however complex, is essentially one" . . . "Humanity is an experiment of the universe in rational self-consciousness." This unity and consciousness of this unity are to be approached in one way by human beings—the way discovered by Professor Huxley's counterparts in the ancient scientific schools of the East. To them, religion was no worship of anthropomorphic deities, no bowing to tradition, but meditation, yoga, reasoning work. Body and mind were submitted to a scientific training, leading to higher grades of consciousness and into touch with Values and Ideas.

In the early part of his book Professor Huxley emphasizes the vast power being slowly accumulated for us by science, and proves, with some amazing examples from biology, the danger of interfering with the balance of Nature. He is fully aware of the fearful results to mankind from scientific power unchecked by moral force. He makes a statement, even, that would have profoundly shocked the scientific friends of his grandfather. He says—

Any one, who has experienced the illumination of new knowledge, or the ecstasy of poetry or music, or the deliberate subordination of self to something greater, or the self-abandonment of falling in love, or complete physical well-being, or the intense satisfaction of a difficult task achieved, or has had a mystical experience, knows that they are in some way valuable for their own sakes beyond ordinary every-day satisfactions, such as being more or less fit, earning one's own living, or



filling one's belly . . . . . There is value in logical thought; so there is in mystical experience. [pp. 162, 167.]

Again, Professor Huxley insists that:—

There is, in fact, a reserve of the angelic in ordinary people, which is unused and even unsuspected, because it does not fit with everyday ideas, because, in fact, we, most of us, are subconsciously rather apologetic about such impractical and inconvenient idealisms. Is there a way of tapping this reserve of moral power without letting it loose in the form of irrational prejudice or wild fanaticism, moral, religious, or patriotic? [pp. 173, 174.]

He says that he, personally, does not know; and adds that "We build laboratories to test out how we can harness and concentrate electrical and chemical and mechanical forces; but the corresponding problem of harnessing and intensifying the latent powers and activities of human nature we have scarcely even begun to envisage".

We repeat that it is, to say the least of it, unfortunate that the professor, so learned in many things, has taken no trouble to study the Eastern contributions to his subject. He might then have found it to be true that Light comes from the East. It is, after all, the main glory of Eastern thinkers to have achieved the very science these Huxleys desire. For that, they have neglected much of importance on outer planes, and their treasure has become surrounded with a forest of neglect through which Western eyes seldom take the trouble to pierce. It is here that lies the value of a book like this by Professor Huxley. He clears a road to the East hitherto barred by Western tradition, and makes ready the way for a new dispensation. The challenge is to us who support with our faith the ancient schools of esoteric wisdom. "Here are the facts," cries the scientist—"here is our lack! What will you do for us?" At least we may try to take advantage of the readiness of present-day students to learn our mystic creeds. The last chapter of *What Dare I Think?* shows that, for scientists, they come a prodigious part of the way to meet us.

Mr. Aldous Huxley is getting restive. He wants much the same spiritual satisfaction as his brother. His need becomes more and more apparent under the thin coating of cynical veneer he gives to his work. His great following is not only due to the amusement caused by his often bitter wit; it is due to the fact that his readers sense in his work the same craving for reality that tortures themselves: and the hope that his brilliance may find them a way out.

The modern epidemic of scepticism has begun to sicken Mr. Aldous.

There is, I believe, a general increase in scepticism with regard to most of the hitherto accepted ideas, particularly in the sphere of ethics. . . . . In its extreme forms, however, scepticism is, for most human beings, intolerable. They must believe in something; they must have some sort of justificatory ideas. [pp. 115-116.]

The trouble is, that the average man is untrained in the art of access to the power in his soul. His mental and spiritual apparatus has never developed the proper muscles. It is too weak to tackle concentration and constructive thought. Scepticism and frivolity are the line of least resistance. Wherefore, to quote Mr. Huxley, "we like insignificances and trivialities—prefer them (bottomlessly frivolous as we are) to the significant things which demand to be taken seriously, to be judged and thought about".

At last, in despair, Mr. Huxley exclaims:—

If I were a millionaire, I should endow a band of research workers to look for the ideal intoxicant. If we could sniff or swallow something that would, for five or six hours each day, abolish our solitude as individuals, atone us with our fellows in a glowing exaltation of affection and make life in all its aspects seem not only worth living, but divinely beautiful and significant, and if this heavenly, world-transfiguring drug were of such a kind that we could wake up next morning with a clear head and an undamaged constitution—then, it seems to me, all our problems would be wholly solved and earth would become paradise. [pp. 254-255.]

There is such a drug. Why not come to the mystics and get it?

R. A. L. M. ARMSTRONG



*The Earlier Religion of Greece in the Light of Cretan Discoveries.* By SIR ARTHUR EVANS. Frazer Lecture for 1931 in the University of Cambridge. (Macmillan & Co., Limited, London.)

Sir Arthur Evans is one of our greatest archæologists. It was his pioneer work in the excavation of Knossos and other sites in Crete that revealed to the world the story of the great Minoan civilisation, of which, except for a few vague legends preserved in Greek literature, every vestige had been forgotten. For thousands of years Crete was the headquarters of a highly evolved culture which spread outwards over the Ægean islands and continental Greece, where Mycenæ seems to have been its chief centre. Prior to the discoveries in Crete, the background of the classical age in the Mediterranean lands was dim and shadowy. There were the poems of Homer and Hesiod, who themselves belonged to the age of legend, with their famous tales of gods, demi-gods and heroes, in which history, romantic fiction and religious symbolism are inextricably blended. Apart from these, we might conjecture much, but we knew nothing.

But the spades of Sir Arthur and his colleagues have pierced through the curtain of myth that veiled everything beyond about 1,000 B. C., and have disclosed, not the primitive barbarism, so dear to the anthropologists of a past generation, but a civilisation comparable in age, enlightenment, and technical skill with those of Egypt, India, and Mesopotamia.

