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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

VOL. III OCTOBER 1932 No. 10

SIMPLIFICATION

I came hither [Craigenputtoch] solely with the design to simplify my way of life and to secure the independence through which I could be enabled to remain true to myself.

—THOMAS CARLYLE

Life is the apprenticeship to progressive renunciation, to the steady diminution of our claims, of our hopes, of our powers, of our liberty.

—AMIEL

Simplification of varieties and sizes of products and of stocks is an important aim of modern business, making it possible for the manufacturer to cheapen production and for the merchant to have less money tied up and less space devoted to slowly moving items. Tremendous savings in many lines are attributed to the increasing application of this principle.

The lesson for the individual is obvious. The most important application of simplification from the standpoint of each man, is to his own life—to his possessions, emotions, desires, and thoughts. Our lives are not purposeful, moving toward their goal with the irresistible sweep of a river seeking the sea, because our interests are diverse; we lack the discrimination to sift out and discard the inconsequential.

Once a man resolves to live as soul, he has to subject his whole nature to a careful analysis, to differentiate between that which is in line with his object and that which offers resistance, to its achievement. As a man preparing for a long and arduous journey discards all luggage but the bare essentials, that he may not be im-

peded in his advance, so the soul must strip itself of all the hampering impedimenta with which it sees it can dispense, however harmless they may be in themselves.

If simplification is to be attained, the criterion of selection must be that which is necessary. There are innumerable things which may appear desirable, but the necessities of the soul are few and as easily recognizable as those for the body. To keep our physical instrument in good condition, fresh air, pure water, wholesome food, and adequate clothing and shelter are indispensable. So simple are the actual needs of the body, from the standpoint of the soul. From that view-point, the accumulation of wealth as an end, instead of merely as an instrument of service, is a waste of time, and, worse, leads almost certainly to an obscuring of the real purpose of life.

The refinements of civilization have their place, if sight be not lost of their true function, which is to contribute toward freeing the soul from the trammels of sensuous existence. Time-saving appliances, for example, are good if the time and energy thus saved are devoted to more constructive purposes. Things of beauty in the home are good to the extent that they create an atmosphere conducive to high and noble thinking. Thus tested in the light of the soul's needs the necessary things, comparatively few in number, are recognized and all the rest can be dismissed from the mind, clearing our consciousness of all the host of non-essentials which have cluttered it.

Similarly the emotional nature must be subjected to scrutiny. Most of our emotional reactions are a hindrance to the soul. A few, simple, strong emotions rooted in the Impersonality of the higher nature are all that are needed—pity for all animate things; gratitude to the Instructors of the race; desire to learn that we may help with knowledge; and aspiration so that its light may energize and guide us. Our simplification programme will invlove discarding all the rest.

Desire is an indispensable part of the equipment of him who seeks the heights. But as a heap of sticks is to a ladder so are ungoverned, unrelated desires to a dominating purpose. To carry the simile further, desires contributory but subordinate to the attainment of a worthy aim are the rungs, held in place and made of use by the side-pieces which represent the synthesising purpose. It is the multiplicity of desires, the concern arising from attending to the inclination of the senses, that draws our thoughts first in one direction and then in another. Countless are the channels into which the thoughts of the personal man tend to flow and many the ruses of material nature to scatter his force and hold him back among the mediocre of the race.

There are as many potential reactions of like or dislike as there are objects and creatures in the

universe. When one recognizes that, if he is wise, he defies with vigour their power over him. He sets out deliberately to use the law of attraction and repulsion, instead of remaining its puppet. By working intelligently with the law, he comes at last to transcend it, in the only true sense.

But the control of thoughts must go hand-in-hand with the abolition of selfish desires. We strengthen the desires on which we let our thoughts dwell, and, conversely, our desires intrigue our thoughts. Controlled thought goes by a straight line to its goal, like the arrow from a skilful archer's bow. The thoughts of most resemble more the purposeless course of a fly on a summer day, darting idly now here, now there, and back again, with only the negative result of dissipation of energy.

Control of thoughts calls for constant vigilance and the practice of steady concentration on the task at hand. To whatever object the inconstant mind goes out, it must be subdued, brought back, and consciously directed to the subject under consideration. It is by brooding over an idea, studying it from every angle, that intuitive perception is cultivated.

Simplification means purification of human nature, the material field of human consciousness; this nature, electrical and magnetic in essence, is capable of attracting and repulsing the invisible constituents which form the basis of bodily cells. The secret of magnetic personality, the radiant personality, the peace- and power-emitting personality is locked up in the process of purification, symbolized in the rite of Baptism, which in actuality every chela under training is made to practise.

Blind unintelligent asceticism is mere folly; that such conduct as that of St. Labro which I spoke of before, or that of the Indian Fakirs and jungle ascetics, who cut, burn and macerate their bodies in the most cruel and horrible manner, is simply self-torture for selfish ends, *i.e.*, to develop will-power, but is perfectly useless for the purpose of assisting true spiritual, or Theosophic, development.

We regard only *moral* asceticism as necessary. It is as a means to an end, that end being the perfect equilibrium of the *inner* nature of man, and the attainment of complete mastery over the body with all its passions and desires.

But these means must be used intelligently and wisely, not blindly and foolishly; like an athlete who is training and preparing for a great contest, not like the miser who starves himself into illness that he may gratify his passion for gold.

H. P. BLAVATSKY, *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 217

WORDSWORTH'S MYSTICISM

[**Hugh I'A. Fausset** has already published *Donne, a Study in Discord*; *Keats, a Study in Development; Tennyson, A Modern Portrait; Tolstoy, The Inner Drama; William Cowper* and *Samuel Taylor Coleridge.* This article is a presage. Mr. Fausset tells us that he has at last finished the book on Wordsworth, upon which he has been working for two years, and he expects to publish it within the next six or eight months.

The "fall" of Wordsworth is described on P. 656 and attributed to what is called, in occult parlance, a disregard for Soul-Chastity, or what the Hindu Occultists call Brahmacharya. This explanation will be accepted as true by students of the esoteric philosophy. But what school of western psychology will accept it? Not only excuses are made but explanations are offered justifying the sense-indulgence, and even sense-orgies of creative-artists—a view not acceptable to Yoga-Vidya or Occultism. Brahmacharya or Soul-Chastity is more than bodily celibacy; the latter is but a material reflection of soul-integrity. That inner integrity acts as the focal point for the Spiritual Sun to cast its direct and perfect image in human consciousness transforming man into God.—EDS.]

The abrupt decline of creative faculty from the age of thirty-seven is the fact in Wordsworth's life upon which critics have increasingly concentrated. And rightly so, because in penetrating to its causes we touch the essentials of Wordsworth's personality and the qualities which made him in turn the most original and the most conventional of poets. Yet although there have been many explanations from De Quincey's to Mr. Herbert Read's which reveal a high degree of psychological insight, it is doubtful whether the spiritual significance of what Professor Garrod has called "the most dismal anti-climax of which the history of literature holds record," has yet been fully grasped.

It was left to Blake who was not a clever psychologist or an intellectual critic to make the simple but profound comment. "I see in Wordsworth," he said, "the natural man rising up against the spiritual man continually, and then he is no poet, but a heathen philosopher, at enmity with all true poetry or inspiration". The statement is perhaps too simple to satisfy our complex modern minds but it goes to the root of the problem which Wordsworth failed to solve. For he was a potential mystic who failed to complete himself at a crucial point, failed to pass from the state of childhood and boyhood where the spiritual is the condition of the natural, to a creative maturity in which the natural should be as inevitably a condition of the spiritual. Hence when his physical powers began to decline—and they declined early because he had more often lived on them than *through* them—his spiritual power declined too. He not only ceased to grow imaginatively, but he began to die. A true mystic might well, indeed, outgrow the need of self-expression in poetry, because all his energies would be

absorbed and concentrated in the attainment of true Being. But Wordsworth continued to write poetry for nearly forty years which was no longer informed by the creative principle but which, like the religions of the orthodoxy in which he had taken refuge, was little more than a shelter for his nervous and frustrated egotism. And this descent into negative conventionality is the more pathetic and also the more instructive because he was, in his greatest moments, something far more profound than a 'nature-mystic,' in the merely expansive pantheistic sense of the term, because he knew however precariously, that experience common to all great mystics of sinking inwards towards his own centre, to discover there, in what St. John of the Cross called the 'Night of Sense,' the sudden splendour and wonder of spiritual illumination.

It was because he had refused to come to easy terms with life, because he had had the strength to stand alone, to preserve his unique relationship with the universe that he had been able to discover in the world of human experience so much that was both new and immemorial and to express it in a language that was peculiarly his own. Nature he had loved as few had loved her, but he had never allowed her to seduce him from himself. And in this he had been right. For the destiny of man is not to be submerged in Nature but to be reconciled with the creative Spirit which is in and beyond her. And to achieve this he must preserve and perfect his human identity, that unique and inaccessible self-hood which is, when fully vindicated, the organ of the Godhead. Only by gladly accepting and acting out of this aloneness can he fulfil the purpose of the creative principle in himself and thereby come into true union with all creation.

Wordsworth had been a great poet because from boyhood he had known and preserved this aloneness. Even in his enraptured youth his spirit had lived aloof and apart. He had known himself to be, in the literal sense of the word, a singular soul, marked out and dedicated for some unique experience, some ultimate communion from which would spring a new revelation to mankind. It was not spiritual pride, but spiritual necessity, which dictated his conviction that he was not, as other men, for this place and hour, and that he belonged by native right to another and truer condition of existence which it was his destiny to discover or rediscover. And it was because he thus preserved his spirit from the cloudy commerce of the world or from those easy, social, sentimental, or merely intelligent contacts which dim its pure flame that he became a magnet for the powers of earth and air, that the universe spoke to him 'rememberable things,' and that in its ghostly language he divined the mighty workings of an eternal demiurge and sensed the sacredness of some primal state.

How was it, then, that the very

qualities which had made him a great poet, his stark independence, his intense self-absorption, his tenacity of thought and feeling, became his chief defects? To answer that question adequately requires far more space than we have at our disposal here. But we can at least define briefly the stages by which he passed from a positive into a negative condition of being. Up to the age of twenty he enjoyed, as few have enjoyed so perfectly, a 'state of Nature,' or, in other words, a creative consciousness. All his faculties were submissive to and centred in the spirit of life as it informed the elements, radiated from the sun, unrolled the clouds and sustained the growth of tree and flower. There was of course an inward development, a gradual intrusion by thought and self-consciousness upon the pure sensations of childhood. But although there were significant moments even in his boyhood when his self-absorption was such that he seemed no longer to view a world outside himself with bodily eyes, but rather 'a dream, a prospect of the mind,' the unity of his being was never threatened. Sensation, feeling, and thought grew progressively and necessarily out of each other and seemed but human modes of natural life.

And then suddenly, appallingly, and disastrously came the Fall.

He went to France, was caught up in the tide of revolutionary enthusiasm, and for the first and last time in his life was completely possessed by passion for a woman. The surrender was the more sensationally over-whelming because by nature and upbringing he was unusually reserved. He could not, however, resist the expansive forces of the time and the urge of his own ardent youth. *He gave himself and in giving lost the happy singleness of being which has been his since childhood and which, because later he recoiled in terror from his giving, he could never renew.*

The sensational dream was inevitably followed by the bitter disillusionment. Gradually his faith in the Revolutionary Cause and his love for the woman who had borne him a child were disproved by time and events, and he was left stripped of all trust in life and haunted by a sense of shame and self-reproach. We cannot trace here the steps by which he re-established his shattered being. It is enough to say that he never really succeeded in healing the division in himself because, much as he suffered, he could never bring himself to accept without qualification the fact of his lost integrity, bowing down before the mystery of life with a willing submission, in which no element of protesting self-esteem remained. As a boy and youth he had so surrendered himself to the spirit in Nature and known the ecstatic joy of active communion. But that had been an instinctive self-surrender which involved no moral effort. The submission, however, which he was called upon to make was opposed by his strongest instinct, his tena-

cious individualism. It meant carrying the painful struggle within him to the extreme point where either death must be accepted or new life born through utter self-abnegation. And because he recoiled from the ultimate act of self-surrender which alone could have liberated him, he was to spend his life in a self-defensive warfare that culminated in barren self-righteousness.

It is in his mysticism, however, which so often seems to express a true vision and a true liberation, that the persistence of the inward conflict in himself is at once most concealed and most apparent. In its expression, as in the lyrics which he wrote in the spring of 1798, when he was recovering from the long winter of his post-revolutionary discontent, it was an invitation to men to abandon the 'madding intellect' and to feel the life of Nature with 'a wise passiveness'. But if we read these lyrics carefully we find that the impulse behind them was an instinctive reaction from barren rationalism. Unlike the true mystic who stills alike the agitations of sense and of self-conscious thought that the spirit or real self within him may achieve union with its divine source, Wordsworth was striving to submerge the mind in a spring-tide of instinctive feeling. Later, however, in the famous lines composed above Tintern he thought to reconcile the pleasure of natural and of human feeling, of instinctive delight and of sympathy for 'the still, sad music of humanity'. And he was to persist in this attempt to enjoy the best of both worlds, of instinct and of thought, of men and of Nature, until with the decay of his instinctive sensibility and the hardening of his mental outlook the inadequacy of such a self-gratifying policy of adjustment became apparent. For *the sympathy with Nature and with Man which the true mystic experiences is disinterested.* It is not conditioned and limited by a drive for personal gratification as it was with Wordsworth. And even in the closing books of 'the Prelude' where he testified so eloquently to love as the inspiration of life, the inward division and the crippling self-interest persisted. The 'feeling intellect' which he there enthroned as the organ of the godhead in man reflected the dualism in himself, while his conception of the correspondence between the life of Nature and of the poet was a subtle perversion of that unified act of eternal self-expression and self-contemplation which the true mystic has divined in the mystery of creation.

But Wordsworth did suffer an experience which transcended the '*egoistic sublime*' and, had he realized its significance, disproved the uneasy association of the naturalist and the moralist at the expense of the true mystic, by which he sought to solve his dilemma. In 'the Prelude' he left more than one record of this experience, which in its various recurrences from childhood to manhood was the most strange and

the most real he has known. But it is, perhaps, in the 'Intimation Ode' that we find the clearest definition of it, when he raised a song of thanks

. . . for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised.

In this experience we have the core of Wordsworth's imperfect mysticism. The sense of the 'luminous' belongs equally to the poetical and religious genius. But the experience which Wordsworth described here was in a measure peculiar to himself. In these moments which at once thrilled and terrified him, the actual world was not revealed to him in its eternal reality. It was dissolved into nothingness. Only he himself remained real, floating in intense self-consciousness over an immeasurable void. Hence the blank 'misgivings' which accompanied the experience and which he attributed to the abasement of his mortal nature before a reality so much purer than itself.

And certainly all the great mystics have acknowledged this feeling of awe in their moments of intense illumination. But their awe has had no element in it of creative fear. And it is in this significant respect that their experience differs from Wordsworth's. Wordsworth was troubled by a sense of fear and guilt, not so much because he was abashed by a reality greater than himself, but *he was cut off from any reality but himself*. For the true mystic who really sees with the eye of spirit, the things of sense are transformed. He sees them as they subsist in essence and knows that the mortal aspect both of them and of himself is illusory. But far from being separated from the actual world, he is then only really at home in it. Wordsworth's tenacious self-consciousness, however, reached its extreme in these moments of introverted ecstasy. Certainly he was possessed in them by spiritual forces which surged upward from his subliminal self. His physical senses were consumed by a purifying fire, as in some ritual of atonement. But the purification remained incomplete because he clung mentally with all the force of his deep-rooted fear of self-surrender to his separate individuality. Consequently his mind was bedazzled and bewildered, but it was not truly illuminated, and the trance condition which he experienced was nearer to that of hysteria than of mystical vision. Yet a similar condition has frequently preceded the attainment of true liberation as the inner history of many mystics shows. And it is for this reason that it is of such importance in an understanding of Wordsworth's life. For in these moments as he shuddered over an abyss of nothingness and felt at once denuded and invaded by some infinite power, he approached as near as he ever did to the re-birth which might have renewed his genius. But while his physical being was dissolved and 'the light of sense' went out in flashes, his mind con-

tinued to resist and to assert its own isolated identity. And so the perfect union with creative spirit remained unrealized.

No one, therefore, shows more clearly than Wordsworth that *the problem of reconciling the spiritual and the natural man is ultimately a problem of achieving a true individuality*. The depth and richness of his consciousness up to a certain point was due to the very limitations of his tenacious individualism. But because the evolutionary principle in the natural world becomes in man an urge towards self-transcendence which must be progressively satisfied if his creative life is not to be arrested, these limitations proved later his undoing.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

Look at humanity around us; it is like the great space in which so many different places exist. What a variety of minds, evil and superior, surround us!

There is the gutter mind full of filth; there is the slum mind full of poverty and of disease; and the stupefied and drugged mind like unto an opium den; and the quarrelous mind like the liquor shop; and the mind which is like an unswept street, full of scraps of paper and of peels of fruits, a picture of untidiness; and then, there is the city mind, sharp and keen and competitive, as well as the village mind, simple and unsophisticated and clean. These places of evil and ill health are within us, and the city and the village are also within ourselves. We must tidy up our streets, and abolish liquor shops and opium dens of our own Akem-Mano or evil mind. But let us not make it a desert mind—vast and clean but unfruitful, in which tempests are bound to arise. Let our minds be like a fair garden, a beautiful orchard, where joy is felt, where nourishment is obtained. Let our minds be like deep mines in which diamonds of purity, and rubies of power, and emeralds which please, and sapphires which inspire, are to be found. Let our minds be like mountain peaks of magnificent heights, from which we are able to view miles and miles of territory and whose awe-inspiring beauties are perceived by men from a distance also of miles and miles.

Such mountain peaks are Master Minds, all Sons of Vohu Mano, all possessors of superior vision. Such Master Minds were Zarathustra and Jesus, Lao Tze and Confucius, Rama and Krishna, Buddha and Shankara. Let us raise our eyes and behold the glory of those majestic mountains. What a sublime and stupendous range They make. Let us praise Them by silent repetition of holy thoughts, let us bow our heads in true invocation, with confidence because of inner conviction based on knowledge so that Their blessing may come to light our own minds, and that we too may become in the process of time possessors of higher Wisdom and Compassion, of the Superior Mind.

—"THE WAY OF THE SUPERIOR MIND"

ARRAIGNMENT OF MODERN SCIENCE

Three serious-minded men separated in space by oceans and in time by racial cultures, in which their roots of thinking are hidden, raise their voices against the ways of modern science. To the student of Theosophy these are echoes of familiar sounds as will be evident from innumerable statements in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine.*

I.—THE DANGER OF SCIENTIFIC DOGMATISM

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Every culture must have its god, and the representatives of one culture, in their allegiance to their own god, habitually regard other gods and their followers with tolerance, contempt, or loathing.

The representatives of western Twentieth Century civilization are prone to cherish the belief that they have discarded god altogether, and are getting along very nicely without him, or else that they have relegated him to a subordinate place. They are particularly likely to view with derision the gods revered by those simpler cultures represented by primitive man. The truth is, on the contrary, that modern civilization has its own distinct god, characteristic of itself, and yet, paradoxically enough, strangely similar to that very type of divinity that it most heartily scorns.

The god of the modern world is Science, and in our unreserved adoration of it we have made it precisely the kind of god worshipped by the savage in the jungle—a Fetish.

A fetish is an object worshipped for qualities or powers that it is believed to possess, but does not actually possess. The savage discovers a strangely shaped piece of wood or stone, and forthwith endows it with a spirit, a potent spirit that has power to ward off disease, protect him from his enemies, give him success in the hunt—in short, to control beneficently all those elements of luck and chance with which he knows himself to be so abundantly surrounded. He cherishes his new divinity tenderly, perhaps wearing it on his person, or perhaps enshrining it in his hut or cave. He bows before it in ardent devotion rendering thanks for benefits bestowed, and supplicating further favours.

There is no need of an elaborate discussion to show the striking similarity between the attitude of the savage toward his fetish, and the attitude of the advanced intellectual toward science. Science

is looked upon as the healer of disease, the protector from enemies, the provider of an abundant livelihood, the source of present blessings and the guarantor of future prosperity. The adulation poured out upon modern science has all the earmarks of the rhapsodies of the idol-worshipper, and the more rigidly scientific a man prides himself on being, the more certainly does he exalt science to the same niche in which the barbarian places his fetish.

The only point upon which there can be any question, is whether or not science actually possesses the qualities that are attributed to it, which the odd stick or stone does not; whether science is competent to confer all the blessings that are hoped from it, which the fetish certainly is not. In short, can science be accepted as the sole reliance for the achievement of the good life?

