

# THE ARYAN PATH

51, Esplanade Road,  
BOMBAY.

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# The ARYAN PATH

No. 6.

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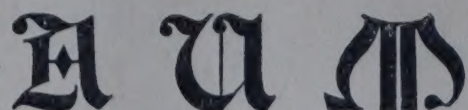
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- (a) To form a nucleus of a universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and a demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.





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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JUNE, 1930.

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*The Editors hold themselves responsible for unsigned articles only. They are not necessarily in agreement with the views of their contributors to whom they leave free expression of opinion.*

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## OCCULT KNOWLEDGE.

*Anyway you are right that struggling is wrong. Do it quietly, that is the way the Masters do it. . . . Patience is really the best and most important thing, for it includes many. You cannot have it if you are not calm and ready for the emergency, and as calmness is the one thing necessary for the spirit to be heard, it is evident how important patience is. . . . So, keep right on and try for patience in all the very smallest things of life every day, and you will find it growing very soon, and with it will come greater strength and influence on and for others, as well as greater and clearer help from the inner side of things.—W. Q. JUDGE.*

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Many questions are asked as to what is Occult knowledge and how it is to be obtained. Especially in the Western world there is a growing desire to understand the true esoteric mysticism. Below we print a valuable interpretation from the pen of the late Robert Crosbie :—

Occult knowledge means knowledge which is "hidden" but it also means knowledge which is known. If it is knowledge that is known, there must be those who know it ; there could be no knowledge without the knowers of it. True occult knowledge can only be obtained by those who follow the path to it. That path was set down by those Who Know ; those who will, may and can arrive at that knowledge. It is not a path open only to certain persons ; it is open to every living human being, and limited only by the limitations we ourselves place around it through choice or through ignorance.



But there is much heard in the world to-day of what passes for "occult knowledge." Our search for knowledge is usually and universally looking for something outside. We are looking for information, for instruction, in the thoughts of other men, in the ideas of other peoples, which, in this school of Occult Knowledge, is not knowledge at all. The only *knowledge* we can have is that which we gain for ourselves, and within ourselves, as actual experience. External facts and information can never give us any understanding whatever of the higher, more divine parts of our nature.

Occult Knowledge is to be gained by the recognition and conscious use of the powers of the Inner Self. It cannot be gained by reasoning, or the inferences reached from looking at things from outside and judging from what we are able to perceive; it is gained by what we call the Intuition—the acquired knowledge of all the past. Occult Knowledge enables one to absolutely determine what is the nature and essence of anything regarded.

True and full Intuition can come to us as a steady light only through our doing away with the false ideas that we now hold and employ. So what is required is a correction of our basis of thinking. Theosophy gives us the true basis for right thinking, and so, of course, for right action.

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*On close observation, you will find that it was never the intention of the Occultists really to conceal what they had been writing from the earnest determined students, but rather to lock up their information for safety-sake, in a secure safe-box, the key to which is—intuition. The degree of diligence and zeal with which the hidden meaning is sought by the student, is generally the test—how far he is entitled to the possession of the so buried treasure.*

MAHATMA K. H.



## THE RIGHT RESOLVE.

[B. M. is an old-world man living by his old-world methods in our era. We are fortunate in having secured a few reports of his talks to his intimate friends. The Bhagavad-Gita is the book he has mastered through long years of study and meditation; but further, having lived according to its tenets more successfully than is generally possible, his thoughts breathe a peculiar fragrance. The papers have been translated from the vernacular; it should be understood that they are not literal translations, and the translator has adhered more to ideas and principles than to words. Although B. M. knows English, his inspiration becomes impeded in employing that medium of expression and so he prefers not to use it. We think our readers will find real inspiration in this series.—Eds.]

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“Even if the man of most evil ways worship me with exclusive devotion, he is to be considered as righteous, for he hath judged aright.”—*Bhagavad-Gita*, IX. 30.

Such verses as the above in the different scriptural books have been misinterpreted by the priest and purohit in every age and clime. Every religion nowadays is presented to the world for its superior claims. The truly spiritual man knows that all religions are true at their root and false as separated and separative factors.

The *study* of religions leads us to the eclectic nature of Religion. The *Gita* is an eclectic book. It is meant for all, even for one “who may be of the womb of sin.” In the above Shloka it is not said that only a Brahman or an Aryan who had judged aright must be considered righteous, but all, whoever and whatever they be, provided of course that they “worship me” i.e., Krishna. But the Lord of Mystery was not ignorant that different men follow diverse ways of worship. He refers to them in this very ninth discourse. He also says: “I am the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings” (X. 20), including the man of most evil ways.

It is a well-known philosophical axiom that each one of us understands the universe in terms of his own power of senses, of mind, or of heart. The resplendent universe does not exist for the blind; the laws of Nature exist not for the lunatic; the good, the beautiful, the true exist not for the hard-hearted, the ugly tempered, and the selfish individual. Thus also, we are able to cognize the nature of Krishna only by the aid of that Spirit in us which is Himself. Thus we can see that it is the spirit of Krishna which in the true Christian is named the spirit of Christ, and unless, it is said, the Christ be born in him, he may be a church-goer but not a Christian. A Buddhist may repeat “I worship the Buddha”; unless the Tathagata light is lighted in his heart, he is not a true follower of the Enlightened One.

Krishna is the Self within each one of us. The first step in spiritual evolution is the acknowledgment of that fact. We may call it the Christ within, or the Buddha within; we may call ourselves “sons of Ahura Mazda” or “servants of Allah”; we have to recognize that names matter little and the reality they represent means everything.



Just as a single idea can be expressed in any tongue, and in pictorial and symbolic ideographs, so also the Spirit in man is one and the same though its shining forth in each is different according to the evolution of each human being. There are men of evil ways in each religion and nation, and for them all a method is here presented.

If a man resolves aright he is to be considered righteous ; and his resolve is true when he has taken to "worshipping" Krishna. This is the first step : each person must begin to worship the Spirit of Deity which dwells in his own heart. What is worship ? —it is becoming worthy of relationship ; to be united to the Divinity within is the object of worship. We are in essence divine and spiritual. To succeed in transferring that divinity and spirituality to the living, toiling, suffering man is the task set out before us, by the *Gita*. To be united to the Higher Self is Yoga, and Yoga and worship are synonymous. So any man or woman who has resolved to listen to the voice of his own conscience, to seek for the still small Voice of God in his own heart, to gain communion with his own Higher Self, has judged and resolved rightly and is to be accounted righteous. In this doctrine is not offered some vicarious atonement, some hope of distant heaven, to some special few. Here is more than hope—certitude for each and every one, provided he exerts himself along the right line.

To sit in judgment over our lower self and to note all its foibles ; to review its mischievous tendencies and correct them ;—this is the task each one of us must perform at the close of every day. This leads to right resolve and the Great Light dawns in our consciousness as we repeat to ourselves the words of a Great Sage : " He who will not find our truths in his soul and within himself, has poor chances of success in Occultism."

B. M.



## FORTY YEARS OF PHENOMENA.

[Under this general heading we print two very interesting articles and an editorial Afterword. To obtain a correct estimate, the three should be read together.—Eds.]

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### I. THE PRESENT POSITION OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.\*

[**Sir Lawrence Jones**, President of the Society for Psychical Research since 1928, has been actively interested for several decades in matters psychical. He has drawn on his vast fund of information as well as his interesting literary reminiscences, acquired during the course of a long life, for his lecture before the Oxford Society for Psychical Research, which we have the privilege of publishing here. He was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, of which he was a scholar in 1879. His studious and scholarly interests have not dried his humanitarianism. He has been Vice-Chairman of the Council of the Charity Organization Society since 1917 and is a member of the Administrative Committee which is the executive committee of that body, as well as Borough Director of the Emergency Help Committee of the British Red Cross actively associated in its Fulham work.—Eds.]

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The first beginning of Psychical Research really dates from the early seventies of the last century when Frederic Myers, then a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, realizing, as he says, "that the Historic Religions are not cosmical," turned in despair to Ghosts and Spiritualism. He said:

It was a time when not the intellect only but the moral ideals of men seemed to have passed into the camp of negation. We were all in the first flush of triumphant Darwinism when terrene evolution had explained so much that men hardly cared to look beyond. Among my own group, W. K. Clifford was putting forth his series of triumphant proclamations of the nothingness of God, the divinity of Man. Swinburne and Frederic Harrison also were glorifying Humanity as the only Divine.

Fortunately Henry Sidgwick did not reject the appeal to investigate "ghosts," and with Edmund Gurney as Honorary Secretary, the Society for Psychical Research was started in 1882. Its first aim was to investigate and establish thought transference—then came hypnotism and automatisms generally.

The Society's work during the first twenty years was summarised in Myer's great book, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*.

In that, the new terms—invented mostly by Myers himself—and the new conception of personality involved are fully set out. Telepathy—a word that has been conveyed or translated into every civilised language—and "the subliminal consciousness or sub-consciousness" as it has been called, are now in daily use. But giving labels to things does not explain them. The word telepathy, for instance, is little more than a label covering a huge mass of experiences

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\*Summarised from a Lecture delivered before the Oxford Society for Psychical Research, November 12th, 1929.



about which we are still in the dark. They have been classified and labelled but we are still ignorant of the underlying laws of thought which make such things possible.

Last year the S. P. R. was anxious to try an experiment in mass telepathy on a large scale, extending over a considerable period of time. In response to an appeal by Professor Julian Huxley about five hundred persons in the United Kingdom and Europe responded. The experiments extended over a year, with a weekly test, and Mr. Soal who carried them out for the S. P. R. is now tabulating the results.

Arising out of this comes a further development of Miss Jephson's experiments; Professor Gardner Murphy, of Columbia University, U. S. A., and Professor Flugel, of King's College, are co-operating in these. It is hoped that light will be thrown on the problem of whether telepathists are also clairvoyant—in short, whether they are both manifestations of one and the same psychic faculty. A psychological standard in normal people may thus be set up by which to judge those deviations which are so remarkable.

Professional thought-reading reached its highest pitch in the Zanzigs. I was sorry to hear of the death of Mr. Zanzig, for whose powers I had the greatest admiration. Owing to a law in Scandinavia, to which he belonged, that no money may be taken for an exhibition of psychic powers, he had to pretend to be a trickster.

The problem may be summed up in one query: Does mind transcend matter? That is the age-long question on which Psychical Research may be expected to throw light. That it has not completely done so is shown by the fact that after forty years of investigation Professor Richet, the eminent physiologist, in his great book *Traite de Metapsychique*, while accepting every variety of psychic phenomena, both objective and subjective, still adheres to the materialistic outlook with which he began his enquiries.

Allowance must be made for the sceptical atmosphere of his scientific colleagues in Paris. I believe that since the publication of his book, the claims of the idealistic interpretation of his facts are becoming more insistent—and that in private life "Papa Richet," as he is affectionately spoken of by his pupils, may truthfully say as he did years ago to a friend of mine, "Au revoir, dans ce monde ou dans l'autre." He has invented a new label "Cryptæsthesia" which is deemed to include every kind of clairvoyance and even prevision.

The evidence for personal survival seemed to have a serious set-back when Myers' sealed letter was opened. I was present on that occasion which he hoped might prove historic, sitting by Mrs. Benson, wife of the Archbishop. A number of extracts from script written mainly by Mrs. Verrall were read aloud to us. We agreed that they pointed to a particular classical passage being contained in the letter. When it was opened the contents were far otherwise. The mistake may have been ours. Anyhow the experiment was a failure and has been abandoned.



Mrs. Benson, undeterred by that failure, left a sealed packet, the contents of which had belonged to her daughter who had died two years previously. An attempt was to be made to get information about the contents by supernormal means. The experiment was again a failure but five mediums independently suggested that there was a lock of hair in the box. All these mediums had been consulted by a friend of Mrs. Benson's, Mrs. A., and it would seem as though there was some telepathy between them through Mrs. A.

Now a new method, by thumb prints, has been introduced through "Margery" at Boston, teste Dr. Schiller.

It might have been thought *a priori* that a surviving personality who certainly could not have described his own thumb prints while on earth, could not reproduce them in facsimile after death. But the incredible seems to have happened, and before long, in place of sealed letters, collections of thumb prints may be deposited at the S. P. R. Rooms, awaiting their owners' return to reproduce them in dental wax.

Myers' book, *Human Personality and its Survival* published in 1902, indicates by its title two stages in this enquiry. Before studying Survival we want to know better what survives. Spiritualists are so interested in Survival that they pass over the problems of Human Personality and are apt to accept all communications purporting to come from the other side on their face value. In short, they ignore the subliminal consciousness. And yet over and over again the communications are shown to be limited by the existing knowledge of the medium and sitters—not necessarily conscious knowledge but part of their mental furniture.

Another curious limitation of mediumistic utterances is that they may be founded on something that has appeared in print, or is in existence somewhere in print or MSS.

Mr. Soal's paper on his sittings with Mrs. Florence Cooper, *Proc.* Vol. 35, includes a most remarkable case of this kind. A boy who was lately drowned at Bristol purported to be present in London and gave correct information as to his death and family. Most of this was discovered to have been printed in the *Daily Express*, and the rest was seen by the sitter in the local newspaper before it came through. But at subsequent sittings all answers to questions about his family which were not in the papers were wrong—obvious inventions.

No one should investigate Trance Mediumship without a knowledge of this paper and of Mr. Sidgwick's exhaustive analysis of the Piper Controls in *Proc.* Vol. 28.

My own investigations of trance mediumship some twenty years ago—with a private medium who is a personal friend—have convinced me of Survival. But good conditions are rare and difficult to come by and there seems to be a door open for blatant personation. So I would say to all: Be on your guard, and for the younger members of



your Society I would deprecate investigation into Survival. It is too absorbing to be safely undertaken and should be the ultimate and not the proximate subject for study.

The best evidence for survival is of course where a deceased person makes known by dreams or vision some fact unknown to any living person. The Chaffin Will Case is one of the most recent, and as it involved a law suit in Canada, is comparatively well known. Such cases are naturally rare. First, there must be some missing object, will or money, or whatever it is, then a deceased person who cares enough to try and communicate, and finally some one sufficiently mediumistic to receive the message and remember it accurately.

\* \* \* \*

Dowsing for water, or metals, is another form of clairvoyance of great interest and requiring far more investigators than it has yet had. But beware of thinking that the dowsters' explanation of their singular powers is likely to be the right one. Here in Oxford, you have Mr. Timms, the veteran dowser, to whom a friend of mine in Ashdown Forest is eternally grateful. *The Times* of August 23, 1929, contained a report on divining for gold by Mr. Frederick Stone. He successfully located various gold objects that had been buried by the Curator of the Museum at Plymouth. Unfortunately, the report does not state whether the Curator was present during the search. In order to eliminate any explanation by telepathy such precaution should always be taken.

The difficulty in the way of any electrical explanation of dowsing is that the same condition may exercise diametrically opposite effects on two dowsters. I have myself seen the rod turned strongly downwards in the hand of one dowser, and as strongly upwards a moment after in the hand of a youth who had lost an arm and used an iron hook in its place. I myself incline to clairvoyance as the stimulating cause. Miss Wingfield, a very noted clairvoyante and crystal gazer, told me that by means of a forked rod she had at once found a sovereign which had been tossed into a hayfield by Lord Radnor, and which other dowsters had failed to locate.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. J. W. Dunne's book, *Experiments with Time*, should be consulted and his experiments repeated. He disclaims any title such as "psychic" or "clairvoyant," but to experience such displacements of time as he records, both for himself and certain friends, brings them within the definition of a clairvoyant. A criticism of his theory of serial times will be found in the *S. P. R. Journal* 24, p. 119. Mr. Soal, the reviewer, seems to have detected a fallacy which vitiates the whole theory. But the experimental part of the book is really valuable.

Mr. Dunne's previsions are of his own mental states, anticipations of his own future mental-experiences. It will require many records of such cases before any theory of their origin can be formulated. It is obvious that such previsions are more curious than welcome,



especially as they tend to establish a theory of time which is at first sight repellent. But there must be some among you who are willing to "follow the argument wheresoever it may lead," and to contribute their quota to the stock of human achievement. Here, at least, is an almost unknown country, approach to which seems fitful and illusive, but which when once explored may throw light on much that is obscure in human faculty.

\* \* \* \*

I joined the S. P. R. soon after its formation in the expectation that they would explain away ghosts. But the ghosts have had their revenge and I am now more certain of them than of 31, Tavistock Square. They are more enduring. At the same time, if it is a question of "Believe me all in all, or not at all," I think the "Noes" have it. "One world at a time" has much to say for itself. And the experience of those who seek the guidance of ghosts in their daily life is not always encouraging.

It would not be honest to conclude without one word of warning. However differently it may be interpreted there is such a thing as obsession, and the harm done by excessive absorption in the invisible may require a long and tedious process of re-education before it is eliminated.

*Mens sana in corpore sano* is trite but should never be forgotten.

LAWRENCE JONES.

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## II. SPIRITUALISM—FORTY YEARS AFTER.

[**David Gow's** first short article appeared in our April number. Time has not affected the belief of Mr. Gow in the spiritualistic movement; he is an ardent supporter of the cause of Spiritualism, but happily is free from that peculiar obstinacy and bigotry which so many friends of the "spirits" evince. —Eds.]

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If I here pursue brevity to the point of baldness it is because I am essaying to reply in a few hundred words to a question the answer to which could hardly be set forth adequately in a considerable book. That question is whether Spiritualism has made any marked advance since the days of my predecessor, the Rev. W. Stainton Moses, better known by his *nom de plume* "M. A. (Oxon)."