In the lecture under review, Sir Arthur describes the religion of Minoan times, as revealed by the pictures, statues, and sacred sites which have been unearthed in Crete and elsewhere. The beliefs and customs, thus disclosed, are shown to have remarkable affinities with those of later times. Both the exoteric religion of historic Greece and the cults of Western Asia seem to have branched off from the common Minoan stem, although in the classical age they had become widely differentiated.

The central object of Minoan worship

was a Great Mother Goddess with her divine Son—prototypes of Cybele and Attis, Aphrodite and Adonis, Diana and Virbius; but in these later and degenerate cults, the son had become a lover, and unclean rites had been introduced which there is reason to believe were unknown in the Minoan age. In this connection it is a note-worthy fact that, as Sir Arthur tells us, "from the beginning to the end of Minoan Art, amongst all its manifold relics—from its earliest to its latest phase—not one single example had been brought to light of any subject of an indecorous nature".

Christianity too seems to have certain affiliations with the old Minoan worship. Thus a scene, almost exactly paralleling the "adoration of the magi" is found depicted on a signet ring, which shows the mother seated with her babe, in a cave, and receiving offerings from two warriors. The traditional arrangement of a Christian church was prefigured in the building known as the High Priest's Chapel at Knossos, with its choir-stalls, double chancel, and metal gates shutting off an inner sanctuary wherein stood an altar.

Sir Arthur is of opinion that the Minoan religion had "a more spiritual essence" than that of classical Greece: he finds in it "a certain moral ingredient—taken over, it may be, from Ancient Egypt—perceptible in the idea of the weighing of the Soul in butterfly form,... and by the scene on the 'Ring of Nestor' where the deceased are led before the Griffin Inquisitor, enthroned before the Goddess".

H.P. Blavatsky told us that there are seven keys to the interpretation of every symbol; and there is much work still to be done in the study of the religious symbolism of the ancient Cretans. On their engraved signet rings, of which Sir Arthur gives us several illustrations, appear frequently the butterfly and chrysalis, the upright stone associated with a sacred tree, the mother and child, the serpent, griffin-headed women, and other significant forms.

R. A. V. M.



*Satyākāmā*. By S. E. STOKES. (S. Ganesan & Co., Madras.)

S. E. Stokes was heard of as the champion of certain tribes on the Simla hills, and as an active participator in the Non-Co-operation movement of 1921-22. In this book *Satyākāmā*, he appears in the rôle of an original thinker. It was first sketched in prison in 1921-22 and was addressed to his wife as an explanation of his attitude to life. The personal form is retained on the advice of C. F. Andrews.

*Satyākāmā* is an attempt at a resolute working out of the implications of the vision that the Ultimate is love. The mahāvākya or great saying of St. John that God is Love furnishes the motive force, and Indian Philosophy, the framework of the metaphysic, which our author develops as the philosophy of *Satyākāmā* or True Desires.

Paramatman, Purusha and Prakriti constitute the three categories of Being, which in their unity are Brahman. Brahman is no separate category nor is it more ultimate than Paramatman. Brahman is simply Paramatman, Purusha and Prakriti seen in their integral unity. But Stokes's Paramatman is the Personal Brahman of Ramanuja and the God of Christian devotion, in so far as personality is concerned. He is the immanent and sustaining spirit. Stokes finds the *nisus* of creativity in the 'Need of Love to be Needed'. This according to him is no imperfection. This is the significance he finds in the Upanishadic passages "He desired: 'Would that I were many,'" etc. Purusha in Stokes's metaphysic is the infinite potentiality of all conscious personality in the universe, called forth by Paramatman to respond to his Love. This Sankhya term is used by Stokes in his own way. It has no Sankhya meaning whatever in this book. Apparently it is chosen for its suggestion of personality. Stokes gives a picture of biological evolution and reads it as the process of vehicle-making for the development of Purusha. Purusha is unconscious potentiality in essence but develops *pari passu* with organic or vehicular

evolution into centres of conscious individual personality. Purusha is one, though it manifests itself in myriads of organic forms. Further, Prakriti is the medium and instrument of manifestation for Purusha. It is not 'matter' in the scientist's sense. Stokes substantially adopts Ramanuja's view of prakriti. It is a non-sentient element necessary for life. The human organism is just one among the many vehicles that Purusha has built up in the course of evolution in association with Prakriti. Purusha and Prakriti evolve in close association, Prakriti predominating in the earlier stages. Stokes accepts the view that Buddhi belongs to Prakriti. The intellect is merely a part of the mechanism by which experiences are 'formulated' to the Purusha. The urge that accounts for the potentiality which is Purusha passing into the actuality of evolution is Paramatman's will (*sankalpa*). Stokes distinguishes his Purusha from the Jiva of Ramanuja. In the view of our author Purusha is not personal to begin with, but achieves personality in the course of evolution. The first stage is the achievement of Ahankara, or sense of clear-cut individuality. The second is that of transcending this Ahankara in the multi-personal unity of Purusha. The self must be built up before it can be offered. The emergence of Love in the Purusha evolution marks its hold on 'Eternal Life' and guarantees the individual from disruption. Immortality is to be achieved. Salvation is unity in Love with God and all the forms of purusha. Transmigration is accepted in a carefully defined sense. All the achievements of purusha in each centre are retained in the form of forgotten modifications in the texture of personality, and form the basis of further evolution. But memory is necessary in the higher reaches of experience. Immortality begins here and now when the individual has entered into experiences of permanent value such as love. Death does not affect us after such entry, and our love may ensure the immortality of those with whom we are indissolubly bound up.