What is science? Any idea which captures the popular imagination—which, in its very nature is incapable of comprehending or appreciating a really elevated idea—is certain to receive so many distorted and ignorant interpretations that the word which is supposed to identify the idea inevitably becomes ill-defined and vague. This has certainly happened to science. We hear today not only of a science of chemistry, and of biology, and of economics, but also a science of psychology, a science of ethics, and possibly a science of philosophy. When Mrs. Eddy selected the name for her new doctrine she linked together the two words that probably had a greater appeal to the contemporary American populace than any other two she could have chosen. She consolidated the authority of traditional Christianity with the allure of the rapidly spreading science. Her followers to-day habitually speak of themselves, without the qualifying adjective, simply as "Scientists". Yet in their characteristic attitudes, approaches and methods, Christian Science and the physical sciences are as diametrically opposite, and as far apart, as the poles.

Strangely enough, in the case of science, it is not the aberrant, remote, or derived versions of the idea that constitute the serious menace, as is usually the case; it is science in its strictest and most rigid sense. The danger arises from the fact that, just because science is so powerful, it is easily endowed with virtues that it does not possess, and is relied on for results that it cannot possibly achieve—that is, it is a fetish.

In its strictest meaning, science is orderly, systematized, and generalized knowledge based upon extensive, methodical, unbiased, repetitious observation of natural phenomena. The material with which science works is the physical constituents of the universe. The medium through which it works is the physical senses of man.

Mere observation, description, and recording, however elaborately and accurately done, do not constitute science. In order that

a science may exist the following conditions are requisite. First, a definite body of phenomena, lying within a limited field, and capable of observation. Second, constancy, regularity, and reliability in the phenomena themselves. If these conditions are present, it is then possible to classify and arrange the observations in an orderly and systematic manner, and on the basis of the constancy of the phenomena to set up generalizations. Such a generalization is what is known as a "natural law," and is the most significant contribution of the science in question, in fact, is the very essence of science.

It is clear, then, that all the tangible features of science rest upon two fundamental realities, the phenomena of the physical universe, and man's observation of these phenomena. No science can be any more exact than the combination of these two essentials.

Now just here lies one of the sources of the danger of scientific dogmatism. Some one has said that the scientist is very fortunate in that he works with concrete facts, and does not have to rely on beliefs. This is an egregious and pernicious error. *The scientist must have certain fundamental beliefs before he can start work at all.* Setting aside the somewhat philosophical question of the belief in the existence and reality of himself and the environing universe, which, of course, cannot be proved, there is first of all the belief in the reliability of his own senses. This involves not only the accuracy of his sense impressions individually, but the identity of his personal sense impressions with those of other observers. Neither of these can be proved. There is no way of demonstrating that the colour red is the same to you and to me. In the second place, the scientist believes in the perpetual constancy of matter. This, too, cannot be proved. All that can be proved, assuming the accuracy of the first belief, is that matter has been constant in the past. There can be absolutely no proof of the future, and all the scientist's predictions about the future rest on pure belief. *A "natural law" is merely a human statement of how things have been observed uniformly to happen.* Any other concept of a natural law is nothing but belief.

It is because the scientist is prone to forget these limitations that formal science is itself such a shifting and ephemeral thing. The scientist not only believes that he always sees things accurately; he also believes that what he has seen, as far as it goes, is positive and final. In evidence of this, one need only examine the popular textbooks in any given science over a period of half a century. Each particular book presents its material as if it were infallible and immutable truth; yet between the beginning and the end of the series changes are manifest far more sweeping than in many realms of pure belief. *Yet in a world where science is a fetish, the common man acts upon*

each successive pronouncement of the scientist, as far as he can grasp it, as if it were eternal verity.

But the greatest practical danger to society and to human welfare arises not from the uncertainty and partiality of the scientist, but from the limitations of science itself. It is just because science has done, and can do, so much for us that we are inclined to believe that it can do everything. To appreciate the full gravity of this menace it is essential to consider some of the things that science cannot do.

In the first place, science can never really explain anything. What we call a scientific "explanation" is simply a statement of observed sequences. One thing happens because something else happened first. This is all there is to a scientific analysis of cause and effect. The real nature of the phenomena and of the forces behind them can never be accounted for by science. Science can tell how, but it can never tell why. This is because, in a scientific explanation, the cause is always of equal magnitude with the effect, the antecedent contains all the potentialities of the consequent. Nothing is ever added, nothing ever comes from nowhere, in a scientific explanation. Accordingly, when the scientific analysis is completed, just as much mystery remains as there was at the beginning. Science, by its very nature, can never explain the riddle of the universe.

Indeed, the extension and perfection of science tend to increase the marvel and mystery of the universe, rather than to diminish them. Science can never dispose of a creating power of some sort. And granted a creator, there is more of wonder in a nebulous mass that has the capacity to whirl itself into all the stars that dot the firmament, more of awe in a sea of protoplasmic ooze that has the power to evolve into all the multitudinous forms of life that have ever existed, than there is in a universe created by a single fiat just as it is. The treatises of the evolutionists require a more incomprehensible mind and plan on the part of the creator than does the first chapter of Genesis.

The second thing that science cannot do is to determine the final goals and objectives of human life and social endeavour. These finalities can have no explanation; they are starting points. If some one presents an alleged explanation or derivation of any of them, it immediately appears that there is something back of the explanation, of equal magnitude and of equal mystery. All ultimate values are axiomatic.

It follows, that science can never determine what is good, beautiful, or worth-while. It can determine what is true only within its own restricted field. All that science can do is to tell us what is wise or prudent, assuming that we know what is good or desirable. Science is a tool, the most flexible, comprehensive, and efficient tool that man has ever devised. Used as a tool, it has unpredictable

potentialities in aiding man to achieve the goals which his concept of happiness postulates. But it can never be more than a tool. When exalted into the rôle of a guide or mentor it immediately becomes fraught with danger and disaster. *Science can help us immeasurably to achieve the good life—it can never tell us what the good life is.*

It is obvious that the limitations and dangers of science become intensified the more it is applied to spheres involving life, particularly human life. The practical value of science is in direct ratio to the mechanical constancy of the phenomena with which it deals. Where that constancy, as observed in the past, is so unvarying as to give ample ground for expecting its continuance into the future, we have the basis for a truly scientific belief, and a generalization can be made which will serve as a valid guide to conduct. But where the phenomena are as subject to unpredictable and unexplainable variation as is human conduct, then dogmatism in the name of science becomes itself intrinsically unscientific.

There are two fields in which this danger is particularly manifest at the present time. The first is medicine. There has been a tremendous advance in the last few decades in the science of biochemistry, bacteriology, anatomy, etc. Young physicians trained in the best medical schools are admirably equipped with this type of knowledge. But they are woefully deficient in the comprehension of the human personality. They are inclined to disregard the fact that human beings are not, and cannot be, standardized. The typical modern hospital is likely to handle its patients as if they were uniform lumps of matter that must respond in a given way to a given routine treatment. If they fail to display the expected response, it is too bad, but it is really their fault, and there is nothing to be done about it. Scientific medical knowledge is an invaluable equipment for the practitioner, but it is ineffectual and even dangerous if it is not complemented by a sympathy, comprehension, and intuition that rise above science.

The second field of immediate danger is that of economic relationships. This is less of a menace than it was four years ago, thanks to the depression, which, in spite of all its distresses, has served as a useful revelation of the false pretensions of the fetish of economic science. In the exuberant months of 1929 it was easy to believe that the daily stock reports, and the various curves showing economic trends, not only revealed the pathway to happiness and measured our progress on it, but also told us what happiness is and wherein it consists. For the moment, our eyes are opened, but the danger is not yet wholly past, the materialistic god is not yet thrown down from his pedestal. Constant vigilance and much soul-searching will still be required lest the dawn

of a more prosperous day dazzles our eyes into beholding the figure of economic science, along with science in general, as a mystic being possessing all power over human destiny and welfare.

HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD

II.—CONFUSIONS OF MODERN SCIENCE

[**C. E. M. Joad** has added to his long list of publications *Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science* which will be reviewed in our pages by Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan.—EDS.]

I can most conveniently bring out the meaning of my title, and more particularly of the word "Confusions," by beginning with a series of questions. The questions are cosmic and secular; they are, that is to say, questions about the nature of the universe as a whole, which men and women have asked in all ages and which they are still asking to-day. "Is the universe a fortuitous collocation or is it the embodiment of design and plan?" "Is the world we know a chance world or a planned?" "Is life an incidental by-product of material processes, a mere eddy in the primeval slime, or is it fundamental in the scheme of things?"

"Is the process of evolution haphazard or purposive?" "Is humanity, in particular, its most admirable achievement, destined to carry life to higher levels than any which have yet been known; or is it doomed to failure and extinction, so soon as the material conditions which gave it birth have ceased to obtain?" "Are we free to make our lives as we please, or are our wills determined by bodily reflexes and unconscious wishes?" "Is mind a unique and separate principle or a mere function of bodily processes, which have produced consciousness as a kind of glow surrounding the brain?"

To these and similar questions there has been during most periods of human history a set of fairly definite answers. The answers may have been incorrect; but they were clear and they were reasonably consistent. Usually the answers have fitted into the framework of a religious hypothesis which, indeed, dictated them. For example, the world is the creation of an omnipotent and beneficent deity; it is, therefore, planned and designed. Mind is at the heart of reality, and matter is its creation. Good is fundamental and objective. In course of time the religious answer came increasingly in the Western world to be questioned by science, and by the end of the nineteenth century science was in a position to substitute a framework of its own. From within this framework a new set of answers were offered, equally clear, equally consistent, but utterly different.

The universe was a vast machine without plan or purpose, which functioned through the automatic interaction of its parts. Matter is the only reality and mind is simply an appearance which matter presents or an emanation which matter gives off at a certain stage of its development, a chance characteristic of chemical compounds like the bright colours of an oil film.

Under the influence of materialist science with its insistence on the sole reality of matter, Western man has for the last fifty years been dominated by the notion that to be real a thing must be of the same nature as a piece of matter. Matter, he knew, was something lying out there in space. It was hard, simple and obvious; indubitably it was real, forming an admirable foundation upon which the horse sense of the practical man could base his irrefragable convictions. Now matter was something one could see and touch. It followed that whatever else was real must be something which one could theoretically see and touch. Hence, to enquire into the nature of the things we saw and touched, to analyse them into their elements and atoms, was to deal directly with reality; to apprehend values or to enjoy religious experience was to wander in a world of shadows. Common sense, under the influence of science, took the same view; to use the eye of the body to view the physical world, was to acquaint oneself with what was real; to use that of the soul to see visions was to become the victim of illusions. *Common sense generally embodies the petrified science of fifty years ago, and most Westerners to-day instinctively assume, except on Sundays, that only material things are real.*

Parallel with this belief that the real must be a substance tangible and visible, was the belief that it must be subject to the laws which were observed to operate in the physical world—that it must work, in short, like a machine. As Professor Eddington puts it, nineteenth-century science was disposed, as soon as it "scented a piece of mechanism, to exclaim, 'Here we are getting down to bedrock. This is what things should resolve themselves into. This is ultimate reality'". The implication was that whatever did not show itself amenable to mechanistic causation—value, for example, or the feeling of moral obligation, or the sense of Deity—was not quite real. Religion, therefore, was an illusion, morality a figment, beauty a will-o'-the-wisp; these things were not factors in the universe; they were projected whimsies of the mind of man.

To-day the foundation for this whole way of thinking the hard, obvious, simple lump of matter has disappeared. Modern matter is something infinitely attenuated and elusive; it is a hump in space time, a 'mush' of electricity, a wave of probability undulating into nothingness. Atomic theory suggests that the material things we believe ourselves to perceive,

never known directly, are an inference from events taking place in the brain of the perceiver; relativity theory that the qualities of the external world are the result of the imposition of the categories of the human mind upon a comparatively featureless spatio-temporal flux. The only characteristics which the external world possesses in its own right are, it is said, strictly mathematical ones; colour and temperature, shape and size and smell, are projected into it by the human mind. So mysterious, indeed, has matter become, that the modern tendency to explain things in terms of mind, is little more than a preference for explanations in terms of the less unknown rather than of the more.

Thus there is a marked tendency among eminent physicists to regard reality as fundamentally mental—it is a universal mind-stuff, according to Sir Arthur Eddington, the mind of a mathematically minded creator, according to Sir James Jeans—and the material world as one of its aspects. Mind alone, on this view is real, and 'matter' is the way in which a mental reality appears to our limited apprehension. When the simple, obvious lumps of matter disappeared the mechanist universe which was built upon them collapsed, and with the collapse of mechanism there is no longer a framework for a set of clear and consistent answers to the questions with which I began.

The imaginative conception of reality no longer being limited by likeness to the things we can see and touch, there is room for wider views. Virtue, for example, may be real, and so may be the objects of the ethical and the religious consciousness. Hence, there is now no need for those who accept the results of the physical sciences to write off, as they had once to write off, as subjective illusions the intimations of the moral, and the aesthetic sides of their natures, and the nineteenth century gulf between science and religion is in a fair way to being bridged.

Biology is also in the throes of change, and demands reinterpretation in the light of new conceptions. The mechanist theory which proclaimed life a bye-product of non-living processes, and mind an offshoot of the brain, is proving increasingly unsatisfactory. From a number of quarters evidence is accumulating to suggest that the mode of behaviour of a living organism is fundamentally different from that of a machine, and cannot be explained in terms of it. Life, it seems, is fundamental; moreover, it is creative, and uses and moulds the forms of living organisms as instruments to further its purposes and serve its ends.

Evolution, in other words, is coming increasingly to be regarded as a creative process, ever bringing to birth something new. There is, in fact, literally more in the universe at any moment than there was at the last. The process of evolution is also purposive; it strives by trial and

error to draw nearer to goals at whose nature we can at present only dimly guess, but of which in aesthetic and moral experience, and above all in the experiences of the religious consciousness, we have such intimations as we are capable of receiving. Whether it is through man or some more highly evolved organism that these goals will be realised is as yet undetermined. The answer depends in part upon man himself, for although evolution is purposive, the future is not determined, and man is free within limits to make it as he pleases.

But, while physics leans increasingly to a spiritual interpretation and biology stresses creativity and purpose, psychology has moved in the other direction. Much modern psychology is fundamentally mechanistic in outlook, tends to throw doubt upon the uniqueness of man's mind, and to deny the freedom of the will. This result came about in two different ways; there are, that is to say, two distinct branches of this very confused science which reach what are in effect the same answers to the questions formulated at the beginning of this article, by different routes. In the first place, Behaviourism has achieved unexpected success in interpreting the behaviour of human beings without introducing the assumption that they have minds. They may have, of course, for, since a mind cannot be observed, to deny it, is, it is held, as unreasonable as to assert it; but if they do, there is no reason to think that their minds influence their behaviour.

This, at least, is the assertion of the Behaviourists. Beginning with a study of animal psychology, they reached certain conclusions tending to show that animals were automata. These nobody felt impelled to resist, since few supposed that animals were virtuous, and fewer still had any interest in maintaining that they possessed minds. The Behaviourists then proceeded to apply their conclusions to human beings, who were humiliated to find how mindless they could be made to appear, but were, nevertheless, unable to produce very convincing reasons for supposing that they were not the highly complicated automata which the Behaviourists represented them to be. What the Behaviourists' doctrine implies is that human beings are all body and only body and this the Behaviourists have very ably advocated; and, if it could be successfully maintained, it would, it is obvious, imply a very different set of answers to the questions with which I began, than those which physics and biology are inclined to suggest.

In the second place, the theories of the psycho-analyst while wasting a doubt on the existence of mind, clearly demonstrate the dependence of its rational upon its non-rational factors. Conscious events are merely the distorted reflections of unconscious desires and impulses, and what we think, feel and do is determined not *by* us but *for* us by forces deep down

in the recesses of our personalities, whose genesis escapes detection and whose workings evade control. Modern psychology proper, while rejecting the somewhat bizarre machinery of psycho-analysis, issues in the works of many writers in not dissimilar conclusions.

If we are not ultimately responsible for what we think or what we do, if our natures are formed not *by* us but *for* us, free will, it is clear, is a delusion. We are automata no less on the psycho-analyst view than on the behaviourist; we are determined, it is true, not by our bodily responses to external stimuli, but by instinctive trends of which we are unconscious; but we are enslaved none the less for that.

Thus the implications of contemporary psychology run counter to those of physics and biology. Mind, it seems, is not unique, freedom is an illusion; ethics is a rationalisation of non-ethical impulses.

Thus to each of the questions with which I began this article the contemporary sciences suggest radically different answers. Nowhere, indeed, in the world to-day is there a set of answers to which any substantial body of educated men would consent. This *confusion of modern thought is in a large measure due to science. Science which was thought to have shattered the old religious framework, seemed for a time to have substituted one of its own.* It is only now that we are beginning to realise that the scientific framework was raised upon inadequate knowledge. Its strength was that of narrowness and exclusion. Nor should the fact occasion surprise; the more we enlarge the area of the known, the more also we enlarge the area of contact with the unknown; indeed, we are just coming to know enough about the universe to realise that we know nothing for certain.

Some may be inclined to infer from the present confusion of science that science is by its very nature precluded from giving us information about the real nature of things, arguing that because its signposts point at the moment in different directions, that they cannot therefore point to reality at all. I do not myself believe this inference to be just. There is no reason that I can see, why the world that we know by means of our senses should not be as real as any other, or why the method of the scientist who investigates it should not be a legitimate avenue of approach to reality. But it is not the *only* world, and the scientists' avenue is not the *only* approach to reality. Besides the data collected by the scientist there are the deliverances of the ethical, the aesthetic and above all of the religious consciousness. A debt that we owe to twentieth century science is the restoration of these modes of experience to their rightful position as *bona fide* ways of access to reality, a position from which nineteenth century sciences deposed them. But with their restoration comes the urgent need of a synoptic study,

which, acting as a clearing house to which the different sciences may bring each its report of the universe, will consider their bearing in relation to these reports. Hence, in short, the need for philosophy.

C. E. M. JOAD

III.—SCIENCE AND ETHICS

[**Pramathanath Mukhopadhyaya** is the joint author with Sir John Woodroffe of *The World as Matter* and *The World as Consciousness*. He has also published *An Introduction to Vedanta Philosophy* based on lectures delivered at Calcutta University in 1927 when he was Sreegopal Basu Mallik Fellow in Vedanta.—EDS.]

Modern Science possesses knowledge, and its knowledge means increasing control and power. Is this power for good ? That question is now seriously and anxiously asked. Science has been asked to submit its certificate of character and fill its affidavit of conduct before the high tribunal of the conscience of humanity. How far has science been an aider and an abettor in the criminal folly and self-destructive fury of the present age ?

The indictment against modern science must not be drawn up lightly and in a summary way. It is not correct to say that criminal folly and self-destructive fury are the urge or special 'complex' of the present age. These are distressing symptoms of a deep-rooted disease. Nor is modern science to be condemned because in the last century it was materialistic and skeptic, arrogant and dogmatic, and as a consequence of which its tremendous power was and still is misused and abused in so colossal a manner. Behind all its hesitency and its doubt, all its groping and faltering, modern science is slowly but assuredly feeling its way towards light and even spiritual light.

On the other hand, it should not be assumed that the knowledge of the ancients was all wisdom or all superstition and that its power gave perfect utility or brought utter futility. One may reasonably be sure that spiritual limitations and criminal tendencies are not only ancient or only modern phenomena. They have certainly afflicted other ages. Psychical sciences and those that were called "occult," lent themselves possibly to as much misconception and abuse as the physical sciences of to-day. And one may be sure that in searching Nature for her mysteries, the eternal Faust in man made a pact with the eternal Mephistopheles in him. Magic may be assumed to be a primitive science which knew truth as well as wielded power : but sometimes it looked and proved so black that it was shunned by the truer instincts and justly condemned by the saner judgments

of men.

The question has been often asked—What is fundamentally wrong with science which in practice has been found black and diabolical? What constitutes the value of knowledge, and by what criterion are we to assess it? There is nothing wrong with knowledge. It is science *applied* that involves and raises the question of value. As the moral consciousness of man has recognised (sometimes without clear definition) an hierarchy of ends of human pursuits, so we may have correspondingly a graded scale of values, leading to the highest or supreme value. What is the highest end to which science or organized knowledge should be applied, and what therefore is the knowledge that is supremely valuable?

