

# A U M

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

## THE ARYAN PATH

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### SOUL—WHAT IS IT ?

These days every one seems to believe in and talk about the soul. Like so many other important terms the name "soul" is pressed into service by physicists, psychologists, philosophers and others, as well as by theologians. Each understands it in his own way. Has not the time come to define the term, so that all may know what each signifies when he uses the word soul? Church theology, especially in Protestant countries, inclines towards what is loosely regarded as the scientific concept of soul. Modern science has not defined with any exactitude the nature of the reflective consciousness or self-consciousness of the human being, though it holds that that self-consciousness is born of sense and brain activities. Soul is most generally regarded as the product of body, and such different terms as life, spirit, mind, are used as its synonyms.

In eastern countries, even in India, confusion exists, arising from this babel of thoughts. This need not be, if propositions of Asiatic, especially Aryan, psychology are properly tabulated. The six schools of philosophy (*shat darshanani*) and the six limbs of science (*shat angani*) present but different views of the same truth. Some Indians, however, prefer to be tutored by western psychologists and even pseudo-psychologists than become devotees of their own Wise Gurus. Hence all suffer, and the light of the East is not made properly available in the West.

The pressure of the moral atmosphere on the entire globe is such that millions of men long and yearn for some discipline of life. The existence of soul is an intuitive faith with almost all men. The breakdown of materialism, and the moral shaking humanity received through the war and its aftermath

which still continues, are proportionate to the insistence of the demand for some life-discipline.

Every one desires to live the soul-life, and most try to do so in terms of one book or another. Charlatans make money out of private lessons produced on the multigraph; and higher fees are charged for oral teachings! The disillusioned victim grows sadder but not always wiser, for he turns to sample other lessons and teachings, hoping against hope that the true way has been found. This confusion becomes a pernicious difficulty in the way of educated humanity, in spite of the fact that true knowledge of the Ancient Way of Life exists and may be found. It is not sought because "men of science," "leaders of thought," "those who know," etc., are themselves experimenting, debating, shifting ground, and will not take pains to study the old-world teachings. The masses *follow* the "leaders of scientific thought," all the time fancying that they have freed themselves from the fetters of blind belief and dogmatism. The craze for "new and up-to-date knowledge" blinds people, who talk of soul, spiritual

life, culture of concentration, etc., without defining what is the difference between spirit and soul, and how both are or can be distinct from the mind, and what concentration really is.

It is of the utmost importance that definite words should be used for definite things. We are not advocating a brushing away of differing schools of thought, representing definite points of view, but recommending that terms used by each be simply and adequately defined. Some enterprising periodical, like *The Hibbert Journal* or *The Adelphi* in London, or *Revue des Deux Mondes* in Paris, or *The Atlantic Monthly* in New York should invite articles defining such terms and describing the evolutionary processes pertaining to each. Answer must first be found to the question "What is Soul?" before soul-life is undertaken. The ancient Wisdom-Religion, repeated in modern Theosophy, gives very exact instruction, and below we give a table which, we believe, will go a great way towards clearing the existing confusion about Spirit-Soul-Mind-Self-Ego. We invite our readers to consider and discuss it:—

THE HIGHER SELF is	{	<i>Atma</i> , the inseparable ray of the Universal and ONE SELF. It is the Self <i>above</i> , more than within, us. Happy the man who succeeds in saturating his <i>inner Ego</i> with it!
THE SPIRITUAL <i>divine</i> EGO is	{	the Spiritual soul or <i>Buddhi</i> , in close union with <i>Manas</i> , the mind-principle, without which it is no EGO at all, but only the Atmic Vehicle.
THE INNER, OR HIGHER "Ego" is	{	<i>Manas</i> , independently of <i>Buddhi</i> . The Mind-Principle is only the Spiritual Ego when merged into one with <i>Buddhi</i> . It is the permanent Individuality.
THE LOWER, OR PERSONAL "Ego" is	{	the physical man in conjunction with his <i>lower Self</i> , <i>i.e.</i> , animal instincts, passions, desires, etc. It is called the "false personality."