The 'Avataras' are interpreted as 'Purushottamas' or great personalities who have far transcended us on the road of evolution. Thus Christ and Krishna are not GOD, neither are they men, but Purusha at a far higher level of development. The authority of Scriptures is interpreted as lying in their power to evoke deep experiences, and to afford illuminating clues to the great problems of existence. Stokes believes that Sankara's interpretation of 'Tat twam Asi' and 'Aham Brahma asmi' was not meant to deny finite individuation altogether, but only to contradict the nihilistic and dualistic tendencies of Buddhism and of Sankhya. What is to be annulled is not individuality but the illusion of separateness. Hence Stokes locates the source of

individuation in the Purusha itself and not in the prakritic Upādhi. On the whole, the philosophy of Satyākāmā is an original variant of Personal Idealism, and recalls Lotze, Pringle-Pattison, Royce and Howison in the West and the Ramanuja type of Vaishnavism in India.

But his claim that it is a complete philosophy because it deals with Reality as a whole cannot be accepted. A system of philosophy demands a more detailed analysis of problems. The vision of Stokes must develop into a coherent account of all spheres of life. However the book is full of suggestive ideas and is written in a style of remarkable clarity rising frequently into moving eloquence.

M. A. VENKATA RAO

*Mencius.* A translation of a Chinese Philosopher's Writings with an Introduction by LEONARD A. LYALL. (Longmans, Green & Co. 12s. 6d.)

This new translation is opportune, for amidst universal unrest there is desire for Unity. When Mencius lived (*circa* 300 B.C.) local feuds threatened to destroy Chinese national unity. Confucius (*circa* 500 B.C.) had already tried to correct errors of government, but his influence was waning. Mencius sought to re-establish the ancient doctrines. Recalling how they had been exemplified by the emperors Yao, Shun and Yü, and King Wen and his sons, he proclaimed: "When rulers love their lieges, when they pity the unfortunate, then all below heaven can be ruled as if carried in the palm of the hand." He affirmed that goodness is fundamentally inherent in everyone,—like original good seed implanted, that may or may not be cherished. He fearlessly uttered soul-searching words, or with quick wit emphasised the point of the argument. But, like Confucius, he felt rebuffed, for the feudal princes, lacking courage, failed to follow his advice.

Certain key-words in Chinese Classics occur originally in the *Yih King*.

Evidently the disciples of the Sages did not possess sufficient insight to appreciate their cosmic and microcosmic signification. The English words whereby some of the ideographic key-words are usually translated are not altogether satisfactory: e. g. *mind* for *te*, *gentleman* for *chün tzu*, *knight* for *shih*. But better renderings would not greatly affect the tenor of this translation, because the writings offer endless food for thought, whether or not their depth be plumbed. The inestimable worth of the book is enhanced by the indices. The frontispiece of 'Shun upon his elephant' supports the belief that the 'golden age' emperors *were* men living amongst men. Mencius said: "Shun was a man as I am a man." "Yao and Shun were the same as other men." (A modern belief that the Sages never did live upon earth, seemingly arises from the same misconception that caused people to weave legends about and to deify their inspired leaders.) The pre-eminently wise men who existed on earth in primitive, prehistoric times, had been found worthy to be chosen and taught in order to guide others to find the Way.

I. MEARS



*Easter Island : Home of the Scornful Gods.* By ROBERT J. CASEY. (The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis, U. S. A. \$ 4'00 )

Mr. Casey, who manages to combine the humour and imagination of a storyteller with the more sober qualities of an archæologist, takes his readers with him on the thirty-four ton schooner he has chartered at Tahiti, and designed for other purposes, across two and a half thousand miles of ocean to Easter Island. The chronometer is out of order ; navigation is guess-work ; and we despair, at times of weathering the storms we encounter. But this voyage is, we suspect, largely experimental. Mr. Casey really wants to know whether the journey could ever have been made in canoes.

In the second part of the book, the author makes us experience all the melancholy of an ancient and barren land, which has played its part in the great scheme, run its course, and is spent. In attempting to probe the mystery of Easter Island, one finds oneself at every conjecture, involved finally in deeper mystery, Mr. Casey says. But this is a truism ; there are not several mysteries ; there is only one mystery, that of our own minds. Patanjali is lucid on the subject, and just a few writers, de Maupassant and Mr. Bernard Shaw are among the number, have made the discovery themselves.

Mr. Casey is no doubt right, however, in tracing the origin of the Polynesian race to the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Maori legend attributes it to Uru, which the author takes to be Ur. The emigrants from Chaldea travelled to Vrihia where "ari" grows, later to be pushed onwards again in a search for unpopulated lands. It is curious, Mr. Casey points out, that the Sanscrit name for India, and this name for rice should have been preserved in the Polynesian tradition, more especially as no rice is grown in the South Pacific.

The colossal statues of Easter Island—some five hundred in number—were carved, lying upon their backs—from rocks of volcanic tufa. As they are

thickly planted about the island, and although of different sizes are similar in feature, they represent evidently, a god, whose universality is thus shown, as was that of Osiris by his scattered members and that of Krishna by the number of his arms. As elsewhere in the ancient world, there were greater and lesser gods whose powers varied, so on Easter Island there are greater and lesser images—the latter, also possibly, representing the attributes of the former.

While the highly polished and finished masonry of the wall at Vinapu and that of the cove at Tangariki shows much resemblance to the skilled workmanship of the American monuments, the ornamentation of the latter is lacking in Easter Island. It well may be, however, that there existed once a continent by which its archaic civilization reached the West coast of South America, for had it arrived from the Atlantic, it would undoubtedly have chosen the fertile Eastern plains upon which to settle.