I am referred to a rather pungent criticism of Spiritualists written by "M. A. (Oxon)" in the year 1889, forty years ago. I print the passage *in extenso* as illustrating the critical temper in which the leaders of the Spiritualist movement then regarded it. For there were other such statements, even more severe, from the judicious minds in the Spiritualistic ranks. Some of those condemnations have been frequently quoted by hostile writers who do not seem to have



appreciated how healthy a sign was this self-criticism. Complacency, self-satisfaction, is the bane of communities as well as of individuals. Here is the passage:—

It is worth while to look steadily at this point, for it is of vital moment. We have an experience and a knowledge beside which all other knowledge is comparatively insignificant. The ordinary Spiritualist waxes wroth if anyone ventures to impugn his assured knowledge of the future and his absolute certainty of the life to come. Where other men have stretched forth feeble hands groping into the dark future, he walks boldly as one who has a chart and knows his way. Where other men have stopped short at a pious aspiration or have been content with a hereditary faith, it is his boast that he knows what they only believe, and that out of his rich stores he can supplement the fading faiths built only upon hope. He is magnificent in his dealings with man's most cherished expectations. "You hope," he seems to say, "for that which I can demonstrate. You have accepted a traditional belief in what I can experimentally prove according to the strictest scientific method. The old beliefs are fading; come out from them and be separate. They contain as much falsehood as truth. Only by building on a sure foundation of demonstrated fact can your superstructure be stable. All round you old faiths are toppling. Avoid the crash and get you out."

When one comes to deal with this magnificent person in a practical way, what is the result? Very curious and very disappointing. He is so sure of his ground that he takes no trouble to ascertain the interpretation which others put upon his facts. The wisdom of the ages has concerned itself with the explanation of what he rightly regards as proven; but he does not turn a passing glance on its researches. He does not even agree altogether with his brother Spiritualist. It is the story over again of the old Scotch body who, together with her husband, formed a "kirk." They had exclusive keys to Heaven, or, rather, she had, for she was "na certain aboot Jamie". So the infinitely divided and subdivided and resubdivided sects of Spritualists shake their heads, and are "na certain aboot" one another. Again, the collective experience of mankind is solid and unvarying on this point that union is strength, and disunion a source of weakness and failure. Shoulder to shoulder, drilled and disciplined, a rabble becomes an army, each man a match for a hundred of the untrained men that may be brought against it. Organization in every department of man's work means success, saving of time and labour, profit and development. Want of method, want of plan, haphazard work, fitful energy, undisciplined effort—these mean bungling failure. The voice of humanity attests the truth. Does the Spiritualist accept the verdict and act on the conclusion? Verily, no. He refuses to organize. He is a law unto himself, and a thorn in the side of his neighbours.—*Light*, June 22nd 1889.

Has Spiritualism progressed since those days? For the answer one has but to look round. From my own personal observation I can contrast the days when the subject was derided everywhere, boycotted in the Press (except for purposes of attack), was anathema to the Church, to Rationalism, to people of education and culture and to people of none. I had almost added Science, but Science rarely condescended to notice it except as something beneath its contempt. I can contrast those days with the last few years and observe a difference hardly to be described in words. To-day the ideas for which Spiritualism stands have permeated everywhere—the Pulpit, the Press, the Professor's study, the Physician's consulting room, the Chemist's laboratory.

That is to deal broadly with the inquiry. Perhaps, in considering a smaller question, the extent to which Spiritualism, with its scientific auxiliary, Psychic Research, has examined its bases and developed



a *rationale*, I can go into a little more detail which will, incidentally, illuminate the larger question.

During the years which have elapsed since Sir William Crookes' famous experiments (1870-74) and "M. A. (Oxon)'s" criticism, a vast amount of experimentation has been made into the mental and psycho-physical phenomena. The names of the experimenters alone would easily fill a column of this journal. I may mention such names as Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Barrett, Professor Richet, Dr. Von Schrenck-Notzing, Dr. Gustave Geley, Professor Bozzano, Dr. Osty, Professor Henslow, Dr. Crawford, Professor Flammarion, and Dr. Paul Joire, on the scientific side of things, and I may state incidentally that the signatures of a hundred Continental scientists, many of them occupying professorial chairs, were obtained a few years ago in attestation of the reality of psycho-physical phenomena in the experiments of Dr. Von Schrenck-Notzing.

This is to say nothing of a great amount of scientific investigation in America. The net result is that the reality of psychic phenomena has now been placed beyond serious question, and in the meantime a great amount of work has been accomplished in the investigation of causes—the *modus operandi* of the manifestations. That much valuable information on this point has been gathered by interrogation of the agents concerned—to put it plainly, the operating *spirits*—has a significance of its own. If my statement is accepted, and I am positive of its truth, then what has been called the major hypothesis in Spiritualism, the existence of discarnate spirits, is carried with it, *ex factis*.

To-day an immense amount of the work of clearance has been accomplished, such, for instance, as the distinction between phenomena produced by discarnate agencies, and those which we now know to be the intensive product of the psychological conditions of mediums and circles. It is true that, just as in the past, many inexperienced people fail to observe the difference, but lump the manifestations indiscriminately as being all of spirit-origin. They are learning by experience in the way of disappointment and disillusion—a severer school than that of precept and instruction. But to "muddle through" is the British way. Certainly it avoids the methods of the intellectual theorist—it is practical if rather wasteful of energy.

It is a large subject even if its consideration is limited to the amount of work done in clearing what "M. A. (Oxon)" truly described as a "jungle," through which we had to cut a road. If we have not filled "the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run," yet I claim that in the forty years a substantial amount of progress has been made.

DAVID GOW.



## III. AN AFTERWORD.

The two preceding articles should be read together. Sir Lawrence Jones is the respected President of the Society for Psychical Research ; Mr. David Gow, the other writer, is the well-known Editor of *Light*, the spiritualistic weekly.

Sir Lawrence Jones makes some important points on which Theosophical information is essential.

He warns against words and labels, and truthfully adds that " We (*i. e.*, psychical researchers) are still ignorant of the underlying laws of thought which make such things possible."

Why is this so ? Very earnestly Sir Lawrence points out that the materialistic basis of research and investigation persists, and he instances Professor Richet's great book.

The main problem in his opinion is the knowledge of personal survival which would prove beyond doubt that mind transcends matter. But Sir Lawrence makes what to us is the strongest point in his whole paper—" Before studying survival we want to know better what survives. Spiritualists are so interested in survival that they pass over the problems of Human Personality and are apt to accept all communications purporting to come from the other side on their face value." Neither in spiritualistic messages nor in the extant literature of the S. P. R. is there to be found any convincing instruction which satisfies reason and logic. Theories abound ; they compare and contrast and finally pronounce contradicting and contradictory views. What Sir Lawrence says about dowzers equally applies to all other experimenters—" Beware of thinking that the dowzers' explanation of their singular powers is likely to be the right one."

But, as we said, the point Sir Lawrence makes regarding knowledge about the human principles which constitute human Personality is very important. H. P. Blavatsky repeated a hundred times over that philosophical fundamentals and the principles of psychology as a science should be enquired into ; she pointed out that the only sure source of *knowledge* and not speculation, *facts* and not theories, is to be found in the Vidya-Science of the Eastern Sages arising out of their practical mastery of Asiatic Psychology. The Masters of H. P. Blavatsky took great pains to enlighten the original researchers—Frederick Myers, Stainton Moses, and others. What barred the way to knowledge ?—the same materialistic prejudices to which Sir Lawrence refers.

The world of knowledge would have gained substantially if the early generations of Psychical Researchers had accepted, merely as working hypotheses, H. P. Blavatsky's teachings, and by their light examined the phenomena they were investigating. The Spiritualists were so much in love with their " spirits " that to proceed on any other line of explanation was considered sacrilegious ; a kind of a



religious bias obsessed them. On the other hand, the Psychical Researcher, filled with his materialistic notions, would proceed on his own line, in his own way, at his own speed.

Outside the spiritualist-psychical circles Theosophical knowledge given on the subject was acquired by many. What Human Personality is, what survives, what can be contacted of the survival and what not, and how, were all fully and thoroughly explained. In her *Key to Theosophy* (1889) Madame Blavatsky amplified and detailed her hints and guarded expositions of 1877 given out in the two volumes of *Isis Unveiled*. Let any man of average intelligence read sections 6 to 9 of *The Key* and he will see her points; let him examine and judge all authentic phenomena in that light and much of puzzlement will disappear. Let him accept her views as but theories, we repeat, as working hypotheses, and be judge instead of partisan, and see what transpires.

We cannot let pass the grave warning Sir Lawrence gives in his closing paragraphs. Unguarded and ignorant dabbling in spiritualistic séances and psychical circles is dangerous to health and sanity. "The harm done by excessive absorption in the invisible" is of the nature of obsession, a phenomenon which again is not at all understood. We wholly agree with Sir Lawrence—" *mens sana in corpore sano* is trite but should never be forgotten." Spiritual living is opposed to spiritualistic practices.

To turn to Mr. Gow's article: The writer gives the credit of all the work of the Psychical Researcher to Spiritualism which is hardly fair. The Psychical Researcher, from the very start refusing to accept the Spiritualist position, has gone his own way, and after some forty years of investigation cannot and will not subscribe to the central doctrine of the Spiritualists, *viz.*, the "spirits" returning to séances are genuine surviving souls of the dead.

A clear difference in the positions of the two classes must be made. The Psychical Researcher never claimed any philosophical knowledge; he proceeded then as he proceeds now, merely to *investigate*, not to prove anything. On the other hand, the Spiritualist is a believer in the spirits of the dead and is out to convert others to his view.

Therefore the public has a right to ask—is there a definite philosophy of life and definite knowledge on after-death states which Spiritualism offers. For over half a century, according to it, the dead have returned; the dead free from the bondage of the senses and the numbing effects of the flesh should be in a position to teach the world. Truth being the same there should be a consensus of opinion on a variety of subjects of mundane and super-mundane interests among these returning "spirits." Are all the "spirits" agreed, let us ask, on the subject of what the soul is, or if Reincarnation be true; or have they given facts of and about this world which can be used for human betterment? Further, who has not encountered the puzzling fact that distinguished men, such as William James,



Emerson and Roosevelt (we name these because we have seen messages purporting to come from them through genuine mediums) deteriorate frightfully after the death of their bodies ! Most of the messages from the great among the dead may be designated by one word—piffle.

When we dispassionately proceed to examine what definite knowledge the Spiritualists (independent of Psychical Researchers) have to offer us we cannot help feeling—there is nothing.

But for all that the Spiritualist Movement has rendered one distinct service—it along with others has kept before the world the great fact of the reality of the invisible worlds, of abnormal powers, and strange and scientifically-not-to-be-explained phenomena. Against this is the important factor. It does not seriously take into account the danger about which Sir Lawrence Jones gives grave warning. The fate of the mediums (their physical and moral degradation) in itself is a serious sign ; has its meaning been understood by the spiritualistic movement ?

The task of THE ARYAN PATH is to explain ; to give knowledge. Therefore, next month we will publish the first instalment of a carefully prepared statement entitled “Contacting the Invisible.” As a preliminary basis to the understanding of the subject, we reprint here Madame H. P. Blavatsky’s epitome of her two volumes of *Isis Unveiled*—which she described as “the fundamental propositions of the Oriental Philosophy” :—

1st.—There is no miracle. Everything that happens is the result of law—eternal, immutable, ever active. Apparent miracle is but the operation of forces antagonistic to what Dr. W. B. Carpenter, F.R.S.—a man of great learning but little knowledge—calls “the well-ascertained laws of nature.” Like many of his class, Dr. Carpenter ignores the fact that there may be laws once “known,” now unknown to science.

2nd.—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 constantly change ; the higher third does not.

3rd.—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, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity.

4th.—Magic, as a science, is the 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.

5th.—Arcane knowledge misapplied is sorcery ; beneficently used, true magic or WISDOM.



6th.—Mediumship is the opposite of adeptship ; the medium is the passive instrument of foreign influences, the adept actively controls himself and all inferior potencies.

7th.—All things that ever were, that are, or that will be, having their record upon the astral light, or tablet of the unseen universe, the initiated adept, by using the vision of his own spirit, can know all that has been known or can be known.

8th.—Races of men differ in spiritual gifts as in colour, stature, or any other external quality ; among some peoples seership naturally prevails, among others mediumship. Some are addicted to sorcery, and transmit its secret rules of practice from generation to generation, with a range of psychical phenomena, more or less wide, as the result.

9th.—One phase of magical skill is the voluntary and conscious withdrawal of the inner man (astral form) from the outer man (physical body). In the cases of some mediums withdrawal occurs, but it is unconscious and involuntary. With the latter the body is more or less cataleptic at such times ; but with the adept the absence of the astral form would not be noticed, for the physical senses are alert, and the individual appears only as though in a fit of abstraction —“ a brown study,” as some call it.

10th.—The corner stone of MAGIC is an intimate practical knowledge of magnetism and electricity, their qualities, correlations and potencies.

To sum up all in a few words, MAGIC is spiritual WISDOM ; nature, the material ally, pupil and servant of the magician. One common vital principle pervades all things, and this is controllable by the perfected human will.



## GREEK PHILOSOPHY AS AN ANTIDOTE TO MATERIALISM.

[“**Cratylus**” is the pen name of a distinguished scholar and civil servant who for several years has been reviewer in philosophy to the *Times Literary Supplement*. He was Lamb and Richard Medalist, Christ’s Hospital, and graduated from Oxford with honours.

In his article something of the indebtedness of the modern world to Greek thought makes a veiled appearance ; also, he distinguishes between the liberating ideas of Platonism and those modern ones which imprison the mind in the senses, and thus limit the vision of human consciousness.

While we agree with “Cratylus” that the influence of Greek thought has penetrated through Spinoza and Leibniz and Kant and Hegel, we must also recognize that it has suffered in the process. While the speculations and metaphysics of the great Greeks have become the background of these philosophers, they have not inherited the warmth, the devotion, the practicality and above all the vital living-power which belong to the Greeks. The highest service Spinoza and the rest can render human minds is to take them away temporarily from sensuous living into cold speculations, and thus impart to them some power to speculate and be cold ; but the Greeks warm the mind, bestow on it some power to meditate and create, and reveal its proximity to the soul, thus enabling intuitions to play their part. The Greek thought touches life and ennobles it.

European and English literature is nearer to the heart of Greece than the speculations of European philosophy.

Another thought arises—if Greece has impressed so powerfully the later eras, was she herself the recipient of some sublime impress, from Egypt, from Persia, from India and China ?—EDS.]

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The supreme sweep and mastery of the Greek genius, however freely recognised and appreciated, may at first sight seem an insufficient ground on which to base the suggestion that an alleviation, if not a panacea, for the type of mental unrest from which the present age suffers may even now be found in a return to Pythagoras and Socrates, to Plato and Plotinus. Granted, it may be said, that Greece and its literature was indeed “the shrine of the genius of the old world”: yet the fact remains that this world is at once too young and too old for us, upon whom the ends of the earth are come. The discoveries of science apart—so the argument will continue—can we, whose position in philosophy is buttressed by Spinoza and Leibniz, by Kant and Hegel, hope to recover any more perennial and transcendent value from the Greeks than that which is guaranteed eternally by their wonderful language and its poetic beauty ? There is, it may be conceded, some force in this modern re-orientation of the old praise of Abana and Pharpar above Jordan ; but there exist nevertheless sound reasons why its cogency may be fatally over-estimated.

In the first place, it is impossible for anyone with a belief in philosophic continuity and in the authority of its catholic and classical tradition to be blind to the fact that there is a very real sense in which all the protagonists of post-Cartesian thought have in a greater or less



degree drawn upon Greek sources as their foundation of inspiration. This needs no proof in the case of Leibniz and Hegel, little in that of Kant, whose intermixture of dualism and fideism is essentially Platonic, and but little more in that of Spinoza, notwithstanding his protestation that the authority of Plato and Aristotle moved him but little.

Secondly, the Greek spirit was pre-eminently endowed with the power of disentangling eternal principles from their temporary and phenomenal incrustations; and that sense of "Life continuous, Being unimpaired" which, according to Wordsworth, was seen by the humblest like a light shimmering through the veil of their mythological ritual, certainly inspired their philosophers with an intuition of the "Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe" which constitutes as eternal a gift to the human race as the Eastern perception of the illusory nature of the phenomenal or as the Jewish discovery of moralised monotheism.

Thirdly—and this is perhaps the most important point of all for us to-day—the Greek way of looking at the Universe was like our own in its scientific bent and bias. From Thales to Plotinus there was no great Greek philosopher, and no great school of Greek philosophy, (with the very partial exceptions of the Stoics and Epicureans) that was not supremely concerned with physical science or with mathematics, or with both. It may be said no doubt that the science of the Greeks was by comparison a rudimentary thing: but, apart from the fact that this is far less true of fully-developed Pythagoreanism than is usually supposed, the objection is of little weight when due regard is had to the amazing Greek power of penetrating into universal principles.

The important consideration is that the Greeks started with the belief that a primary corporeal substance of an infinitely attenuated nature could be discovered by analysis: and that when they discovered the falsity of the fundamental assumption that the manifold of corporeity could be explained by a corporeal One, their acute genius shifted its ground once and for all to the belief (held it is true in a variety of forms but appearing in its essential purity in a line of philosophers such as Anaxagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle—if not quite consistently—and Plotinus) that the source of the sensuous must itself be supersensuous. This revelation, nascent in Anaxagoras and supreme in Plato in the spiritual doctrine of the indestructibility of the self-moved mover, the selfhood or soul, found its culmination, along paths which Plato had foreshadowed in the "flight of the alone to the Alone" which represented for Plotinus the supernal transport in which the human soul might, at infrequent intervals and after stern self-preparation, enjoy the ineffable experience of essential union with the All-soul. Plotinus indeed was no mystic in the degenerate signification of the term; and if fate had been kinder and the times less unworthy he might have crowned his life of purity and self-denial by using his influence with the unfortunate Emperor Gallienus to the nobly practical end of establishing a Platonic community in Campania: but the supreme tenet of his philosophy is nevertheless to be



sought in his vindication of the possibility of a mystical experience from which Plato himself, to judge from his later writings, seems wistfully to have turned away. Yet it is not to be forgotten that Plato too, even in the midst of the epistemology of the *Theaetetus*, could remind the brilliant and short-lived young hero from whom the dialogue is named that it is the chief duty of man to aspire towards assimilation with Godhead as far as may be possible.