# THE DISCOVERY OF THE SELF

## *An Essay in Religious Experience*

[**J. D. Beresford** is our most regular contributor. In publishing these autobiographical articles, to be completed in our May issue, we have in mind two objects:

(1) The Theosophist will learn how an honest mind seeking facts of soul-life reaches one stage and then another by his own self-induced ways and self-devised means. There are more students and practitioners of Theosophy than this world dreams of. Theosophy is not the sole possession of the few, but is a way of life followed by many. One of the tasks of the Theosophical Movement is to gather such earnest minds into a real Brotherhood. Next, all who call themselves students of Theosophy should once again learn that dual injustice is done: human souls, looking for the Bread of Life, which H. P. Blavatsky and her Masters have offered, are given instead the stone of neo-theosophy based on personal revelations, pseudo-clairvoyance, and unproven and unprovable claims. Both the seekers and the Sacrificers are wronged.

(2) The non-theosophist, especially in the western world, who is interested in soul-life, and who is not devoid of inner soul-urges, may be moved to learn the great, ancient truth that unfoldment of the soul, like the growth of the body, takes place by precise rules and laws, and that there exists a very definite record of instruction. Soul-life need not and should not be a matter of mere experimentation. Much time will be saved and many dangers averted by a clear recognition of this fact and its practical application.—EDS.]

### I

In setting out to write these articles on my own religious experience, I have no evangelistic purpose in view. My own belief at the age of 57, a belief that may conceivably be changed before I die, is that all forms of dogmatic propaganda are liable to lead to error, most notably so when a creed is imposed whether by threats or promises upon undeveloped minds. In the training of my own sons, I have preached no recognised creed. My influence during the past ten years has set strongly against what I regard as the untenable hypotheses of materialism (mechanism) and behaviourism, but even in this I

would avoid replying to a question with a dogmatic Yes or No, preferring to submit an argument rather than to pronounce seemingly authoritative judgment. My reasons for this attitude will become clear in the course of this essay in spiritual autobiography, but I wish to make it quite plain from the outset that I have no sort of intention in what follows of winning converts to my own present point of view.

Having written that, however, I feel that some apologia is necessary for the publication of my own religious experience; for I do not wish it to be inferred that I have no ulterior object in attempt-

ing this task. My ostensible purpose, indeed, is twofold. In the first place, I wish to put on evidence, by as nearly as may be an unbiassed historical method, a record of what might be described in the pathological sense as "my own case," seeing that any sincere record of this kind is of value in the search for truth. In the second place, I wish most earnestly to help those who are nearly at the same level of development as myself. To some of them what I have to say may solve a difficulty. My experience, although unique in the sense that it cannot have happened to anyone else precisely as it happened to me, is in its essence universal. And although, as I have said, I do not wish to impose my own interpretation of it on another, the bare statement may in some cases serve to lighten the dark places of doubt and fear.

I must begin by postulating that I have what has been called the "religious temperament," which means that one is born with an inherent tendency to seek spiritual knowledge. In childhood this temperament was manifested by the secret injunctions of that intuitional censor we call conscience, "no sure or final guide," as "Asiatic" wrote in the June num-

ber of THE ARYAN PATH, "as to what is vicious in oneself," but when strongly developed in youth an indication that esoteric knowledge is a part of the individual's inheritance from the past. In later life, this phenomenon of "conscience" often becomes untrustworthy,\* because its teaching is frequently undistinguishable either from the effects of dogmatic teaching imposed while the intelligence was easily impressionable, or from subconscious reactions to personal inhibitions and suppressions. But out of my own experience I can affirm that as a child this inner knowledge pronounced judgments, and as I see them now after fifty years, true judgments, upon matters concerning which I had had no instruction whatever from my parents or early teachers.

The next stage of my early development was manifested when after the age of puberty, I began to have, though at rare intervals, transports of religious emotion. My father was a Church of England clergyman with strong evangelical, as opposed to ritualistic leanings, a Sabbatarian, a believer in a Hell of torment and in a personal God for ever threatening the evil-doer with an outstretched rod. But although up

\*Why is it that in later life conscience often becomes untrustworthy? Theosophy answers: because in earlier years that conscience is not heeded. Every violence done to conscience makes its influence more difficult to reach and affect the personal man. If its voice is strictly listened to, it will lead the honest mind to that intuitive perception induced by the higher still small voice of one's own Personal God, whose seat is in the cone-shaped heart. The Law of conscience-evolution is from negative to positive action: obey it when it says "no" and "don't" and it will bring through the message of "this way" and "here is the truth". About the age of puberty, when the principle of desire (Kama) fructifies and begins its direct action, conscience unfortunately gets checkmated, and thus weakened; the coming of age, *in the real sense*, is delayed, and often is never attained.—Eds.

to the age of twenty-one I retained my belief in the creed that had been imposed upon me almost as it were at the point of the sword, my emotions when I was greatly stirred showed no indication of a Calvinistic bias.