Mr. Casey rejects the theory of a lost continent on the evidence of ocean soundings in the Pacific. Yet, it is tempting to imagine such a continent, after repeated eruptions and disturbances, giving rise to the Andes, and splitting up into numerous groups of islands and archipelagoes, many of which, in their turn, have disappeared. Such a theory would support Mr. Stimson's research evidences undertaken for the Bishop Museum of Honolulu, and Mr. Casey's practical conclusions respecting a migration from the Indo-Chinese peninsula to the Society Islands in the first place, for it is at this centre that Mr. Stimson discovers the origin of a language from which the dialects of Hawaii, New Zealand, and Easter Island have sprung.

One point, however, is certain. When the terraced platforms were built, Easter was already an island shaped as it is at present, for the walls with their backs to the sea completely encircle its thirty-five mile circumference. There is no reason to ascribe a higher antiquity to



the statues than to the platforms. The two examples of this sculpture at the British Museum are unfortunately placed for an examination of their backs, the symbols upon which, although of importance in determining their antiquity, Mr. Casey does not mention. Upon the smaller statue, there is carving which might easily be mistaken for the "crux ansata" of ancient Egypt, but closer inspection shows that it is a girdle with clasp to which a cloth passing between the legs is attached, as worn until lately by the natives of the Island. On the other statue is engraved among other indistinguishable devices, a pair of paddles and a tern, a sea bird invested with the properties of a god to save the species from destruction on an island where food was always scarce.

Some of the images, thirty-five feet high and weighing forty tons, are buried up to their necks, while others seem to be as exposed as when first erected; and some are more weather worn than others, belonging evidently to different periods. But when Admiral Roggween discovered the island in 1772, he saw the natives performing rites before the statues and concludes that they were sun worshippers. Later, La Perouse reports that the Indians displayed a kind of reverence for the images.

From this it appears evident that the ancient worship persisted up to the time of the Peruvian slave raid, when sages and chiefs alike were carried off to perish in the South American guano fields. Thus the last traditions of Easter Island culture were lost.

L. E. PARKER

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*The mystery surrounding Easter Island is great. H. P. Blavatsky wrote much about it and all that follows is culled from her writings:—*

The mystery that surrounds Easter Island is as great as ever, in spite of the fact that its history was fully outlined by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* almost half a century ago.

This island occupies an isolated position in the Pacific Ocean, about two thousand miles off the coast of South America. It is approximately twelve miles long and four miles broad, and is dotted with craters which have not been active within the memory of man. The main interest of Easter Island, however, centres around the gigantic statues whose history still remains a matter of conjecture to the scientific mind.

When Captain Cook first explored the island, he found statues measuring 27 feet in height and 8 feet across the shoulders lying on the ground, and others of even greater dimensions still standing erect. One of the latter was so tall that its shade was sufficient to shelter thirty people from the heat of the sun. The platforms supporting these colossal figures range from 30 to 40 feet in

length, and from 12 to 16 feet in breadth and are built in the same Cyclopean style that characterizes the temple walls of Panchacamac and the ruins of Tia Huanaca. Four of these images are found in Ronororaka, three of them deeply embedded in the soil and the fourth resting on the back of its head, in the position of a sleeping man. Though all belong to the long-headed type, there is a great diversity in features, indicating that they were portraits of different individuals, not images of religious worship. Certain distinguishing marks—such as their head-dress, for instance—distinctly show that the originals were not savages of the stone age, but belonged to a civilization already in a high state of development. The distinctly sensual type of their features, however, indicates that their tendency was rather towards sorcery than Adeptship. Two of these statues now stand outside the British Museum, attracting attention and curiosity from the tourist and the student.

A comparison of the Easter Island statues with those remarkable stone figures found near Bamian in Central Asia brings out some points which should not be overlooked. Both have



preserved a record of the existence of prehistoric races of giants for men of the present day. But while the five Bamian statues embody the history of *all* the giant races which preceded our own, the Easter Island statues tell the tale of but a *single* race. The Bamian figures depict the gradual decrease in size of the various races, while the Easter Island figures—being of a more or less uniform height of from 20 to 30 feet—show the approximate size of only *one* particular race of giants.

These statues are by no means the only records that we possess. The literature and traditions of all ancient peoples are full of references to 'giant races'. India had her Danavas and Daityas, Ceylon her Rakshasas, Greece her Titans, Egypt her colossal Heroes, Chaldea her Izdubars, the Jews their *Emims* and the famous giants Anakim, Og and Goliath. The second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* is filled with references to these colossal ancestors of ours, and fully explains the process by which the human race has gradually dwindled to its present size.

If the Easter Islanders were giants in physical stature, must we necessarily assume that they were pigmies in intelligence and knowledge? If we examine the symbols and glyphs engraved on the tablets and statues our question will receive an illuminating answer.

In every ancient system of cosmogony, the growth and development of the Kosmos were recorded in geometrical figures. Every record began with a circle, a point, a triangle and a cube, ending with the Pythagorean *decade*—the sum total of all. This *decade* and its numberless combinations are found in every portion of the globe: in India, Egypt, Chaldea, Peru, Mexico and North America.

*They are also found on the Easter Island relics*, and show that the early inhabitants of this place could not possibly have been Neolithic savages, but on the contrary must have possessed both mathematical and metaphysical knowledge, and must have been in communication with other parts of the globe

where these same symbols were known. Even the cross appears engraved upon the back of some of the statues, showing the great antiquity of that particular symbol.

Not only were the Easter Islanders connected with other parts of the world by their common knowledge, but certain facts go to prove the existence of a universal language as well. Despite the fact that New Zealand, the Sandwich Islands and Easter Island are separated from one another by a distance of from 800 to 1000 leagues, and that the aboriginal inhabitants of these islands could not possibly have communicated with one another before the arrival of the Europeans, yet we find all of them speaking dialects of one original mother-tongue, able to understand one another without difficulty, and having almost identical customs and religious beliefs.