Two words of caution, or at least of qualification, are perhaps called for in conclusion. While the spiritual interpretation of the universe is the common inheritance of Greek philosophy, there is of course no uniformity or unanimity in detail, and even Theism as generally understood is not to be found in such philosophies as that of "Atoms and the Void," associated with the names of Leucippus and Democritus. Secondly—a more general consideration—the lovers of Greek philosophy must be prepared to meet the argument of any sceptic who may maintain that the Greeks were conducted to a vision of the supersensuous not by insight and intuition but by the shortcomings of their scientific knowledge and its consequent breakdown. This is a line of attack which is not likely to shake the faith either of those who have appreciated once and for all that which is eternally valid in Berkeley's position or of those who realise how true it is that the scientists who are to-day farthest from materialism are precisely those whose delicate probings into the imponderable proto-entities of matter have gone deepest, and that it is they who have brought back the most lively sense of the futility of seeking upon material lines for the limits of :

Quid possit oriri.

Quid nequeat : finita potestas denique cuique.

Quānam sit ratione atque alte terminus haerens.

Those whose outlook is material because they possess a smattering of science are indeed more likely to be impressed : yet even in their case the aspiring energy with which Platonism is instinct can hardly fail to help to expel the virus. One can hardly imagine a man rising from a perusal of the *Phaedo*, the *Republic* or the *Symposium* without realising that this is not the language of the baffled scientist, but of the liberating idea that :

Heaven-born, the soul a heavenward course must hold :

Above the visible world she soars to seek

(For what delights the sense is false and weak)

Ideal Form, the universal Mould.

Such an experience, and the attitude of mind which it instils and bequeaths, is at least as necessary to-day as ever it was. As the late Professor Burnet says, we still have with us "the type of mind which would reduce the world to an interaction of vibration and society to a compromise of natural rights."

CRATYLUS.



## THE VEDIC PATH.

[Prof. S. V. Venkateswara, M.A., wrote on the "Antiquities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro" in our first number, and so is introduced to our readers. In this article Vedic and Upanishadic truths are presented which can be used to help others to lead the higher life.

The real importance of such knowledge is understood when one tries to practise what one learns; such knowledge, once assimilated, and its effects realized, can be simply imparted; meanwhile perforce one must go to the records of holy writ, and each presents the truths as he grasps them, first by mind then by life.

Our author maps out the Path of the Soul according to the Vedas. He shows how it begins with the right desire which awakens conscience; how the preparation lies in the Soul recognizing the whole of Nature as living and intelligent; how our vices hinder such recognition; how discipline follows—purification and control of body, speech, mind, by acts of sacrifice which kill pride and egotism; how a clear perception of the One Life and the One Self is born, and how vibrant Nature responds to the vow invoked by the mind-soul.

Then comes the examination of the ways of mortal men, of bliss-abiding devas, and the highest one of Brihaspati—the Path of Chelaship, the way of those who volunteer to forego the joys of heaven to serve suffering-humanity, in whose lives the trivial becomes the sublime and the daily routine is transformed by the Light of Wisdom.

The Theosophical student will do well to study this article in the light of *The Voice of the Silence* in which every stage referred to and every step described by our author will be found.—EDS.]

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Man is not born to vegetate. The idea of progress is instinct in the soul, and implied in the throb of life in every limb. But the earthly tenement in which the soul is encaged, "this muddy vesture of decay," often conduces to a life of indolence and ease.

The first task of the Path-finder is to save the soul from inertia. Effort and work are divine and the power to improve by self-effort is not the least of our first gifts from Nature. Hence the Vedic prayer: "We meditate on the adorable effulgence of the First Cause, so that He may stimulate our strivings"<sup>1</sup>. There is no royal road to perfection: It has to be planned out for oneself along the lines best suited to the individual. But it is desirable that our energies run in line with Nature's forces. So is the pilgrim advised to rise early and gather bliss from dawn, imbibe her rosy health and inhale her pure air, and to worship the rising sun who follows in her wake. He should associate himself with that fountain of life by his unremitting toil and selfless service, illumining what is dark, and raising what is low, alike in the objective universe and in the subjective world.

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<sup>1</sup> R. V. III. 62.10; S. V. II. 812; V. S. III. 35; XXII. 9; XXX. 2; XXXVI. 3; T. S. I. 5.6.4; 8.4; IV. 1.11.1.; M. S. IV. 10.3; XIV. 9.14.



“He who feels thus at sunrise and sunset lights on all happiness.”<sup>1</sup>  
 “The sun at the height of his glory at noon lights up the gloom in the darkest recesses of the human heart.”<sup>2</sup>

It requires the lure of happiness to keep the soul from the instinctive indolence of a lotus-eater. So Vedic literature is full of passages which hold out hopes of progeny, prosperity and power in this world (*prajā*, *pushti* and *sāmrājya*). Those for whom power and wealth have no charms are impelled by promise of a superior knowledge and effulgence, and of life in a Better Land (*brahmavarchas* and *svarga*). In one place we have a regular ladder of happiness laid for all, with prospect of pleasure increasing at every step even by the Benthamite standard—in range, duration and intensity, through every grade of life from the humdrum human to the highest heavenly. The pilgrim finds his goal at each step until a higher and superior joy (*ānanda*) dawns on his spiritual vision. So he goes on evolving through eternity, and there is no relief from work (*Kurvanneva karmāṇi jijīviṣet śatam samāh—Isa Upd.*).

#### ASPIRATION AND ANSWER.

A mere pursuit of pleasure will lead one along blind alleys or winding ways of murderous gloom. All action is not necessarily progressive, and all progress is not in the right direction. Hence the prayers to light up the Path and for guidance in avoiding meaningless cycles and epicycles in progress.

“*Agni, lead us along the right path unto the sovereignty of the Self. Thou of deathless lustre knowest all the ways of progress. Kill out of us the forces of sin which would propel us along the winding ways of the world. So may we surrender ourselves unto thy guidance for evermore.*”<sup>3</sup>

The world is too much with us ; the flesh is heir to ills which drag us down ; the devil tempts us on the way. What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world but loses his soul ? The quest of the soul is along the steep path of perfection (*Ṛtasya-panthā*), and a false or unwary step means a fall into the valley of the shadow of death. In the complex known as human nature Mr. Hyde usually gets the better of Dr. Jekyll. What helps is self-determination. Once the soul-force asserts itself and clasps the wavering mind to it with hoops of steel, there is fixity of aim (*śraddhā*). Now comes the appeal to the Teacher : “He who avoids the guidance of the dependable friend, does not even get advice as his portion. . . . He knows not the path of the good” (*sukṛtasya panthām*).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> T. A. II.2 ; cp. A. V. II. 32.1 ; XVII. 1.30.

<sup>2</sup> R. V. I. 50.10 ; A. V. VII. 53.7 ; T. B. II. 4.4.9.

<sup>3</sup> R. V. I. 189.1 ; T. S. I. 1.14.3 ; IV. 4.3 1 ; 2.11.3 ; M. S. I. 2.13 22.6 ; IV. 10.2 ; 147.8 ; 11.4 ; 171.14 ; 14.3 ; 218.3 ; K. S. III. 1 ; VI. 10 ; V. S. V. 36 ; VII. 43 ; 40.16 ; S. B. III. 6.3.11.

<sup>4</sup> R. V. X.71.6 ; A. A. III. 2.4.3.



The three classes of beings—divine, demoniacal and human—approach Prajapati for advice. His mystic *da* invokes introspection, and they are conscience-struck. The Asuras give up the state of *homo homini lupus* and learn to practise *dayā* or *ahimsa*. The men give up greed and cupidity and practise *dāna* (gift). The devas read *dana* in *da* and learn humility and self-restraint.<sup>1</sup> What a lesson to modern nations whether on the path of lust for dominion or economic exploitation, love of power or political domination, military glory or cultural arrogance. What a lesson to the human complex blended in different proportions of the nature divine, the instinct of greed, and the disposition to be demoniacal. It will conduce to progress all round if greed relax into liberality, cruelty melt into mercy, and egotism bow to self-restraint.

#### PREPARATION.

When once the conscience is awakened, spiritual progress is bound to follow. A hymn<sup>2</sup> to the waters implores them to wash off the sins due to hatred (*droha*), and one to Varuna<sup>3</sup> is a penitential plea for pardon. Another<sup>4</sup> analyses the harm done to others as caused by the physiological functioning of the various parts of the body, by harsh and untruthful speech, and unkind or uncharitable thought. Yet another<sup>5</sup> strikes at the root cause of all evil—which is in the mind: “Kama and Manyu (Lust and Anger) are the agents of sin. I am neither doer nor abettor,”—and aims at an attitude of detachment. The Yajur Veda is full of reminders that even plants and animals have life and feeling. The grass or twig required for sacrificial purposes was to be lopped off from a knot so as to facilitate further sprouting from the stem or the branch.<sup>6</sup> The very directions given at an animal sacrifice breathe tenderness for the victim, and warn the callous paingiver that his sins would recoil on his own head. Thus the principle of *ahimsa* is well established. If harm be done by others unto him, it was not for him to indulge in revenge, but to invoke the aid of the gods to change their attitude towards him.

So in regard to the other two cardinal sins (greed and arrogance). Acceptance of gifts was a necessary evil, even at the El Dorado of an all-bounteous sacrifice, and had to be expiated by fasts and prayers. On the other hand, everyone had the duty of giving—giving of his own and with all his heart. The gifts in the earliest times took the form of food (*vāja*) and presents (*dakshīnā*) at Sacrifices. “He who

<sup>1</sup> Br. Up.

<sup>2</sup> R. V. I. 23.22; A. V. VII. 89.3.

<sup>3</sup> R. V. VII 89.5; A. V. VI 51.3.

<sup>4</sup> T. A. X. 26.1; II. 3.6; Mah. U. 14.3.

<sup>5</sup> R. V. VI. 58.4; A. V. III. 29.7; T. A. A. X. 61; Mah U. 18.2.

<sup>6</sup> T. S. I. 1.2.



eats his food alone and by himself is steeped in sin".<sup>1</sup> Sometimes there were permanent endowments (*ishtā pūrta*) in the form of choultries and watering houses for feeding the hungry and quenching their thirst (*Khādi* and *Prapā*). But the highest yajna was the giving away everything one had (*sarvavedasam, anantadakshinam*). It became the one principle of Vedic teaching that "not action, nor liberality, but surrender and sacrifice (*tyāga*) was the path that led to immortality".<sup>2</sup> Nyāsa became exalted as the highest of the virtues.

But a self-conscious self-sacrifice tends to foster a certain spiritual pride, or lead to a thirst for fame, that "last infirmity of noble minds." The story in the *Kenopanishad* shows how the Devas, the very agencies that work untiringly in the interests of the Universe, were infatuated with, and became arrogant from, the idea of the supreme importance of their work. For if the Wind cease to blow, the Waters to wet or Fire to quicken, how can life exist? Brahman appears before them to humble them and sets up a blade of common grass. The fire is unable to burn it, moisture to wet it, the wind to blow it away. Then there appears before them Uma, the spotless daughter of the Snow, and explains to the dumbfounded Powers how they are all tiny reflections of the Spirit "without whose command even a windle-straw cannot be moved." "Who can act if that bliss in the heart of life ever ceased to be?" "From fear of its ceasing, do Fire and Water act as ordained, and Death speeds on his dreaded duty." It was in the triumph of the Spirit that the Devas discovered their own true greatness<sup>3</sup>.

#### RULES OF DISCIPLINE.

The introspection which led to self-restraint, sympathy and self-sacrifice, pointed also to a system of Self-discipline extending to the various sides of life. The body is to be made holy (*puṇyam*) by periodical fasts, regulation of diet and observance of vows, so that it may not respond to the siren voice of *Kāma* or bind the soul in the silken meshes of *Raga*. Continence is a cardinal virtue, and the positive virtues of *brahmacharya* are extolled so that a diffused sensuality may not flow from suppressed sexuality. Hatred is often a translated form of lust, and disappears along with it. Bodily energies flow from food, and there is a scheme of food regulation. Some kinds of food were forbidden as exciting passion (*ucchishṭam abhojyam*). The company of evildoers (*pankti dūshakas*) was to be shunned at dinner as also acceptance of food from the irreligious (*na brāhmaṇāḥ ṛtayāvah purā annam akshan*). Observance of these rules developed a certain mystic vision<sup>4</sup>.

Speech was the principal gateway of the mind, and it was to be made gentle, truthful and comforting. It was to be stayed from

<sup>1</sup> R. V. X. 117.6; T. B. II. 8.8.3.

<sup>2</sup> T. A. X. 10.3; 60.1; Mah. N. Up. 10.5; 21.2; V. S. XL. 2; T. B. III. 12.9. Isa. Up. 2; Br. Up. IV. 4.82..

<sup>3</sup> Ken Up. 26.

<sup>4</sup> T. A. II 6.11.12; Mah. Up. 14.2; A. V. VI.71.1 and 3.



reviling (*parivad*) the good and the great and from voicing scandal. It was to be mainly devoted to utterance of sacred texts, so that the mind should dwell upon them and derive from them an urge towards the higher life. The other senses which, like refractory horses, had dragged the mind away, now became its willing auxiliaries. The eye helped to fix the gaze and imprint on the mind the things that were holy (*bhadram*), <sup>1</sup> the ear heard that which was good, and nerve and blood moved in every limb so as to serve the needs of a higher life.

Every impulse in the mind was sublimated. It ceased to be a hindrance and became a help. Greed learnt to hoard in heaven, and hatred to hate itself. Low sensuality and lust were transfigured into the adoration of the Beautiful (*tan nama ityupāsīta namyante asmai kāmāḥ*). New facilities appeared and new faculties came into play. When the mind became steadfast and observed a vow (*vrata*) all the beings in the universe offered co-operation (*vrataṁ upayāntam anūpayanti*).

#### SCALE OF VALUES.

The earlier generations had been content to follow the path of their Fathers (*pitṛyāna*), living lives of rustic virtue and simple faith, observing "the seven rules of conduct laid down by the ancients," and honouring father and mother, teacher and guest. In after-life they enjoyed delights with Yama, in the placid moonlight. <sup>2</sup> But their happiness was consumed by the fulfilment of desire in Yamaloka, and they had to return to mother Earth with visions of fresh longings.

Higher than this was the path of the Gods (*devayāna*). Here was an eternal summer that never fades. In this Better Land no hunger or thirst was heard of, and all were free from fear and crabbed age <sup>3</sup>. The Gods transported themselves in ecstasies of delight and were in eternal pursuit of higher joys. But their orgies flowed only from the fountain of joy that welled up from their hearts. If that ceased to flow, all joy would cease, and the thought of its ceasing smote the devas with horror.

The thinking mind pondered long and seriously on the path of self-evolution. Neither of the paths seemed to satisfy. "Where is that infinite Spirit on which all these are embroidered? Is it Food or Breath or Mind or Knowledge or Joy?" asked Bhṛgu the son of Varuna, plunged in thought <sup>4</sup>. His father set before him the canons of judgment and insisted on his finding it for himself by meditation (*tapas*). Thus did he finally realise that Ānanda was Brahma—the joy or happiness in life that ultimately sustains all creation though it lapses now and then into moody melancholy.

<sup>1</sup> R. V. I. 89.8.

<sup>2</sup> T. A. II. 6.10.

<sup>3</sup> Katha Up. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Tait. Up. 3.



And there is a scale of hedonistic values. The lowest are those of the world and the flesh, the pleasure of the humdrum human life. Higher were the pleasures in art and ideal, of the Gandharvas. Higher still were the pleasures of personality surviving bodily death which was enjoyed by the most advanced among the Fathers. The devas (divine beings) had their joys intensified in concerns entirely of the Spirit, which brought successively knowledge, refinement and power ; higher was the delight of the all-wise Brihaspati, with his infinite illumination, rising to that of Prajapati who created ever-new forms of increasing sweetness and light. Highest of all was the bliss of synthesis, the realisation of the cosmos as a synthetic whole, and the capacity to identify oneself with every layer of the cosmic consciousness. When the little self had become extinct, the Universal Self appeared in its place.<sup>1</sup>

#### MYSTICISM.

The highest hedonistic value leads therefore to "mysticism" in the Vedanta. The quest of pleasure led to the conception of the one whole (*akhaṇḍa*), single and indivisible, to be sensed and felt, not logically analysed or verbally described. It was felt that while everyone of us was attached to a differential (*Satya*) the integral of all of us (*Āta*) was lost at eternity (*amṛta*). "In utter darkness are they who are devoted to the path of action or to the worship of images; in worse darkness, those devoted to Knowledge, or to worship without images."<sup>2</sup> Those who understood used both the paths at particular stages of evolution to achieve the end which was higher than both. Knowledge showed a correspondence of the macrocosmic and the microcosmic worlds, and along the lines of the one, the other<sup>3</sup> unfolded itself to spiritual vision. Progress meant increasing selflessness (*akāmahatātva*) as well as increasing power, so that the highest and best powers of the soul were realised and surrendered to Service.

The supremest effort of the Vedantic mystic was how to<sup>4</sup> clutch at Infinity and Eternity as One Whole (*akhaṇḍa* or *Pūrṇam*) whether as Power, as Truth, or as Bliss (progress along one path implied and included that by the other two.) To this end, he had the training to move toward the Universal in the ordinary things of life and to look on every act of routine from the highest point of view. He might be bathing in a tiny brook but the hymns he uttered brought deep thoughts—of the waters that washed the globe, and quickened life, and the enveloping waters that symbolise the mystery of eternity.<sup>5</sup> The food that he took nourished him with everlasting life, and in him food and feeder became as one.

The spiritual student thus given glimpses of the high peaks and ridges of Universality burned with a desire to grasp the whole. He implored the highest of the Parts to shed its limitations and appear

<sup>1</sup> Isa Up. 9.12; V. S. XL. 9. Br. Up. IV 4.13.

<sup>2</sup> Tait Up I. 7; cp. A. V. XII 3.10.

<sup>3</sup> T. S. I. 6.5.1; K. S. V. 5; M. S. I. 4.2.

<sup>4</sup> R. V. I. 23.20; S. V. II. 1194; Mah. N. Up. 15.10.