I remember one such transport very clearly; and as I believe that these early tendencies have a valuable significance, I will give some account of it. The immediate cause of it was, I am not ashamed to admit, the reading of Marie Corelli's *Romance of Two Worlds*, a work that whatever its literary failings has a vein of marked idealism and aspiration. I finished this book in a glow of religious fervour, and this glow was a positive, illuminative emotion. I had no feeling, after the manner of a "revival meeting," of being convicted of sin, rather did I feel convicted of righteousness. Nevertheless, though I went into the garden and walked up and down for an hour in an ecstasy of bliss, the ethical side of this conversion had its due weight. I made many steadfast resolves whose form was influenced by the creed to which I still subscribed. I determined to be more enthusiastic in my attention to Church services, to live, as I may boyishly have expressed it, "a better life".

This was, no doubt, an early symptom of that "hunger and thirst after righteousness," which, if it had been rightly developed, might have had a more lasting effect upon me. Unfortunately, it never occurred to me at that

time to question the authority of a creed that was far too narrow to contain my half-realised aspirations. The effect was inevitable. I found nothing in the too familiar services of the English Church to reinvigorate my enthusiasm when it began to fail, nor received any stimulus from my observation of the practice of its more fervent devotees. Wherefore the emotion receded from day to day and finally left me at, apparently, the old level.

I did not get free from those shackles of orthodoxy until I was just twenty-one, and then I threw them off in a single evening. Until that time, although I had been living for three years in London, away from home influences, I never questioned the truth of my parents' beliefs, never conceived the possibility of questioning them, until I met and made friends with a Theosophist, an English doctor who was then, 1894, out-physician at the London Hospital. My conversion, if I may call it that, was not achieved with pain and difficulty. I suffered none of the agonies and torments of doubt that are symptomatic in some cases. In effect, my friend offered me the suggestion that the theories of orthodox Christianity were neither logical nor probable, and I accepted that suggestion with a great sigh of thankfulness. It is true that I could not for many months rid myself entirely of the fear that I might be wrong. I began to read diligently every book I could lay my hands upon which was frankly antagonistic to

my discarded faith. And my fear was evidenced by the fact that I was annoyed by anything that seemed to me a concession to orthodox Christian beliefs. In those days, my desire was to become comfortably convinced that the Bible was a complete fiction. I had not then enough discrimination and judgment to comprehend it.

I cannot, however, pass on from this early phase without making two further comments. The first is that the effect upon my morality was all for the good. When the threat of Hell had been taken from me, I found a new stimulus for leading an ethical life. I learnt out of my experience that the superficial righteousness which is the outcome of fear has no spiritual value.

The second comment is of another kind and I offer it more tentatively. It is that my change of thought, though apparently sudden, was due to an inner impulse that had been maturing in secret. Some experienced entity within me recognised the truth when it was presented, and afterwards I rationalised it by a process of study and reason that convinced my intelligence. But, later in life, this reasoning self that I so strenuously cultivated from that time onwards was to prove a far harder stumbling block than the hypnotic suggestions of my early training.

My reaction was, in truth, something too violent. For many months after that evening of my conversion, I was strongly inclined towards the Theosophical teaching of that period,\* more particularly as expounded by Rudolf Steiner. I became a vegetarian for a time and attended Theosophical meetings in a studio in West Kensington. But the tendency to disbelief in any formalised religion, or I might say in any faith that was based—as I saw it then,—on revelation, gradually led me into an absolute scepticism, and I fell by degrees into a reasoned materialism, a denial of the immortal principle in man.

I propose to pass very rapidly over the next thirty years of my life, but they furnish certain psychological material that is too valuable to be wholly neglected. If I had not suffered that experience, I should not be precisely where I am to-day.