Though science has been misapplied and abused alike in ancient as in modern times history has not failed to note a vital difference. The highest end and supreme value of science was *the* factor that really and vitally mattered to the ancient seers and sages; but the modern savant fights shy, when he does not actually ignore or dismiss this as irrelevant. When he turns his telescope to the far away nebula beyond our galactical system or calculates the spin and the revolutions of the electron in the atomic system, or indulges in mathematical flights in hyperspaces and higher dimensions he is not looking for any gain beyond the actual knowledge itself. He thinks that any piece of true knowledge is of value intrinsically, without reference to any ulterior object. He believes that the chief glory of modern science consists in the fact that it has liberated itself from the thraldom of religious mysticism and of moral codes. It is for the best, he thinks, that science is indifferent or neutral in relation to ethical issues. Of course the issues are important and the human spirit must continue to probe them if it cannot finally understand them, but science is not affected by them. Science is not only content but wise to pursue Truth in an atmosphere of religious and ethical neutrality which it should maintain.

This attitude of detachment in regard to the deeper issues and problems of life can only be tentative and superficial. The savant admires Truth and pursues it. But he admires it because he finds that truth is Order and Harmony and Beauty. It is the fascination of the beautiful whether in his experimentation or in his calculation, that keeps him to his job. Does he not appreciate a masterpiece of mathematical analysis like that of Lagrange or Hamilton as a scientific poem, or a perfectly coherent chain of natural induction like that of Darwin or Pasteur as he would enjoy a masterpiece of Mozart or Beethoven? Yet the truth he admires and pursues is partial, fragmentary, and very often conventional, and passing. The Whole truth, the Real, has been perpetually eluding and receding

from him. But if the shadow of truth be so beautiful and attractive, how vastly more beautiful and attractive must be the Whole, the Real?

The wise of all ages, particularly those of the ancient, did not consider the position of neutrality to be a feasible or even a desirable one? Modern science follows various paths, but the ancient one converged upon and led to the Centre. It had approaches to the knowledge of the Supreme Fact. As Maitreyi said—"of what worth is all this to me if by them I do not conquer death and become immortal?" The ancients called this Centre the All—*Brahman* or *Atman*. And they knew that the True (सत्यम्) is also Good (शिवम्) and Beautiful (सुंदरम्). This Centre and Reality they also found to be their own Self or Atman. To know It is to know All—the Upanishad said. The knowledge of it is liberation, from passion, fear, nay death itself. "Know thyself" is profounder teaching than "knowledge is power". Such was the position of the ancient wisdom. But modern science in attempting to value knowledge for its own sake, has been going away, rather than towards, the Centre. Any knowledge of the constituents of the nebulae or the atom can be of value only in so far as it leads up to the knowledge of the Centre, reveals Its essence, law and nexus. Otherwise it lacks that unity, coherence, proportion and harmony which constitute truth, and confer both meaning and value. Knowledge is not organized and unified without this reference to the Centre. In absence of this reference, knowledge is not real knowledge and the power it gives is not real power. Real knowledge and power enable us to reach, realize, and master the true Self or Atman. This the ancients called Swarajya—Self-Rule. Modern science has not cultivated this positive, centripetal, self-constructive power. Therefore like Maitreyi of old we find Huxley of to-day holding up his hands in dismay seeing the helplessness of science before the human Prometheus bound to the hard rock of fate with the vulture of unrest and misery perpetually eating into his vitals. Science finds itself lost in the shoreless agnosticism when not submerged in the serbonian bog of materialism. In making for the haven of truth it finds itself stranded. By a new compass (which can only be the ancient Brahma-Vidya) a new orientation and a new start should be made.

Wandering away from the Centre, science can give us facts and laws that are elusive if not illusory, and its materialism-agnosticism creates just the appropriate anti-moral medium for turning some of its little grains of truth into germs of human malady and affliction.

Some of the material benefits conferred by applied science are of a dubious nature; comforts and conveniences have not made masses of men happier and healthier and there is little doubt that as an instrument of real and

vital human advancement, it has not come near its promise and pretension. Most certainly it has not ushered in the millennium on earth; and it is not likely that in its present form and spirit it ever will. It has killed old superstitions but has created new ones, equally vicious and obstinate; it has broken old idols but has erected new fetishes and made men and women dance round them; it has failed to produce in the masses of men that broad, bright, joyous and kindly outlook upon life and universe which is the substance of true culture and enlightenment; and by barricading the paths that lead to the Soul—the ancient paths of self-culture and self-realisation—it has delayed the progress of the human race. Moral discipline and spiritual endeavour alone make that progress possible. It is made when man gets away from the animal mind in him. But a philosophy that makes matter and the sensing of matter the only dependable fact, which gives no assurance of the moral governance of the world and of purpose and value of human life and destiny, is not the philosophy that will be of real service to man. It is no wonder therefore that man's moral and spiritual progress has not kept pace with the progress of science.

On the other hand ancient science generally opened and paved the path to true progress, which is towards the Centre. Only such advance can bring true enlightenment, power and happiness. It enables us to outgrow and master the sense-soul, the kama-mind. Ancient Vidya or knowledge has proved of real service to the cause of human advancement. Will modern science undergo an inner conversion and accept the inspiration of ancient Brahma-Vidya?

PRAMATHANATH MUKHOPADHYAYA

Will you permit me to sketch for you still more clearly the difference between the modes of physical (called exact often out of mere compliment) and metaphysical sciences. The latter, as you know, being incapable of verification before mixed audiences, is classed by Mr. Tyndall with the fictions of poetry. The realistic science of fact on the other hand is utterly prosaic.

Now, for us, poor unknown philanthropists, no fact of either of these sciences is interesting except in the degree of its potentiality of moral results, and in the ratio of its usefulness to mankind. And what, in its proud isolation, can be more utterly indifferent to every one and everything or bound to nothing but the selfish requisites for its advancement, than this materialistic science of fact? May I ask then . . . . what have the laws of Faraday, Tyndall, or others to do with philanthropy in their abstract relations with humanity, viewed as an intelligent whole? What care they for MAN as an isolated atom of this great and harmonious whole, even though they may sometimes be of practical use to him? Cosmic energy is something eternal and incessant; matter is indestructible: and there stand the scientific facts. Doubt them, and you are an ignoramus; deny them, a dangerous lunatic, a bigot; pretend to improve upon the theories—an impertinent charlatan.—*From A Master's Letter of 1881.*

INDIA AND OBJECTIVE REALITY

[**Professor A. R. Wadia M. A.** (Cantab) of the Mysore University writes a vigorous article criticising the extremism of both Messrs. Mason and Chitnavis whose contributions on this subject appeared in our last issue. There is much in Mr. Wadia's article that is reminiscent of what a great Theosophist, W. Q. Judge, wrote as will be seen from an appended extract; we cannot however overlook that it also has a streak of extremism—a kind of a prejudice in favour of western viewpoints, when their eastern counterparts are not fully examined. In fairness to Mr. Chitnavis, who has left for Middle East, it must be said that he has not seen Mr. Wadia's article, nor does he hold all the opinions Mr. Wadia ascribes to him.

However we hope that this very important topic will be taken up for further discussion by those who are vitally interested in it.—EDS.]

In the September issue of THE ARYAN PATH appear two thought-provoking articles on the relation of India to Western civilisation from two very opposed standpoints, and I can hardly resist taking part in so interesting and vital a discussion. The dispute reduces itself to this: has Western civilisation anything vital to teach India? Mr. Mason thinks that India must learn from the West its higher standards of living and more material comforts. Mr. Chitnavis sees in this very fact "a danger, the most grave danger which India is facing". Both agree, though through different formulations, that no man can afford to neglect this life and both agree that there is an Ultimate Reality in which this present life is rooted. To a dispassionate student of life both in the West and the East both writers will be seen to err in the excessive emphasis laid upon their opposed theses.

The initial mistake of Mr. Mason in his diagnosis of Indian conditions to-day is to be found in his italicised statement: "The West is affecting the desires of the East because in the West there are higher standards of living for the people and more material comforts." If this is the only thing that the West has to teach, it would be a poor compliment to the West, and I am sure Mr. Mason himself does not mean what he says, because later in his article he emphasises the hard work, intense struggle and "self-imposed discipline" that lie behind the mechanism and the comforts of the Western peoples. His statement is equally a poor compliment to us in India. If many of us have been attracted to the Western mind it is certainly not by its luxuries but by its deep humanism, its love of liberty as a condition of progress, and the superb devotion of its scholars to unravel the secrets of nature as well as of the buried civilisations of the past. I wonder whether Mr. Mason during his stay in India had not a chance of visiting the house of an educated Indian, occupying a responsible position and certainly not suffering from poverty. Even in such a house he may not have found two good chairs to sit on, with hardly any pictures to relieve the bareness of the walls, hardly a table to work at, in short hardly

any furniture worth speaking of. And yet the inmate of the house may be deeply versed in Shakespeare and the philosophy of Herbert Spencer and Kant and Hegel. He would be familiar with the latest scientific teaching of the West and may be gloating over the volumes of Spengler. A deep student of politics, he knows what Mussolini has said and the Secretary of State for India has at the back of his mind. He is a prominent member of the National Congress or of the Liberal party and one day may occupy the desk of a minister. He may be a prominent social reformer, eager to remarry his widowed daughter and to entertain an untouchable in his own house to a discourse on the *Gita* or to a cup of tea. In short he may be all that an educated Indian may be expected to be. And yet there are no visible signs of any great material comforts about his house or his dress. Let me assure Mr. Mason that such an Indian is the product of Western education, but he has not cared a pie to surround himself with luxuries. Luxuries as the West understands them may be found in Indian houses, but it is not the luxuries and material comforts that constitute the charm of the West. No, it is rather the spirit that lies behind all this external paraphernalia. The West has vigour, has self-respect, has adventurousness, has missionary zeal to heal the pangs of the poor, has a forward outlook that may venerate the past but refuses to be a slave of the past. The West has virile thinkers and writers to lash the follies of the great and call the tyrant to account. The West has organisation. These things have a deep spiritual meaning and it is this that has attracted the best minds of India from the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the first ripe product of Western education in India, to the days of Mahatma Gandhi who behind his loin cloth embodies in himself some of the choicest influences of the West. Let Mr. Mason realise that mere material comforts cannot be given the place of honour, though they have their own humble legitimate place in the scheme of human existence.

He is correct when he emphasises the need for developing a philosophy of objective reality. Time has indeed come to rethink the basis of our life and to realise that the spiritual does not subsist in the air in violent opposition to what is called matter, but that it subsists in and ennobles matter. The machine that is apt to be looked upon by the average Indian as the embodiment of materialism did not come to birth by itself Athena-like, but has come out of the immaterial thoughts—shall I say spiritual—of its maker. Man is man not by virtue of his body, but by virtue of his mind and that is what distinguishes the civilised Mr. Mason and Mr. Chitnavis from the crude savage of Central Africa or the uncivilised Bhil of Central India. The term "Ultimate Reality" has been greatly abused in the history of philosophy

and its capital letters have had a hypnotising influence on the minds of men. Spirit is ultimate, not as a dead immovable carcase, but as living in the myriad forms of nature, ever showing new phases of thought and power, rich in light and colour, richer still in their meaningful soulfulness. Mr. Mason is on solid ground when he brings out the need for having our feet resting on facts and not on ethereal nothingness. He is a friend of India and therefore has not cared to flatter us by praises of the past, as if man can flourish on the undigested philosophy of the past any more than the son can hope to live on the food masticated by his father.

Coming to Mr. Chitnavis one comes across a typical case of the modern Indian, who suffering from an inferiority complex tries to make up for it by emphasising the superiority of his ancestors. "The present has nothing to teach us. Ah! if only we can go back to the days of Sri Krishna" may summarise the despairing cry of Mr. Chitnavis' note on Mr. Mason's article. This attitude is far more common with those who have never left the shores of India and always see life and solve problems through books, that must not be less than a thousand years old. It is difficult to realise that he has only recently returned from a tour in America and Europe. These countries are by no means the homes of saints. But could Mr. Chitnavis find nothing worth noting during his travels except "the motor-car morality, the cinema precepts, and Hollywood examples, the contraceptive-ethics, which not only connive at but encourage fœticide" and "virgin-mothers"? This unfortunately betrays the sickening Miss-Mayo-mentality, from which we Indians have suffered so much that we at least ought to cast it out of ourselves with all the spirituality that we can command. Is India really free from virgin mothers? If Mr. Chitnavis resides in Bombay the Foundling Hospital at Pandharpur is not far off to study the seamy side of Indian life. Is the use of contraceptives really so bad as infanticide which used to be practised in India as in other parts of the world for centuries? May I refer him to some gruesome details which he will find in the pages of the Census Reports of India? It is certainly not a matter to dogmatise about whether it is more moral to bring forth child after child, till the health of the mother is broken and the demon of poverty prevents the children from having even the minimum nourishment possible, than to regulate the birth rate by a judicious use of the contraceptives with an eye to the physical health and the economic resources of the family concerned. Is it in any sense fair to regard the moral principles of Hollywood as the norm to judge a whole civilisation by? I should not like to waste further time on the doubtful policy of judging a nation by its gutter statistics. I am deeply ashamed as an Indian that untouchables exist in India even to-day, but I hate the idea

of any writer on India focusing all his attention on the manners and customs of the depressed classes. I am sincerely glad that Mr. Chitnavis has not made the heroic attempt to show to the "materialistic" West how spiritual we are because millions of us have hardly one square meal a day. I am glad he has had the courage to speak of it as "wretched poverty".

I should be surprised if Mr. Chitnavis during his travels in the West was not impressed by the splendid organisation of its police, its splendid temples of learning whence issue books and ideas that are perpetually fertilising human brains, and the splendid hospitals where money is so lavishly spent to relieve human suffering, and the bright sanatoria where the convalescent recoup their health, and the heroic adventurousness of the myriad workers in laboratories, who place the discovery of truth far above their life and any material comforts whatever. I too have travelled in the West and I have learned to yearn: when will India have more Boses and Ramans; when will she have her Florence Nightingales; when will she have her J. S. Mill and Bradlaugh to prick through humbugs; when will she have her G. B. S. to laugh to scorn her smug self-satisfaction and hypocrisy masquerading as spirituality? When will India relearn the great truth which Buddha preached: the worth of human soul, its dignity, its right to live and expand?

But I am glad that Mr. Chitnavis agrees with Mr. Mason about the imperative need of revaluating old philosophical ideas. He waxes eloquent over the *Gita*, but such euthusiasm would have come with better grace from a non-Hindu, especially when he has tried to minimise the importance of Christ and Mahomed. I am an admirer of the *Gita* myself and I am prepared to go so far as to say that of all the sacred books in the universe it is the most philosophical. But that is the very reason why its practical importance has been less than that of the *Bible* or the *Koran*. It is too subtle, too laden with thought to enter the minds of the masses. And that is why the petty priestly minds have made a hash of it and tortured it out of shape. How many Hindus understand the full significance of the shloka (IX, 32): "Taking refuge in Me, they also, O son of Pritha, who might be of inferior birth,—women, Vaishyas as well as Sudras—even they attain to the Supreme Goal."

It is also very striking that Mr. Chitnavis takes for granted that the Western civilisation is on the brink of collapse and he has no hesitation in ascribing it to the dominance of industrialism. That the Western civilisation is passing through a crisis none can deny, but this is nothing abnormal, for all human institutions are subject to an ebb and tide of good fortune. Moreover it is notorious that after a great war and a period of hectic activity there follows a period of great trade

depression with very disastrous results. Every student of economics knows how Europe suffered after the Napoleonic wars, and Napoleonic wars were on a far lesser scale than the last Great War. Political revolutions have not been unknown in human history and so cannot be regarded as a peculiarly discomforting feature of the present age. Industrialism in the West has hitherto had a free scope for development, for it had the whole world to dominate, but the rising tide of nationalism and industrialism in Oriental countries has inevitably put a brake on the industrial prosperity of the West. That implies that Western industrialism will have inevitably to adapt itself to these new conditions, may even have to reconcile itself with a far lesser degree of prosperity and far lesser profits. It certainly does not mean, as Mr. Chitnavis naïvely assumes, that machinery will be scrapped all round and the world will return to the wooden plough of India. Neither in physical vigour nor in the output of thinking and new inventions does the West show any sign of exhaustion and it is not wise policy to count on weaknesses of others, which have no real existence. Far from the Western Industrialism breaking up, it is only those oriental countries that have attempted to adapt themselves to new conditions *e. g.* Japan and Turkey, Persia and China, that show real signs of life. Others are lagging behind, since facts count for more than sentiment.

There is great force in Mr. Chitnavis' dignified criticism of Western Imperialism that is latent in the pursuit of mere personal happiness. But let it not be forgotten that the brutality of Dyerism as well as the sabre-rattling of Mr. Winston Churchill is as much condemned by the sober mind of the West as by the victims of their onslaughts. Imperialism of the exploiting variety is undoubtedly a disease that affects human relationships, but it would not be fair to identify it completely with Western civilisation. China was once imperialistic, and so was India in her palmy days. Asoka did not disdain to be conqueror before he became a devotee of *Ahimsa*. Akbar was imperialistic and so were the Mahrattas. The power of kings and empires may pass, but not the knowledge and the culture they have built up. The worth of empires in the last resort is gauged not by the evil they have done but by the good they have built up. India has been accustomed to bow her head before the ascetic—and that is the secret of Mahatma Gandhi's influence even on those who do not see eye to eye with him on all questions. But India has been the land of luxury as well with her silks and jewels and gardens and palaces, which embodied in themselves the last word in luxury. Human nature is complex. It revels in beauty, but it must also be conscious that the life of thought combined with action based on

thought is far more precious than the life of mere luxury. India knew this, but has forgotten it in its exclusive emphasis on caste marks and dreamy thought. The West knows it, but is at times apt to forget it in its pride of power. Both need it and, what is more, must practise it as a living truth. On the whole the West has better assessed human worth in recent centuries and so has thriven. It seems to me this is the best that the West has to teach us. It may not be a new truth to the land of Buddha and Kabir, it is not; but a truth that has to be relearned is as good as new.

A. R. WADIA

That the peculiar characteristic of the educated Hindu is intellectual activity can hardly be doubted. It is exhibited on all occasions; in hair-splitting dialogues; in endless commentaries; in fine controversies over distinctions; in long explanations; in fact, in every possible place and manner. This is the real difficulty: it was the cause of India's decadence as it has become the obstacle against her rising to her proper place among nations. Too much intellectual activity in a nation like this, living in the tropics, with religion as a heritage and the guide for every act, is sure to lead in any age, to spiritual pride; and spiritual pride in them then brings on stagnation. That stagnation will last until gradually there arise men of the same nation who, without fear of caste, or favour, or loss, or ostracism, or any other punishment or pain will boldly bring about the reaction that shall result in the death of spiritual pride and the acquirement of the counterbalancing wheel to pure intellectual activity. Intellectualism represents the letter of the law, and the letter killeth, while the spirit maketh alive . . . . . Here then is the real opportunity for Indian Theosophists . . . . . No Rishi, however great, can alter a people; they must alter themselves . . . . . The West is bad enough, the heavens know, but out of badness—the *râjasika* quality—there is a rising up to truth; from *tamogunam* comes only death. If there are men in India with the diamond hearts possessed by the martyrs of the ages, I call upon them from across these oceans that roll between us to rise and to tell their fellow Theosophists and their country what they ought to know. If such men are there they will, of themselves, know what words to use, for the Spirit will, in that day and hour, give the words and the influence.

W. Q. JUDGE, *The Theosophist* (September 1893)

THE SOUL ON THE STAGE

[R. H. B. writes out of long experience as an actor in America and England. This article is a fruit of reminiscence, in retirement, of stage-life.—EDS.]

The Way is open to all. It begins wherever one is, in whatever place, time, or condition. When the time is ripe for the heart to hear the divine message, the place is ready, and the conditions are transformable to the awakened will. And whether the path be that of knowledge—gnani-yoga; or the path of action—karma-yoga; or the path of devotion—bhakti-yoga, matters not in the least, since these all ultimately blend in the one great Raja-yoga, the Kingly Wisdom, which is not different in any way from absolute Compassion.

To an actor, the path at first sight, would seem to be that of karma-yoga. By his action he lives, his acting, good or bad, determines his standing in his profession, but this again is determined partly, by his temperament and opportunities. The sum of past emotions and experiences has led to, in fact has created, the present; how he uses the present will make future opportunities. The profession of acting, like other things, has four natural divisions. They may be said to correspond to the four castes of ancient India. For instance, the actor may begin as a "super" one of the mob, a spear-carrier, a servant. If he is prompt, reliable, efficient, he is promoted to what is called a "utility man," he has real wages, is a commodity of use, to be bought and sold in play-production, he may be said to correspond to the vaishya at this stage. And just beyond this—quite a distance beyond in value, though it is but the next step—is the actor who has learned not only how to discern and evaluate meanings, but to "contend for the shade of a word and a thing not seen with the eyes". This brings him into the class of a kshatriya—one who fights for his ideals, and defends those of others. By this type, the real meaning of an author is brought out, the balance of dramatic force is sustained, the true message of a play is preserved. At this stage the actor projects from the plane of the noumenal to the plane of the phenomenal the living character, lending it his own life-force in the process. At this stage, too, the actor in his own private life, often becomes aware that as his capacities are greater, so his responsibilities are heavier than those of others, and he may contend for the rights of all, which may bring about better conditions in the theatre-world.