<sup>5</sup> Tait. Up. 2.



before him entire. “ Oh Pūshan, path-finder, cast off thy veil of gold, the glitter of which hides from me the Reality. As I am on the right path, do let me realise the highest and best aspect of Thy Self. The Self that thou art, that is the Universal Spirit, even that is me, and so I abide”.<sup>1</sup> “ Shuffling off the sheaths of the soul does the Realised Spirit abide. He sings his routine of life, for by action he is not tainted. Not for him is the thought of the worry whether what he does may be right or wrong. He is alike subject and object, doer and deed, giver and receiver, the centre and circumference of Immortality.”<sup>2</sup> *That* is Perfection, hence the profundity of *this*; for from Perfection verily arises infinite Potentiality. Everything that is is but a speck of the Perfect and must partake of its own nature and must needs be perfect (*Pūrṇāsya pūrṇam ādāya pūrṇam eva avasiṣyate*). May Peace reign supreme !”<sup>3</sup>.

S. K. VENKATESWARA.

<sup>1</sup> cp. R. V. X. 125.8; A. V. IV. 30.3; Isa. Up.

<sup>2</sup> Tait. Up. II. 4.9; K. S. XL. 9; Ch. Up. V. 2.6.

<sup>3</sup> A. V. X. 8.29.



## THE INDIAN CONCEPTION OF GOD.

[**Professor Sten Konow, Ph.D.**, of the University of Oslo, Norway, is well known for his oriental scholarship, especially along philological lines. He is the author of several books and numerous articles, and his latest contribution to learning is the editing of the Kharoshthi Inscriptions published by the Indian Government at Calcutta.

We do not know any other single factor which makes so great a difference in life, individual or corporate, as the conception of Deity. "Understand a man's God and you understand him," it was once said. In India, especially among the Hindus, the monotheistic concept, producing the ludicrous notion of a personal anthropomorphic extra-cosmic being, fortunately does not prevail. Monotheism is very unphilosophical and lands the believer in a variety of superstitions. Prof. Konow well points out how an Omnipresent Deity is the basis of all religious thought among the Hindus. The Hindu Pantheon is a descriptive record of the innumerable powers, creative and compassionate, or destructive and cruel, which prevail in Nature.

In the Vedas, Brahma-Sutras and Upanishads, as in modern Theosophy, Deity is defined as an Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, Immutable Principle. Writes H. P. Blavatsky (*Secret Doctrine*—I, p.xx)—

"Esoteric philosophy proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the Sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *Ens*. It only refuses to accept any of the gods of the so-called monotheistic religions, gods created by man in his own image and likeness, a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Ever Unknowable."—EDS.]

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India is known as the home of polytheism. Countless gods and godlings are worshipped by the people, and even animals and lifeless objects are honoured with pious offerings. India has given rise to religions where man is told to strive for salvation without the help of any superhuman agency—religions which have been characterized as atheistic. From India we hear about thinkers and seers attempting to realize a mystic union with an all-pervading reality, in a spirit which few people would hesitate to term pantheistic.

Some difficulty has, therefore, been experienced by those who have tried to trace notions and ideas corresponding to the monotheism underlying Christianity, and by missionaries who wanted to translate the Bible into Indian tongues and to find an adequate equivalent of the word "God."

The difficulty is a double one. In the first place no Indian religion, not even Buddhism or Jainism, denies the existence of the many gods. Where the atmosphere seems to be almost monotheistic, the one god has numerous deities at his side. The famous hymn of the Shvetāshvatara Upanishad, which everyone who visits a Brāhma Samāj Temple will hear, sings of the Lord of lords, the great Lord, the highest Deity of deities. And in the Rām-charit-mānas, Tulsī's sublime hymn on Rāma, his God, Rāma himself, declares that he worships Shiva, and that nobody is so dear to him as He.



In the second place Indian cosmology only knows perishable gods. The life of the universe can be divided into several vast periods, and at the beginning of each period new gods appear, to be dissolved together with the universe at the period's end.

In spite of all this, modern Indians speak of God, the supreme ruler and lord of the universe, in terms which remind us of real monotheism.

Many years ago I met an Indian barrister at Trichinopoly, a highly educated gentleman with a modern European training. Just outside the tower is a hill, which is looked upon as a *linga*, the symbol of Shiva. Government had just given permission to quarry stones on the hillside, and some blasting was going on. My friend then asked me what I thought of a government permitting people to blast away parts of God's body. He said "God," and not "Shiva," and he was quite in earnest.

His words set me thinking, and I was reminded of some utterances by prominent Indians. When Dayānand Sarasvatī in his youth saw a mouse eat of the offerings before Shiva's image, he was astonished that such things could happen in the presence of the all-powerful god. His father then explained that Shiva himself is enthroned on Mount Kailās, where, however, men cannot now-a-days see him. Therefore they put up images and lay down their offerings before them. And in his mercy the great god accepts them as if they had been brought to his presence. The meaning is clear: There is a mystic and nevertheless real connection between the god and the image or symbol, and God is both in and outside—he is, in fact, omnipresent.

This view is in thorough agreement with Vivekānand who denies the existence of polytheism in India. You may listen, he says, in any Hindu shrine, and you will hear how all God's qualities, even omnipresence, are attributed to the local image or symbol.

It is evident that our terminology is only partly applicable to India, and also especially that such monotheistic ideas as may exist in that country should not necessarily be supposed to be of the same kind as those current in the world of Christianity. Nor should we wonder if we were to find that the Indians themselves do not always answer the question about God and His nature in the same way. The well-known visionary Rāmakrishna was once asked whether God is a person or a spirit or something else. And the answer which he was finally prevailed upon to give was to the effect that he *is* a person to those who can only conceive of the highest power as wielded by a person, while he is a spirit to those whose idea of divinity is spiritual, and so on. He was himself firmly convinced that he had seen God, face to face, in various shapes and forms, as Krishna, after having trained his mind according to the views of the Krishnaites; as Allah when he had long conformed himself to the teachings of Islam, and as Jesus after having imbibed the tenets of Christianity. The visions were different, but the reality was always the same. Krishna, Shiva, Allah, Jesus, they are all different aspects of the same God, and he



is even present in the image or in the symbol in such cases where the worshipper cannot rise to a conception of God as separated from them.

Such notions are by no means the exception in India, and it becomes evident that we must try to change our angle of vision if we want to grasp the religious mentality of the Hindus. Indian religiosity is the result of a long and unbroken development, which is peculiar to India and the various stages of which have all left their marks on the religious mind. The religious experience of the various seekers of the past remain as latent forces and tendencies, just as, according to the Indian theory, the doings and experiences of past existences influence our present life as *samskāras*, i.e., as regulating impressions, forces and tendencies. And it is not only the strictly religious experience of the past which acts in this way, The creations of devout singers and poets, the rich treasure of religious and semi-religious tales and lore give also their colouring to the mental picture of the highest. In other words, we must try to understand India's past in order to grasp the conceptions of the present day.

Much has been written about the ancient Indo-Aryan conception of divine power. There is, however, a general consensus of opinion to the effect that the gods which we learn to know in the Rig-Veda, the oldest songs of the Aryans, have few distinctly personal features, wherefore they were not pictured in images or statues. They are often indistinguishable from the power or activity for which they stand, and their names are usually adjectives or nouns of agency, bearing reference to such powers. Some of them are apparently vague personifications of abstract notions, such as *Manyu*, Wrath ; *Kama*, Desire ; *Tapas*, Glow, Ardour ; *Shraddha*, Faith ; *Anumati*, Approbation ; *Aramati*, Devotion ; *Nirvriti*, Dissolution ; *Kala*, Time ; *Aditi*, Boundlessness etc. Similar conceptions are also found on Iranian soil, such as *Haurvatāt*, Health ; *Ameretāt*, Immortality, etc., and they are evidently pre-Indian.

A similar way of conceiving various ideas is, it is true, occasionally met with also in Europe, where various virtues are sometimes spoken of as if they were independent, semi-divine entities. The ancient Aryan frame of mind was, however, of a somewhat different description. What we call an abstract notion was to the Aryans rather a force, a fluid or an element, with its own independent life. Thus sin was more or less a kind of poisonous matter, and Karma, action, is in the Jama system a fluid or stuff, which may enter and transform man. And in Nyāya philosophy Time and Space are classed with Earth, Water, etc., as substances.

Such apparently abstract entities and deities help us to understand the value of the oldest Indo-Aryan gods. They are vague personifications of forces and powers and really indistinguishable from them, as when India is called *Shavasah Sūnu*, the son of Valour, i.e., in reality Valour itself.

Such gods, therefore, had in themselves the germ of universality ; and might, in favourable circumstances, especially when their sphere



of activity was wider than usual, become the sole rulers of the universe. Such is to a great extent the case with gods such as Vishnu and Shiva, whose worshippers often think of other gods simply as manifestations of them.

The conception of divine power was further influenced by the state of things in the human world. An old Indian stanza is to the effect that the food that man takes, the same food his deities take. That is to say, the pantheon, the divine world, is a replica of the world of men. Those in power on earth were chiefs and kings, and the gods were consequently conceived of as powerful kings. And when, already in pre-Indian days, a larger organization came into being, with an over-king as suzerain and minor kings as subordinate rulers, this new state of things was reflected in the pantheon. The great god Varuna is characterized as *samrāj*, paramount sovereign, and Indra becomes the king of gods.

This attitude might lead to a kind of monotheism, or at least to the belief in one supreme god. And such views have no doubt been at play both in Shaivism and in Vaishnavism, and probably also in the so-called bhakti-school, the religion of devotion to Bhagavat, the god of love and mercy. India's history through the ages did not, it is true, add strength to such tendencies. The idea of a universal ruler usually remained as the unobtained and unobtainable ideal of individual princes. But still the ideal was there.

The chief factor in the development towards unity is, however another feature in the religious mentality of India. Even before their migration to India the Aryans felt the existence of a universal law behind the phenomena and behind the gods. They called this law or force *ṛita*, the same word which has become *asha* in the manuscripts of the Avesta, and some of the principal gods were characterized as guardians of *ṛita*.

*Rita* is manifested in the sacrifice, and the idea has certainly been further developed and strengthened through the growing importance of the sacrifice, which would, in its turn, be unthinkable without a vague notion of some law pervading the universe.

The chief thing in this connection is, however, that *ṛita* is not simply said to have been created by the gods, but often seems to be conceived of as older, as more original, than they are. It is of the same nature as *satya*, truth, that which was and is and always shall be, the abstract idea, or rather the essence or element of reality and eternity, which may pervade gods and men, who then themselves become *satya*. It reveals itself to man, and the final aim of Yoga and of most Indian seekers is to realize it by direct intuition.

This *satya* is, in spite of the many manifestations, one, a unity, the fixed point in the ever-changing phenomena.

It is well known how such thoughts have played a prominent rôle in India. Behind the apparent manifoldness, there is a primeval unity, a common fountain from which everything has sprung. It has been called *Brahma* or *Atman* or *Nirvāṇa*, etc. The designations



and the conceptions may change, but everywhere we find the same tendency, and this way of viewing the universe has made itself felt everywhere, not only in the case of thinkers and seers, but also, as an undercurrent, in the mind of every Hindu.

This angle of vision also becomes important for the conception of divine power. It is characteristic that the ancient word *deva*, god, has more and more been replaced by the derived term *devatā*, formed from *deva* by adding the abstract suffix *tā*, a change in the religious terminology which we can trace already in ancient texts. The original meaning of the word *devatā* is "godhead," "divinity," "divine element," but the word is generally used in the sense of "deity," that is to say, a being pervaded by godhead.

We are here face to face with the same mental attitude which we found in the oldest Indo-Aryan period, further developed under the influence of the common trend of religious thinking. The ancient gods were the bearers of various superhuman forces, the semi-personal aspects of the underlying elements, of some power-fluids, or, as we should say, of the underlying abstract ideas. In the same way the general term "god" is vaguely conceived as a bearer of "godhead," of the abstract idea of godhead, which is older than any individual god. We must only bear in mind that what we call abstract terms rather signify self-existing realities.

A parallel will make the matter clearer. The word *sarkār* is used in India in the sense of government, ruling authority. To the popular mind *sarkār* is a mystic power wielded by the different officials whom it pervades, wherefore every official is himself addressed as *sarkār*. On the other hand, the popular usage and everyday experience about individual persons as bearers of power reacts on the conception of the underlying idea, and the semi-abstract *devatā*, godhead, easily gets a personal colouring. This is especially the case in such religions where the importance of the individual teacher, the promulgator of godhead, is prominent and when the religious devotion is a leading feature, as in the wide-spread Bhakti-religion.

Whether such is the case or not, however, the general attitude is the same. There is only one really existing divinity, the eternal principle of godhead or the constituent element in everything that is divine, and this is God. He, or, as others would say, It, has many faces or *pratīkas*, through which He looks and is beheld by men, with their material eye or in inner vision. We may call Him Vishnu or Shiva or Kālī or by any name we like. But He is everywhere the same and everywhere really existent, even if we behold Him in an image or a symbol, or in a human being, who has succeeded in freeing himself from everything that is subject to change and annihilation, and merging into the eternal infinite, the essence of all that is real and powerful.



## WILL WEST MEET EAST ?

[**Dr. Paul E. Johnson** is a professor of philosophy at Hamlin University (St. Paul, U.S.A.). He has lived in China and possesses a sympathetic understanding of oriental points of view.

In this valuable analysis of the relation between the orient and the occident he presents some Theosophical ideas. The last way of life which he favours among the three he describes, is the Theosophical way, as the students of the *Voice of the Silence* will perceive: "Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body agitated, thy mind tranquil, thy soul as limpid as a mountain lake."—Eds.]

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It was about three years ago when Rabindranath Tagore, having been discourteously received on American shores, responded to an invitation from a Boston magazine. At that time he referred to the world's greatest problem as the meeting of east and west. The problem has neither lessened in importance nor progressed toward solution visibly in this interim. "The explosive passions of hatred and contempt" continue "to accumulate in the dark chasm that has been kept open between the two hemispheres."\* In fact the problem rapidly approaches crisis as the interweaving of peoples and interests draws more tightly the snarl of our human tangle.

Why is our meeting such a problem, and what can we do about it? Natural barriers are insignificant. Geographical separation is marvellously overcome by advances in transportation and communication. But instead of laying our meeting problem to rest, these improvements unite us only to beget whole broods of new problems. Modern transportation brings us closer by days in time, but draws us apart in understanding. For improving transportation of men, goods and machines, brings exclusion acts in the west and non-co-operation in the east. Modern communication brings us closer by weeks in time, but draws us apart in sympathy when we are communicated to each other by *Mother India* and *Uncle Sham*.

Racial characteristics, often pointed to as immovable natural barriers, are likewise ineffectual except for artificial reinforcement. Children of different colour mingle easily together, unconscious of any barrier until warned by prejudices of elders. Youth of different races fall in love naturally (unless forearmed) and bear in sorrow the odium of aspersion cast upon them by both races. Biological and mental measurements show no standard racial differences, yet every people are ready to believe their race superior. Advancing modern science decisively overcomes natural barriers. Human pride and prejudice persistently rears up artificial barriers immovable until we change our minds. It is to these man-made barriers our attention must turn if we are to solve this human problem.

A major root of failure to understand and co-operate is economic contrast. Whoever wonders if there is food enough to go around

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\* See *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 139 (1927), p. 732.



becomes concerned about his neighbour economically. Wherever human wants are insatiable, getting is apt to predominate over giving. I was about to assume—we all want more than we have. And then it occurred to me that this too may be a provincialism. It is certainly rare to meet an occidental who does not want more goods than he has. But it is not uncommon to meet orientals who reject such desires. There appears to be an economic difference here that is more than economic—a cleavage of interest, attention, desire and judgment as to what is good. West and east differ sharply in standards of living, evidently because they differ in philosophies of value.

The average child of western civilization, now that monarchies and nobilities are on the wane, is apt to rank his fellowmen no little by economic standards. In justice to him we should say this is by no means his only standard of judgment. And the better he comes to know a man the more other traits and values count. But human decency, so he believes, requires a certain minimum standard of living. From this standpoint he looks eastward upon poverty, famine and economic lethargy. Approval is impossible. Whether sympathetic or indifferent his judgment is "This is wrong." If he is sympathetic, he says, "Something must be done about this." If he is indifferent, he will say, "So much the worse for them." But it is against his whole philosophy of life for the occidental to approve or submit calmly to poverty.

There are many who see the greatest economic rivalries in competitive markets and control of raw materials. The economics of internationalism is deserving of attention. We are growing more interdependent economically. Markets, manufactories and raw materials are getting at once farther apart and more tightly bound together. Few square miles of productive area on this planet escape the network of economic connectionalism. The west is calling on the east insistently to get into the game. Why does the east draw back? She may not like the terms of the contract, and with good reason, for western concerns are shrewd to their own advantage. She may not like the industrial way of life with its hurry, noise, accident and standardization, and well she may, for we drive out many a delicate bloom in giving right of way to the machine. She may not like our economic system based on unequal distribution and cut-throat competition. But there is a conflict deeper than these.

Beneath all superficial economic rivalries lies the basic difference in standards of living. The oriental seems content with poverty; the occidental abhors it. The occidental enjoys wealth; the oriental distrusts it. A table conversation in Peiping, China, makes this difference clear. One guest expressed admiration of the undying values in Chinese civilization that have survived over hundreds of generations, commending the primary emphasis here on spiritual values. Another guest, distinguished by years of service to the Chinese government enjoined reply, "What do spiritual values amount to when their people must fight like dogs in the streets for food?"



The oriental deplores the materialism of the west; the occidental deplores the sentimentalism of the east. It is a conflict in the importance of economic values.

As long as this fundamental disagreement continues what hope for understanding? An east neglecting economic values and a west neglecting spiritual values are on diverging paths. And furthermore both paths lead to destruction. For the values require each other, just as these civilizations do. Without economic support human life in our sphere is impossible; without more than economic goods life is unworthy and undesirable. Spirit without body is ghostly; body without spirit is ghastly. More careful examination shows some of both material and spiritual in each civilization. Generalizations are dangerous, and sweeping classifications false. But there is certainly a difference of emphasis between us that needs guarding on either side against over-emphasis.