There can be but one logical explanation of such facts as these, and it may be found among the traditions of the people themselves. When Louis Jacolliot visited Polynesia many years ago, he found the natives of the different islands unaware of one another's existence; but in every case it was maintained that *that particular island* had at one time formed part of an immense continent which extended toward the West, on the Asian side. When they were asked 'Where is the cradle of your *race*?' without exception they extended their hands toward the setting sun. In both Malacca and Polynesia, which form the two extremes of the oceanic world, there is a common belief: All these islands once formed two great continents, the one inhabited by yellow, the other by dark men, and that the Ocean punished them for their incessant quarrelling by swallowing them up.

Fifty years ago only a few intrepid souls were brave enough to assert their belief in these buried continents. Jacolliot, the author of "*Histoire des Vierges : les Peuples et les Continents Disparus*," who devoted many years to the study of the religion, language and customs of the Polynesians, says:



One of the most ancient legends of India preserved in the temples by oral and written traditions, relates that several hundred thousand years ago there existed in the Pacific Ocean an immense continent which was destroyed by geological upheaval, and the fragments of which must be sought in Madagascar, Ceylon, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and the principal isles of Polynesia. As to the Polynesian continent which disappeared at the time of the final geological cataclysms, its existence rests upon such proofs that to be logical we can doubt no longer.

Mr. A. R. Wallace, in his *Malay Archipelago* arrives at the following conclusion after a review of the evidence on hand:

The inference that we must draw from these facts is undoubtedly that the whole of the islands eastwards beyond Borneo and Sumatra do essentially form part of a former Australian or Pacific continent.

Even Haeckel, in his *Pedigree of Man*, traces the cradle of the human race to

Lemuria, a continent that lay to the South of Asia, and sank later on beneath the surface of the Indian Ocean.

As early as 1877 H. P. Blavatsky offered the theory of a submerged continent as the only plausible explanation of such mysteries as that of Easter Island. Eleven years later, in *The*

*Secret Doctrine*, she elaborated this theory, giving the full history of both Atlantis and Lemuria and a description of their inhabitants, their culture and their disappearance beneath the sea. She refutes the ideas of those archæologists who would place the date of the Easter Island statues within the Christian era, and says that the continent of Lemuria sank beneath the sea some four million years ago. In regard to the architecture of the Lemurians she says:—

We find the Lemurians in their sixth sub-race building their first rock-cities out of stone and lava. One of such great cities of primitive structure was built entirely of lava, some thirty miles west from where Easter Island now stretches its narrow piece of sterile ground . . . . . and was entirely destroyed by a series of volcanic eruptions. The oldest remains of Cyclopean buildings were all the handiwork of the Lemurians of the last sub-races . . . The first large cities, however, appeared on that region of the continent which is now known as the island of Madagascar. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 317)

Those who are interested in Easter Island and who are looking for authentic information concerning the prehistoric races and continents would do well to make a serious study of this volume.

LEONA GRUGAN

*The Greeks.* By ROSALIND MURRAY. (A. & C. Black, London. 2s. 6d.)

This is an interesting little book, written in a pleasing style and quite suitable for the How and Why Series.

People are so prone to think that the discoveries and inventions of the present era are absolutely new, that it is a delightful surprise to meet a volume which is not only willing to admit, but ready to prove, that the Greeks were far ahead of our age in many ways—science, philosophy, architecture, government, and various other fields of activity. Unfortunately, however, Miss Murray does not appear to have all her information quite accurate. For example, on what authority does she state that the statues of Buddha found in India, China and Japan are adaptations of the Greek statues of Apollo?

But the question: where did the

Greeks obtain their knowledge and inspiration? A nation is certainly not born with a wealth of culture, but has received it as a heritage from the hands of another nation older and more experienced than itself. Herodotus, the "Father of History," confesses more than once that Greece owed everything to Egypt, who obtained her knowledge from the Chaldeans, who in turn received their learning from India, the cradle of the Aryan race. If one wishes to go still further back, one finds that the Greeks are, in reality, the descendants of the old Atlanteans. (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 743)

Let us not forget that the real mission of Greece was to serve as a gateway through which the spiritual treasures of the East were able to penetrate into the West, and thus enrich the life and ideals of the Western world.

M. F.



*The Prisoner's Soul and Our Own.* By EIVIND BERGGRAB, Bishop of Tromsø. Translated by LAURA GRAVELY. ( J. M. Dent & Sons, London. 6s. )

In Norway they have two kinds of prisons—the isolation and the association. It is in a prison run on the cell or isolation system that Bishop Berggrav has made his observations as chaplain. And his book has been written partly to show what mistaken notions most people have of prisons and prisoners, partly to express his conviction derived from experience that no man is so evil that he has not something of good in him. You may lose faith in society in a prison, he tells us, but nothing you see will ever make you lose faith in man.

The Norwegian cell prison seems wonderfully humane. There are cheerful colours, pictures, books, and tools kept in the cell. The dress and style of hair of the prisoners are normal. Plenty of work is given them, with pay,—carpentry, book-binding, shoe-making, and so on. Liberal probation is granted for good conduct. The attitude of the staff is firm yet sympathetic. In such an atmosphere one feels that the system is given its best chance. Does it succeed? Is it curative for both mind and body?

Undoubtedly the cell system has great advantages. It provides opportunity for self-examination, a regular life, and the discipline of quiet. Alcoholists, for instance, apparently stand solitude well. It often cures them. The system brings out traits in human nature usually concealed or undeveloped—love for living things, such as a bulb, a spider, or a canary; redeeming love for the mother or the wife; desire for work—carpentry is easily the most popular craft; affection for the home and for domestic festivals such as Christmas. Its drawbacks are that constant self-examination tends towards self-pity unless rightly guided; and that unless responsibilities, *i. e.* temptations, are gradually introduced there is a reversion to infantility. So many resolutions to “run straight” are made in prisons where temptation is ab-

sent. Almost as many are broken when the full pressure of temptation is felt on release.