The representative tendency of this period was a steadily increasing struggle between the inner guide that still urged me to go further in my search for truth, and the inhibiting force of my reason, a struggle whose nature in its early stages may best be indicated by an illustration. I remember quite clearly, for instance, my emotions after reading, I believe in 1904, the English translation

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\* Mr. Beresford tells us that he never read any of H. P. Blavatsky's books. Thus, unfortunately, he did not touch the real teachings of the Eastern Sages. Here is a noteworthy instance of one who having rejected the false concept of Revealed Religion was not helped to see the true Theosophical position of an Immemorial Record of consistent Teachings not to be believed in but to be studied—and so carried his search for truth into materialism. We know of many such fair and intelligent minds thus wronged by neo-theosophy.—EDS,

of Ernst Haeckel's book *The Riddle of the Universe*. At the stage of knowledge I had then reached, I found the argument of this work completely convincing. Haeckel had, so far as I was competent to judge, triumphantly demonstrated that man was nothing more than a complicated arrangement of cells, whose development and reactions followed mechanical and chemical laws, and that this arrangement was broken up at death leaving no indication of an immortal principle, nor any need to infer one.\*

Now my intelligence accepted that deduction, and if *The Riddle of the Universe* had been written earlier and read by me, say, ten years sooner, it is I think a safe assumption that I should have been elated by my discovery of this scientific proof of human mortality. As it was I was saddened and depressed. Some two years before I had been greatly impressed by F. W. H. Myer's unfinished work *Human Personality*. It had no real religious significance, but that, too, appealed to my reason and it was intelligence—in those years my ruling counsellor—which demanded conviction. I did not, I believe, lay the least weight on the fact that while I had been elated by Myers, I was depressed by Haeckel. Emotion was an influence that I thought it well to ignore in my prosecution of the everlasting search.

This instance, supported by the

continually increasing pressure from within as the years passed, is to me evidence that, in my own case, the esoteric knowledge which had been born in me was persistently seeking an outlet. But no such interpretation need be accepted by those who deny my theory of reincarnation. For them, I merely wish to record the facts and leave them to draw their own inferences.

And the facts of chief importance in those thirty years are that my reason was resolutely opposed to any occultist account of the universe, that my Western European mind respected and approved the scientific method, and that in spite of all resistances a growth from some tiny seed of the inner wisdom was sufficient to break down and conquer the stubborn logic of my developed intelligence.

Of that struggle (which is not, indeed, yet consummated, for only a few days ago I read a long, reasoned article by H. G. Wells directed against the belief in personal immortality, and felt again the old twinges of doubt), I hope to write at some length in my two following articles. But there is one other observation relative to these first fifty years which deserves notice here. It concerns those ecstasies of which I spoke, and which were directly related in my youth to a religious emotion.

Now, these ecstasies did not cease even in the most pro-

\* If Mr. Beresford had at this time come across *The Secret Doctrine* (then already in circulation for some sixteen years) he would have found the Haeckelian speculations adequately disposed of to the satisfaction of any honest intellect.—EDS.

nouncedly mechanistic period of my philosophy, but they were no longer related to a definitely religious motive. They were not of very frequent occurrence, and quite irregular in their manifestation, but their characteristic emotion was always one of release. At such times, my imagination worked with exquisite freedom, and I was, though I hardly realised it, truly conscious of my real self, of that inner principle the full

knowledge of which means complete independence of the phenomenal world. Those states should have been sufficient evidence to me of the futility of my objective intelligence as a guide to life. But I was very blind in those days, and although I welcomed these ecstasies, attached no importance to them. And of late years they have become rarer, myself having found, I believe, another mode of expression.

J. D. BERESFORD

*The Path to Occult Sciences has to be trodden laboriously and crossed at the danger of life; every new step in its leading to the final goal is surrounded by pit-falls and cruel thorns; the pilgrim who ventures upon it is made first to confront and CONQUER the thousand and one furies who keep watch over its adamantine gates and entrance—furies called Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy and finally Temptation—especially the latter; he who would see beyond has to first destroy this LIVING WALL; he must be possessed of a heart and soul clad in steel, and of an iron, never failing determination and yet be meek and gentle, humble and have shut out from his heart every human passion that leads to evil.*

MAHATMA K. H.