It was this type of man and woman by the way who, banding together at their Kshatriya stage of development, originated the Actors Equity Association in America, greatly helped by the American Federation of Labour. Many old wrongs were righted and abuses corrected by those

who fought not for themselves only but for all their profession, even for those who stood aloof. From what has been called the Kshatriya stage, again it is but a step to the very great actor who can teach by word and example, who can make others act, who can call out their own powers by the fire, the conviction, the reality of his own conceptions. He is the highest caste, the head of his profession. For him there are no laws, he discovers his own laws, having worked up through and transcended all the conventions, and come into the realm of the creators, working in harmony with natural law itself.

It has often been said that there are two types of actors: the one composed of those who "live" their parts, become immersed in them, even submerge their own personalities in them, torn by the emotions they portray to the point of being unbalanced for the time; and the other type who call up and stimulate emotion by their own will, suggest it to the audience who are made to feel what is necessary to the situation, while the actor, cool, self-possessed, is merely the transmitter of the effect produced. There have been great actors of each type, the first, a medium between the author and the audience, the other an interpreter to it, as it were. In the first the actor does the audience's thinking and feeling for it, and wonders why it remains "cold" to him. In the other the audience itself is moved to feel and think as the author meant it should, and the actor while faithfully conveying the meaning, is not affected emotionally by what he has passed through in portraying it. The first is swept away by the passions of his part, the second sweeps the audience by them; the one is the more or less unconscious medium, the other the conscious mediator between author and audience.

At whatever stage of his development, the actor encounters the Theosophic teaching, it is bound to make a great difference to him. He can no longer be a passive agent and drift with the tide. He knows that his ultimate destiny is in his own hands, even though his immediate circumstances may still show the shackles of Karma. He realises that he can begin from wherever he is, to follow in the path of those who have become the Path. He knows where he is going, and that he is on the way, however far ahead the goal may be. The dangers that lie along the way,—the dangers of vanity, ambition, conceit, pride, the sense of personal egotism, the illusion of greatness, although they exist, are lessened for him by reason of the knowledge he has contacted, the glimpse of reality which he has caught. Only that endures which is Real. He is able to stand a little aloof from his personal experiences, on or off the stage, and view them in their right perspective. He culls a certain knowledge from each character he portrays, just as the divine Ego, the enduring life, stores the

efflorescence of all the lives it lives. His work is sure to broaden and deepen, his life is certain to show it. His horizons are always lifting to loftier altitudes. Vision, hope, purpose, endow him with ever-beckoning possibilities. The parts he originates will be participators in this increased individuality; his instinct will develop into intuition; his acting grow into power, his knowledge into love. Thus the paths merge. Thus they become one service—the longing to give to humanity all that oneself has seen, known, loved. It is possible for the great actor, the great orator, by the mighty power of the spoken word, the uttered thought, to make an audience *one* as perhaps nothing else does.

All along the way of his development, the actor has had to learn great lessons in little things—to subordinate his part to the whole; that it is the *play* which counts, its right values that must be brought out, the interests of others served; until there comes to him a deliberate selflessness, a conscious magic in this world of illusion. Illusion? What is that? Is not the ideal world he creates more real than the actual at least for the time being? The minds and hearts of men are the instruments on which he plays the theme he has been set to interpret. He can move them and lift them at will. He can by the magic wand of imagination, make them transcend their little lives because his service is a consecration.

And at the end of the play, whether he lays down the clown's hoop, or the king's crown, he will know that neither is himself, just as his own present life is not himself, but a part of the Great Self, the One Life. He will know that he has not fully expressed it, that his very best was imperfect, was but a becoming. And in the rests between lives he will

> in far Elysian fields
> Dream, without sorrow of the days that were

and build ever better for the good, the true, and the beautiful, each time he returns to work.

Thus, it does not matter where the path begins. It begins where one is; yet it leads straight away from where one is. In Hamlet's words—

> If it be now, 'tis not to come;
> If it be not to come, it will be now,
> If it be not now, yet it will come:
> The readiness is all.

The readiness is all.

R. H. B.

TRUTH AND SUPERSTITION

[**G. B. Harrison, M. A. (Cantab.), Ph. D. (London)**, is author of several volumes among them *The Lancaster Witches 1612.* He wrote on "Modern Superstitions" in our pages last February.—EDS.]

Superstition may be defined as active credulity, showing itself either in the expectation of results from certain actions or conversely in the performance of illogical acts to produce results. The difference between the credulous man and the scientific is that the one jumps from cause to result, the other to his own satisfaction by reason, experiment, and deduction traces the links between the first and the final event. Both have faith in their own judgment, the one in his own intuition or conviction, the other in his power of observation. Yet human knowledge is very narrowly limited, depending upon a minute experience of an infinitely varied universe. A new ingredient added to the mass of experience will often alter the blend so that the science of one generation becomes the superstition of the next. In material science new instruments make for preciser knowledge; but in the realm of ideas the differences between one generation and another are as often as not in expression and statement, new notions being but new labels for what was long ago perceived and comprehended. Longinus understood the 'lyric moment' as well as any modern critic.

Empiric knowledge is usually disgusting to the professed scientist, who will harry those who claim it. Registered doctors of medicine conscientiously persecute the unregistered healer as a quack, excommunicating any of their brethren who aid the pariah, in part that the community may be protected from humbugs, partly also to defend their own priestly caste. Yet men know many more things than they can explain, and even the exactest knowledge ultimately depends on two fallible humans, the instrument maker and the observer. Moreover scientists of great repute will think in terms which make puny the wildest speculations of theologians. Astronomers in computing the intervals between the heavenly bodies use a 'million light-years' as a unit of measurement; at such distances faith and fact are alike insignificant.

Experience has an uncomfortable way of supporting superstition against reason. As a small boy I had some lessons in this fact. Once I cut my finger nails on a Sunday, and was told by a horrified elder that it was an unlucky act—

> Best a man had ne'er been born
> Than have his nails on a Sunday shorn ;

and sure enough I got into all manner of trouble on the Monday. Another time I made myself a ring from some old leather. For

some quite unaccountable reason I felt convinced that the ring was unlucky. The next week was full of troubles. I therefore hid the ring in a drawer and forgot it. Weeks after I came upon it and threw away the wretched thing lest it should bring more trouble; next day was again notably disastrous.

This kind of passive superstition is probably due to crude reasoning. Misfortune is repeated. The mind looking for a cause turns to memory, and the only precedent events which can be recalled are that before each misfortune the same omen was observed, crossed knives maybe. Therefore crossed knives were the cause; and if trouble should again follow crossed knives no amount of reasoning will finally eradicate that superstition. The reasonable man would go on to prove this deduction to be false by crossing his knives at every meal; but superstitions of this kind arise from fear, and fear is the natural antipathy to reason.

Superstitions of fear are not necessarily bad. Such moral laws as existed in the Greek religion were largely based on the superstition that a man should mind his words and acts lest they came back at him.* Even the superstition that thirteen must never sit down together at a feast has its not altogether degraded side. The last supper when Jesus sat with his twelve disciples was the immediate prologue to Calvary, and Judas who first rose was dead within a few hours; one should be careful to avoid every circumstance of such a tragedy.

Active superstition may likewise have its defence. Many practices which cannot be proved reasonable may yet be based upon intuitive or partial knowledge; though empiric knowledge of this kind is hardly to be distinguished from mere credulity, an eagerness to be deceived and a distaste for the effort of reasoning. There are countless specimens in this kind, particularly in the cures of minor ailments. Some hold, for instance, that to avoid the rheumatism one should carry a piece of sulphur on the person; this belief may be mere superstition, the sulphur being a form of talisman, but equally it may be that there is some property in sulphur as yet not identified. Other treatments are at first sight sheer superstition. One, whom I knew, was suffering from a wart. She was advised by an old village woman to take a dried bean, rub it on the wart, and then hide it secretly in an unseemly place; and the wart did disappear!

With most of these practices fuller knowledge will usually confirm that the remedy was simply superstitious, and the result if not entirely fortuitous, was due to the stimulus given to the mind by self-deception. And yet the wildest of odd practices sometimes are justified by scientists. It is said that ancient Greek physicians prescribed as a cure for goitre the ashes of a burnt sea sponge; but the ashes contained

iodine which is the modern remedy for the complaint. The interesting speculation here is to discover by what process of reasoning or intuition the Greek doctor was led to experiment with so unlikely a substance. Similarly the use of digitalis (or foxglove) for complaints of the heart was a remedy of witches. A village doctor—so the story goes—finding that his patients gained more relief from the local wise woman than from himself had the courage to consult the witch and win from her the formula, which included many useless simples but among them foxglove. The foxglove was thus admitted to the pharmacopœia and, as it were, baptised late respectability.

Superstitions are most gross and frequent in that part of experience which is called religion; and here especially one should be chary of passing hasty or indeed any judgment. Religion is pre-eminently concerned with those experiences which are least definable or communicable, and yet most vital. It is impossible for one man to enter into the experiences of another, and to know what others feel or see. The man who has felt an over-powering religious experience will go through any antics to recapture it, whilst those who have never known the experience will look upon him with amazement and disgust. Most religious bitterness, intolerance, persecutions and even wars arise from the simple ignoring of the fact that men's experiences and capabilities of experience differ, and that no great emotion can ever be fully expressed.

Nor is there, apparently, any reconciliation possible between the two kinds of mind. The enthusiast has felt the emotion but is unable, and indeed seldom wishes to analyse its causes objectively. The rationalist is incapable of enthusiasm. The wise man can only recognise that the fundamental difference exists; whilst rejecting the explanation he realises that the enthusiast has indeed enjoyed the experience; and on the other hand, whilst accepting the rationalist's objections, he realises also that the rationalist's emotional capacity is underdeveloped.

Religious ritual is not superstitious in itself, but it soon degenerates into superstition when the worshipper ceases to be conscious, in his reason or his emotions, of that which it symbolises or evokes. Psychologists may explain religious experiences in their own terms of suggestion and hysteria, but the experience itself belongs only to those who have felt it. Unfortunately it is rare for the two kinds of mind—the emotional which experiences and the rational which analyses—to exist in one person, so that the rational mind usually lacks the experience or even a comprehension of the experience; for indeed this process of analysing is the surest way of frustrating emotional experience.

Fundamentally this is ultimately the difference between the Catholic and the Protestant mind. The one believes intuitively, the

other by his own process of reasoning. The experiences of the Catholic are so indefinable in terms of logic that his dogmas can soon be reduced to nonsense by the unbeliever; but only a fool would seriously challenge a Catholic to submit the consecrated wafer to chemical analysis. On the other side the Protestant who regards Catholic ritual and practice as idolatry is himself equally credulous when he bases his faith on a book to which he attaches supernatural powers. Idolatry and bibliolatry are equally superstitious.

Much of the difficulty in discussing religious ideas came from the inadequacy of words as a medium for expression or exchange of thought. Language is a sensitive and various instrument, and few can use or hear it with precision. Even the same idea may be expressed in different forms so that in one it is enlightened truth, in the other barbarity. Thus, to speak of the prophyllaxis of smallpox by vaccination is eminently hygienic, but express it in the terms of an old wife's recipe book—"To prevent the small pocks, scratch the left arm of an infant with an needle and into the wound rub some pus taken from a cow that the cow pocks, and for seven years that infant shall never suffer from the small pocks". The process is the same; one formula is disgusting, the other evokes no emotion. Even the simplest of actions cannot be completely transmuted into words. Vaughan, moved to an ecstasy of an *o altitudo*, wrote:—

I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright;
And round beneath it Time in hours, days,
years,
Driven by the spheres
Like a vast shadow moved . . .

As an expression of emotion this is magnificent, but how inaccurate as an expression of scientific fact! How hardly can we share the subtle thoughts of each other.

Moreover truth has no clear edges, being like the colours in the rainbow wherein can be distinguished red and blue and yellow, but no one can say where one blends into the other. Some years ago a traveller on his return to England described a certain mountain as notably shaped like a lump of sugar. Whereupon another traveller declared that, on the contrary, the mountain had a peak like a cone; but both travellers were absolved from lying when a third said that from the North the mountain was indeed square topped, but from the East conical. This is a parable of Truth.

So with superstition. It may be defined as active credulity; but passive incredulity is equally superstitious.

G. B. HARRISON

DOSTOEVSKY'S AFFINITIES WITH BUDDHISM

[**Philip Henderson's** article reminds us of the efforts of Madame H. P. Blavatsky to bring to the notice of the English reading public *The Brothers Karamazov*. Dostoevsky's death in February 1881 was hardly mentioned in the British press, and only since 1885 when his *Crime and Punishment* first appeared in English that he became known in Britain. The early translations were not from the original but from French. H. P. Blavatsky translated directly from Russian and published a long extract from *The Brothers Karamazov* in *The Theosophist* for November and December 1881, describing it as "a cutting satire on modern theology generally and the Roman Catholic religion in particular". She called Dostoevsky "one of the ablest and profoundest among Russian writers".—EDS.]

Fyodor Dostoevsky is often referred to as a great psychological realist by those who use the word "psychological" to describe mental processes. Actually, however, his work has a far greater significance. His spiritual life was so intense that his characters are less "people," as in the work of most novelists, than disembodied souls inhabiting a timeless world. Thus to call him a psychological realist, in the material sense of the psycho-analysts, is to misjudge his profundity as a thinker. Indeed, the world of phenomena scarcely exists in Dostoevksy's novels, the action taking place almost wholly within his characters' minds. And even when he does introduce a background of objects, they are so charged with spiritual overtones that they are little more than symbols of states of soul. His landscapes, streets, houses, are like things in a dream. In short, his world is the metaphysical world of the self in relation to which all phenomena are seen as illusory; and he is a psychological realist in the sense of the psyche and the Real. It is from this point that any serious consideration of Dostoevsky as a thinker must begin.

The great events that subsequently determined the whole course of Dostoevsky's mental life occurred in 1849 when, at the age of twenty-seven, he was taken out to be shot as a member of a revolutionary political society. During the few seconds that elapsed before his reprieve, waiting for death, he had already begun to live in eternity. That moment of vision permanently altered his whole perspective and never afterwards did he quite regain the "normal" sense of time. Then for four years he was imprisoned in Siberia. These were Dostoevsky's years in the wilderness, during which he was continually face to face with himself. The significance of this period in his inner history is that it contains the death sentence to his old way of life before his arrest, and what may be regarded as his initiation; that self-searching and that deep humiliation from which was born his pity for the sufferings of mankind. Had not these particular events come upon him, he would un-

doubtedly have experienced their counterpart. For it was not that "he had the opportunity to be profound," as is sometimes cynically suggested, it is not that he was "pathological," that matters: these events show him to have reached a stage of inner evolution when it was no longer possible for him to go on writing of temporal social problems, as in *Poor Folk*. Henceforth he was face to face with eternal problems within himself. Henceforth he ceased to be a novelist, although he continued to use the novel form. He became a metaphysical writer and a mystic.

During his imprisonment, Dostoevsky was thinking out his novel *Crime and Punishment*, in which he exposed the bankruptcy of the conception of the superman, the illusion of self-will and the ultimate sterility of the intellect as a means of attaining to truth.

Incidentally, I would point out here, that in describing Raskolnikov's state of mind at the end of *Crime and Punishment*, Dostoevsky writes:

> Everything, even his crime and sentence, and imprisonment seemed to him now ... an external, strange fact, with which he had no concern.

a statement that obviously mirrors Dostoevsky's own attitude of mind towards his past sufferings, and one which reveals his perception of the fact that the soul remains unchanged by suffering, although we ourselves in our mortal natures may then be brought to a greater consciousness of it.

But for Dostoevsky intellect *qua* intellect, as in the teaching of the Buddha, was one of the diabolical principles in life. It is his own intellect personified that becomes Ivan Karamazov's Devil and nearly drives him to insanity at the end of *The Brothers Karamazov*. For the intellect can create and destroy systems of belief with fiendish agility and leave the mind face to face with nothingness; it is essentially nihilistic. It is this principle that leads Dostoevsky's characters down a blind alley of the mind, the only escape from which is insanity or suicide. It is this "Euclidian understanding," as personified in Nicolay Stavrogin of *The Possessed*, that is the most formidable barrier in the way of real understanding.

Against such "possessed" characters, Dostoevsky sets the pure of heart, men like Prince Myshkin of *The Idiot*, Aloysha Karamazov and Father Zosima. The attitude of these men is a profound and passive acceptance of the world through love, a non-resistance to evil and a consistent rejection of the fetters of desire, that, in its mystical Asiatic Christianity, is very near to Buddhism.

The Buddha laid it down in his Noble Truth of Suffering, that all the ills that man is heir to are the result of his assertion of self-will, the result of desire for gratification of the senses, and among the senses, as a thing essentially perishable, he included the mind, the personal ego. Suffering can be the only

ultimate result of such an assertion, such a desire, when the things we thirst for are in their very nature transitory and therefore, *sub speciè aeternitatis* illusory. Thus only by denial of the self-will, by transcending the mind and the renunciation of our personal ego can we ever hope to reach to that timeless omniscience, that perception of the deathlessness and changelessness of the Self realised as one with the universal soul of Nature, which is bliss, which is Nirvana. Even then it is not by mental exertion that we can reach this state, which is the end to which we were born, but by spiritual intuition that transcends the mind.

It is this state to which Dostoevsky refers in *The Possessed* in a conversation between Kirillov and Stavrogin when the former says:

"Life exists, but death doesn't at all."

"You've begun to believe in future eternal life?"

"No, not in a future eternal life, but in eternal life here. There are moments, you reach moments, and time suddenly stands still and it will become eternal!"

In another place Kirillov says, stumbling with his words in the ecstasy of his intuition:—

The feeling is unmistakable; it's as though you apprehend all nature and suddenly say, "Yes, that's right .... Yes, it's right, it's good .... It ... It's not being deeply moved, but simply joy. You don't forgive anything because there's no need of forgiveness. It's not that you love—Oh, there's something in it higher than love .... What's most awful is that it's terribly dear and such joy!"

And again:

Man is only unhappy because he doesn't know he's happy. It's only that. That's all, that's all! If any one finds out, he'll become happy at once, in a minute!

It is an inward transformation such as this that is the essence of all mystical experience: the removal of temporal illusion, the ability to see everything with the eye of eternity.

Similarly we have those moments of the highest mystical intuition which precede Prince Myshkin's epileptic fits, those Nirvanic glimpses, the memory and the anticipation of which dominates his whole life. Commenting on them, Dostoevsky, who was an epileptic himself, writes:

That such moments really contained the highest synthesis of life he could not doubt, nor even dare to admit the possibility of doubt. . .And since, in the last conscious moment preceding the attack, he could say to himself, with full understanding of his words: "I would give my whole life for this one instant!", then doubtless to him it really was worth a life-time.

Describing such moments himself, Myshkin says:

I feel, then, as if I understood those amazing words "There shall be no more time". . . No doubt the epileptic Mahomet refers to that same moment when he says he visited all the dwellings of Allah in less time than was needed to empty his pitcher of water.

It is not for nothing that some peoples have always regarded epileptics with awe and reverence as those who are in touch with the divine. In the utilitarian West, however, they are regarded

merely as obstacles in the way of practical activity, idiots, in fact, as all the other characters in the book regard Myshkin, till they discover that he was wiser than any of them.

All great spiritual reformers have been spurred to their task by some spiritual disorder or state of non-balance. Their teaching is simply a revelation of the means of attaining spiritual poise and wholeness. Buddha showed that poise and wholeness can only be attained by true renunciation and taught the approach to this condition through love in the sense of gentleness, unselfishness and compassion, which, by helping one to realise the Oneness of all life, destroys the fetters of ill-will and sensuality, limiting one's perception within the narrow bounds of self, and permits of self-realization through self-expansion, till finally one partakes of the Universal Life in the tranquillity of perfect knowledge.

For the intuitive reader, these principles are implicit in all Dostoevsky's work. As M. Gide points out in his admirably lucid study of the author, Dostoevsky divides the human personality into three strata: the mind, the passions and a vast realm remote from either mind or passion. It is this last realm that is inhabited by the soul and in relation to it the most tragic events, the most tempestuous passions, are no more than shadows. This indeed, in the Universal Self which knows no individuality, no separateness from the whole.