To admit that the cell system has a curative value is not, however, to justify it. Those who have visited the Oslo prison condemn the inhuman isolation and torture of spirit which the cell system creates there, as elsewhere. It is astonishing that kindly Bishop Berggrav should have grown almost to love such hateful conditions, for nowhere does he roundly condemn them; nor does he make it clear that the association prison, despite its difficulties, is greatly to be preferred.

But on the whole the message of Bishop Berggrav is one of glowing hope. Rightly run, one feels that the system of modified isolation has tremendous possibilities. The prisoners understand that their confinement is expiatory, and they can see its reformatory value. But they cannot and will not appreciate that they are dangerous to society. To ask a prisoner to accept this view is, says the Bishop, psychologically brutal. Where the reformatory value fails is in the faulty relation of time sentences to true justice, and the fact that the memory of misdeeds becomes blurred with time.

Does prison life bring out the religion in a man? Very seldom, apparently. A man has to find himself before he can find God; and though prison audiences are the most attentive and emotionally responsive of all audiences, though they soak up all words like dry sponges, yet the impression made is like that in a piece of rubber—merely momentary. A healthy scepticism, on a basis of hope, is the only effective attitude to the seemingly religious prisoner, Bishop Berggrav has found.

This book is so full of human nature, and so illuminates the minds of people whom society ordinarily shuns as evil, that it deserves to be read by all who wish to understand prisons without repugnance and without sentimentality. And it convinces one that prisoners, after all, are very much like ourselves.

G. W. W.



## CORRESPONDENCE

### THE SENSE OF SIN

If the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, so are the sulphurous flames of Hell. Just as Amitabha dwells in the heart of every man, so does the stern Yama-Raja, the judge of his soul. Even while we listen to and obey the counsels of Mr. Worldly-Wiseman, Yama-Raja, apparently asleep, is really wide awake.

When Prince Nekhludof, the hero of Tolstoy's immortal work *Resurrection*, discloses to his maid-servant his determination to leave nothing undone in the effort to save the woman he had wronged, even going to the length of marrying her if necessary, Agraphe-na tries to comfort him, and if possible to dissuade him from his plans, with these words:

Of course you can do what you please, but I must say I can't see that it's any particular fault of yours. Such things happen to everybody, and if people use their common sense affairs like that are soon overlooked and forgotten.

Such "common sense," certainly counsels a man to turn a deaf ear to his conscience whenever convenient. And it was with precisely the same sort of argument that young Nekhludof had years ago attempted vainly to ease his conscience on the morning following his seduction of Katusha, though in his heart he knew that he had played a dastardly and cruel part in his dealings with an innocent virgin. "The same thing had happened to So-and-so, and with Uncle So-and-so, and with his own father," he had then argued; "and if every body does it, how can it be helped?"

Yet he knew that he had forfeited his own self-respect, and could neither look an honest man in the face nor blame a fellow-sinner. However, he soon succeeded in forgetting the past, so that "in these latter days it never came into his mind". Time had brought him his cup of nepenthe! We praise Time for the miracles it works, but

Time also helps us to forget the wrongs which we inflict on others. So Nekhludof would have married a lovely and clever princess, and lived with her a life of wealth and luxury for the rest of his days, commanding the respect of those about him and allowing his past to bury itself in oblivion. But as a Buddhist would say his karma had prescribed for him a different course, for Katusha's trial by jury brought home to him again, even more vividly than before, the enormity of his own offence, aggravated as it was now by the realization of his responsibility in unwittingly condemning an innocent woman to penal servitude.

Tolstoy is careful to describe Nekhludof as a man, who in spite of his illicit relations with women had preserved a more tender conscience than the common run of the Russian aristocracy of his time. Had he possessed a little more "common sense," he could easily have lulled his conscience to sleep again, and pursued his career in the orthodox fashion.

Most men, all over the world, do so. Nay, they go further, and, not only do they deceive themselves and the world, but, they judge and condemn others. Even when they admit their sins, they quickly find out plausible excuses for them. "If I hadn't seduced her some one else would probably have; and besides, she tempted me as much as I tempted her." In the case of certain crimes, we blame society or the State and not the offenders, especially when we ourselves are guilty of the same offence. We argue, that such crimes are the inevitable products of lamentable social conditions, as if man were an automaton, reacting to environmental influences!

Stern self-criticism is almost as rare in the East to-day as it is in the West, and like Agraphe-na Petrovna most of us question the wisdom of a man who



follows conscientiously his own inner divine voice.

Society is exacting in calling upon every one to conform to its rules and conventions, and indifferent to man's inner spiritual attitude. People soon acquire the habit of obeying society and disregarding the betterment of their own soul. But all great men have discovered for themselves (at what a cost!) that it is the spirit that really matters. "It is man's soul that Christ is always looking for," wrote Oscar Wilde and added that "one realizes one's soul only by getting rid of all alien passions, all acquired culture, and all external possessions, be they good or evil".

A true Buddhist tries, or should try, to normalize his life, and to keep the normal state of perfect balance or unity in time of emergency. Such a condition is ordinarily described as the mind having complete control of the flesh. In reality there should be no semblance of control or domination one way or the other, for that would imply force and restraint, with the possibility or danger of rebellion. In an ideal normalized life body and soul are perfectly at peace with each other, or *are one*. Such a life, permanently maintained, is worthy of a Bodhisattva. But in the ordinary man, possessing a keen conscience, the conflict between his higher spirituality and his baser animal nature is frequent and unavoidable; and in some cases so sharp that it eventually leads him into a monastic or other forms of religious life, or into a life of self-sacrifice and willing service of his fellow-men. And when one realizes how grave one's offences are, not necessarily in the eyes of the law or of society (which recognizes and punishes only crude forms of crime) but in the judgment of one's own conscience, then does one begin seriously to ask oneself, "Shall I ever fully atone for my sins while on this earth, however hard I may strive? Shall I not have to spend many lives for their atonement, if indeed there be such future births in store for me? So numerous and so grave are my sins, that

I begin to doubt if ever I shall make full amends for them with my own sadly-limited powers".