Understanding is impossible without appreciation. Frank criticism of faults is good in its place. By this time, however, we are pretty well criticized; and instead of further exposing delinquencies might we not to better advantage look for admirable qualities? Americans need desperately to appreciate the best traits of the orient. In our maddening maze of things and machines we need to pause in receptive mood before the simplicity of life, the love of quiet beauty, the meditation on eternal values in the orient. Orientals, on their side, might not unwisely give attention to labour-saving devices, utilization of natural resources, sanitation and medical service, and universal public education. It is when the occidental of his own accord discovers the appeal of eastern ways of life and the oriental freely discovers the worth of the west at its best that understanding is bound to increase. Such free discovery is exemplified between China and the west by Bertrand Russell\* and Hu Shih†, between India and the west by L. Adams Beck‡ and Tagore.

Intercultural movements and interests as expressed in the ideals of this magazine should aid the cause of mutual understanding.

It should not be difficult for Christians to understand the oriental view-point on this question of economic and spiritual values. Jesus cautioned that "Ye cannot serve both God and Mammon," and challenged disciples to "Go sell all thou hast and follow me." A few occidental Christians have tried this, and mediæval Europe gave serious attention, at least among the devout, to this way of life. In that sense the European civilization of the Middle Ages was much closer to the orient than is our civilization to-day. For by no fair appraisal could modern civilization in this hemisphere be called Christian. It contains some Christians and some partially Christian ideals, but mingled with Greek, Roman and barbarian ideals the

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\* *The Problem of China*, 1924.

† "The Civilizations of the East and the West," in *Whither Mankind* (1928).

‡ *The House of Fulfilment*, 1927, and *The Story of Philosophy*, 1928.



dominant note is hardly Christian. Barbarian militarism, Roman legal and imperial lines, Greek ideals of secular freedom and moral independence are heavier motifs in the pattern.

At present it is the Greek ideal of life that seems to predominate in our civilization. The general secularizing and humanizing of our culture, the aim of proportion, the demand for the inclusion of all values, and the satisfaction of all desires is distinctly Grecian. A sound mind in a sound body is the aim of our education ; the increase of comforts and luxuries is the end of our labour ; the right to be happy and enjoy every possible value is the note of such ethics as our moderns consider reasonable. The ascetic ideal is generally regarded as morbid, the need to sacrifice is openly denied. This widespread secularizing and Hellenizing of western civilization makes more difficult its understanding with India. But at the same time it makes for readier understanding with China. For Confucian China is a civilization quite as secular and humanistic as Greece.

This suggests that the meeting of east and west is more complex than might at first be supposed. There are no two civilizations drawn up in battle array across the world as propagandists like to tell. There are several western civilizations laid upon each other or interwoven together and probably as many oriental ones. Nor are the conflicts all drawn between the hemispheres. They criss-cross in every locality large or small and the human problem is everywhere related though in various emphases and settings. But in so far as general traits may be distinguished we may observe that the Grecian pattern in the west joins the Confucian pattern in China, while the Christian way of life joins most naturally with the religious aspiration of India.

Will the meeting of east and west after all be a very different problem from the integrating of culture patterns within these civilizations ? If we are able successfully to co-ordinate Greek and Christian patterns or Confucian and Buddhist patterns, should we not by the same methods be able to bring together civilizations east and west ? Buddhism and Confucianism are getting on fairly well together in China by tolerance and free intermingling. There have been intolerances. We cannot overlook the bitter persecutions of the Lotus Sects by Confucian zeal. But on the whole these two cultures have dwelt peaceably enough together to rank with Taoism as the native religions of China. In Europe, Greek and Christian cultures united quickly by mutual admiration, philosophic interest and the need each of the other. So complete was this synthesis that for a thousand years or more Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, ranked with Jesus and Paul as teachers and authorities consulted in theological questions.

And yet neither in Asia, Europe or America has synthesis become entire fusion. It is sometimes observed that synthesis is undesirable because it leads to loss of identity. But the history of these great syntheses hardly substantiates that fear. The closest union seems to have been between Buddhism and Taoism, and in that case it is not



improbable that Taoism reflects Buddhist influence from its beginning. Wherever contrasting ideals have been woven together in synthetic cultures they are still distinguishable even after millenniums of intermingling. And in civilizations east or west we find the same conflict between sacred and secular ideals. The religious ideal of India and Christendom has called men to sacrifice the economic good for the spiritual, the rational for the mystical. The secular ideal of Greece and Confucian China has called men to surrender remote spiritual promises for present enjoyments.

In general there are three ways of disposing of this conflict between material and spiritual values.

(1) Separation of the spiritual from the material interests. Finding physical pleasures insatiable, this philosophy believes it better to renounce them altogether and escape their temptation. This is the negative path of cutting off desire, of denying and disciplining the flesh, of freeing the attention from the transient to attain the eternal. This is the way of the ascetic in any civilization but as it is more widely practised in the east it is popularly associated therewith.

(2) Surrender of the spiritual to the material interests. Finding physical needs elemental to the very continuation of life, this philosophy believes it better to give up visionary dreams of the spirit as impractical or unnecessary. There are some who take all spiritual things for superstition and launch open attack upon them. Others give the affairs of the spirit a place along with other luxuries, but postpone their attainment until the more urgent physical desires are satisfied. This is the way of the pagan in any civilization, but as it is more widely practised in the west, it is popularly associated therewith.

(3) Another possibility is that the spiritual control the material. Finding human life a larger fact than either body or spirit, this philosophy believes the wise man or civilization will employ material goods to gain spiritual ends. This is not the ideal of compromise. It holds unflinchingly to the supremacy of spirit, and engages every good means to sustain and develop spiritual values. It calls on men not to flee desires but to control them, not to abuse the body but to use it well, not to avoid economic possessions but to create them to enrich personality. It neither denies nor postpones spiritual development but sees the human organism or the human culture as essentially one. To cut off a hand cripples the free expression of the whole personality, to starve the body is to maim the mind. No desire is wholly physical, no human enterprize is entirely economic; and the action of spirit is most effectively exercised in controlling the physical and directing the economic to serve the highest interests of the human race. These highest interests are surely more than physical but they just as surely require physical foundation for their freest and fullest development.

Each of these philosophies has been practised by men in every time and place. None can claim originality or locality. Not all of us may agree on the best of the three. But as a common denominator



for uniting ideals and patterns of cultures, the third suggestion clearly holds the preference. It will never be possible to unite all men or any civilizations on either the first or the second. No civilization has ever been or will ever be wholly pagan or entirely ascetic. For each is a narrow view of life doing violence to part of human nature and its valid interests. As long as men have bodies they will not all unite in denying natural desires, for desires that are natural are rooted in organic needs. As long as men have minds they will not all unite in enslaving them to animal passions and material things. To bring human kind together our platform must be broad enough to support human nature in its essential needs. A programme to care for these essential needs of man must join together sacred and secular in an ideal that includes them both. A philosophy to win universal assent will have to be adequate enough to resolve partisan conflicts into integral harmony. Is there any other path to understanding and co-operation across the world?

PAUL EMANUEL JOHNSON.

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The biennial report (1927-1929) of the Kern Institute, Leyden, shows the advance that institute has made since its inception in 1925. It was started "to promote the study of Indian archæology in its widest sense." This study is not restricted to the Dutch East Indies, but embraces British India and Ceylon as well—in fact all territories influenced by Indo-Aryan civilization. Their ancient history, the history of their art, their epigraphy, iconography and numismatics are subjects of study and research. The institute was named after the great Dutch orientalist, Dr. Hendrik Kern and is now established in one of Leyden's historical buildings—with reading-room, library, and lecture hall. The Institute has in its possession collections of photographs, slides, casts of sculptures, and rubbings of inscriptions. It is devoting especial attention to its library. As the years go by it is becoming better known, and the list of members is steadily increasing and is drawn from many countries. The Report says :

From an international point of view the most important task undertaken by the Kern Institute is the publication of the *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archæology* which is intended to supply the necessary information regarding all books and articles dealing with Indian archæology and allied subjects, which appear in the course of each year. It also contains illustrated notes on the chief discoveries made in the same domain.



## ON EXORCISING EVIL.

[Our readers will find this article of J. D. Beresford on the evils arising from hating evil of more than ordinary interest. Lest his true statements that "the way of the mystic is peculiar to himself" and that "he is not to be judged by common standards" may be distorted, as they have been by evil-doers posing as mystics and occultists, it is necessary to give the Theosophical position.

Theosophy does not teach that the passions are to be pandered to or satiated, for a more pernicious doctrine was never taught; the injunction is ever to rise and not to fall under the dominion of the dark quality of lust, anger and greed.

Says *The Voice of the Silence*: "Do not believe that lust can ever be killed out if gratified or satiated, for this is an abomination inspired by Mara. It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart."

We draw our readers' attention to a special Note which follows this article.—EDS.]

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I have been greatly struck recently by the fierce criticism aroused by Sir Oliver Lodge's statement that "The higher man is not worrying about his sins, nowadays." Churches of various denominations appear to have been outraged by this announcement, and their preachers have spent their best energies in trying to persuade their, no doubt, willing congregations that the first duty of the Christian is to hate evil.

As a doctrine that command obtained an early hold in religious communities. It ministered to a human weakness. At a certain stage of development—it may be, in some cases, a transitional stage—the convert to religion found it far easier to hate evil than to love good. Hate was a passion with which he was familiar and the change of object appeared a full and sufficient justification for the exercise of a natural propensity for destruction.

The effects of this upon various sectarian religions have been various, and one interesting development was that which led to the practice of monasticism. In many early forms of asceticism, this "Evil" which was so hated and feared could be avoided, it was believed, only by a complete separation from the world. A sanction could be found, if it were needed, in the injunction to "flee from temptation," and men and women sought righteousness by flight.

In doing this their purpose differed from that we commonly associate with some forms of near Eastern monachism. They did not enter their retreat for a period of meditation in order to fit them for re-entry into the world; they entered it for life. In many cases there can be no doubt that they sought solely a personal righteousness though it might be only of that negative type which depends upon the observance of the Mosaic decalogue—with a possible reservation in the case of that fifth commandment enjoining the cherishing of father and mother. But even those who had higher aspirations than



this, sought to escape from evil rather than to conquer it. In modern civilisation we may see an analogous type in those who find a sanctuary among the conventions of a suburban or provincial society. But it is not by this way that we can find peace.

Another and far more devastating result of the command to hate wickedness was related to the dissensions of the churches. For sectarian purposes the definition of "evil" could be readily amplified to include an unacceptable dogma, and a fine passion of hate could be released in denouncing the followers of what was assumed to be a dangerous heresy. Naturally, but very unhappily, this accumulated hatred could not find sufficient vent in denunciation alone, and the horrors of persecution with all its accompaniment of cruelty, torture, and murder found excuse in this hatred of one evil (so-called) while it practised another and, by ethical standards, infinitely greater, for although the martyr be blessed in suffering for his faith, his persecutors are guilty of murder.

Lastly in this connection, the hatred of evil as defined by this, that or the other sect gave final authority for the tortures of hell. When the slow process of civilization forbade active physical vengeance on the heretic of whatever creed, the thwarted desire found some kind of compensation in dwelling upon the thought of eternal punishment for the unbeliever, and God—as pictured by the Calvinists, for example—was made the agent for human spite. I do not mean to imply by this that the conception of a hell of everlasting torment arose as a direct consequence of a change of opinion that forbade the physical torture of the heretic. The conception was far older than that. But we find it most virulent when the more active expression in physical cruelty is denied. For if we foster the lust of hate no matter what the object of it may be, it must find some outlet whether in practice or in imagination.

At the present time the doctrine that we must hate (not "forsake") evil is far less powerful in the Christian Churches than it was even in the last century, obtaining most strongly in those cases in which the "evil" is not the sin against our fellow-men but the profession of a dissentient dogma. In the Roman Catholic Church, for instance, any crime may be absolved by penitence and confession, even on a death-bed; but those who do not die in the "faith" are consigned in imagination to the outer darkness. This is, indeed, so grotesque and impossible a belief to the reasoning man, that the Churches in which eternal punishment is preached for whatever dereliction, are rapidly losing the more intelligent of their members. But it seems to me that so long as the principle of "hating evil" is upheld as an essential of the religious life, it will be logically impossible to escape from the inferences of a personal devil and a place of eternal punishment. The doctrine is incomplete from the Church's point of view without those consequences of the magnification of sin into a great positive force at active war with its opposite.

I am, therefore, greatly enheartened to find Sir Oliver Lodge who still retains, I believe, some remnant of his old orthodoxy, giving



publicity to such a principle as that which I quoted at the head of this article. For as I foresee the development of the coming ethic, the crux of the whole problem for the average man and woman will turn upon this question of "worrying about our sins," or, in other words, of setting up an image of Sin as the master bogey to terrify the sinner into a compulsory righteousness.

To the mystic, or to those "higher men" of Sir Oliver's phrase, it is sufficiently evident that the great positive command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," includes in seven words the six last injunctions of the original decalogue. And the practice, or the attempted practice, of that magnificent commandment renders the old "hatred of evil" an absurdity. Any active detestation of ill-doing will induce a dislike of that ill-doer who is our neighbour; and in the mind, love and hatred for the same object cannot co-exist.

Thus far, however, I have considered the hatred of evil mainly as a religious doctrine. It has another and far more significant meaning when it is considered in relation to personal effort along the path of holiness. The first inclination of the religious convert generally takes the form of a fierce suppression of those sins which he believes are most apt to trip him. This represents a practical application of the doctrine in question, and if the goal of the aspirant is the attainment of the inner wisdom, the method will stand as a perpetual bar between him and his object. He may by a continual effort of will lead what the Church describes as a "godly, righteous and sober life," but he can never attain the peace of the mystic.

The reason for this may be explained by an illustration taken from the life of one who sought and is still seeking the higher truth. At the very outset of his search immediately after the termination of the War, he realized that by way of preliminary discipline he must abandon the use of all such drugs as alcohol, tea, coffee and tobacco. He was already a vegetarian. All these stimulants or narcotics he discontinued without difficulty except one. He found himself still craving for tobacco. He has told me that when he was in the presence of men who were smoking, the personal deprivation was almost an agony to him. Now if he had adopted the principle of which I am writing, fiercely inhibited his desire for tobacco by the exercise of will, (as he was then doing), thrust the evil thing from him or fled from it to some sanctuary where he would be no longer tempted, this suppression would for ever have remained a bar to his progress. But he was far too wise to allow what for our present purpose we may regard as a sin to remain as a perpetual worry, a recurrent temptation that would be a lasting drag upon him. He returned, therefore, to the use of tobacco, and presently cured himself of the craving not by any denunciation of it as "evil," but by the development of his realisation that he no longer wanted to smoke.

The same principle applies to the alcoholic. If he has great powers of determination he may thrust the craving from him by a powerful act of resolution, but it will not die. The temptation will remain with



him, magnified into a spectre of positive evil, continually dogging his footsteps. I had an intimate friend who was in such a case. In early manhood he was a slave to alcohol, a secret drinker. Then a somewhat unusual combination of circumstances gave him an opportunity to free himself. He made a great effort, thrust the evil from him by an act of will, and was for many years an absolute teetotaler. But the spectre was not laid. He believed himself cured after so long an immunity; and when, somewhat run down by a long period of strenuous work, he was recommended by a doctor to take stout, he accepted the prescription without a qualm. Yet within six months of that time, although he was successful and happily married, he had succumbed to the old temptation and like the possessed of the parable, his last state was worse than the first.

In both these instances, the failure was due to raising evil to the eminence of an active opponent. So long as we make of sin a bogey to be hated and feared, the struggle against the imaginary enemy will continue. The consequence of this is something more than a mere tax on our powers of resistance. By the elevation of common sins to the dignity of a positive, active force, we create the thing we desire to kill. We set up an idol to Ahriman, and though we may spit upon it, the powers with which we have endowed it, will remain and wax. By regarding evil as an active, positive force we make the personal devil an important factor of our everyday life.

And the truth is that evil in its relation to the individual and not as an ethical abstraction, is a matter for everyone to define for himself. I may sin against the particular laws that are accepted by the society in which I am living without offending the code of my own conscience and with no loss of virtue. Also that which would be evil in me—take such an extreme instance as the destruction of that transcending wonder we call animal life—is the common profession or sport of another who so long as he kills with no sense of reluctance or uneasiness is guilty of no fault. The way of the mystic is peculiar to himself and depends upon the guidance of the inner wisdom that comes to him. He is not to be judged by common standards, nor will he so judge others.

Wherefore I find Sir Oliver Lodge's pronouncement that "the higher man is not worrying about his sins" not merely justified but the expression of a fundamental truth. For, indeed, the sins of the mystic are not those that the common world would regard as such.

J. D. BERESFORD.

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## A NOTE ON THE ABOVE.

[**Asiatic** is an old friend whose uttermost purity of life, great knowledge of Theosophy and Occult Psychology, and practical helpfulness to suffering minds without any monetary remuneration, have been known to us for many years. We sent him Mr. Beresford's article, requesting him to favour us with a full exposition of the subject ; all we have been able to get out of him is the following short Note, and we print it, thankful for this small mercy.—EDS.]

The article is clear. Readers may misjudge because of their own confusion. Passion-fraught minds have debased the *Bhagavata-Purana* from a Scripture of Divine Love to a sanction for worldly lusts ; inverted vision saw practises in yoga-sutras which Patanjali never taught ; and so on. Your forenote ought to clear our position as humble students and cautious practitioners of the tenets of Gupta-Vidya taught by the Acharyas and Arhats. Brother Beresford himself provides the safe-guarding clue. Writing about his friend the tobacconist he says that he was cured by himself " by the development of the realization that he no longer wanted to smoke." How did he *reason* himself out of it ?