Dostoevsky's conception of the human will is essentially Buddhistic and is well illustrated in the following passage from Schopenhauer's *The World As Will and Idea*:

> The inflicter of suffering and the sufferer are one. . .If the eyes of both were opened, the inflicter would see that he lives in all that suffers pain in the wide world. . . and the sufferer would see that all the wickedness which is, or ever was, committed in this world, proceeds from that will which constitutes *his* nature also, appears also in *him*, and that through this phenomenon and its assertion he has taken upon himself all the sufferings which proceed from such a will, and bears them as his due, so long as he is this will.

This is the state of mind of Dostoevsky's most spiritual characters, of Myshkin, of Father Zosima and Aloysha Karamazov. It is Father Zosima who kneels down and kisses the ground before a great sinner and sacrilegious libertine. It is he who says:–

> Love all God's creation—every grain of sand, every leaf, every ray of God, you should love. Love animals, love plants, love everything. Love everything and you will arrive at God's secret in things.

It is the state of mind, as formulated above by Schopenhauer, in which we find Myshkin at the beginning of *The Idiot*. He is the only motiveless, unselfish and spiritually naked character in the book, and he bears the burden of the suffering World-will, transcending it in moments of purest, intuitive bliss. Myshkin, his author confessed on one occasion, was his idea of a perfect man.

It is not till we come to the *Dream of a Queer Fellow*, from the *Journal of an Author*, that we have the essence of Dostoevsky's gospel and his affinity to Buddhism set forth clearly and unmistakably in the parable of a queer fellow's vision of a replica of our own, but where all live together in an harmony of love and a mystical communion with Nature.

They desired nothing, but were calm; they did not aspire to a knowledge of life, as we aspire to knowledge, because their life was fulfilled. But their knowledge was deeper and higher than our science, for our science seeks to explain what is life, she aspires to know life, that she may teach others how to live; but they, without science, knew how to live. . .They showed me trees, but I could not understand the depth of love with which they looked at them, exactly as though they spoke with their fellows. And perhaps I should not be wrong if I said they did speak with them. . . In the same way they regard all nature—the animals which lived at peace with them, did not attack them, but loved them, subdued by their love. They pointed out the stars to me and told me something about them that I could not understand, but I am convinced that in some way they were in contact with the stars of heaven, having connection with them not by thought alone but in some physical way.

They hardly understood me when I asked them concerning eternal life, but they were evidently so convinced of it that it was no question to them. They had no temples, but they had a real, living and continual communion with the whole universe; they had no religion, but they had the firm knowledge that when their earthly joy had been consummated to the limit of their earthly nature, then would begin for them, living as well as dead, a yet greater expansion of their contact with the whole universe. They awaited this moment with joy, but with no impatience, with no anguished longing for it, but already as it were partaking of it in presentiments of their hearts which they communicated to each other.

I saw and know that men could be beautiful and happy, without losing the capacity to live on earth. I will not, I cannot believe that evil is the normal condition of men.

Dostoevsky knew that love was the most expansive and emancipative of all forces, and he pictures here a state, such as the Buddha taught, of self-realisation through self-expansion.

Buddhism is the most inward conception of life, the most intrinsic standard of moral worth, that has ever been given to human thought. Just as Christianity, as taught by Christ, it is founded on the great conceptions of the Upanishads, the ultimate source of all spiritual knowledge. And the novels of Dostoevsky illustrate more powerfully than any others the Buddha's words:

Virtue rewards itself by strengthening the will, by subduing unworthy desire, by generating knowledge of reality, by giving inward peace. Sin punishes itself by weakening the will, by inflaming unworthy desire, by generating delusions, by breeding fever and unrest.

PHILIP HENDERSON

THE EXPERIMENTAL ORIGIN OF KNOWLEDGE

[**W. Wilson Leisenring, B.A.,** is the author of *The Real Earth, Too Small for Life,* etc. and at one time was associate-editor of *World Power.*—EDS.]

I

The fundamental question with regard to H. P. Blavatsky, and the one of all others most significant to-day, is how did she obtain her knowledge? If that were known, the crucial problem of present-day science might be, at least partially, solved. Those who seriously follow, or try to follow the pronouncements of men of science realize that the leaders of research have come face to face with the mystery of the origin of knowledge and of the nature of man. Their own experiments and researches have brought them into instrumental contact with regions of the 'atom' and molecule, with fields of space and states of psychical reaction that apparently stultify the hitherto known 'laws of Nature'. A mystery vast, dark and occult looms around us, and Space refuses as yet to yield up its secrets.

There was no place for mystery in old-fashioned 'materialism,' and fifty years ago the most prominent scientific authorities wanted to be materialists: perhaps fortunately so, as otherwise the motive for scientific research might have been lacking. To-day eminent physicists invoke metaphysical conceptions to account for the finite, physical universe; distinguished biologists hypothecate individual minds to explain the behaviour of minute organisms; palæontologists glimpse a Dawn Man rising on the receding horizons of geological ages; and archæologists conclude that highly civilized man must be immeasurably old since the date of his appearance cannot be fixed and his origin is remote and illusive in the mists of antiquity.

In general and in detail H. P. Blavatsky predicted the present position of science. At the time *The Secret Doctrine* was published its scientific philosophy was not only heterodox to theological teachings, but revolutionary, if not fantastic, to scientific authorities. It is only forty years since her death and many persons who knew Madame Blavatsky are still living, including several eminent specialists whose views were discussed in *The Secret Doctrine*; but during that period all departments of science have contributed to the confirmation of her statements in regard to both facts and principles. This, alone, characterizes the production of that work, and of the earlier volumes, *Isis Unveiled*, as a unique phenomenon hitherto unknown. It is needless, for our present enquiry, to consider the many other factors, so often and inconclusively discussed, which focus around Madame Blavatsky. Both the writer and the contents of her

books have a strictly scientific interest because, if we knew how Madame Blavatsky obtained her knowledge, the key to the present dead-lock between physics and metaphysics might be found. It may be granted that she was an extra-ordinary personality, was a gifted linguist and had a wide knowledge of the world and of human character; it may be known that she spent a large part of her life in travels which took her three times round the world, and that she ventured into out-of-the-way territories amongst all kinds of tribes and races; it may also be affirmed that she possessed unusual psychical powers from childhood: but these characteristics and experiences would not of themselves, singly or collectively, have enabled her to write *The Secret Doctrine*. Neither travellers nor 'psychics' make verifiable predictions regarding the future of scientific research. In the annals of psychical research and mediumistic phenomena we find nothing new revealed by mediums. No 'spirit' has ever uttered an idea that has not been expressed often before, has ever presented a new outlook on life, or stated an unknown "law" of Nature.

H. P. Blavatsky had no training in modern scientific methods. She had never experimented in Western laboratories; and yet so appreciative was she of scientific research that a large part of her writings was devoted to scientific discussions. So certain was she of her own knowledge that in *The Secret Doctrine* she declared that

> In the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas (I, xxxvii).
>
> No disbeliever who takes the "Secret Doctrine" for a "hoax" is forced or even asked to credit our statements ... Nor, is it after all, necessary that any one should believe in the Occult Sciences and the old teachings, before one knows anything or even believes in his own soul. No great truth was ever accepted *a priori*, and generally a century or two passed before it began to glimmer in the human consciousness as a possible verity, except such cases as the positive discovery of the thing claimed as a fact. The truths of to-day are the falsehoods and errors of yesterday, and *vice versâ*. It is only in the XXth century that portions, if not the whole, of the present work will be vindicated (II, 441-2).

Those who have noted at all carefully the results of scientific research during the last twenty years or so, and who have at the same time read and pondered Madame Blavatsky's writings, realize that this prophecy is even now well on the way to fulfilment. But the mere fact of such corroboration is not in itself important. What a scientific inquirer is interested to know is the source of her knowledge—the methods by which it was obtained, for that might give a clue to the significance of much of her exposition as yet unconfirmed experimentally, and indicate, perhaps, new directions for research.

It is obvious that the origin of human knowledge must be in man himself. Whatever has been known or will be known by him

must be potential in his own nature. It is possible, too, that, in past cycles of racial evolutions and civilization, knowledge may have been obtained by experimental means other than those employed to-day. It is now certain that there was a technical knowledge of practical sciences in ancient and prehistoric civilizations that had been forgotten in subsequent ages, although the existence of a real experimental science of psychology may not be considered so assured. Thus 'relativity' seems to apply to knowledge of scientific principles as well as to 'events' perceived by the physical senses; such knowledge being relative at any given point in the racial cycle. More than that: it must be relative to man's powers of sensational perception, and to his ability to isolate and experiment with the matter under observation. Stated in another way: consciousness itself must be relative to the frequency level of the energy with which the organism interacts; and this factor depends on (though it is not caused by) the degree of complexity and evolution the organism has attained.

Science has found that the five physical senses of man function in different frequency levels of the ether, and that they respond (consciously to man) to but a limited range of the energy-frequencies by which the organism is surrounded and interpenetrated. Scientific instruments supplement this restriction to an amazing extent, but they also have their limitations since they are constructed of terrestrial materials and elements which have not passed through the processes that have evolved the human brain. As physical matter is thus finite for us, energy or radiation above a certain frequency cannot be isolated by purely physical means. It does not follow, however, logically or evidentially, that there are no ultra-physical energies, nor that they could not be controlled by ultra-physical means, if we had access to such. In any case, we have as yet insufficient knowledge of that marvellous organism, the human brain, to state positively that it contains no organs or 'centres,' not functioning at present, which may have been active in earlier races or may be developed in a future race of mankind and in rare individuals of our present race.

The knowledge of Nature so far obtained by modern science has been *by means of experiment*; and there can be no other kind of knowledge. When men despair of finding new means of experiment they admit defeat in the search for truth. The retort may be: "True, but the physical universe is objective and external to us, and, therefore, means for experiment may be devised; and if states of energy exist within or beyond those apparent to us, how can they be experimentally demonstrated? It seems, indeed, that what may be beyond our perception must be forever unknown and that we can merely

mentally speculate about it." Some thinkers conclude, therefore, that mind or thought must be the ultra-physical state of the universe because the human mind has played the dominant part in conducting researches, and mental conceptions interpret for us the known universe.

These conceptions have been formulated and termed the Laws of Nature. The entities of Nature apparently behave like logical beings, 'obeying' these laws, until physicists discovered states of energy in which the entities do not conform to any of our previous conceptions. In other words, they appear to be a different kind of intelligence. They behave, not according to the conceptions of our logical minds, but according to our ideas of entities endowed with 'free-will'. Thus the characteristic of ' will ' is added to that of ' thought ' in order to describe or interpret for our finite satisfaction, states existing on the borders between the seen and the unseen. Were scientific workers able, however, to control these seemingly irrational and capricious entities their sportive freedom would be at an end, and the threatened break in the Uniformity of Nature would be averted; for they would be compelled to obey a 'law' or intelligence imposed or impressed upon them. But for all we know, those elements in Nature in ultra-physical and biological states, at present beyond scientific control, do obey the law of their own peculiar characteristics—*their* life or intelligence—and act and react within their inherent restrictions.

Scientific research has shown that each type (of 'atom,' molecule, species etc.) in Nature is bound by limitations determined by its own constitution and the concomitant environmental conditions, the medium or 'field' of its existence. Even human intelligence, which, we flatter ourselves, is 'free' must be subservient to its own characteristics, to its own 'field' of operation, the element or medium in which it functions. That only could be ' free ' which is independent of, unmotived and uncaused by any exterior conditions whatever whether apparent to us, or not.

Hence it is evident that exteriority or objectivity is a relative matter. Impulses which we imagine are subjective and free may be impelled by influences exterior *to them* though unseen and subjective with reference to our physical perceptions. We cannot control or determine the nature of such impulses (whether physical or mental energy) until we externalize them; and we cannot accomplish this objectification while our consciousness is focused through our organism in the same energy-level as that in which those impulses operate. It is because man's brain functions in mental levels of the ether superior to the range of the purely animal instincts that he is able to re-organize his physical environment and control the lower energies of Nature. He

has the power to project or objectify his thoughts.

Every advance in scientific knowledge has been achieved by making external or objective what was previously hidden from the senses or conceived of only in thought, subjectively. As an experimentalist advances in knowledge he must continue to objectify. At that point or energy-level where he finds himself incapable of doing this, his knowledge must cease.

It has been suggested that the reason it is impossible to objectify ultra-physical constituents of light is because they consist merely of thought: they are, in fact, nothing but mathematical formulae which are materialized in mechanical systems of electromagnetic energies. If this be the case intellectual man has come face to face with himself in the glass of Nature in which he truly sees but darkly. Are we, then, entitled to assert that Nature and Man are actually one and the same? If we accept this conclusion we virtually deny the principle of evolution and imply that present-day scientific geniuses represent the *ne plus ultra* of knowledge and human achievement—that man has no future. Nature merely reflects our Psyche. But, surely, this Psyche is as illusive as in the ancient myths, and man is apparently still unable to capture her. Is the significance of this *impasse* that man must direct his researches on himself if he would penetrate deeper into Nature and understand and control his Psyche mirrored in its depths? Or must we conclude that such experimental research is impossible, and that the present civilized man represents the highest type that evolution can produce?

W. WILSON LEISENRING

An occultist can produce phenomena, but he cannot supply the world with brains, nor with the intelligence and good faith necessary to understand and appreciate them.

H. P. BLAVATSKY, *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, p. 49

SOME SPIRITUAL NOTES IN MODERN VERSE

[**Vida D. Scudder** was born in India, educated in Europe and taught in America. She is the author of numerous volumes among them "The Life of the Spirit in the Modern English Poets" (1895). In sending the article she wrote—"I confess that I am not at all sure that the article will please you, for I suspect that your point of view is not quite mine". While we regret this, we are sure our readers will not fail to note the beauty of her writing and enjoy it as we have done.—EDS.]

A sensitive mind exposed to modern verse or novels may feel a little sad. Chaotic incertitudes often greet us. Now we encounter sensuous passion, recorded, save the mark! with the defiant air of new discovery; now a strained plunge into the depths of consciousness drags from the mud of the sub-conscious a tangled mess of amorphous emotions and ideas, to fling on the printed page. Old traditions of lovely form,—rhyme, rhythm, organization,—are tossed to the winds; and the result frequently baffles understanding. A good deal of poetry simply bewilders the reader, who desperately chases pronouns without antecedents down the queerly printed page, and rejoices, at the victorious moment when the meaning is caught, in much the type of satisfaction afforded by the conquest of a picture puzzle.

Modern poetry is not only often cryptic; it is drearily disillusioned. An American writer,—he happens to be a novelist,—some time ago said that all his books amounted to showing how dull life is. And indeed fleshly experience plus escape from inhibitions never succeeded in making life interesting for more than a little while.

Not all modern poetry keeps us however, if a Victorian allusion may be permitted, "on a darkling plain where ignorant armies clash by night". We cannot, by the way, claim pre-eminence in disillusion; it was as easy for Matthew Arnold to look at things that way as it is for T. S. Eliot to regard life as a Waste Land under a curse. For that matter, Macbeth found the last word in this line when he called life "a tale told by an idiot". Yet always, and to-day is no exception, some poetry takes us away from the darkling plain to sunlit reaches, visited by rays from the light that never was on sea or land.

The distinctive quality of an age is often best seen in its secondary poets; as in the seventeenth century, when men like Trahern and Vaughan certainly reveal the deeper intuitions of the time better than the icy splendours of Milton. Our day is rich in minor poets, and the reader of their slim volumes is ever and again surprised by a lovely flash from the Far Country of the soul. The air, so silent to our stupid ears, is always full of music that the radio can transmit; and poetry has great transmitting power. Francis Thompson caught the

grand rhythm of the speed of the Pursuing and Fleeing God. In the verse of some Irish poets, the veils of sense are as thin as the mists over their hills as in Yeats, with his messages from faery, or Æ, whose songs, to use his own words, are "half from the hidden world and half from this". Nor is magic confined to Ireland. Housman, especially in his "Little Plays of St. Francis" can lead us into the presence of the God-possessed. Evelyn Underhill, Masefield, Alfred Noyes, yes, the Sitwells, Humbert Wolfe, can induct us into reality now and then. Alice Meynell writing with such subtle restraint that the listener must be very still, shared with us an intimate knowledge:

" 'You never attained to Him'. 'If to attain
Be to abide, then that may be'.
'Endless the way, with how much pain !'
'The Way was He.' "

Turning to the United States, names crowd the memory of fine spirits each with a special report, of the Beyond: Emily Dickenson, Father Tabb, William Vaughan Moody, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Anna Hempstend Branch.

Let us dwell a little on one poet, whom those who would live in the Spirit may value more in fifty years than she is valued now. In the life as in verse of Eva Gore-Booth is the rare essential union of social passion and mystical insight. Sister of Countess Markievicz of the Sinn Feinn Movement, our poet herself rejected violence in any form, though her sympathy was intense for the "land of falling tears and broken promises," and for those who suffered for that land. Her own devotion went out first to work for the emancipation of women and this led her to contact with modern industrial evils and the horror of them and of war. Passionate pity is the key note of her social attitude; it has perhaps most perfect expression in her drama or Maeve of the Battles, where Fionavar, daughter of Maeve dies through anguish over those slain in her mother's wars. The poignancy of our poet's cry against the injustices that ravage us will be felt by all who read "Womens' Trades on the Embankment" or "The Good Samaritan". But she knows that social ends can be compassed in the long run only by spiritual force, and writes "To Certain Reformers":

So long as the senses reign
And the spirit is trodden down
Your desire ye shall not gain,
Ye shall not win your crown.

It is not in her social poems that she moves most freely, but when she can hear "The Little Waves of Breffny," or when in the presence of beauty seen a higher beauty gleams. For always she is aware of Him

"Whom Christ hath called Love,
Strange Father of the Inner Life that flows
Deep down beneath the colour of the rose."

In the purest strain of that intuitive philosophy born of experience she rises from the Many to the One. She writes of the sunlit cloud; and suddenly:

"The Eternal Beauty leans toward my soul,
Till life and love are merged in one great
shining whole."

She echoes Keats as she cries, "I have sought the Hidden Beauty

in all things". Never was any one more sensitive to loveliness; to the blue of the gentian, the primrose gold, the far shining of Alpine snows, the art of Italy. Wide travel, familiarity with literatures of many lands, furnish her themes and impart dim fragrance to her verse. But it is not only through nature, art or letters, that the Eternal Beauty shines for her. Her spiritual pilgrimage guided her to great enlightenment.

Eva Gore-Booth is capable of sad irony, as in the penetrating lines, " The World's Grief "; but she climbs through the zone of pain and cloud into the upper air. Three dominant influences may be noted in her work. In the writing of no other Irish poet is truer rendering of that exquisite Celtic spirit which wavers forever in the borderland between the seen and the Unseen. She bends the magical old myths to the service of her modern faith. Next comes the influx of perception from the East. Scholarship discerns more and more the close connection of old Ireland with the Orient; the work of Eva Gore-Booth bears the imprint of earnest Oriental studies. The sense of the Indwelling God was native to her, but it is now enhanced. Definite stress on Reincarnation inspires several poems full of grave beauty, as the lines "To C.A" (Lady Clare Annesley), the wholly delightful "Vagrant's Romance", or, more subtly and with more general connotation, "The Immortal Soul".

But, as in Emerson's "Brahma" and in most theosophical writings in English, the ancient wisdom has passed through a modern and Western mind. She derived much from the high visions of the East, but her pilgrim soul did not pause there. Repudiating no insight she had gained, she was gently led into the sanctuary, for her, of Christian faith. Nothing was lost, one repeats, of earlier gifts, when there came to her an awareness of the everlasting truth in the great Christian mysteries. Nor were these mysteries mere symbols to her but revelation of reality, as ultimate as dim mortal eyes may see. They meant to her recognition of the Transcendent God, of a great redemption from without the separate soul, surrounding the helplessness of human life. In those later collections inspired by Christianity, "The House of Three Windows" and "The Shepherd of Eternity," the poems grow in clarity and force. Her study at this time was concentrated on the Fourth Gospel, which is, not excepting the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the greatest gift mystical faith has ever received; and various poems derived from "Johns' " narrative show not only tender and awe-struck imagination, but rare interpretive power. But whether her themes are drawn from Greek myth, from Oriental wisdom, or from Christian doctrine, the control is ever the same: the vision of the Eternal Beauty, quickening consecration to a world where women shall have come to their own, where industrial cruelties shall be no more, where wars

shall cease, and men in sacred freedom shall have achieved the unity of love fulfilled.