## SHANKARA AND OUR OWN TIMES

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Shankaracharya is described as "the greatest Initiate living in historical ages," and "the greatest of the historical Brahmin Sages" by H. P. Blavatsky, who also says that "the legends about him are as numerous as his philosophical writings. At the age of thirty-two he went to Kashmir and reaching Kedāranath in the Himalayas, entered a cave alone whence he never returned. His followers claim that he did not die, but only retired from the world."

In an early number we shall publish a very interesting article on the era of this great religious reformer who is described as "Buddha's grand successor" in the *Secret Doctrine* (I. xlv) and the two are "most closely connected, if one believes tradition and certain esoteric teachings. Thus every difference between the two will be found one of form rather than of substance." (II. 637)—EDS.]

It goes without saying that there is no greater characteristic of the times in which we live than their achievements in science. Its influence is being felt even in the domain of religion which has always tried to keep itself within regions unverifiable by science. Many are the writers to-day who seek its support for inculcating even religious truths. Philosophy, also, which in its infancy relied so largely on religion, is seen to associate itself more and more with science, being specially interested in its methods. And philosophy in its most modern sense is viewed as an interpretation of experience or life, *as a whole*. As such, it comprehends experience that is not only religious, but also that covered by scientific knowledge. A philosophy, therefore, that confines itself to religion and ignores science is not much valued. The question, then, arises whether the reading of human experience by Shankara, centuries ago, can be a

guide to us in this age of science, or can throw any useful light on present-day problems.

The two outstanding features of Shankara's teachings are his doctrines: "The world is all *Māyā* or Illusion," and "What truly exists is a Unity, not duality or multiplicity". Our purpose here is not to argue these metaphysical principles but to take them for granted and look for their practical application. In a splendid article "The Old Doctrine of *Māyā* and Modern Science" in the April number of this magazine, Dr. Ivor B. Hart has told us how *Māyā* is a fact—an undeniable fact—of experience, and how remarkably the truth of *Māyā* is being borne out by the science of to-day. But let us turn to some other fields.

The late Mr. Tilak thought that, according to Shankara, one should ignore the calls of the world and flee to uninhabited jungles, to free oneself from what, in his view, is the glamour of *Māyā*.

But did Shankara really mean to teach this lesson? It is said that "one's philosophy is best interpreted by the life one actually lives". Nowhere do we read or hear of Shankara having betaken himself to forests, mountains and caves or having shut himself up in monasteries, to illustrate the philosophy he taught. From about the age of eighteen, till the day he departed from the world, he led a life of the most intense activity, being always on foot, moving from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from Dwarka to Jagannath, a distance of about 1800 miles each way, and always teaching and discussing his doctrines or organising and founding institutions. He so overworked his physical frame that it completely wore out before he was thirty-three. For, to him, as to the staunchest realist, life was real, life was earnest. He says in his commentary on the *Gîtâ* that the one business in life of the wise man (*Vidwan*) is "to seek the welfare of others". (*Parānugraha eva kartavyah*). And this he is not tired of repeating. For Unity (Brahman) is *ever* present in the midst of the variety which, no doubt, is an illusion. And if this Unity which ever dwells in the midst of the illusory variety is to be realised, it must be done in the presence of the illusory many. One cannot free oneself from the *Māyā* of the manifold by merely cutting oneself off from the world. A man might as well think that he has wiped out the world of experience by closing his

eyes. On the other hand, if the world were not there, why is any effort needed to realise Unity? Shankara holds that it should be one's aim to realise through experience (*Anubhava* and *Jnānam*) one's "Oneness" with all human beings, nay, with all beings (*Sarva-bhuta*) and finding delight (*ratih*) in working for their good (*hita*). To put the same in modern language "Disinterested Service"—to rejoice in rendering such service—was his slogan, which alone would help us to get at the Truth of Absolute Oneness by overcoming the dislikes and ignoring the distinctions of the manifold created by *Māyā*.