These are the points which might prove serviceable :

(1) Conscience is no sure or final guide as to what is vicious in oneself. Ethical propositions are as definitely coded as metaphysical ones in our Science. From the standpoint of Manasa, the Real Man, virtues are his powers, shaktis, and *any* debasement of them becomes vicious. This debasement occurs because mind-power mingles and mixes with the assemblage of entities which form the principle of Kama-Desire in man. In *soul*-life, at no stage is lust moral or anger righteous or avarice laudable. If conscience is no sure guide, social conventionality is still worse. Superior to human conscience is Taijasi, the Radiance of the Higher Ego ; while social conventions differ and change as we move in time or space, the Occult Conventions growing out of first principles endure. Etiquette, manners and customs, etc., in the Order of Jivan-Muktas are precise and each soul learns to conform to them. It is these Occult Conventions which enable the powers (shaktis) of the man to become excellences (vibhutis) which shine for the good of others. Therefore Brother Beresford would be more exact if he were to say that the way of the Mystic is peculiar to the Order to which he belongs and depends upon the understanding of the guidance that comes to him and which in its turn depends on the purity of his own life. The mystic is a superior soul in the body and therefore his behaviour, conduct, and action should not fall *below* the standards set up by human instinct and intelligence.

(2) True Occultism insists on purity of life, and its method is to proceed from within. Motives are the soul of all human movements : examination of motives precedes all practices ; purity of thoughts, control of feelings do not follow but precede physical exercises. It is comparatively easy to eat meatless diet, not to smoke, even not to drink ; to be harmless in thought and word is more difficult.



Desires build our senses and brain, our sense-organs and body : pure desires will build a purer body quicker and more lastingly than pure food, drink or air. Nay more, pure motives and thoughts will bring the body to pure healthy habits. No diet régime will lead to chastity but service of other *souls* will. Let not the West run after our Hattha-Yogis ; they begin with the body and drive the Soul away. Start with the soul-motions—will, thought, and feeling, and the corpus will not become a corpse (Bhuta), but a Kaya, for which there is no English term known here.

ASIATIC.

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Sir Thomas Oliver, in his presidential address to the Institute of Hygiene (Feb. 20th, 1930) discussing the influence of heredity on the development of genius, said that “ looking back upon the history of talented families, quite apart from sporadic and unexplainable instances of genius, it would appear as if ability did not come suddenly into existence and disappear with equal abruptness but that it rises gradually out of the ordinary level of family life. The mere inheritance of ability is not enough. Unless there is inherited at the same time general capacity, zeal and vigour, mental ability alone will not lift the individual high above his fellow-men.” Obviously Sir Thomas accentuates similarities and overlooks any divergences. The Theosophic explanation is that the real faculty, capacity and power is seated in the *Ego*. The *Ego* “ goes into the family which completely answers to its whole nature or which gives an opportunity for the working out its evolution” (*Ocean of Theosophy* p. 72).

“ The transmission of hereditary qualities—including vices and virtues—is a reality,” adds Sir Thomas. “ Without that there could be no such thing as a breed or race. But the action and reaction on the brain of education and environment makes for progress. While heredity perpetuates, fresh powers from environment are added, whereby heredity becomes enriched, with the passing of the generation and the further evolution of the race is secured.”

The transmission of traits, acquired habits, as taught by Darwinists, is not accepted or taught by occult science. “ Evolution in it proceeds on quite other lines; the physical according to esoteric teaching, evolving gradually from the spiritual, mental and psychic. This inner soul of the physical cell—this ‘ Spiritual plasm ’ that dominates the germinal plasm—is the key that must open one day the gates of the terra incognita of the Biologist. . . .” (*Secret Doctrine* I. p. 219).



## GOD GEOMETRISES.

[Mrs. E. Hughes-Gibb, F.L.S., is an English botanical expert, and author of *The Life-Force in the Plant World*. This has been well-received and its companion volume, *The Life-Force in the Inorganic World*, will appear shortly. It is an attempt to sketch the work of the creative impulse in its building of the inorganic matter of this earth, and to obtain some glimpse into the principles at the base of things. Her first book on botany, *How Plants Live and Work*, was published thirty-three years ago. With her succeeding work, *The Making of a Daisy*, it has now been selling steadily for three decades.—EDS.]

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Nothing in this Universe comes into being haphazard. Neither does anything arise out of pure mechanistic necessity. Such is the creed of the writer of this article. To employ a metaphor borrowed from the ancient Jewish religion, all things seem to be straining to produce the "pattern which was shewn to them in the Mount". This pattern is different for each unit in the great Cosmogony and becomes more and more intricate as evolution proceeds.

Whether we begin at the point where we stand to-day and look from the marvellous patterns of the present stage back to the simplest forms of the inorganic, or—beginning as near as we can to the first creative breathing—work upward from simple to complex, the result is the same. A great Unity unfolds itself in the form of an august spiral, widening as it goes, to embrace every single material atom, whether belonging to inorganic or organic, as it is evolved.

Using our present knowledge of the constitution of the atom, let us watch the gradual building of the elements out of charges of positive and negative electricity. The unit charge of positive electricity, or "proton," is the nucleus of the atom; that of negative electricity, the "electron," is held in a circling orbit by attraction, as are the planets around our sun.

Pattern-building begins at once. Each new element, from the first—hydrogen—with one proton and one electron, to the 92nd—uranium—with 92 attendant electrons held by 92 positive charges, involves the addition of one more planetary dancer. The orbits vary from full circle to narrow ellipse, the laws and problems of the arrangement of the cloud of whirling planets grow more and more complicated as their numbers increase. Stability of the element whose atom is being built is no doubt the aim of the life-force, and this, in the simple elements, is attained by the "rule of two" under which helium, the second element, with two protons and two electrons, attains a "perfect pattern". But later on the "rule of eight" supersedes it and persists to the end. Under this rule the object appears to be to arrange that the outermost ring of electrons consists of exactly eight members—the "octet"—the remainder being sometimes crowded into the central groups in order to attain this formation. The coveted pattern of perfect



stability is secured by the following amongst the list of elements : Nos. 2, 10, 18, 36, 54 and 86, and these are sometimes called the "noble gases" because they have such perfect stability that they have no tendency to combine with any other element, but are sufficient unto themselves. A hidden relationship in their apparently fortuitous appearance in the list of elements unites them, and they can be shewn to be the resting-points in an upward rhythm, where the coil of the spiral returns upon itself and makes its fresh departure. Diagrams which I have prepared for a forthcoming book exhibit clearly the building of the elements as a wonderfully ordered rhythmic plan with spiral formation.

Turning rapidly over the pages of evolution and coming to the plant-world of to-day, can we find anything similar? We can; and the analogy is so striking that none can think it fortuitous.

Suppose that photographs were taken at regular intervals of the growing point of a rose-shoot, where the young leaves are developing, and that these photographs were arranged in a cinematographic apparatus and we could watch the growing process "speeded up," we should find that a definite pattern was being aimed at, and that the leaves were being placed in a spiral round the stem, each one at approximately  $\frac{2}{5}$  of the circumference of the stem distant from the next. The result would be that a regular rhythm would be developed. With the placing of the third leaf one coil of the spiral would be completed; two more leaves would end the second coil; and with the sixth leaf the rhythm would start afresh with No. 6 exactly over No. 1. This is the  $\frac{2}{5}$  arrangement with its rhythmic song of 3, 2, continuously repeated. The holly or the wallflower would have  $\frac{3}{8}$  of the circumference of the stem for its distance between the leaves, and its rhythm would be 3, 3, 2. The golden rod would set its leaves at  $\frac{5}{13}$  interval, and its rhythm would be 3, 3, 2—3, 2; the cone of the spruce fir, or the araucaria shoot would have the still more elaborate interval of  $\frac{8}{21}$  with a rhythm of 3, 3, 2—3, 2—3, 3, 2; and the daisy an interval of  $\frac{13}{34}$  with appropriate rhythm.

This series is that of the well-known phyllotaxian numbers—aimed at so faithfully at the growing point of the shoot, and so frequently lost in the terrible exigencies of growth and life-problems that the careless eye fails to detect them in the tossing sprays of leafage. Here and there they come out in arresting form and the perfect pattern, the rhythm and the spiral startle us into attention. The patterns formed by the arrangement of seeds on the giant sunflower head, the rosette of the common house leek (*sempervivum*), the conical hill on which the daisy florets are set, the araucaria branch, and above all the pine cones, with their arresting secondary spirals, strike the most careless eye.

As in the inorganic, so here in the organic world the geometrical patterns are usually hidden beneath a deceptive exterior. The striving of creation after the pattern of perfection is the secret of the individual; the fir cone's secondary spirals conceal for ever the true central winding of its coil, which gathers every scale of the cone into



its ascending spiral. Perfection, when apparently attained, is seen to be but a breathing space, a turn in the coil which winds on for ever, higher and yet higher. From rule of two to rule of eight ; from simple rose to the close phalanx of the daisy florets, such are the increasingly intricate patterns of the Geometry of God.

E. HUGHES-GIBB.

## A NOTE ON THE ABOVE.

[In the instructive article of Mrs. Hughes-Gibb, a great truth of the esoteric philosophy is hidden. Below we give but one statement of that ancient science which ought to set minds of the calibre of Mrs. Gibb to proceed deeper into the examination of that Life-Force which is invisibly at work in every form. All forms are Forms of Life, and modern science is advancing, though very haltingly and slowly, from visible forms to the invisible numbers, one within each form, invisible to sense but not invisible to the eye of soul, and fully known to the Eye of Spirit.—Eds.]

Nature geometrizes universally in all her manifestations. There is an inherent law—not only in the primordial, but also in the manifested matter of our phenomenal plane,—by which Nature correlates her geometrical forms, and later, also, her compound elements ; and in which there is no place for accident or chance. It is a fundamental law in Occultism, that there is no rest or cessation of motion in Nature. (It is the knowledge of this law that permits and helps the Arhat to perform his *Siddhis*, or various phenomena, such as disintegration of matter, the transport of objects from one place to another.) That which seems rest is only the change of one form into another ; the change of substance going hand in hand with that of form—as we are taught in Occult physics, which thus seem to have anticipated the discovery of the “ Conservation of matter ” by a considerable time. Says the ancient Commentary to Stanza IV :—

“ *The Mother is the fiery Fish of Life. She scatters her spawn and the Breath (Motion) heats and quickens it. The grains (of spawn) are soon attracted to each other and form the curds in the Ocean (of Space). The larger lumps coalesce and receive new spawn—in fiery dots, triangles and cubes, which ripen and at the appointed time some of the lumps detach themselves and assume spheroidal form, a process which they effect only when not interfered with by the others. After which, law No. \* \* \* comes into operation. Motion (the Breath) becomes the whirlwind and sets them into rotation.* ” SECRET DOCTRINE I. 97.



# MUHARRAM

## THE SHIAH MOURNING.

[This month **N. Kasturi Iyer, M.A.**, describes a Muslim festival ; though the writer is a Hindu, he is able to express some of the feelings of the "faithful" at this festival of mourning.—EDS.]

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Muharram, the first month of the Islamic Lunar year, was ordained a sacred month, of peace and inviolability ; for, even in pre-Islamic days, it was the month, of harvest and vintage. The tenth day is observed by all Islam as a day of fast, of absention from evil, to starve out the beast within. For, the Koran says, "O, you who believe ! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil." For the Shiah sect, however, the first ten days of Muharram are reminiscent of the most pathetic incident in the early history of their faith, and they observe the period as a solemn time of regret and veneration, of singular melancholy.

In contrast to the democratic Arab tribesmen who understood and appreciated the elective principle for the Caliphate, the Persians and other eastern peoples followed, even in theology, the principle of autocratic, personal, and hereditary monarchy and hence refused to recognise any except Ali, the Vicegerent of God, the son-in-law of the Prophet, as their legitimate Caliph. Hence arose the cleavage in Islam between Shiahs and Sunnis. It also produced the wonderfully emotional atmosphere of martyrdom in which the Shiah creed and ritual are steeped. They are most zealous in the worship of saints and look back with respectful regret to the tribulations of the martyred founders of their faith.

During Muharram, they celebrate the death of Husain, son of Ali, at the hands of the chiefs of Qufah, on the fatal field of Kerbela in 61 A. H. Inveigled by an encouraging report from a cousin sent to reconnoitre the prospects of the family of the Prophet, Husain had started with seventy-two followers, mostly women and relatives, towards Qufa, but was ambushed on the outskirts of the city, Ker-u-bela—"grief and sorrow." The peaceful little band prepared themselves for the inevitable struggle. During the night, Husain's sister cried out, "Alas, for the desolation of my family ! My mother Fatima is dead ; and my father Ali and my brother Hasan. Alas, for the destruction that is past ! Alas, for the destruction that is to come !" —these were fore-warnings, visions that could have unsettled a person less resigned. Husain was calm. He performed the marriage of his nephew and his daughter, long affianced, in the tent of the women ; he prayed, "Oh God ! thou art my trust in every trouble, my hope in every hazard ;" every male hurried to the fray. Husain was wounded on the head, his infant son was killed by an arrow while sitting on his lap ; exclaiming, "Truly we belong to God and unto Him we return."



he laid it on the ground. Afflicted with excruciating thirst, he ran to the river. The women too were scorched by thirst and many a hero lost his life in endeavouring to take water to them, in spite of courage and intrepidity. No sooner were the leather skins filled than arrows pierced them dry. On the river bank—the last few moments of agony—the hands of Husain's little brother, Abbas, were cut off. At last, the martyr fell.

Imagination seizing upon this scene has worked it into a dramatic episode, full of poignant pictures of agony. The first ten days of Muharram are dedicated to the recalling of these memories. There is an atmosphere of profound quiet and solemn stillness, of the self-inflicted discipline of abnegations and fasts which prepares one for the intimate experiences of martyrdom and of suffering. The Shiah endures stern and systematic privations; he abstains from luxuries, comforts and even conveniences; women neglect their toilette and lay aside their ornaments; there are no cushions, no bedsteads; only the coarsest meal is taken; while devout persons subject themselves to a complete fast. They try to experience a fraction of the pain which their Imam heroically passed through those fateful days. Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali observed at Lucknow long ago:

In sorrowing for the martyred Imams, they seem to forget their private griefs; the bereavement of a beloved object is even almost overlooked in the dutiful remembrance of Hassan and Hosein at this period, and I have had opportunities of observing this triumph of religious feeling in women, who are remarkable for their affectionate attachment to their children, husbands and parents,—they tell me, “We must not indulge in selfish sorrows of our own, whilst the Prophet's family alone have a right to our tears.”

In addition, public mourning assemblies are held in special buildings called *Imambaras*, tastefully and elaborately decorated with every variety of banners, mirrors, chandeliers, wax-lights, censers and the Shiah symbol of the “Spread hand.” Here *Taziyahs* or *Tabuts* are set up, miniature models of Husain's tomb at Kerbela, of exquisite workmanship, loaded with things conceivably used by Husain then, such as turban, sword, shield, bow and arrows. Twice a day the Faithful assemble to hear the Moulvi read out in affecting tones the sad tragedy of Kerbela and, though sedate intellectuals do not give way to loud lamentations or public display of grief, the masses soon allow tears, sobs and groans to escape them, until, when the funeral elegy is sung in chorus, there are many who beat their breasts in sympathy.

Special days are devoted to separate incidents. On the first is narrated the treacherous seizure and torture of the cousin, Muslim, who was sent to report on Qufat; on the seventh, the tearful wedding of Quasim and Sakinah; on other days, the heart-rending thirst, the last few moments of awful carnage. On all days, especially in Persia and Iraq, are enacted in specially erected *takyahs*, dramatic representations of the catastrophe, including the battle, the single combat, the slaughter—living mystery plays full of suggestive symbolism. Prof. Bogdanov while describing such a play relates a few anachronisms and trifling slips but hastens to add—“Still, nobody minds such trifles;



so beautiful is the whole setting, so great the enthusiasm of the actors and the spectators. During the more touching passages in the drama, all those present are sobbing aloud and beating their breasts." The swaying crowd keenly follows every expected word and is all in tune from beginning to end with the sadness of the story. The players go through the performance, "not after the manner of actors but of earnest men absorbed in some high sacrament and without consciousness of themselves or their audience."

The tenth day of Muharram is the climax and culmination of this travail. The multitudes of mourners who paraded the streets on previous days and attended the recitations ; the Tabuts consecrated throughout the city ; the banners and censers ; the chanters and the readers—all combine to form a most imposing procession. Of course, the general effect is often marred by groups of professional flagellants, painted wrestlers, clowns and mendicants of various types who join merely for frolic and in order to earn a few coins. But the sight of the symbols of grief and despair, long streamers of black silk ; the spread hands hewn off Abbas ; the model of Qasim's tomb followed by trays of *Mayndhie*, the dye of the marriage rite ; bareheaded and barefooted men in mourning garb, straggling on after ten days' privations ; the many Taziyahs, modelled on the most exquisite designs of Saracenic architecture, hurried along according to the general style of carrying the dead ; the caparisoned horses, as when Husain rode out from Medina ; the cries of "Shah Husain wa' Hussain," the pipes and cymbals, the funeral dirge—all these contribute to work men up to a frenzy of emotional excitement.

After the Taziahs are committed to the sea or the cemetery, the men return and appease the poor by generous gifts of food, clothes and money and spend a further two days in meditation and prayer. Thus ends the annual contemplation of the death of Husain and the martyrs ; the rigorous discipline of self-inflicted abstinence, of unselfish sympathy ; the moving drama of veneration and gratitude on the sombre background of thirst and agony, enacted year after year. The memory of Kerbela is kept green and the inspiration of Husain's piety and surrender is rendered a permanent experience, carved deeper and deeper in to the mind of the community.

N. KASTURI.



## FROM GERMANY.

[Waldemar Freundlich's first letter appeared in our February number.—  
EDS.]

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We have listened lately to a speech delivered by Herr Oswald Spengler in Hamburg in a crowded hall. A semi-official body had invited the famous author of *The End of the Occident* to speak, but evidently little supposed that his speech would display such a dark outlook and pessimism. In fact Herr Spengler was in no way inconsistent with himself. Whoever had expected to be comforted by the slightest reference to a more hopeful future, was mistaken. The learned speaker fascinated his hearers by a graphic picture of the present and coming decay of Western Europe, proofs of which were manifestly evident.