Many poets beside those mentioned above share her burning intuition of Deity. They write with refreshing diversity of accent, but they have one witness to bear. These moderns when they touch religion at all, have sometimes a singular gift of conveying reassurance. Even a secular epic like Benet's "John Brown's Body" holds as solemn recognition as Hardy's "Dynasts" of the mighty Immanent Will. Even a brilliant piece of sardonic irony like Humbert Wolfe's "News of the Devil" is imbued with extraordinary apprehension of the Unescapable God; and in his "Requiem" the same faith shines through the studies in defeat and shame. So through our turbulent confusion sounds the Divine Summons, and at any moment the compelling accents of the Spirit may be heard in the very voices that deny.

VIDA D. SCUDDER

As the eye of the expert jeweller discerns under the rough and uncouth oyster shell the pure immaculate pearl, enshrined within its bosom, his hand dealing with the former but to get at its contents, so the eye of the true philosopher reads between the lines of the Purânas the sublime Vedic truths, and corrects the form with the help of the Vedantic wisdom. Our Orientalists, however, never perceive the pearl under the thick coating of the shell, and—act accordingly.

H. P. BLAVATSKY, *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 528

What we desire to prove is, that underlying every ancient popular religion was the same ancient wisdom-doctrine, one and identical, professed and practised by the initiates of every country, who alone were aware of its existence and importance. To ascertain its origin, and the precise age in which it was matured, is now beyond human possibility. A single glance, however, is enough to assure one that it could not have attained the marvellous perfection in which we find it pictured to us in the relics of the various esoteric systems, except after a succession of ages. A philosophy so profound, a moral code so ennobling, and practical results so conclusive and so uniformly demonstrable is not the growth of a generation, or even a single epoch. Fact must have been piled upon fact, deduction upon deduction, science have begotten science, and myriads of the brightest human intellects have reflected upon the laws of nature, before this ancient doctrine had taken concrete shape.

H. P. BLAVATSKY, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, 99

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

[**Professor D. S. Sarma** writes with lucidity and vigour on the subject of the study of different religious creeds. There is no other force so powerful in uniting the different races into one family than the energy of Wisdom enshrined in Religion ; conversely, there is no other force so destructive of human solidarity as the separative tendencies inherent in every organized religion. "The chief cause of nearly two-thirds of the evils that pursue humanity, ever since that cause became a power is religion under whatever form and in whatever nation—the religion of the sacerdotal caste, of the priesthood, and of the churches. Ignorance created gods and cunning took advantage of opportunity. The sum of human misery will never be diminished unto that day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of Truth, Morality, and Universal Charity the altars of these false gods." Thus wrote a great Indian Sage. The different religions inculcate the propitiation of half-gods ; dethrone them and Gods arrive who promulgate RELIGION by which man lives and labours in knowledge. The plea of Professor Sarma is a Theosophical one : the mystic element in each religion enthrones self-effort to emancipation and enlightenment and rejects the intermediary, the priest, between man and deity, these two being but different aspects of the One Life. Attention is drawn to two extracts on the preceding page.—EDS.]

Here are two books* before us which seek to appraise some of the great religions of the world.

The first is an honest attempt to describe the essentials of almost all religions ancient and modern.

The second is only an indirect attempt to discredit the peoples of India in the eyes of other nations, and may be dismissed at once without any further comment.

The former raises the interesting question of the value and importance of the comparative study of religions. In recent years many books have been written on this subject. The general reader in Europe and America nowadays wants to know something about the great historical religions, if only to congratulate himself on the possession of a faith which is so manifestly superior to all other religions. The demand is met by enterprising publishers who employ an author or a group of authors, some of whom may be specialists, for the work. The authors thus called upon to describe all the religions under the sun forthwith begin to read the available handbooks and supplement the information given in them by spicy or picturesque details offered by travellers or missionaries or interested journalists. The result is perhaps a charming book which will delude the reader into great self-complacency and semblance of culture. Meanwhile the poor Hindus,

1. *Procession of the Gods*. By G. G. ATKINS. (Constable & Co., London. 15*s*.)
2. *The Religions and Hidden Cults of India*. By Sir GEORGE MACMUNN. (Sampson Low, Marston & Co., London. 15*s*.)

Buddhists and Muhammadans whose religions are caricatured can only smile at the amazing ignorance and arrogance of the Western writers. To exaggerate some of the ugly features of Eastern religions, to confuse their essentials with their excrescences, to persist in looking at the roots of their institutions and not at the fruits, and above all to judge Christianity alone by its ideals and all other religions by their practices—this is not the way to arrive at truth in religion or to find out what religion has done for man in various countries of the world. But generally this has been the way followed by many occidental writers who pretend to make a comparative study of religions.

A better and a more hopeful way—the true Aryan path—is that of the students of mysticism. From the records of the inner lives of the saints and mystics of all religions we are able to see that there is a common path of light which all have trodden. It seems to lie like a steel frame behind all types of religious structures. The skeleton is the same, the flesh covering it varies in texture and the skin above the flesh varies in colour. If all religions are examined according to the light they throw on the various stages of the mystic way and grouped accordingly, we shall not only arrive at the right principle of their classification but shall also be in a position to see their relative merits and, what is most important, their inner unity.

The mystic way—"the flight of the Alone to the Alone"—has, as every student of mysticism knows, some more or less definitely marked stages. It begins with a great unrest of the soul which leads to the awakening, technically called Conversion. After the awakening the soul passes through a period of self-discipline and purification to the stage of Illumination in which it is able to live for a much longer time in the higher states of consciousness. After that it passes through the many trials incidental to contemplative life and reaches the Unitive stage in which it lives in union with the Great Self and is able to reconcile within itself profound peace and incessant activity. These are the well-known traditional stages of the inner way traversed by all mystics.

Now, if we take the mystic path as our guiding line in examining the religions of the world, we first come across the primitive religions, in which there is a vague sense of the Divine Spirit all around but no sense of any moral or spiritual values. Fetishism and totemism, animism and ancestor-worship, all belong to the pre-awakening period. They belong to the childhood of the race and are still practised by tribes which have not outgrown their spiritual infancy.

After the awakening we have the long process of purification in which the emerging ethical values are carefully conserved. Here might therefore be grouped all the religions in which a code of ethics

is all in all—Taoism, Southern Buddhism, Jainism, etc. Other religions also have their ethics but they subordinate it to their faith in Deity. In the matter of ethics all religions are practically unanimous. Virtues are the same in every religion. Only the emphasis is different. If Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism emphasize the virtues of detachment, self-control and non-violence, Christianity emphasizes humility, service and love, Zoroastrianism emphasises purity and charity, and Islam emphasises equality and brotherhood. Each religion has its own commands and cardinal virtues, but that does not mean that the other aspects of moral life are ignored. On the other hand, we find that all virtues are brought under a few headings known as cardinal virtues. Thus with regard to ethics there is unity underlying all religions, though the distribution of emphasis confers an individuality on them.

Now passing from the purificatory stage to the illuminative stage we see that a number of theistical religions belong here—Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Northern Buddhism, Vaishnavism, Saivism, Christianity and Islam. All of them recognise a source of light and life and help to establish an emotional relation between that and the striving soul. But each of them visualises the source in its own way. Each regards it as a Personality whose attributes are revealed to the loving hearts of the worshippers either independently or through the medium of a prophet, saviour, Avatar or Bodhisattva. Men's devotions and their counterpart, the grace of God, are fundamental to this group. But the difference lies in name and form. Just as in the earlier stage we have seen ethical religions derive their individuality from the distribution of emphasis, so here we have to recognise that theistical religions derive their individuality from the name and form with which they seek to invest the Formless and the Nameless. Traditional concepts regarding the attributes of God, often made concrete by means of symbols, play a great part in fixing the form of the Deity in the minds of the followers of theistical religions.

Finally, passing from the illuminative stage and escaping the many pitfalls incidental to contemplative life, the mystic reaches the unitive stage where God is no longer an object of devotion but an inward light. Here belong the higher and the mystical phases of all great religions—Vedanta, Mahayana Buddhism, Christian Mysticism, Sufism, etc. It is a question of experience here as it was a question of emphasis and form in the first two stages. Some types of mystical religions represent the relation between the soul of man and the spirit of God as one of proximity, some as of resemblance, and some as of identity. And it is mainly from this representation that they derive their individuality. But all the other features of the uni-

tive stage are common to them—a sense of profound peace, of complete spiritual freedom and of irrefutable authority.

Thus the mystic way is our surest guide in our examination of all historical religions. Obviously that religion is the best which gives us help of the best kind in all the stages of our spiritual journey according to the growing needs of our souls. All the great religions of the world have their own accents of moral life, their own forms of worship and their own mystical doctrines which give them their individuality. Some are strong in a few particulars and weak in others. A perfect and impeccable religion is only an ideal like a perfect language. For religions and languages are not produced *in vacuo*. They are organic growths in which the evolving spirit utilises, according to the needs of the moment, the physical, psychological and historical materials that it finds in its surroundings. Therefore the task of one who wants to make a comparative study of religions is similar to that of one who makes a comparative study of languages. What do we think of an English philologist who in his admiration for the growth and structure of his own language, for its wonderful flexibility, its simplicity of grammar and its machinery of word-order pronounces Greek and Latin as clumsy, antiquated and barbarous? What do we think of his logic when he argues that the virtues which gleam only fitfully in the classical languages shine with full effulgence in modern English? But what we regard as ridiculous in the field of comparative philology we have not yet learnt to regard as ridiculous in the field of comparative religion. How many books are there written by Christian scholars who scoff at Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam because they are not like Christianity! And how many zealous missionaries are there who argue with a singular lack of humour that Christianity is the crown of Hinduism, or Buddhism or Islam!

Meanwhile the duty of those who study religions other than their own, not in a spirit of superciliousness but of reverence, not with a view to supplant them but to supplement their own, is clear. We want light and guidance at every point of our spiritual journey from "conversion" to "deification". And if the scriptures of a so-called alien religion give us greater light and better guidance at one point than those of our own religion, we should reverently utilise them and assimilate their teaching. If a Hindu, for instance, feels that in some things the New Testament gives him better guidance than the *Bhagavad-Gita* in leading a spiritual life, he should thankfully accept the teaching. Similarly if a Christian feels that in some respects the Upanishads give a clearer interpretation of his religious exeperience and provide him with a loftier conception of God than the New Testament, he should

thankfully accept the help. In the kingdom of Spirit there is no question of "mine" and "thine"! Is there a question of "mine" and "thine" in the utilization of scientific discoveries? Do we not use the steam-engine, the motor car, the telephone, and the wireless irrespective of the nationality of the inventors? Mystics, saints and prophets are after all only scientists who explore the laws of the spiritual universe, make experiments in the laboratory of their souls and invent devices for the speedier march of the human spirit on the highways of the Lord. So to whatever age or nationality they belong their teachings are among humanity's permanent possessions and have to be thankfully accepted and assimilated by all. It is a mistake to look upon the immortal scriptures of other religions than our own as only interesting curios. Even a mere intellectual appreciation of them is not enough. Their practical value in applied religion has to be sought and sought assiduously. Just as we utilise all modern inventions and discoveries without a thought of their origins, so should we use the world-scriptures irrespective of their origins for the enriching of our spiritual life from day to day. Very little is gained by a mere academic study, for instance, of all the books in the 'Sacred Books of the East' series or the 'Wisdom of the East' series, and less by a superficial reading of modern compilations giving information about all the religions under the sun, and least of all by the irreligious and ignorant denunciations of other religions than one's own because they belong to a different type.

D. S. SARMA

Ideals of Hinduism. By KASHI NATH. (D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., Bombay. Rs. 4.)

On the whole this is an interesting and thoughtful survey despite many hasty and often contradictory statements. The author deals with the evolution of Hinduism and beginning from Rigvedic times traces the course of Hindu society upto the present crisis when "a new ferment has started within Hinduism itself which is more potent for the destruction of Hindu religion than any it has faced so far". Till now religious influence predominated in the lives of the people, and time after time in its concept of the Divine and in the ideas of its Gods, Hinduism asserted its greatness, and its Wisdom.

Self-aggrandisement is rapidly increasing, and women copy men in this as in the blind imitation of the West. In these the author sees the irrevocable doom of Hinduism: "A sudden overwhelming flood when things believed to be firm as mountains are found gone in the course of a night; and what has taken its place. . . . . nothing whatever." "No man or nation ever grew to greatness solely by copying others," but by strength of character. Spiritual education is India's crying need; renunciation not of the world, but of the heart, her way to greatness and glory. That alone, states the author, can save India.

N. K.

The Co-operative Movement in India. By ELEANOR M. HOUGH, Ph. D. (P.S. King & Son, Ltd., London. 15*s.*)

The most alarming problem of the present-day India is the poverty of its masses. The annual average income of the Indians *per capita* has been calculated as Rs. 57, and in the jail administration annual food expense of prisoners per head is taken to be Rs. 90. This very fact glaringly indicates how the Indians live a life of actual starvation. In fact, more than two-thirds of the vast population of India live in a chronic state of famine. To talk to them of higher things or ideals of life is nothing short of a grim tragedy.

To effect a lasting improvement in the condition of the 90% of Indian population that live in the villages, nothing can be more useful than the Co-operative Movement. It may not be a panacea for all the ills of life of our rural population but it has potentiality. Co-operative Movement does not mean only the starting of Co-operative Credit Societies, as is wrongly supposed by many; it can be turned into a potent factor of rural reconstruction in many important aspects. Co-operative Movement is not an economic organization only; it is "the village *panchayat* modernised in a sense, functioning as a council of elders, arranging for finance, purchase, and sale, as also for sanitation, medical relief, cattle insurance, life insurance, social reform, and not merely in theory but in actual practice carrying out a policy of rural reconstruction". The greatly useful *panchayat* system in our rural areas has broken; it is doubtful whether we can get it back. But the Co-operative Movement may be a substitute for that to a great extent.

In order to succeed it must be a spontaneous movement *of the people*. The Co-operative Movement has not made much headway in India chiefly because it has beeen sponsored by the Government, and the Government officials working it find it difficult to show or fail to prove that their interest is identical with that of the people. Therefore the Movement is not even now receiving as much sympathy from the general populace as it should. This can be remedied through the education of public opinion.

The present volume, giving details of the working of the Co-operative Movement in India—its origin and growth, its weaknesses and possibilities—will be of invaluable help to all who want to work in that field. The writer, though a foreigner, seems to have spared no pains to make a thorough study of the subject and she has been eminently successful. She has consulted innumerable authorities on the subject and not being content with mere book-knowledge has discussed the matter with many persons who have direct and personal experiences of the Movement. In fact, we are astonished to see the amount of labour she has bestowed in writing the book. And above all, she has that outlook of sympathy which is necessary for understanding properly a foreign country and its people.

It would be a disservice to the Indian to cause him to substitute for his ideal of contentment with little, the common Western concept of happiness as dependent on the satisfaction of an increasing number of wants, but there can be no objection to arousing such legitimate desires as those, for example, for the condition indispensable for health and a modicum of comfort.

No thinking person with India's good at heart would wish her to surrender her spiritual heritage in exchange for the civilization of the West in its totality, but, just as the West has much to learn from India of philosophy and spiritual attitude towards life, so India stands in need of the best the West has achieved in the conquest of physical nature. India's task is to discover the middle ground between spurning material comfort and prosperity and regarding them as ends in themselves. If she can find the way to prosperity without ceasing to regard material things as, at best, but means to the end of a deeper and fuller life, the background against which is enacted the perennial drama of soul evolution, she will have laid the world under an incalculable debt.

It is so true!

The book contains a valuable foreword and an Introduction from two authoritative writers.

PAVITRANANDA

Illustrated Magic. By OTTAKER FISCHER. With Introduction by FULTON OURSLER. Translated and edited by J.B. MUSSEY and FULTON OURSLER. (The Macmillan Co., New York. 25*s*.)

For the student of Theosophy the interest of this work is not to be found in any light which it is able to throw on esoteric science, but rather in the presentation of the views of the practitioners of the "ancient and honourable art of humbuggery" upon those occult phenomena of which the efforts of the modern conjurer are more or less plausible imitations. Within its covers the mysteries of scores of the tricks which form the stock-in-trade of the professional entertainer are disclosed.

It is rather amusing, in these days, when telepathy is coming to be recognised as an established fact not only by psychical researchers, but by scientists generally, to find the author reluctant even to admit the possibility of the genuineness of the phenomenon. "There have been so many failures . . . as to justify the suspicion that the successes were merely lucky coincidence." It may be readily conceded however, that for the purposes of public entertainment a secret and elaborate code on the lines of that given in the present volume is absolutely essential.

Some of the "explanations" offered are far more ingenious than convincing. One way to read the contents of a sealed envelope is secretly to rub the surface with a small sponge dipped in alcohol ! *Odourless* alcohol ?

The carrying out accurately of actions mentally commanded by another can be done, it is stated, by "*anyone* who is capable of grasping the motile impulses of the guide" or willer. It is all so simple !

Coming to the achievements of the Indian fakirs and kindred wonder-workers, the author is driven to the admission that "think what we will of the supernormal performances of the fakirs one thing we cannot doubt ; the fakirs have an extensive knowledge of hypnotism and suggestion, and of this knowledge they make conscious and unlimited use. Many reports borne out by photographs have given undeniable indications of this ; observers claim to have seen occurrences which did not later appear on films exposed at the time."

Accepting the statement that the fakirs and yogis make "unlimited use" of a deep and extensive knowledge of hypnotic science it is a matter of surprise to find the *mango trick* dismissed as "an insignificant affair" based on the art of palming. Still more incredible is the story which is related in regard to the performance of an Egyptian variation of this illusion. The fakir, it is said, "used little trees with hollowed-out branches. In the cavities, invisible to the spectators, were leaf-grasshoppers, whose wings looked almost exactly like tree-leaves. The fakir first showed the 'tree' bare ; on command, it became covered with leaves. The trick was that he caused the grasshoppers to leave their hiding places, whereupon, sitting quiet on the twigs, they looked precisely like leaves." The secret whereby the grasshoppers are "caused to leave their hiding places" on command is not disclosed !

The endeavour is also made to fit a mechanical explanation to the "almost mythical rope trick," one of the illusions which lend themselves most readily to explanation along the lines of mass suggestion. It is not necessary to stress the fact that India is the home of occult science. The West has yet to discover the tremendous power latent in a trained will harnessed with a vivid imagination. The rope trick, according to Madame Blavatsky, is without doubt an exhibition of collective hallucination. "Who doubts," she says in *Isis Unveiled*, "but that it is an illusion or *maya*. . . .? But when such an illusion can be forced on, say, ten thousand people at the same time, as we have seen it performed during a public festival, surely the means by which such an astounding hallucination can be produced merits the attention of science".

H. P. B. also testifies to the genuineness of the phenomenon occasionally

exhibited of burial alive for a lengthy period. Witnesses of unimpeachable integrity are cited, amongst them Captain Osborne, author of *Camp and Court of Ranjit Singh* who tells how a fakir was buried alive for six weeks in a box placed in a cell three feet underground. In order to prevent deception, sentries, relieved every two hours, were detailed to stand guard night and day. When the body was resuscitated, "I called to a medical gentleman," says Captain Osborne, "and he could discover no pulsation in the heart, the temples, or the arm. There was, however a heat about the region of the brain which no other part of the body exhibited". Among the preparations for burial may be mentioned the swallowing of the tongue which, a fakir told H. P. B., "was done not only to prevent the action of the air upon the organic tissues, but also to guard against the deposit of the germs of decay . . . "

Again the phenomenon received scant credence from the conjurer, the author declaring that "deliberate deception was found in several instances. Often the fakirs were buried near hollow trees, from which tunnels led to the buried persons, so that the air supply was unhindered". To compare the voluntary suspension of animation by an application of the hidden laws of nature, with the admittedly daring and clever efforts of Houdini to imitate them, is nevertheless to degrade the "ancient and honourable" title of "magician". Magic, now synonymous with mere trickery, is, as Madame Blavatsky declares, as old as man, and, to quote *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. I, p. 25) once more, formerly "was considered a divine science, which led to a participation in the attributes of divinity itself".

HARRY J. STRUTTON

The Mind of Leonardo da Vinci. By EDWARD MCCURDY. (Jonathan Cape, London. 4*s.* 6*d.*)

Leonardo da Vinci. By CLIFFORD BAX. (Peter Davies, London. 5*s.*)

Francis I, King of France, was perhaps a bad man, as the local parson estimates morality; but he was undeniably a clever one. He said of Leonardo, who adorned his court, that he was sure there had never come into the world a man who knew so much. Leonardo's portraits, at Windsor and Turin, make one feel that saying might be true—and in far greater measure than the king, with even his limited culture, could imagine. Especially the Turin drawing shows a face as it were of Wisdom here incarnate.