Why then did he himself renounce the world and enter the monastic order, and that so early in life? He believed and taught that the renunciation (*Sannyas*), which aimed at purity of mind, was most conducive to the achievement of all life's great objects, which demand undivided attention and undeviating steadfastness. Even after assuming the yellow robe, he worked *in* and *for* the world whole-heartedly. To him, Brahman, the Unity, was *in* the world. His philosophic idea of *Sannyas* was, therefore, far different from the *religious* or *mystic* idea of it, which alone is current and which, as he himself said, is often a means to eke out a living with ease: (*Udaranimittam bahu kṛta vesham*). He never deprecated the natural seeking of peace in the evening of one's life by means of *Krama Sannyas*, the object of which is often confound-

ed with that of the *Sannyas* of early life, the *Sannyas* of preparation for mystical or philosophic purposes (*Vividisha*). And it was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa that revived in recent years in India Shankara's *philosophic* idea of *Sannyas*.

What has Shankara to say on the most vexed problem of caste? We need only look at what he did when his mother died. He performed the obsequies, thus infringing the rules of caste, and he was accordingly put out of it by his community. Did he then turn a Bohemian? No. A fence is an absolute necessity to protect a plant so long as it is tender, but it may be an obstruction to that plant when it grows into a tree and no more needs it. So long as a man is not able to judge for himself he must be bound by social restrictions such as those of caste. And one is said to arrive at discretion, according to Shankara, when one knows that the main purpose of practical life is to realise "Oneness" by rendering disinterested service in the best way. Should any caste or social rules obstruct the attainment of this object, one is at liberty to ignore them. In securing the "welfare of others" no rules of caste need be heeded. But Shankara nowhere encourages the breaking of social rules for purposes of mere sensual or self-gratification.

It was Shankara and not any political ruler or conqueror known to *historical* India that first gave her a sense of "National Unity". He it was that established four

institutions of learning in the four distant cardinal regions of this peninsula, comprehending various communities, different faiths, and different political states, under a sense of common interest, which developed later into a definite concept of Political Unity under the Mahrattas and the rulers of the Vijayanagar.

What do all human activities in respect to family, home, political group, government, or human society mean, unless it be that they aim at one's realising the sense of a "Unity" (of interest) underlying differences and distinctions? From the family to the community, to the race and to humanity, there is an ever widening circle in which one feels called upon "to rejoice when others rejoice and to grieve when others grieve," *unifying* oneself with the circle. It is evident that the aim of the government of a country is to realise its "oneness" or "non-duality" with the governed. The *sense* of identity or "Unity," is what matters. Among those who have done the greatest good to their fellow beings are those kings and emperors of India, as well as their distinguished ministers, who were most deeply imbued with the spirit of the truth of Shankara's teachings, *i. e.*, who loved their fellow beings as their own selves by ignoring the *Māyā* of the distinctions of power, position and wealth. Shankara was well aware that "Unity" was strength, not duality or multiplicity—strength in the physical as well as in the metaphysical world. For, *Māyā*, as

duality or multiplicity, is ever changing or unstable. Hence it only makes for weakness.

All the great founders or re-suscitators of the world's religions possess the distinction of having given to the world, each a single faith. Jesus founded Christianity; Mahomed, Islam; Gautama, Buddhism; Mahavir, Jainism and so forth;\* whereas Shankara is known, by the unique name of SHANMATASTHAPANACHARYA, the establisher of not one, but six faiths. Here he drew a line between philosophy and religion, meaning by the latter whatever implies belief in a *moral* Deity and methods of worshipping It. Buddhism, Jainism, Atheism, and Agnosticism and many others he treated merely as schools of philosophy and discussed them according to his lights, agreeing with whatever in them conformed to Reason. He held every religion to be equally a pathway to Deity provided it had a *moral* basis, though he did not hold the same view in regard to the philosophical systems. With regard to religion he followed to the letter the teaching of the *Gîtâ*:—"It is the path leading to ME that men follow, *on every side*."

His life and philosophy are a most emphatic protest against the

doctrine that God has entrusted the keys of heaven to believers in any particular religion, any religion that believes in proselytisation. We say *emphatic*, because he declares in his *Sutra Bhasya* in the most unmistakable terms that men and women of all castes, creeds and colours, anyone provided that he is a human being (*Purusha matrena*) can attain to the Highest. And even to this day among his followers may be found those who worship Vishnu, Siva, or Sakti or other deities, and that in various ways. According to Shankara the goal of religion is mystic experience which aims at the actual realisation of "All Selfness" (*Sarvâtma bhāva*) which is nothing new to the world of mystics. But he asks, like the most modern thinker: How do we know that the mystic realisation is the *highest truth*? For an answer to this, he says, one must have recourse to philosophy alone.