It is such overwhelming realization that finally determined Honen and Shinran, two of Japan's greatest religious teachers, to leave the old traditional school of self-discipline and, in the midst of strong opposition, preach the gospel of absolute faith in Amida.

*Yokkaichi, Japan*

M. G. MORI

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#### PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIETY

May I write about Prof. A. R. Wadia's article in January ARYAN PATH? It seems to me that one of the first points to make is about the difference between philosophy which is love of truth and the speculative deductions from materialistic scientific findings. As I see it, the philosophy of a people cannot be a series of speculations put forward by any man, even of titanic mentality, but rather the principles used naturally in every day life by those people. Therefore, if Prof. Wadia wishes to know the philosophy of the West he must judge it by our systems of governments, economics, international relationships, and above all by our every day life.

But, what Prof. Wadia refers to as a nation's philosophy is doubtless the culmination of ideas in the finest minds of a race. But then he ignores the hypothesis of absolute knowledge or unchanging truth. He does not conceive of anything higher than mind, nor any man capable of transcending his mind and seeing truth in a deeper and more comprehensive way. Is not this the reason that he is enamoured of western philosophy? Would he like his countrymen, and especially country women to live as men and women live here—say in my neighbourhood at Hollywood?

*Los Angeles, U. S. A.*

M. D.

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## THE BUDDHA IN NEW INDIA

The Hindu philosophy of life originates in the Vedic hymns, defines itself in the Upanishadic intuitions and finally reaches a culmination in the *true* Vedant philosophy, the key to which, however, has been missing for long. The contribution which Buddha made to the eclectic Hindu philosophy, has been almost always misunderstood and misjudged; He has been condemned as an enemy of Vedic tradition.

The crux of the question centres in the meaning of the term 'soul' and colossal changes in the religious history of India have resulted from no greater cause than a mere misjudging of connotation! It is as interesting as helpful to realize the truth of the theosophic view that beyond the plane of social conventionality words become alive in proportion to the intensity of thought and that they are in truth the 'living messengers' deserving our utmost care and reverence. That literature can hold a mirror up to the age to which it belongs, is indeed due to the power of words which open up suggestive avenues for insight into human experience. India could have been saved from tremendous spiritual set-backs if clearer cognition of the term 'soul' had been possible during, and immediately after, Buddha's times. And India of to-day needs in no less degree the clarification of that very term, since the spiritualistic, the psychical, and the ultra-academic distortions of the true meaning of that term are getting an easy vogue.

It is therefore necessary, to draw the attention of all to the opening article "Soul What Is It?" in THE ARYAN PATH for March 1931. While a critical consideration of that article will unfold the Theosophical significance of the term 'soul,' a comparative study of Mrs.

Rhys Davids' two articles appearing in your last May and June numbers actually proves the constructive character of Buddha's mission and reveals his affinity with the Vedic and the Upanishadic teaching.

Buddha *did* annihilate the soul: he laughed out the immortality, and also challenged the very spirituality of the soul. But the soul which was his victim was the finite and the personal, the soul that craved for a loose life in heaven, of passion and passivity, the soul that sought to secure that heaven by means of vicious *karmakanda*—ignorant, dark, and mischievous practice of rituals. This initial negation and destruction, however, was only the first phase in his constructive plan of "fulfilling and expanding the central teaching of the Upanishads". Mrs. Rhys Davids shows in her articles how the collective consciousness of India of B. C. 600 to 500 was straining and striving after a More, was hungering after a fuller and richer experience.

Apart from the world of ideas and philosophical meanings the tangible results of Buddha's constructive programme and his affinity with Vedic tradition can be traced and ascertained by a study of the social life of his times. Swami Jagadiswarananda has mentioned a few connections between the Vedic and the Buddhistic art-forms in his pamphlet *Buddhism and the Vedas*; and in the April-May number of the *Mahabodhi* Dr. A. L. Nair of Bombay has given some suggestive hints as regards the educational, the agricultural and commercial ameliorations which have originated in the efforts and teaching of the Enlightened One.

All these are certainly a sign of the times—Buddha's influence must regain predominance in the New India which is emerging.

Bombay

D. G. V.



## ENDS AND SAYINGS

“—————ends of verse

*And sayings of philosophers.”*

HUDIBRAS.

A very interesting article by Mr. Frank Malland in *The Times* of 13th April led the discussion on the subject of belief in witchcraft among African natives; the discussion was about the best method which the ruling Whites should devise to free the population from this “shadow,” “curse,” etc., “which is co-extensive with native life and thought”. All the correspondents who commented on his article, as Mr. Malland himself, possess first hand knowledge of African life and administration.

The points of interest to the intelligent believer in magic, and we do believe in it, are:—(1) that ridicule or denial of magic is no remedy; (2) that the existing law should be altered, for, the present attitude “appears preposterous to the natives,” who “regard Europeans as we regard the colour-blind or the tone-deaf, deficient in one sense, and they carry on on the evidence of their own senses”; (3) that the official and the missionary should be given “anthropological training, sufficient to enable him really to appreciate the outlook on magic and religion of the primitive peoples” which outlook is regarded as childish and foolish. Mr. Malland complains that “we make all divination illegal—even for

ascertaining what spirit is incarnated in a new born babe”. In his original article he says:—

We confine ourselves to persecuting those who are fighting what they believe to be the most evil and unnatural curse that afflicts mankind, and who do but hold the belief that was held by Lord Bacon, Raleigh, Lord Coke, Cranmer, Knox, Calvin, Wesley, and many other men of intellect and culture.