Mr. Edward McCurdy, in his admirable book, sighs for some Pisgah where should stand revealed "the alp-like statue of the man whose measure of universality in mental gifts has no equal". Lacking a Pisgah, we can at least get him and Mr. Clifford Bax to lead us near the promised land. Hoisting us on their shoulders, they can give us a glimpse of this Master of humanity in human form. The paintings, drawings, and, above all, the manuscripts of Leonardo are by no means easily accessible; in these hurrying days, how shall we be too grateful to men whose intellect and industry have brought us such a view?

Mr. McCurdy claims for Leonardo that he took all knowledge as his province; but, as he says, we can only examine a few facets of the beryl. At least we have the ***manuscripts***, in the thousands of pages of which "he has left the mirror of his thoughts".

Leonardo was the man of whom a contemporary said: "in his appearance there was such radiance of beauty that the sight of him made sorrowful hearts glad". He was at once a painter, sculptor, architect, musician, engineer, anatomist, geographer, botanist, astronomer, geologist, chemist, mathematician: and, let us add, philosopher. In each domain of study he distinguished himself —in some he was pre-eminent. The wonder-man of his age, he has baffled the enquiring spirits of posterity as no other man has done. What was his

secret?

Mr. McCurdy leaves us to guess that for ourselves—without reminding us, like Mr. Bax, that "all Leonardists in the end go mad". He treats Leonardo's life as a kind of obstacle race: points out the size and height of the various hurdles one by one, repeating constantly that only a super-man could have cleared them at all but that Leonardo did so with ease—and in incredible numbers. He does his work efficiently, but the *why* and *wherefore* he leaves alone.

Mr. Bax, on the other hand, not deterred by the threat of lunacy, skims lightly over the obstacles and settles down to reconsider the race as a whole. *Why* did Leonardo run it? What were his motives and whence his great success?

Mr. Bax is notoriously light on his spiritual feet; he follows his hero nimbly through a maze of ingenious suggestions, coming out the other side with a theory plausible enough to receive our serious attention. It would be unfair to reveal it here. But we would venture to suggest that the secret of Leonardo's life is more likely to unfold itself to the eye of a mystic than to that of an art-critic or psycho-analyst. Mr. Bax is his old brilliant self in this delightful essay, but he is at heart a mystic of no mean order; we are inclined to think he could have taken us deeper than he does.

Leonardo was a great humanitarian. He refused to make public a method which he discovered for remaining a long time under water, "because of the evil nature of man who would use it for assassinations under the sea". He condemned all war as a "bestial passion". He was essentially a man of the Spirit; coarseness and brutalities of the material plane bruised and hurt his fastidious mind. The horror of inflicting pain was such as to lead him to be a vegetarian, is to be inferred from a reference which occurs in a letter sent by Andrea Corsali to Giuliano de' Medici, in which, after telling him of an Indian race called Gujerats who neither eat anything that contains blood nor permit any injury to any living creature, he adds *like our Leonardo da Vinci*.

On one occasion, Leonardo apostrophises, in his most solemn terms, the mankind which all around him he saw at war:—

> And thou, man, who by these my labours dost look upon the marvellous works of nature, if thou judgest it to be an atrocious act to destroy the same, reflect that it is an infinitely atrocious act to take away the life of man. For thou shouldst be mindful that though what is thus compounded seem to thee of marvellous subtlety, it is as nothing compared with the soul that dwells within this structure; and in truth, whatever this may be, it is a divine thing which suffers it thus to dwell within its handiwork at its good pleasure, and wills not that thy rage or malice should destroy such a life, since he, in truth, who values it not, does not deserve it.

Orthodox religion, in any form, he abominated, as representing the causes of humbug and sham. His MSS. are written in looking-glass script with the left-hand—to be unreadable to those not in the secret. He feared a charge of heresy from the clerics if his views were known—with the then consequent results of torture and death. No doubt his vast scientific knowledge led to unorthodox views; but, no doubt also, he was confirmed in them by his reading of Eastern works, *the books of Avicenna* among others. And there is reason to believe that he himself visited the East as a young man.

The world, according to Mr. Bax, is too old now for its childish joy in poetry and art. Our friends—most of them—are too old in mind. They are too far in advance of the poetic phase in human development. Poetry is too simple to satisfy their puzzle-loving mentality. It may be so. But the Kingdom of Heaven is for little children—and some there are in this age who are "born again" to that estate. They would be well content to meet the great Leonardo striding through Renascence Italy, his splendid form wrapped in his pink cloak, his golden hair glittering in the sun, his eyes fixed on Eternity. What would they not give to watch the painting of *The Last Supper* or his unearthly *Virgin of the Rocks*: pictures which

no artist has excelled before or since—and to hear his voice ring out over his silver lute or let fall words of wisdom and prophecy that to this day enrich the world? Perhaps someday the opportunity will come. Mr. Bax quotes Socrates most aptly in bidding him adieu:—

> Never fear that a soul which has been thus nurtured, and has had these pursuits, will at her departure from the body be scattered and blown away by the winds and be nowhere and nothing.

R. A. L. ARMSTRONG

The Cross and Indian Thought. By V. CHAKKARAI, B.A., B.L. (Christian Literature Society for India. Madras. Re. 1/4.)

The book expounds the central teaching of Christianity about the Cross in the light of Indian religious thought so as to make its meaning and value clear to the modern mind in India. The author feels that not only a work of the type of Bishop Butler's *Analogy of Religion* should be produced which would serve the same unique purpose for the Indian Church as did Butler's for the Western Church in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in its religious life, but that the present situation in India further demands a more radical restatement of Christianity, and by writing this treatise he modestly claims to have only paved the way for such reconstruction in future.

The book has been a further addition to the stock of Christian religious literature of the orthodox type. Jesus, is represented in the usual orthodox way as *the* Avatar, *the* Redeemer, the Manifestation of God to work out the salvation of mankind. He is not to be taken as the efflorescence of the world-movement, or as the product of *Karma*. The author seems to have misinterpreted the doctrine of *Karma* or the eternal law of cause and effect. His endeavour in this treatise has been rather in a subtle way to show the superiority of Christianity. But such a claim, like that of any other creed-follower, fails to serve its purpose. The figure of Jesus has no greater attraction than that of any other Avatar nor is organised Christianity free of faults any more than other organised religions. The book, nevertheless, contains a clear and lucid exposition of the author's viewpoint and should have a special appeal to those who share his religious convictions.

J. K. M.

The Lady of the Boat. By LADY MURASAKI. The Fifth Part of *The Tale of Genji.* Translated by ARTHUR WALEY. (Allen and Unwin. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

Mr. Arthur Waley is nearing the completion of his translation of the *Genji Monogatari*, by Lady Murasaki, and the publication of the sixth volume will see the end of a task of rendering into English a Japanese work of fifty-four books, comprising 4234 pages, and the close study of Motoori's nine-volume commentary, the *Tama no Ogushi*. The difficulties of rendering obsolete Japanese into the English language without losing the curious fragrance of the original text is an achievement beyond praise. Mr. Arthur Waley has succeeded so well that he must rank with the few great translators of Eastern literature. Not the opulence of the *Arabian Nights*, the pessimism of Omar Khayyam, the sensuousness of Hafiz, the asceticism of Chomei, but a glowing beauty that reflected the life of the Japanese Court at Kyoto during part of the Heian period. In this work we find close and intimate observation of human character: the scented and polished surface of exquisite refinement and the deeper places of the heart. Like jewels threaded across the pages we delight to discover poems in praise of blossom, snow, moon, dew, mountains: a lover's message distilled into a brief and elegant verse. The love of life is here, and it is sheltered, urbane,

aesthetic: life gently modulated as if it held no more than a spray of flowers or autumn leaves, a gracious song played at the right moment by a cultured musician. It was life that seemed composed of colour and perfume and refined accomplishments when in England, with Canute for king, we were little better than barbarians.

If we must classify the *Genji Monogatari* as a romance primarily concerned with the many love affairs of Prince Genji, it is beneath the surface, much more than a series of amorous adventures. What will impress discerning readers of this classic, rich and fine enough to be bound by no nationality, is its beauty. Read almost where you will, in the first volume or the fifth which has just been published, there is loveliness of some kind. Not a loveliness that shouts and sings, but a beauty touched with melancholy, with what the Japanese call "the ah-ness of things".

Lady Murasaki was a devout Buddhist. As a lady-in-waiting at Court she was able to observe and record a most amazing pageant we cannot find elsewhere. Never for a moment was she deceived by the glitter of Court life. She knew it to be no more than a bubble of sea foam, and human love, with all its passionate vows and poems on tinted paper, unstable as running water. She knew, too, the power of Karma, the wisdom of withdrawal from life and the blessedness of the teaching of the Lord Buddha.

There is a Japanese poem which reads: "Would that my sleeve were wide enough to cover the spaces of the sky; then should the wind no longer at his pleasure scatter the flowers in Spring." That was the poignant cry of Murasaki, and in *The Lady of the Boat* and other parts of *The Tale of Genji* we realise that the Japanese sleeve, with all its beauty of colour and design was never wide enough to shut out the folly and sorrow of a human heart.

HADLAND DAVIS

Osiris: A study in Myths, Mystery and Religion. By H. P. COOKE, M. A. (The C. W. Daniel Company. 5*s.*)

The life of the soul in God and the story of its deep experience has been portrayed in later Schools of Western Mysticism under the symbology of a Second Birth, a Life of Regeneration, a Mystical Death, a Resurrection and an *Ascensio Mentis vel Animae in Deo.* It is implied here and there in Catholic Mysticism, but was adopted more expressly and developed in later types, among the followers of Jacob Böhme and by Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. It is the life of Christ in the soul and the life of the soul in Christ. There is no question that the emblematical representation corresponds literally with the states and stages of the soul's experience on the path of return to God, answering after its own manner to the Eastern recovered knowledge of the Unity. I have been looking all my life for the analogies of this figurative connotation in the annals of the past; and as a student of the Instituted Mysteries there is perhaps no need to add that the doctrine of Rebirth therein and the dramatic presentations of the Death and Resurrection of the God suggested identical experience in pre-Christian days, outside the written records of old. Like others before me, I was brought after this manner into contact with those explanatory hypotheses of the Mysteries which supposed that the Candidate for Initiation took the part of the God in Ritual; that in him the God died and in him also arose. When Mrs. Atwood wrote her *Suggestive Enquiry* into what was termed by her the "Hermetic Mystery" she believed that Adept Hierophants put the Candidate into deep trance and that his soul was led therein through states of inward experience to intellection of the Supreme Oneness. She did not express it thus clearly, for she was bewrayed amidst a cloud of words and images derived from later Platonists; but it was and is easy to see that her thesis was false at the root, for it is not by travelling in the spirit vision or by induced illumination that the mystical end is attained. It is a work in

one's own life. So also it has been easy to see that a later and greater scholarship which still explains the Mysteries as presenting in pageants the story of seedtime and harvest, is reducing them to a hollow show and writes out at full length the judgment of Thomas de Quincey when he affirmed that the Mysteries were the chief imposture of the classical world.

But if seedtime and harvest are the story of the soul in incarnation, life, growth and the great harvesting of death; if that harvesting leads on to other life, symbolised ritually by the ear of corn exhibited in pregnant silence, as if among the Gods in their Olympus, then the Mysteries are not a cheat but at least the showing of a vision. And if the birth, death and resurrection of the God are the story of the soul awakening from sense-illusions to an apprehension of the Great Reality; if the Death of the God is significant of the soul dying to all that itself can perish; and if the Resurrection is to life in God, then the Mysteries in their own day and after their own manner portrayed the story of the soul which dies to earthly things, that it may rise to the knowledge and attainment of those that are eternal. Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Proclus—these and the rest of them—testifying to the import of the Mysteries, as understood by them, encourage us to look at the Rites from a point of view like this; but they have left us no evidence that the experience of Candidates was more than that of Minor activities and witness in great ceremonial pageants, in shows that shewed. They took part in processsions, they bore the thyrsus, they went through lustrations; but there was nothing individual. For the rest, having seen and heard, they carried away that which they could and chose.

As regards the Second Birth, Initiation was its actuating cause, by the hypothesis of the whole procedure, whatever the Mythos presented. As regards Figurative Death Mr. A. P. Cooke reminds us, in his study of Osiris, which has occasioned these present reflections, that, according to Julius Firmicus Maternus, "the intending *Mystes* of Attis was admitted as *Moriturus*"—one who is about to die. Obviously, however, the part which he took in the spectacles could communicate nothing automatically. How should Alkibiades, for example, profit by a Figurative Death? As much and as little as many and most of those who pass through the death and raising of the Craft Degrees in Masonry. The Initiations of Eleusis are distinct mythologically, but they took place in crowds, and there is nothing to indicate that even its Greater Mysteries were imparted to a few only, and much less personally to each Postulant. Mr. Cooke presents a talismanic speculation on the Neophyte of alleged Egyptian Rites "acting the part of the deity"; but there is no evidence before us, except that he quotes John Yarker, who wrote long years ago a chaotic volume, entitled *Arcane Schools*, and it was published towads the end of his life by Tait of Belfast. Yarker was one of my correspondents in those days, and so also was the excellent William Oxley who paid a visit to Egypt and returned with revelations which impressed Yarker and no one else presumably in the wide world of research. It is difficult to believe one's eyes when Oxley and Yarker are cited in Mr. Cooke's pages as authorities on Eyptian Antiquities or on any of the Mystery Schools except Freemasonry in the case of him who wrote about *Arcane Schools*. Even on that subject which he had followed in every direction, his contributions are stultified by fantastic hypotheses and by omission of references which would enable his statements to be checked.

Mr. Cooke, who is otherwise of interest, fails threfore—but inevitably—on the most vital point of his thesis; and the subject must be left at this point. There is nothing to help us in the collections of Sir James Fraser on the dying God, or in the research of Sir Wallis Budge on *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection*. I remember with gratitude M. Henri Graillot and his *Culte de Cybèle* in Rome and the Roman Empire. The Candidates for simple Initiation in

these Mysteries were many (p. 174); but the Rite of Enthronement at the last and highest state (p. 184) presupposes a single *mystes*. Unfortunately they are not of our concern in the present connection. It remains that the Birth, Death and Resurrection of the God in Ritual cannot be affirmed to portray those states and stages of the soul's experience to which I referred at the beginning. A little mixed and confusing, they offered their own lesson of a blessed life hereafter in Elysian Fields. So also the mythological pageants of other Mysteries conveyed analogous messages; but at their best and highest—as it seems to me—the Epopt's Vision of the God has little at this day to tell those who are in search of the Union. Above all, in those rare cases when the Epopt became the God, M. Graillot makes evident unawares how far from the authentic term was the Candidate's spectacular Enthronement.

A. E. WAITE

A History of Fire and Flame. By OLIVER C. DE C. ELLIS. (The Poetry Lovers' Fellowship. Simpkin Marshall, London. 15s.)

Poet and scientist, Dr. Ellis has given us an unusual book. He has gone so far in getting behind the differences of vocabulary that he has been able to communicate something of the rapture that follows the discovery of a more unified and unifying point of view, the rapture that transforms and lights up platitudes and everyday taken-for-granted things.

Though he has not fully realized the knowledge of the ancients, he has to see it as "a coincidence of the most extraordinary kind that where the ancients conceived an outer cosmic shell of thin 'Fire' we have found an outer 'stratosphere' whose tenuous outer limits are pure hydrogen". And while he traces the production of fire and power from the early days down through the smoke of coal and oil and gas, polluting and darkening the air, on to the present-day "cleanly cosmic power" of Electricity, the flaming Unicorn—yet his scope does not include the still higher aspects of the energy of fire, the Akasa of the Hindus. Perhaps that is asking too much.

The book opens thus: "Man's first consciousness was of One, and ever and again in the spiral progress of his history he returns to the consciousness of One. At each return it is to a higher conception." So fire, or energy, is one; fire, the primal matter, in all its three transformations, gaseous, liquid, solid,—in other words, fire, air, water, earth; fire, the fuel, fire the producing energy, chemical, mechanical or radiant, fire, the resultant force; fire, "the spirit in prison" the first principle of organic growth, fire, the "band of union," the prime cause of cohesion, fire also manifest in disintegration and strife; and so on, with a wealth of detail from Greek Roman, Egyptian and ancient American.

The second idea is that of duality; fire-water, sun-moon, heat-cold, light-dark, good-evil, macrocosm-microcosm, every thing or concept having its opposite pole, yet each member of the pairs of opposites having its own lesser polarity; the sun was friendly or cruel as Saturn, the moon beneficent or maleficent; fire was pure or impure, celestial or terrestrial; and so on, in infinite divisibility of positive and negative. So modern science finds that "No phenomenon nowadays can be considered as completely explained in terms of molecular behaviour, however, or even of atomic behaviour" the explanation being electrical. The water molecule, for example, is polar, and by adding such polar molecules to a mixture of inflammable gases, the process of combustion may be aided. "It is the old alliance of Fire with its dearest enemy."

The third idea is that of the trinity: the sulphur, mercury, salt of the Alchemists; spirit, soul and body; hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen; these three are also found in the previous aspects of Unity. Science, with the help of the technical refinements of photography finds that

the production of a flame is also threefold; 1) rise in temperature with flameless combustion and partial oxidation producing 2) an explosive mixture of gases which ignite 3) as a visible flame. Again "in every gas explosion, there are these three phenomena, a wind travelling through the burned gas, a wind of opposite direction travelling through the unburned gases, and the radiant shell of luminous gas where the two winds stand back to back as they blow." This "radiant self-blown bubble," whose photo is shown, is strikingly reminiscient of the Brahmanical Golden Egg of the World, and the Cosmos as the Son of the two forces, centrifugal, centripetal, that transfer it from subjectivity into objectivity.

This brings us to the strangest point about the book. Apparently Dr. Ellis has not yet discovered that the Eastern writings and the records gathered by H. P. Blavatsky are full of information about Fire. Indeed they broaden the vision and link up the knowledge of the ages still more than this book can do, since it deals chiefly with phenomenal fire,—it suggests, for example, that the secret of the philosopher's stone was simply the production of oxygen. Its author writes in one place that "an intuition, inherently poetic, commonly precedes the factual proofs of science," and in writing of the noumenal intelligence of fire, the Fire of Mind, the Fire of Soul, he himself seems to show rather the intuitional sensing of the poet than the self-conscious knowledge of the scientist. Yet the fiery science of the soul is as capable of factual proof as the science of the phenomenal world. Perhaps Dr. Ellis will make the experiment. With *The Secret Doctrine*, the Puranas and other Indian works, as fuel for his ideation, his next book should be still more vividly 'illumined'.

W. W.

The Zohar (The Book of the Splendour.) By Dr. ARIEL BENSION (George Routledge, London. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

The Zohar. Translated by HARRY SPERLING and MAURICE SIMON. (The Soncino Press, London.)

Nothing could be more gratifying, to the optimist, than the stream of books which pours from the press on mysticism. Publishers are not philanthropists; they are out to make money. The supply, therefore, indicates a growing demand. Since mysticism means an effort to come to terms with Reality, this demand is a sign of serious intention to tackle the problems of life. More than that, since mysticism is universal in outlook, it shows a determination to rise above the barriers of creed, caste and race.

One form of mysticism—the Jewish—has, however, long been neglected—even by the Jews. It is not known to so wide a public as, say, the Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi, or Christian. This Sir Denison Ross points out in his admirable introduction and he suggests that "the reason for this absence of public curiosity with regard to the religious beliefs of the Jews is in a great measure due to our familiarity with their Bible." That is precisely the trouble. The fierce Jehovah of the Old Testament presides over a religion fraught with endless formalities (when it is not drowned in brutality); he suggests nothing so much as a blood-thirsty, domineering old man with occasional lapses of senile indulgence for a favourite and very spoilt child. It never occurs to us to look further; the idea that rich mines of mystic ore are concealed under the cinders of Judaism, is not one that enters our heads.

Yet, in that, we are wrong. Dr. Bension is at pains to prove it in the most remarkable book on the subject that has appeared in the English tongue. Himself a mystic and a great scholar, he succeeds in impressing our minds with his own enthusiasm, lifting us into a new realm of mystical delights. His work is the more timely in that it appears simultaneously with the first complete English translation of *The Zohar.*

What is the *Zohar?* A cabbalistic work written mainly in the Aramaic

language. It takes the form of a commentary on the Pentateuch, and is intended to reveal the hidden meaning of the biblical narrative and the divine commands. "It is a complete thesaurus of Jewish mysticism, theosophy, and occult traditions." Dr. Bension is of the opinion that it was compiled in Spain in the thirteenth century, but that its roots lie far down in the accumulation of ancient Jewish learning and literature. Whatever its origin, it undoubtedly exerted a powerful influence on Jewish medieval life, and helped and guided the race during centuries of persecution and degradation. It inspired some of the greatest mystics of the modern world.