It is fortunate that pessimism is no inherent quality of westerners. In point of fact it is a luxury which goes ill with the exigencies of the day. In these circumstances one must not wonder that there has been a sort of outcry against Spengler's pessimistic outlook, and it is to be hoped that this has helped to appease the troubled minds of those who would have done better not to attend the lecture. For there are truths for the few, as we all know, which will turn to poison for the many. *Sat sapienti*. Why deny the fact that we are on the dawn of a new world-development on our globe, where a displacing of wealth and power from one race and one continent to another will be unavoidable. The levelling influence of the coming west-eastern culture and religion takes much of the awe away which such a prospect may have for most westerners. It will take many years before this new world will have taken form and shape. Rome was not built in a day, nor did the mighty Empire decay without a fierce struggle for her supremacy. That it was, in the end, her own creations, her colonies north and south, which strove after emancipation and deprived the mighty mother of their support, may well suggest a parallel for the present day.

There are two problems which clearly show that the present structure of economic and social life in Western Europe cannot continue. With an army of three million workless, to which must be added those they have to provide for, Germany sees her finances ruined, if the State has to continue to feed some ten million people out of public funds. The more conservative idea that social provision has gradually reached a point where it is killing any sense of self-responsibility and is leading to indifference so long as the State provides for the workless, has a good deal to be said for it. On the other hand any trifling with the problem might lead to serious outbreaks which in their turn might lead to Bolshevism in one form or another. Thus this army of workless with their families forms an unsolved problem of far-reaching import to Western States; the more important, as it



is a recognised fact that a considerable part of them is in a constant state of being out of work, without any hope of finding work again. The reason is too well known to be repeated here. Whole manufacturing centres have been reduced to a few factories, since the conditions of the countries where they found their markets have for many years so completely changed that, in many cases, the buyer overseas has turned to be a manufacturer and exporter himself.

The other problem is the army of working girls and women in all stations of public and private life. It needs no arguing whether or not they are desirable—there they are, painstaking, clever, trustworthy helpmates everywhere, at any rate more ready to give themselves heart and soul to their work than is the average man. And their number is increasing daily, hourly, owing to the hard necessity for finding means of subsistence for their family in the place of the out-of-work father, husband, or brother. They naturally thus come into competition with the husband or brother who may be striving for a place. But as both sexes are now recognized equals in all departments of public life, the education of girls is now based on pretty well the same lines as that of boys, and they are trained to an appropriate vocation in much the same way as their brothers.

That this is accentuating the question of the workless male is obvious, nor is the writer in a position to suggest a remedy. He merely wishes to point out the growing dangers of such a development. One of them is already visible in the changed mentality of the young bachelor-women, independent of home and family as they now are, since they often have to provide for parents and younger brothers and sisters. They spend their life in much frolic and outdoor amusements, with quickly changing friends, much to the sorrow of the parents who cannot and will not understand such a break with morality as they consider it. But in most cases they underrate the sharpness and clear-sightedness of the young generation, which can well look after itself.

That family life and the prospects of children cannot but be endangered under the present method of living, is clear enough. A medical doctor has written a sort of modern drama criticizing the present law which severely punishes measures leading to abortion. It proclaims the right of women to decide for themselves whether or not a child is wanted and the obligation of science to assist. In showing up the shocking results of the secret recourse which poor girls and women have to take to quacks, while rich ladies go to fashionable private hospitals, to be treated there with all possible skill, the author leaves no doubt as to his standpoint. Opinion is much divided on this question and its moral and material consequences on either side. It cannot, however, be denied that many conservative people, including lawyers of repute, have to own that there is much to be said for the argument that the old legal regulations are no longer suitable in the face of such radically changed conditions.

WALDEMAR FREUNDLICH.



## IN THE WORLD OF BOOKS.

[ **John Middleton Murry's** name is already well known to the readers of this magazine. His interest in Meister Eckhart is profound, and we are glad to have from his pen the review of the life and writings of one who may be described as a Theosophical exponent of Christianity.—Eds.]

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### MEISTER ECKHART.\*

Mr. Evans' admirable translation of Pfeiffer's classical edition of the works of Meister Eckhart was published in 1924. As a translation there is nothing to be said about it, except that it is excellent.

Eckhart, it must never be forgotten, was excommunicated although posthumously, in 1329. He would be excommunicated to-day. In the judgment of many, among whom I am one, Eckhart was the purest mystic whom the Christian Church produced, the great St. John of the Cross not excepted. Because of the purity of his mysticism, his excommunication was inevitable.

Eckhart's central doctrine was couched in the idiom of Christianity. It was that God eternally begets His Son in the soul of the individual man. The eternal begetting of His Son in man by the Father, is, in another Christian idiom to which Eckhart was equally given, the eternal speaking of the Word. "The genuine Word of Eternity is spoken only in Eternity, where man is alien to himself and to multiplicity." In such a phrase we pass clean outside the limits of orthodox Christianity.

We are all "sons of God" essentially, and by precisely the same right as Jesus himself. Eckhart is emphatic upon this. He quotes St. John (Sermon VII):

"Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called and should be the sons of God." Now I maintain that we can no more be wise without wisdom than Son without the filial nature of God's Son; without having the very same nature as the Son of God himself.

That is assuredly not orthodox Christianity; but it is the teaching of Jesus. And, to my mind, there has been no more truly inspired expositor of the essential doctrine of Jesus than Meister Eckhart.

Like his Master he was a man of profound religious experience. At his highest he has a transparent lucidity of utterance, comparable only (in the religious utterance of the West) with that of Jesus himself. But Eckhart was also deeply read in the scholastic philosophy of his day. He could speak the language of direct experience, and the language of high metaphysic; and it may be that on this side his teaching can make its most intimate appeal to the modern mind.

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\* *Meister Eckhart*. By Franz Pfeiffer. Translated by C. de B. Evans. (J. M. Watkins, London. Price 20s. net.)



“ Though we are God’s sons,” he says in the same Sermon VII, “ we do not realize it yet. . . . Sundry things in our soul overlay this knowledge and conceal it from us.” There are three great obstacles, he declares, to the attainment of this knowledge: they are Body, Number and Time. In a more modern idiom, they are the modes of sense-perception (Body), and the categories or forms of Space (Number) and Time to which our human thought is apparently confined. Again, Eckhart puts it that there are three phases of knowledge: sensible knowledge (of the Body), rational knowledge (of the Mind), and a third knowledge, of the Soul. The first two are the obstacles we have to overcome in order that “ the eternal rebirth of the Soul ” may be accomplished within us. To achieve Soul-knowledge we must pass completely beyond Images. This is done by detaching ourselves completely first from our sense-perception, then from what he beautifully calls “ the multitudinous mind ” till we have made “ a desert ” of ourselves. In this “ desert ” wherein we have become “ alien to ourselves and to multiplicity,” the Eternal Word is spoken. It is spoken “ only in Eternity,” for by this utter detachment from ourselves, from all that is “ creaturely,” we become ourselves Eternal. Here again, Eckhart is emphatic and heretical. It is not by the grace of God, that we thus partake of the Eternity which is Himself: we do not thank Him for it, we know that He cannot refuse it, and, more than this, we know that in thus thinking of Him and naming Him, we are speaking falsely.

God, he says, is beyond God; just as the Soul is beyond the Soul.

The soul has something in her, a spark of intellect, that never dies; and in this spark, as at the apex of the mind, we place the paradigm of the soul; and there is also in our souls, knowledge of externals, sensible and rational perception, present there as images which obscure it (i.e., the spark of the veritable soul) from us.

This ultimate spark of the soul, attained and known by that complete emptying of the subject which is detachment, or as Eckhart sometimes calls it, “ the divine poverty,” is co-essential and consubstantial with God. It is beyond all name, it is the dwelling-place of God; it is God.

There is something in the Soul wherein God simply is, and this is a nameless thing and has no proper name. It neither has nor is a definite entity, for it is not this or that nor here nor there; what it is, it is from another, wherewith it is the same; the one streams into it, and it into the one. (Sermon XCIV).

This is, as Eckhart names it, pure Being, the realm in which all things eternally are *sub specie æternitatis*, where, in his bold and impressive language, “ Any flea as it is to God is nobler than the highest of angels in himself.”

Hand in hand, in Eckhart, as in all true and durable mysticism which is not to degenerate into emotional indulgence, go always direct experience and the subtlest intellectual analysis. It is because the intellectual analysis is truly subtle that it leads beyond intellect and rejects all that passes commonly under the name of intellect,



into the "creaturely" element from which we must achieve our detachment. None the less, and with perfect warrant, Eckhart, as we have seen, will not let go the name of "intellect" for the soul which is beyond soul. It is "a spark of intellect" for him; for it is indeed that which is ultimately discovered by a process of veritable self-knowledge, in the strictest sense of the word. Thus Eckhart, in another place, describes the soul beyond soul as the intellect beyond intellect.

Above intellect the seeker there is another intellect which does not seek, but rests in its pure and simple essence in the realm of light. (Sermon XIX).

This "divine poverty," this stripping of the subject of all that is creaturely until it is "bare and free from all contingent form," is the end. From the "I am" the "I" is taken, and only the "am" remains. This says Eckhart, is the Man.

This is the Man; in this man all men are one man, and that man is Christ. This man is object-free in time and in eternity.

Never, I think, has the idiom of Christianity been more nobly or more purely used than by Eckhart. Man's final self-discovery is itself the act of God the Father eternally begetting his Son in Man. If Christians could understand Christianity after this wise the Kingdom of Heaven would be at hand. But, alas, Christians for the most part do not understand their own idiom: if they did, they would have no difficulty in understanding the idiom of others. And then they would cease to be Christians.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY.

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*Christos: The Religion of the Future.* By WM. KINGSLAND. (John M. Watkins, London. 2s. 6d.)

The author is a well known student of Theosophy. This little volume is written more for Christendom than for followers of other creeds. There are thousands to-day in every land who are dissatisfied with the formal religions, and are looking out for a rational basis for ethical living. Such, in East and West, are ready for Theosophy. Old prejudices die hard, and terms and terminology form part of the mental furniture which strengthens prejudices. So, it seems, our author uses a Christian approach in presenting some Theosophical ideas; but he quotes freely from non-Christian texts.

The book will help some, we hope not a few, to enquire further and thus go to the source itself which inspires Mr. Kingsland—H. P. Blavatsky. The work of the Theosophical Movement has turned men's minds to enquire fearlessly into the nature of soul and life, and the demand has been supplied by a thousand speculations. There has been much word-weaving, and it need not have been if Theosophists had vigilantly presented during the last fifty years the teachings of H.P.B. and her Masters. But many calling themselves Theosophists were busy weaving their own speculations and making their own reputations. The world's need for knowledge of pure Theosophy is pressing, and a correct *reiteration* of the teachings of H.P.B. will



fill that need. Viewing Mr. Kingsland's book as one such attempt we welcome it, but a greater service would have been rendered if direct statements of H. P. B. had been given in every chapter, thus avoiding the running of any risk that a student's understanding and interpretation are liable to.

S. B.

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*The Interpretation of Religion.* By JOHN BAILLIE, M.A., D. Litt., (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh. 14s.)

The author, who is Professor of Systematic Theology in Emanuel College, Toronto, Canada, has written this book without any pretence of literary style, but has succeeded in making his rather profound speculations singularly readable. He attempts to state a "true theory of religion," and does so by explaining first what theology is, its relation to other sciences, and its method. He then examines the phenomenon of faith, the rationalistic and romanticist theories of religion, the foundations of faith, the conception of God, the nature of religious progress and finally the idea of revelation. His range, it will be seen, is extensive, but his learning equips him for it.

He starts with the Greeks, then a glance at the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages, a rather longer glance at the early Protestant theologians, a good deal more than a glance at Kant, and he comes boldly to the theorists of the present century. For my own part I should like to have seen more consideration given to Scholasticism, if only for the reason that those great theologians of the Dark Ages discovered how to define their terms. It is not necessary always to accept their conclusions, but their methods of definition are an essential element in theological discussion of a scientific kind. This is my chief quarrel with Professor Baillie: he is too protestant. Should one quarrel with a philosopher for being too protestant? I think so, because theology is a science, and the student must come to it free from prejudice if the truth, which is the aim in all science, is to be arrived at.

But Professor Baillie, however, is broadminded, his prejudices are not obtruded, and he does give a coherent account of the science of religion in the terms of the present day. He shows that there is a "central essence" in which all religions are united, which is the revelation of God, which commends itself to the moral consciousness. That is the criterion by which lower religions may be distinguished from the higher:

Religions can be tested only from within. They are to be ranked as high or low, adequate or inadequate, true or false, in accordance with the extent to which they are true to their own central principle—the root idea for which all religion stands; or more accurately, in accordance with the adequacy with which they positively express and expand that principle.

The test of religion is its ethical value. "The only question we can relevantly ask ourselves about any religious creed or dogma is this: How far does it seem to be inspired by, to harmonise with,



and effectively to carry into its own transcendent region, those values which our consciences declare to be deepest and noblest on earth?" That is a test which we can all apply, and having applied it, what remains for us to do but to submit ourselves to the demands of that religion, to put into practice in our own lives what faith requires of us?

C. B. PURDOM.

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*How the Great Religions Began.* By JOSEPH GAER. (Robert M. McBride & Company, New York. \$ 3.00.)

Man is a religious animal ; he will worship. So say the books on ethics, and it is true that perhaps the deepest rooted instinct in mankind after the most elemental ones—hunger, thirst, self-preservation, and the like—is this striving after God, the longing in the human heart to know its creator.

This book gathers into its confines all the religions of the world, some of which reach into the mists of the years before history was written down, also embracing others which are still living and vital. A delicate subject this, one which must be handled carefully so as not to offend any creed or sect and yet present each one in its true light. Mr. Gaer has become the spokesman of religion. Rare indeed is it to find a person so unbiased, so impartial as to be able to write a book of this sort. If the author is inclined more one way than another, he has admirably kept his prejudices to himself and out of his writing, and the result is a book that is of vital interest to every thoughtful person.

In a prologue the author deals with beginnings, the very foundation of all religions, the idea of manifestation, whence came man and other beings into the world ; how, indeed, was the world spun into existence. The first part of the three into which the book is divided treats of India and some of her teachers—Buddha, Mahavir, Kabir, Nanak, etc.

Turning to China and Japan, Mr. Gaer sets forth the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tze. These two religions were the principal ones of China until the advent of Buddhism, brought from India by Chinese merchants. Japan, on the other hand, evolved Shintoism, meaning "The Way of the Good Spirits." Through Shintoism the Japanese learned to love and worship nature ; through Buddhism, for they also knew other religions, they came to love the beautiful in art ; through Confucianism they gained their love of learning. So Japan has been trebly blessed.

The third part of Mr. Gaer's book begins with Zoroastrianism and Christianity, which tended to be the universal religion until out of the East came the prophet Mohammed and his robust followers. The last chapter is devoted to the Reformation and the leaders who came out of it, forming many of the sects we have to-day.

Mr. Gaer has not only given a clear and comprehensive view of all the religions of the world, but he shows a grasp of detail and wealth of background that makes his book immensely valuable. Whether



consciously or unconsciously, he demonstrates the unity of all religions, that each tends towards the same goal, striving to bring men on a level with their highest selves, to grasp the universal good and understand the common ideals of all. This should bring about, if logically carried out, a better understanding and a unity of human minds, instead of the strife and division which has so long riven humanity. Barriers between creeds are artificial ones, erected by years of "man's inhumanity to man." Surely a book such as this should do much in creating a better world spirit.

Although listed as a juvenile, Mr. Gaer's book is too important to pass over as such. A hard task it is indeed to give children an idea of world religions, an intelligent grasp of the many beliefs which permeate the world. Mr. Gaer has eliminated much that is confusing, and in the simplest of language, which after all is the greatest writing, has put the vast subject on a level where it may be easily grasped. A book like this appears once in a generation, and may well serve as a standard. Frank W. Peers has contributed wood-engravings, effectively done in black and white, which enhance the beauty of the book.

O. MUTRIEL FULLER.

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*The Life of Mrs. Piper.* By ALTA L. PIPER (Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London. 7s. 6d.)

Spiritualism is still looked upon with suspicion by the churches, with scorn by the scientist, with ridicule by the sceptic. It has still to fight its battles with the unbelieving. But whether people believe or not, no person with a sense of the true in him can deny that the facts with which the Psychical Research Society has made the world familiar cannot all be brushed aside as the result of fraud or of credulity, though none can deny—and even Miss Alta Piper does not care to deny—that both fraud and credulity have played their part in the history of spiritualism. No fair-minded person can leave Miss Piper's simple and straightforward account of her mother's phenomena without feeling admiration for the lady who in the midst of other duties for years and years allowed herself to be tested, in some cases even to be tortured, during her trances in ways which left their impress during the waking state. This very fact goes to show that she had a remarkable scientific spirit, and will undoubtedly occupy a high place in the history of spiritualistic phenomena. The history of the Latin Message is rather complicated and needs a complex interpretation, which may not carry conviction to all, but there are ample examples in the book, which are simpler in character, and furnish a very strong argument in favour of the truth of spiritualistic phenomena. But what about explanations of those phenomena?

A. R. W.



## ENDS AND SAYINGS.

“\_\_\_\_\_ends of verse  
And sayings of philosophers.”

HUDIBRAS.

In “Educational Leadership in America” in the March *Harper's Magazine* an ancient doctrine makes appearance. Of more than usual interest is the fact that the author is Prof. Alexander Meiklejohn, formerly President of Amherst College, now Brittingham professor of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin. “Plato tells us,” he says, “that as he studies human nature he finds a cleavage in it, a break into two separate and hostile parts . . . that every man becomes really two men with strife and tension between them. There is the external man of action and the inner man of reflection.” He is convinced that Plato is essentially right and that society as man falls into two parts. America's spiritual destiny, he thinks, can only be achieved by setting up intellect, moral and æsthetic insight against material activity, the inner realm of contemplation against the world of external achievement. In agreeing with him, we add not alone America's destiny but that of every nation depends upon it. But it is a destiny made within the small sphere of each individual as also by the collective effort in the educational department of every state. But the latter is wholly dependent upon the former. It is so much easier and more congenial after centuries of wrong experience to set others right than to take one's self in hand, striving to live according to the Inner World of Spirit. What is needed is slow and silent and unassuming work, unit by unit, as against the seemingly quick spectacular movement among the masses with an inevitable reaction. Self-education both for the adult and school-going population should occupy a prominent and important place in our programme. Self-education implies the training of the outer man of action by the inner man of reflection ; Plato's view is identical with that of the *Gita*—raising the self by the Self.