—————  
The one aim of the discussion is the finding of the best means to eradicate this “rank superstition”. Even when the education of the administrator is suggested it is with a view to his bringing the believer in magic to a sense of the impossibility of the existence of witches. We doubt not that in Africa as elsewhere there is superstition, and that witch-doctors take advantage of it. They use the same force which politicians use to exploit young patriots or the priests to exploit devotees. What is that force?—credulity and ignorance. Even in the name of modern science such exploitation takes place; and we are not blind to the existence of the same phenomenon in certain so-called theosophical circles.

Between credulity and incredulity there is no difference. What is wanted is knowledge and not merely the knack of handling the witch, the witch-doctor, and the



believer in both. Neither anthropology nor psychology explain what magic is; there are half-a-dozen "scientific" theories, but all of them fail to satisfy the real student of the subject. Most enquirers start with a predilection in favour of or against some particular view, exactly as all these correspondents to *The Times* do. Why assume that it is superstition? or fraud? or fanaticism? or even auto-suggestion and self-hypnosis? These terms themselves need defining.

Etymologically Magic is the science of the Magi, the Wise, but nowadays it is regarded as the science of the conjurer. Theosophy believes in magic but not in miracle, and offers help to the honest-minded researcher. The first step he is recommended to take is a study of the following postulates, which will turn out to be axioms, if he is earnest and patient in his search:—

I. There is no miracle. Everything that happens is the result of law—eternal, immutable, ever active. Apparent miracle is but the operation of forces undetected by science.

II. Magic is spiritual Wisdom; nature, the material ally, pupil and servant of the Magician.

III. Nature is triune: there is a visible, objective Nature; an invisible, indwelling, energizing nature, the exact model of the other, and its vital principle; and above these two Spirit, source of all forces, alone eternal, and indestructible. The lower two cons-

tantly change; the higher third does not.

IV. Man is also triune: he has his objective physical body; his vitalizing astral body (or soul) the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third—the sovereign, immortal Spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity.

V. The trinity of nature is the lock of magic, the trinity of man the key that fits it.

VI. Magic, as a science, is a knowledge of these principles, and of the way by which the omniscience and omnipotence of the Spirit and its control over nature's forces may be acquired by the individual while still in the body. Magic, as an art, is the application of this knowledge in practice.

VII. Arcane knowledge misapplied, is sorcery; beneficently used, true magic, or Wisdom.

The following is extracted from the stenographic report of the presidential address of Madame Sophia Wadia delivered at the Buddha anniversary in Bombay on the 21st of May 1932:—

"Cease from evil, do good." To do good, but what is good, and how to do it? He asked us to live normally, *i. e.* according to the Norm of the Universe of which man is an integral part. The Good which the Buddha defined is as profound and as far-reaching as His conception of Evil. Look for the Pattern of the Universe, He said. The stars in the firmament, crystals under ground, pearls as oysters of the sea, all show a pattern; a protoplasmic cell as the human



body is founded on a pattern; the rose-bud blossoms, and the star of jessamine falls according to pattern. Life, taught the Great Buddha, is a mighty Wheel of Perpetual Motion. That great universal Wheel or Chakra contains within itself numberless smaller wheels, so that each being has his own wheel of life, with a pattern all its own, and which pattern changes with the present motion. The praying wheel of the Buddhist is a graphic symbol which conveys this fundamental truth. Your life, my life, the life of every one, is a wheel with a pattern and a motion—the pattern is the result of past karma, and represents what we know as fate or destiny; the motion on the other hand, is the energy of present karma, present action, and stands for the effort of our free-will, our self-energization, and self-choice. Please note the two aspects of karma, by present motion or endeavour we change the pattern of past karma, thus building our future fate through our own self-induced and self-devised efforts. Ordinarily, people define all pleasant things as good karma, and all unpleasant as evil karma. The Buddhist's conception of good is of a very different order. To become good, to bring out the good in us, we must try and reproduce in our own wheel of life that pattern which is in harmony with the Pattern of the great universal Wheel. The praying wheel moves with every chant—Aum Mani, Padme Hum. Have you thought of the significance of this practice? It teaches us that our present effort which moves the wheel of life should be in accordance with the wisdom enshrined in that great and potent Mantra—Aum Mani, Padme Hum. What does the sentence mean? It is generally translated as "Oh, the Jewel in the Lotus," but it really means much more, for it refers to and explains

the profound truth about the nature of good. How? The Great Universe and the small man are intimately and indissolubly linked. The sentence really means, "I am in thee and thou art in me" or "I am *that* I am".

To do good or to be good implies that we must seek for the universal Pattern in the performance of the daily duties of life; that good which the Buddha asked us to perform frees us from bondage. Good works of the ordinary kind are binding, and bondage, in the final analysis, means pain and suffering. That real and spiritual kind of good which liberates, manifests only when we incorporate in our individual lives universal aspects. Within each one of us is a Universal Being, the future Nirvanee, the future Buddha. The awakening of that slumbering divine consciousness spontaneously begets this real kind of goodness, very different from our personal concept of what goodness is. Each one—mother, father, child; labourer or merchant; soldier or priest; each one, must revolve his wheel and pray: Aum Mani, Padme Hum; Aum Mani, Padme Hum. In doing our acts and in living our lives, in the daily performance of duty, we must shape ourselves according to the Divine Pattern of the Universal Wheel. This, by the way, is the same truth which our Hindu philosophy imparts through its magnificent pantheon of gods and goddesses. For every walk in life, for every stage in evolution, for every age and condition, there is an appropriate God or Goddess; different people worship different gods and goddesses, *i. e.* they try to become worthy of relationship with them. And in the real sense, man, the microcosm, carries within himself the entire pantheon which is of the Great Universe, the Macrocosm.