The *Zohar* (known sometimes as the *Bible of the Mystics*) is impregnated with the colour and beauty that tinged Jewish life in the Spanish Peninsula, strengthening the belief that its last revision occurred in that country, where three great faiths—the Jewish, the Christian, and the Mohammedan—developed and brought forth some of the finest fruits of their mystical inspiration. "Warmed by the same sun, nourished by the same original source of Faith, they grew side by side, resembling and influencing each other on the spiritual plane, even as children of one family resemble and influence each other on the physical plane." Yet each made a distinct contribution of its own, and it is with the special contribution of Israel that Dr. Bension's book deals. Clearly mysticism apart, this work is an eminently valuable contribution to the study of comparative religion. It links up three great sources of religious inspiration at a time of travails when a new age was coming painfully to birth. The *Zohar* was a third addition (after the *Bible* and the *Talmud*)—in some ways the greatest—to the spiritual treasure of Israel.

The mysticism that emanated from Spain, Dr. Bension tells us, differed from that of other countries in various ways. The Spanish mystics followed vision with action, believing it to be their duty to purify life and every action of life. The burning love kindled in their hearts at the moment of union with the Infinite, remained to influence their attitude and actions towards their fellowmen. They thought it their duty to express by their actions and mode of living, the brightness, the goodness and the love they had had the good fortune to draw into themselves, thus making their lives an example for less exalted mortals.

All through the *Zohar*, in the description of the creation, the pantheistic idea predominates. God creates and continues to exist in all things: both in the hidden and in the revealed. Both in the seen and in the unseen worlds. Both in physical matter and in spiritual essence. Both in animate and in inanimate objects.

This is a great advance on the usual anthropomorphic quality of Jewish theology. No doubt it is in some degree due to Moslem influence, particularly that of Ibn Arabi, whose works preceded the *Book of the Splendour*. The Arab mystics taught especially—and here the *Zohar* seems to follow them—that ecstasy emanating from the intuition is greater than that emanating from the reason; that there is a universal spirit from which all other spirits are derived; and "that man, who is able to reach the heights by means of his ecstasy, is the most perfect thing in creation".

The *Zohar* interprets the ordinary Bible stories metaphysically. Thus it regards the Garden of Eden as the dwelling-place of the soul in the future life. Adam's nakedness before his fall from grace is the luminous and spiritual nakedness of the soul before coming into this world. Adam's expulsion from the Garden of Eden is the soul's descent to the world of men. The garments of skins with which he covered up his nakedness, are the opaque bodies which cover and tarnish the pure light of the soul. Only virtue can give back to the soul the sublime transparence of its pristine state. Should the soul have failed to find this virtue before leaving the body, it is unable to ascend higher until it has been purified by further tests. This leads us to the question of

re-incarnation. Evidently that doctrine formed part of the teaching of the *Zohar*, for it is mentioned in one of the revelations :—

If the soul which is placed here below fails to take roots, it is withdrawn again and again and transplanted until it has taken root. For the soul which has not achieved its task on earth, is withdrawn and transplanted again on earth. Unhappy is the soul that is obliged to return to earth to repair the mistakes made by the man whose body it animated ! For transmigration is inflicted as a punishment on the soul—a punishment that varies according to the nature of the sins the soul has committed. And every soul that has sinned, must return to earth until, by its perfection, it is able to attain to the sixth degree of the region whence it emanated . . . . . Nor can the soul experience any real joy until it feels itself wearing its own heavenly form once more.

Such is the *Zohar*.

Like all books of the human spirit, which embody the divine quality, this book was destined to become the immortal possession of all humanity, because its truths lie within our own soul. . . . . In the revelations of the *Zohar* men may find his transcendental ego, even as he may find it in the high moments that occur in the visions of the seers, the prophets and the divine singers. Its secrets make the wonders of creation transparent to our eyes, as a house of mysteries seen through glass.

RONALD A. L. ARMSTRONG

CORRESPONDENCE

CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

The feature of the Report of the Commission on Christian Higher Education in India (Oxford University Press), which will be of chief interest to readers of THE ARYAN PATH is the proposal for extra-mural extension of the work of universities and colleges in India. This proposal is put forward both for Christian and non-Christian colleges, as a means of integrating Academe in the life of the masses. The idea is that members of college staffs should be enabled to spend time in research-work, not on academic questions of the ordinary type, but on questions of immediate practical import to the life of India, particularly to the life of the villages. It would be for the college to arrange that the results of such research should be made available to the practical men within whose sphere they fall and whose function it would be to apply them.

As an indication of the kind of work possible in this direction the Report prints in an appendix suggestions made by the staffs of the Training Schools for Rural Teachers at Moga, (Punjab), and Chapra, (Bengal). They suggest among other things research into rural economics, under such headings as :—

Family income of the villager,
Family expenditure of the villager,
Indebtedness of the villager, extent and causes,
Rates of interest,
Forms of Co-operative effort now in use and possible developments.

Other headings under which investigations are suggested include :—

Systems of village government,
Systems of administration of justice,
Systems of credit,
Systems of land tenure,
education, (literacy and illiteracy, psychology etc.), religion, public health and hygiene, nature study and science, the traditions of the people, agriculture and animal husbandry, literature.

This proposal for University extension of a kind applicable to India does seem to open up fruitful possibilities. The commission suggest it as one means of bridging the gulf between the educated classes and the ordinary citizen which has been bridged in England by another

kind of University extension, a gulf which, they say, is greater in India today than ever it was in nineteenth century England. The commission wish very laudably to correct a situation in which, "the University education which is intended to fit men for the higher professions and the Government service does not fit them to understand the actual needs of the ordinary people whom they have to serve".

I was speaking about the report the other day with the Chairman of the Commission, the Master of Balliol, and he mentioned another maladjustment incidental to the university system in India, *viz.* the vast unemployment among graduates and the appalling fact that the average income for a male graduate in India is Rs. 25 per month: (the situation is quite different among women graduates, who are far fewer in number and whose average income is Rs. 250 per month). The situation as it affects male graduates clearly needs to be dealt with by a diminution of the numbers attending university institutions: and this should be done by a raising of the standard of work. The latter aim would be achieved by a broadening of the basis of study, in which the Commission suggest that the Christian colleges should take the lead.

The report is well worth studying by any one who is interested in the Indian university system.

London C. R. KING

JAPAN AND CHINA

I am in complete agreement with the contention of Professor Kiang Kang-Hu in the July issue of THE ARYAN PATH, that China and Japan should endeavour so to direct their policies towards each other as to restore their traditional relations, of old friendship. The brief historical sketch of these old relations as given by the writer calls for some correction, without entering into details.

With reference to Prof. Kiang's explanation of the old Chinese name, O-Nu, for Japan or the Japanese, which he identifies with that of the aborigines of the country, Ainu or Aino, I can only say that I read it with great interest, being much struck with the ingenuity of the hypothesis. Neither have I anything to say against the interesting account of the Hsu-Fu (or in Japanese "Jo-Fuku") expedition, or of the early "colonization" of the Japanese islands by Chinese, Korean, and Malayan adventurers. On the racial composition of the Japanese people, opinion is so widely divided even among scholars and specialists that I will refrain from all comment either in support or in criticism oi Prof. Kiang's view, that "at least three-fourths of the modern Japanese are of Chinese blood, chiefly of the Han race".

With the assured feeling that my sentiment will be shared by all my compatriots, let me now pay my most heartfelt tribute to the Chinese people, or at least to their great ancestors, for the cultural debt which we of the Island Empire have owed them. The enormous obligations under which we find ourselves to our continental neighbours can never be exaggerated, and we are perhaps even more sensible of this fact than is the average Chinese himself. Prof. Kiang is right in his view that the native religion Shinto itself has not escaped Chinese influence, and that our Buddhism is more Chinese than Indian in many senses. As for Confucianism, it is often asserted by Japanese scholars that the true spirit of the Master's teachings lives more in Japan than in his native land. Even in military art before our contact with the West we owed more to the Chinese than is commonly supposed, and our students of tactics still make careful studies of the works of ancient Chinese strategists, such as Wu-tzu and Sun-tzu. In short, it is impossible to imagine a Japan without Chinese guidance in the past.

Having said so much with pleasure and gratitude, I now feel bound to say that many of my compatriots will resent the statement which Prof. Kiang makes on the authority of the "Chinese dynasties histories," to the effect that from 108 B. C. Japan was for centuries "a regular tributary to China". He cites

alleged facts from those records to support his statement. That periodic missions were sent from Japan to the Chinese Court with friendly greetings and gifts, is a fact beyond all dispute. But I seriously doubt the accuracy of the statement, among others, that Japan was required to acknowledge "the supremacy of the Chinese emperor" through her envoys, or "tribute-bearers". The fact must be borne in mind that the Chinese are celebrated for their love of grand *names* for themselves, sometimes even at the expense of actual rights and powers, and further that they have for untold centuries delighted to look upon their own country as the hub of the world. The very name of Chung Hua Min Kuo, or "the Central Flowery People's Country," which they have adopted for their republic founded in the present century, is but an example. They have always loved to regard all the adjacent lands their tributaries or dependencies. Korea was several times brought under Chinese influence in a way and to an extent that Japan never was; but this domination was by no means uninterrupted, and yet the Chinese seem to have looked upon Korea *always* as a dependency, even when their influence was scarcely felt there.

It is true that certain military chiefs in the island of Kyushu, which lies nearest to Korea, sent envoys of homage to China and otherwise acted as tributaries to her in their anxiety to ensure and increase their own influence under Chinese patronage, but the real Japanese Court in Honshu, or the Main Island of Japan, never acknowledged the supremacy of China.

When Hideyoshi, the great Japanese military leader, attempted the conquest of Korea in the 16th century, the Ming dynasty of China sought to pacify him by appointing him "King of Japan". But Hideyoshi grew furious with indignation and tore the letter of appointment, declaring that if he so desired it, he could become what he liked without a word from the Chinese Court, but that none but the direct descendants of the First Emperor of Japan might assume imperial dignity.

Prof. Kiang says that, whereas China has been rid of the feudal system since 221 B. C., Japan lived in it until 1871. That is true, but the Japanese feudal system proper *began* many centuries later than the Chinese—namely, after the system of civil government modelled on the T'ang (Chinese) pattern had begun gradually to decline in efficiency in the 12th or 13th century. Prof. Kiang refers to the fact that Japan has had from time immemorial only one imperial family vested with kingly rights, while all those powerful military leaders, like Hideyoshi, who had the actual reins of government in their hands for centuries prior to the Restoration of Meiji, acted at least in the name of the emperor. This is a unique feature of Japanese history of which we are, I think, rightly proud. It is a fact of great moral significance which cannot be so summarily disposed of as does Prof. Kiang by saying that the imperial house was for ages a mere figurehead. Indeed, its moral importance is more fully felt than explained by the average Japanese, whose reverence for the Imperial House to-day partakes much of the nature of religious sentiment.

With the opinion of Prof. Kiang that Japan and China should "set about, in a spirit of amity, the reconciliation of their differences," I concur most heartily. But would the mere "recollection, by both parties, of the fraternal if not filial relationship which exists between them" be sufficient to induce them to work for the desired restoration of friendship in anything like real earnest? Each must recognize and understand more fully the position and claims of the other.

Yokkaichi, Japan M. G. MORI

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"————————*ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."

HUDIBRAS.

It is an observed fact that often human beings suffer from the defects of their qualities; a virtue exaggerated becomes a weakness. The quality of patience develops into sloth, that of detachment into carelessness, that of resignation into dangerous parasitism. Our civilization based on metal and run by machine has now overreached itself. Especially in the U.S.A., the most prolific mother of machine inventions, the symptoms leave no doubt, and so we hear more voices against human enslavement by machinery intelligently raised there than in any other part of the world.

Mr. Stuart Chase has once again taken field and has commenced a series of articles "A New Deal for America," in *The New Republic*, the first of which appears in the issue of 29th June —"Nemesis of Progress". The following quotations give us the gist of his thought and argument:—

To all intents and purposes, our industrial plant is magnificently completed. We have not only the shoe factories, but the blast furnaces, textile mills, office buildings, wheat fields, automobile establishments, printing shops, pulp mills, coal mines, oil wells, what you will, to turn out a stream of consumers' goods sufficient to overwhelm poverty and immeasurably raise the standard of living. Now! In certain fields we have *overbuilt* beyond any reasonable demand; shoes are one example and woollens another. Yet labour and management, supported by bankers and creditors, supported in turn by savings seeking profitable investment, go on rearing the capital structure to the skies. Look at the towers of Manhattan; look at the new mills of North Carolina; look at the new mechanized cotton farms of Texas. Virtually half of the total investment in the United States in recent years is never put to work, while on all of it is snugly laid a blanket of indebtedness carrying a huge volume of fixed charges. The "profitable" investment demands its profit—and rent and interest. But the underlying plant is increasingly incapable of earning a profit because of inadequate utilization.

The nineteenth-century formula has overreached itself. . . . .

In the United States, we have at present time a shoe-factory capacity estimated at some 900,000,000 pairs a year. We buy about 300,000,000 pairs and could hardly wear out 500,000,000 pairs. Yet new shoe factories in normal times are constantly being built. Bankers loan money to their promoters. The "extension" of the shoe business is held to be a cardinal requisite to progress, prosperity, employment. Meanwhile, the existing shoe-plant stands on the average two-thirds empty. The resulting appalling burden of overhead costs forces manufacturer after manufacturer into bankruptcy—and always will. We have the plant, but we cannot make adequate use of it. Jam yesterday, jam to-morrow, but never jam to-day. Men want jobs; people want shoes. But men cannot go to work in these all but empty shoe factories. . . . .

If we had no money system, but used requisition tickets, all this would be plain as a pikestaff. The veil of money tends to obscure the common sense of underlying factors. . . . .

No thought has been given to the idea of resting for a moment and enjoying the fruits of our labors. Such an eventuality has never entered into financial or technical computations. The devil was after us, and we must not stop; quite terrible things were sure to happen if we did. On being asked *what* things, the typical reaction of the honest citizen is to express amazement, pain and ultimately rage. "What!" he shouts, "would you destroy progress?" . . . .

"Progress," my eye. The system called capitalism may need it to keep going, but *we* do not need it. It would be a jolly good thing to declare a moratorium on inventions for at least a decade, and treat all inventors as dangerous lunatics, with proper care and supervision. The quarrel is not with technical improvements as such, but with the rate of introduction. . . . .

Technical "progress" presents certain other dangers of almost equal importance. Progress in mechanized warfare, for instance, promises to end all hope of real progress for generations in the next first-class conflict. Industrial progress is fostering technological unemployment at a rate far in excess of our present power to find new work for the men and women displaced. . . . .

Natural resources are all being ruthlessly and wastefully exploited under the compulsions of technical progress. . . . .

I would soberly estimate that half of the natural resources torn from the earth in the last hundred years have gone to make that filth, which Ruskin termed the opposite of wealth—junk and litter and waste. . . . .

Milk is good for growing babies, but a quart an hour would be disastrous. One of the best hopes for obtaining some real progress in the future is to bottle up technical progress, and feed it out with a measuring cup.

And with that we must turn to *The Atlantic* for August in which is given a strange remedy for this international disease; the American woman is told—"Put your husband in the kitchen".

A blind woman who sees, a deaf woman who hears the roar of machines and the cry of hearts, a dumb woman whose voice penetrates and appeals. Such is Helen Keller, who a few weeks ago amazed the British Medical Association by demonstrating her powers to lecture and to conduct a piece of music played on the piano. But what has Helen Keller to say about the chaos of our machine-made civilization?

In a fascinating article in the August *Atlantic* it is Helen Keller who writes the prescription—"Put your husband in the Kitchen". She is "convinced that machine has taken something out of life". "But the machine is with us today, and our task is to turn it to our proper need." "From my detached position I have tried to examine the whole problem from a humanitarian and commonsense point of view." She contrasts the reaction of the man in business and the woman at home to the new machine-inventions.

The average woman is not very familiar with the complexities of economics, but it seems to me that she has ordered her household economy upon a more solid basis than that upon which men have arranged the affairs of their larger world. In industry, the amazing in-

crease in the use of labor-saving machinery has brought about over-production, unemployment, and widespread suffering. Either women are wiser or they have a sounder instinct for economics. At any rate they use labor-saving devices for the heretical purpose of saving labor, and in doing so they have, I think, demonstrated in their homes a practical object lesson in economics which their husbands would do well to master. While theorists are still searching for the causes of the depression, and politicians remain at loggerheads in their efforts to conjure up remedies, I am tempted to think that the perplexed business man might discover a possible solution of his troubles if he would just spend a few days in his wife's kitchen.

Then she paints a picture: Mrs. Jones having put her husband to the job of developing the kitchen on strictly business lines, surprising results ensue—absurd and amusing antics in the kitchen but which are grim realities of the factory and the office.

There are many Mr. Joneses who acted no less foolishly in their own sphere of large-scale industry, expanding plants and piling up goods with complete disregard of market demand. It may be argued that the parallel I have drawn is not a fair one because the family unit is small and static, that its requirements can be easily gauged, while there is no element of competition in supplying these requirements. But the nation, after all, is only the sum of these small units, and with proper co-operation it should not be impossible to estimate, within certain limits, the amount of goods the nation needs.

A third American, Walter Lippmann, the well-known author and publicist, has also something vital to say on this subject. Delivering an address to the National Conference of Social Work at Philadelphia (published in *The New English Weekly* for 21st July) he referred to "the anxieties, the paralyzing fears, the broken bodies and the broken spirits which the world-wide mismanagement and confusion entail". The cause of this mismanagement?

The solution of that problem depends upon changes in human motives as great as those which distinguish a feudal peasant from the modern business man. . . . . If the descendants of the modern business man are to operate a social order in which personal initiative is to be combined with public responsibility, his motives will have to change as radically in the next centuries as they have in the past. . . . . We do not have the wisdom and the disinterestedness to manage with any assurance the volume of credit which determines the rhythm of economic enterprise. We do not have the wisdom and disinterestedness to make the world secure against war. We do not have the wisdom and disinterestedness to plan and arrange the growth of our cities or the future of agriculture or the balance between agriculture and industry.

In another place ("The Scholar in a Troubled World," *The Atlantic* for August) Mr. Lippmann states that "the theoretical study of public affairs does not, and cannot, provide the immediate practical wisdom to manage public affairs"; this because where knowledge is to be applied to action "there is a highly variable and incalculable factor—the will of the people". "The art of practical decision, the art of determining which of several ends to pursue, which of many means to employ, when to strike and when to recoil, comes from intui-

tions that are more unconscious than the analytical judgment." And so we arrive at the question—how can intuition be developed? How can we become "subtly sensitive to the atmosphere" around, so that we are "able to see in the dark"?

A very Theosophical method is advocated by Mr. Lippmann in which modern India will find a practical message:—

> I doubt whether the student can do a greater work for his nation in this grave moment of its history than to detach himself from its preoccupations, refusing to let himself be absorbed by distractions about which, as a scholar, he can do almost nothing. For this is not the last crisis in human affairs. The world will go on somehow, and more crises will follow. It will go on best, however, if among us there are men who have stood apart, who refused to be anxious or too much concerned, who were cool and inquiring, and had their eyes on a longer past and a longer future. By their example they can remind us that the passing moment is only a moment; by their loyalty they will have cherished those things which only the disinterested mind can use.

Why have we quoted at length these views? Because they justify the Theosophical attitude of H. P. Blavatsky, half a century ago. Madame Blavatsky with a belief in and a knowledge of the Law of Cycles repeatedly told the western world that the day of reckoning was near at hand; she insistently pointed out that the western thinking was pursuing a wrong course and that the western views of life were rooted in unhealthy soil and that the outcome could not but be confusion and disaster. She also pointed out the grave responsibility of the West in influencing Asia through its military and commercial exploits. To the East she equally gave warning to the effect that salvation will not come through western science unless it is aided and energized by eastern philosophy. She raised her voice at the east copying west without discrimination and analysis. In the above quoted opinions Indians have a message, though it is different from that they give to Europeans and Americans.

Mr. Stuart Chase demands "a moratorium on inventions and would treat all inventors as dangerous lunatics"; Helen Keller states that "if the progress of the mechanical age should suddenly cease now, I should say that its disadvantages had outweighed its benefits". Do not these words contain a message for countries like China, India and Persia; Japan copied the western system of production and supply early, before Europe and America had found out their mistake and Japan must inevitably pay for copying indiscriminately the west; but those Asiatic countries which for one reason or another do not find themselves burdened with the blunders of the mechanical age have an opportunity to learn by observation and avoid going through the experience of collapse the West is facing.