*The Voice of the Silence*, however, brings out a point that is very generally missed by readers of Plato and the *Gita*. The Inner Man of contemplation, the Higher Self, is an Individuality but is one and identical with the Universal Self, Deity, the One Life. Therefore the injunction of the *Voice*: “Restrain by thy Divine thy lower Self. Restrain by the Eternal the Divine.” Each self-educator has to learn that not only has he to discipline his lower nature but also to labour for the realization that his higher nature is eternal and supreme.

This training consists of a definite discipline of life, the reverse of which obtains in our civilization, namely, the inner contemplator is called upon to obey the requirements of the hustling outer man, full of his business and his engagements, and in the bustle of it all



it never dawns on him that God and man are one. While from the former aspect, emphasised by Professor Meiklejohn, responsibility towards ourselves as citizens of the world-state arises, it is the second aspect, brought out by the quotation from *The Voice of the Silence* given above, which reveals our responsibility towards all men and all Nature and scientifically explains the stupendous fact of Universal Brotherhood.

Each individual, man or woman, who realizes that he is the Inner Being as well as the personal lower self, and fosters the *universal* side of his nature at the expense of the separative, would be the little leaven ultimately leavening the whole lump. As said in the *Key* :

It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the the same way no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone.

Such self-education would then draw out from within the immense and unsuspected potentialities of the Spiritual Being, knowledge and beneficence for the good of the whole, individuals for nations and nations for the world.

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Discarding the shackles of dogmatic religion, intensely interested in unravelling the mystery of Nature and considering the examination of things as they are enough of a task, science has never felt the need for a philosophical basis for its experimentation. But Mr. A. D. Ritchie, Lecturer in Chemical Physiology, Victoria University of Manchester, suggested to the members of the Institute of Chemistry that there was a need for a philosophy among scientists. *The Manchester Guardian* reports :—

The method of science was analytic, or where analysis failed, statistical. What was individual or unique escaped the scientific net, so that most of what was interesting in life, escaped too. Owing to the limited character of science, every scientific man ought to have some sort of philosophy as well, representing his general outlook on the world. . . There was another reason for scientific men to pay some attention to philosophy. That was the immense practical importance of their work."

Whilst endorsing the view of Mr. Ritchie it can be stated unequivocally, that *a* or *some sort* of philosophy will not meet the growing necessity for a philosophical basis among scientists. What the modern scientist is in need of is a complete and all-embracing philosophy. As W. Q. Judge pointed out as far back as 1892, it should not be "simply synthetical in its methods, for the simplest as the wildest hypothesis can claim that much"; what then? "*Synthesis itself*"—and this is the complete and all-embracing Philosophy at the back of occult science. It is with the aid of that Philosophy that occult science "sees no unsolvable mystery anywhere."

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Anthropology has stripped itself of nineteen-twentieths of its natural prerogative, relying on fossil bones and finding no place for psyche, is the charge levelled by Thomas Browne at "A Dehumanised



Science of Man" in the April *Hibbert Journal*. We find his viewpoints so theosophical and his arguments so cogent that we summarise them as far as possible in his own words. Newton and Dick, the black fellow, look very much alike on the dissecting table. Mathematician and saint are indistinguishable from savage and pervert, and it is inequalities of psychic evolution which make the difference. The lower savage who can hardly count his own five fingers analyses the soul into half-a-dozen different constituents and talks of Emancipation, Evolution, Reincarnation, the Divine Mediator, the World Soul, the Creative Word, the Second Death. Civilisation owes these ideas to men like Plato and St. Paul, affirms Mr. Browne. He disproves the scientific belief, now becoming discredited, that lower man rose to higher man. There are many instances of civilization lapsing into barbarism but none of savagery rising unaided into civilization, and degeneration is just as conspicuous as progress. Wadjak man dwelt cheek by jowl with *Pithecanthropus*; the splendid Aurignacian, a finer type than any now extant, with the brutal Neanderthalian. Civilization must go back to the ante-prehistoric past. It is the unhappy truth that the ideals of Christianity and Buddhism are unattainable in Europe. Christ and Buddha belonged to a different *kind* of civilization from our own. Religion is the first of man's concerns—Science relies on the evidence of the senses, the very evidence which we must *not* believe, otherwise the conjuror would be an authentic miracle-worker.

So far the summary.

Theosophy asserts that civilizations, like men and like the earth on which both flourish, form an endless series. They rise and fall, as men die to reincarnate, and the Earth passes through obscuration or pralaya to manifest once again. The law of cycles provides the clue to the correct interpretation of human history. Those daring souls who master the ruthless sway of cycles, refusing to be engulfed in the effects produced by causes are born into this different kind of civilization referred to by Mr. Browne, a civilization peculiar to the Deathless Race to which They belong. One of Them wrote not many years ago:—

Is any of you so eager for knowledge and the beneficent powers it confers as to be ready to leave your world and come into ours? Then let him come.... Let him come by all means, as the pupil to the master, and without condition.

But how shall a modern force his way into this Kingdom of the Elect? Here is a method prescribed:

You must draw me by a purified heart and a gradually developing will. Like the needle the adept follows his attractions.

But, once again, how shall a modern purify his heart—what does it mean and what does the process imply? And, more difficult—who will teach him correctly and safely to develop the Will? We say—Theo-Sophia.



Apropos of the cycles in human history, we have before us a valuable Report published by the Carnegie Institute at Washington D.C., under whose auspices two conferences were held in 1922 and 1928. The Report first defines a cycle :

In general scientific use the word denotes a recurrence of different phases, of plus and minus departures, which are often susceptible of exact measurement. It has no necessary relation to a definite time interval, though this is frequently a characteristic of astronomical cycles.

The Report contains brief papers on the several phases of various types of cycles. Sun-spots and tree-rings receive a good deal of attention, though other interesting topics were discussed. The whole subject is not quite new, for physical science had observed and recorded the action of cycles in certain departments of Nature ; but it has yet to recognize the *universality* of the Law of Periodicity, Theosophy offers a very full explanation of the Law of Cycles or Periodicity which is the Second Fundamental Proposition of the Secret Doctrine. In 1877 writing her *Isis Unveiled* H. P. Blavatsky expounded this teaching, describing the picture which "covers a whole inner wall of a subterranean temple in the neighbourhood of a great Buddhistic pagoda."

Mr. W. Q. Judge with his customary practicality showed how the Law acts in connection with human moods and soul endeavours. All that help has been made partial use of even by students of Theosophy ; but the cycle is running its course and what was looked askance at by the last quarter of the 19th century will be fully accepted and applied by the second quarter of the 20th. The bottom of a cycle is passed and a barren period is behind us.

Writing in 1880 H. P. Blavatsky gave some of the results of scientific investigation in cycles, and answering a Russian paper the *Novoye Vremya* whether this phenomenon of periodicity be due to blind chance "or depends on the same natural laws, on which are more or less dependent many of the phenomena of human life" commented :—"Undoubtedly the latter." She wrote :

If, on the one hand, a great portion of the educated public is running into atheism and scepticism, on the other hand, we find an evident current of mysticism forcing its way into science. It is a sign of an irrepressible need of humanity to assure itself that there is a Power Paramount over matter ; an occult and mysterious law which governs the world, and which we should rather study and closely watch, trying to adapt ourselves to it, than blindly deny, and break our heads against the rock of destiny.

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In view of what has been said of cycles, it is interesting to read in the London *Daily Express* of the Festival planned to take place in Delphi, Greece, at the beginning of May. By the time these lines appear the Festival will have become an accomplished fact. Mme. Eva Sikelianos, the American wife of the Greek poet, Angelo Sikelianos, is with her husband responsible for this great revival, the second in fifteen hundred years—the first being held three years ago. The plan has been well backed, the Society of Intellectual Co-operation,



which is a branch of the League of Nations, approving the effort, and enthusiasm being especially shown by Germany and France. Professor Gilbert Murray has also displayed a kindly interest in the matter, but the Festival has not caught the imagination of the British generally to the surprise of Mme. Sikelianos.

Greek plays are to be re-enacted at Delphi, and games are to be held. M. and Mme. Sikelianos' central idea is to restore Delphi to its ancient position—"the seat of a neutral culture, in which people met together, animated by the love of art and not by material ambition." This interest in Greece, manifested not so many years ago in the revival of the Olympic Games, seems to point to a cyclic revival of the culture which we call Greek, but which the ancient Greeks in their turn must have received from a still more ancient source. We read of the production in London of a play by Clifford Bax—*Socrates*—a play based on Plato, which has been successfully performed, and which the London *Daily Telegraph* characterizes as "extraordinarily interesting." If there is to be a renaissance of the literary art of the Greeks and the philosophy of Plato so much the better for the world.

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Phenomena of "Eastern Magic," personally witnessed or attested, are well described by Sirdar Ikbāl Ali Shah in the March *London Magazine*. The article, in the words of the Editor, is an absorbing one about astonishing phenomena exploding popular myths and revealing amazing facts. None the less, we differ from some of the author's conclusions. He says, for example, "There are many schools of magic in the East, but all of these assuredly have drawn their original inspiration from ancient Egypt." The teaching of Theosophy is that Egypt drew on the distant East which has been the source of knowledge for the entire Aryan race. India rarely suggests itself to any one whenever the subject of world magic is discussed. This because less is known of its general practice there than among any other ancient peoples. With the Hindus it was more esoteric, if possible, than among the Egyptian priests who "could not be compared for one moment with the ascetical Gymnosophists, either in holiness of life or miraculous powers developed in them by the supernatural abjuration of everything earthly." If magic for the Aryans began in India, the magicians practised but an inheritance of earlier Sages or Rishis of the Fourth Race, the Atlantean. Magic is as old as man.

"Magic in the East," says the Sirdar again, "is sharply divided into two codes, the higher and the lower." But this fact applies universally, not only to the East. To cite but two instances—in the days of Iamblichus theurgic or benevolent magic and Goetic or dark necromancy were alike in repute. And classed with the mysteries of ancient Israel was its magic of a double nature, divine and the black art.



He continues :

The former may be described as the "official" science of a body of holy and learned men, most of whom are removed from the feverish influences of everyday life and who dwell apart from men as hermits and yogis.

The latter has thousands of practitioners, many of whom are to be found in every large city and even in every village, and who are dependent to a large extent on the most unblushing effrontery and charlatanism for the results they obtain. The pity is that many people confuse the two and therefore do great injustices to the more exalted caste. At the same time, it cannot be denied that the systems have points of contact, and that those who practise the lower magic have gleaned certain secrets from the more elevated thought of the higher....the prevailing magic of India to-day is the magic of lower cultus. Everywhere the Black Art flourishes, and is indeed encouraged in the most extraordinary manner, even though the higher priesthood regards it as most offensive, and the laws of Manu forbid it.

It is rather strange that one "who would require a volume to describe" what he "has seen and heard of Eastern magic, real and imaginary," should presume that generations of Western "progress" may eradicate them, though both systems have such a firm grip in Asia! He does add, however—"If indeed it is possible to uproot what seems to me to be a human prepossession."

Those who are interested in and want to know what magic really is will find no book extant in the English language likely to serve them better than the two volumes of *Isis Unveiled*, written by one who had studied the phases of magical power, peculiar to the country, in India, Tibet, Borneo, Siam, Egypt, Asia Minor and North and South America. Madame Blavatsky herself says in the Preface that her work is the fruit of a somewhat intimate acquaintance with Eastern Adepts and study of their science. As far back as 1875, writing to the *Spiritual Scientist*, H. P. Blavatsky wrote :

The exercise of *magical* power is the exercise of powers *natural*, but superior to the ordinary functions of Nature. A miracle is not a violation of the laws of Nature, except for ignorant people. Magic is but a *science*, a profound knowledge of occult forces in Nature, and of the laws governing the visible or the invisible world.

Some Easterners understand more of the spirit of the West than most Westerners themselves, just as some Westerners have touched Eastern consciousness more deeply than most Orientals. This is illustrated in two articles, curiously enough in the same magazine, *The English Review* for March. In the first "Millenium or Mirage?" W. G. Carlton Hall turns his back on the Sermon on the Mount.

Force can be overcome only by superior force. That is a fundamental fact of nature; not of human nature in particular, but of all nature which lies within the limited scope of mortal intelligence. Any nation which neglects to take account of that fundamental fact will have signed its own death warrant.

Mr. Hall has yet to learn that more powerful than the rigidity of iron force is the penetrating sweetness of golden compassion which melts and dissolves. Jesus of Nazareth, as others before him, knew



this as also that a death warrant in the material world means a signal of birth in the spiritual.

It is not without significance that the second article is entitled "You Christians" by "Lala Ji Brahman," reported by Lieut.-Colonel M. W. Douglas, C.S.I., C.I.E. Lala Ji became interested in Christianity at Oberammergau, and now the Upanishads and a vernacular copy of the New Testament lie side by side on his table. According to him :

The revelations of Jesus, Buddha or those contained in our Upanishads are from the same spiritual source. There can be only one Divine Spirit. Jesus spoke the language of symbolism, but the Western mind does not so easily respond to symbolism as does the Eastern.

His analysis of the dry rot of Christianity from personal touch with churches in England and Scotland is profound—sacerdotalism, control of the priesthood, insistence on human creeds and dogmas, as searching as the analysis of the best minds born to the faith of Christendom but who have now fled the so-called house of God.

Man's objective is to be one with Brahman, to reach infinite perfection; this even is our interpretation of the words of Jesus, "I and My Father are one" (says Lala Ji), the equivalent of the Christian conception, that of mystical communion with the Creator. Col. Douglas concludes that Lala Ji is a Christian and goes on :

But he himself has a wider vision and possibly would say "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, Christian nor Hindu. We are all pilgrims on the same quest, the realisation of our Soul, the attainment of infinite perfection, and of Oneness with Brahma."

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Dr. E. Newton Harvey, Professor of Physiology, Princeton, U.S.A., not long ago discussed the problem of luminous animals, before the American Institute at Cooper Union. He predicted the synthesis by chemists of the luminous substance that is the cause of the glow in the firefly. He explained that the firefly is highly economical in that it burns an oil, and after the oil is re-formed it is ready to be reburned. He said :

It is possible to devise a lamp in which luciferin is burned continuously over and over again. In one region luciferin is oxidized to oxyluciferin with luminescence ; in another the oxyluciferin is reduced to luciferin again.

Turning back a few pages of the records of the centuries that lie behind us we come across accounts of the presence of perpetual lamps in shrines and tombs. Madame Blavatsky, in *Isis Unveiled*, gives authentic examples of such as existing in the subterranean crypts of India, Tibet and Japan, at Athens, Cartage, Edessa, Antioch, and in a tomb in the Appian Way, supposed to be that of Cicero's daughter. On the opening of that sepulchre the light was extinguished, after having burnt for over 1,500 years. The Ancients had long ago fathomed the mystery of the ingredients of the oil required for such lamps, and it would almost seem that now the secret was on the verge of rediscovery. Madame Blavatsky is very clear on the fact that such perpetual lamps can exist, and she speaks from her own knowledge.



Among the ridiculed claims of alchemy is that of the *perpetual* lamps. If we tell the reader that we have seen such, we may be asked—in case that the sincerity of our personal belief is not questioned—how we can tell that the lamps we have observed are perpetual, as the period of our observation was but limited? Simply that, as we know the ingredients employed, and the manner of their construction, and the natural law applicable to the case, we are confident that our statement can be corroborated upon investigation in the proper quarter. What that quarter is, and from whom that knowledge can be learned, our critics must discover by taking the pains we did.—*Isis Unveiled*, I, 226.

At a time when the receptive element in the human mind is badly disturbed, and yet, paradoxically enough, is athirst for new ideas and new creeds, it is vital to consider the value of obedience in relation to the challenging attitude into which human activity has fallen. Mr. K. Natarajan recently delivered a sermon on "Obedience and Disobedience" at the Bombay Prarthana Samaj. There is one sentence that gives the key to what he said. "In my study of history, I find that Obedience and not Disobedience has been the inspiring motive of the greatest achievement which it records." Mr. Natarajan enumerates the revolting classes of modern India. The Untouchables are set against religious bigotry; the non-Brahmanas resent Brahmanical pretensions; the new woman demands to be placed on an equality with man; the Musulman claims guarantees for political minorities, while he objects to the barriers to intermarriage and equal treatment. They and others are all up in revolt.

It is the common way of protestantism to raise the standard of disobedience, civil, social, tutorial or any other kind. While it is true that in healthy dissatisfaction and not in smug content lies the millet-seed of improvement, we must not forget that stimulating discontent is one thing, unbridled disobedience another. If the existing order, however defective, is to be hewn to the ground, there must be something, higher and nobler, constructively conceived, ere the axe is raised. Says Mr. Natarajan: "The aim of religious movements is to set before the people the vision of a higher obedience and not of mere disobedience to a lower rule." We agree, substituting the word "spiritual" for religious, because religious creeds, separating man from man, are mischief breeders and evil doers. No Buddha or Christ ever came to establish a religion or a church, but to show to all the Higher Way of Obedience to the God within, which does away with obedience to a personal anthropomorphic god or gods without, or to any priest or pope with his bulls and edicts. The Spiritual Teacher ever taught that there is an obedience unto a higher Law which alone can point to the progress of the immortal soul. Freedom, according to His doctrine of obedience, is a growth and not a change, working from within and not imposed by force from without. If we are to attain such freedom, using the term in its psychological connotation, we must first learn to obey the immutable laws that govern the destinies of human life, in preparation for the Greater Life. Let us go to school again, the school of the soul-life, taught by Men who have freed themselves from religious notions and who live by spiritual ideas rooted in knowledge.