Shankara was not perfectly justified, it is said, when he forced his mother to permit him, the only son, to leave her and renounce the world. Did he not thereby encourage unethical conduct? Does not his theory of illusionism put a premium upon recklessness and immorality, seeing

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\* This is historically not true: Jesus did not come to establish a new religion, but was a Protestant against the corruption of the Temples of Judea. It was in later ages that a religious creed was built by limited human minds. Similarly, Gautama was a Kshatriya, a Reformer of corrupt Brahmanism, and if out of his Brotherhood of Monks (the Sangha of Bikkhus) a new religious creed arose, it was not of His making. Shankara who followed Gautama may be rightly said to have completed the task begun by His Illustrious Predecessor, and even in His name Advaitism as a sect came into existence. Every true spiritual Teacher has endeavoured to free men from the fetters of belief which enslave the senses, by encouraging them to use reason, and to develop intuition, so that senses may be controlled and purified and men may live like Gods in Wisdom and Compassion.—EDS.

that it would be no serious matter to deprive another of his property or life, or to commit other heinous vices inasmuch as all are unreal, and even the very acts are a myth. But Shankara would ask: If one has the *conviction* that the manifold world, everything other than "Unity," is *unreal*, what can induce one to think that a second entity, like property or person, really exists, so as to make one eager to appropriate it for one's own benefit? In fact it is only those who believe in a duality or plurality of *real* existence that may feel impelled to deprive others of what they possess, for their own self-gratification.

Contrariwise, what greater stimulus could one conceive of for the very highest moral action, the sacrifice of one's self for the good of all, than the fact that the underlying *Unity* is the eternal reality? No lover of truth can honestly feel proud of, or take credit for, even self-sacrifice, which in truth is *Māyā*. According to Shankara, Arjuna, who hesitated to fight or to do his duty so long as he believed that the body was real, cheerfully resumed his bow and arrows the moment he realised that the body-appearance was an illusion and that nothing that really exists, the *Unity*, could ever cease to be.

If men uphold the ideal of self-denial in any form, it is because it enables them to realise that everything other than the "Unity"

within is not worth much, is but an illusion.

Let us not be told that there are and will be men who talk of "Unity" and "Unreality," and yet *lead* the most reprehensible lives. They are only talkers, not *knowers* of Unity. How could there be the duality of saying one thing and doing another in an Advaitin ( Non-dualist ) ?

At the present moment, if we look around, nothing seems to loom so large before our eyes as the problems confronting the League of Nations or conferences for communal, racial and religious harmony. And what would be Shankara's message to them? "Whatever good ye venture to seek, know that is the call or the urge of Truth." For, the Good according to Shankara is the True. And Truth is the ONENESS behind the differences and the distinctions that divide us and set us each against the other, which are all *Māyā*. And without diving beneath *Māyā* no good can be attained. If ye heed not the urge, the call, woe will be unto *all*. Truth abhors the spirit of duplicity or multiplicity. No path but the one making for the Truth of Unity—the Atman, Brahman—can avoid strife and suffering which comes now to some, now to others. Who shall escape? *Ko Mohah, Kasso-kah, Ekatvamanupasyatah*: What delusion, what sorrow, for him who sees ONENESS?

V. SUBRAHMANYA IYER

## DREAMS IN THE WESTERN WORLD

[**Rodolphe Louis Mégroz**, of mingled French and English descent, writes regularly under a well-known pseudonym in a leading weekly in London where he has always lived with the exception of a few years in Geneva. That his is the world of *belles lettres* is revealed in his critical and biographical studies of Francis Thompson, Walter de la Mare, the Three Sitwells, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the several anthologies he has edited, including *Shakespeare as a Letter-Writer and Artist in Prose* and *For Fathers: A Book of Domestic Letters*, and his own *Personal Poems* and other books of verse.

Our author naming some authorities remarks that "these pleasing essayists, however entertaining, do not contribute much to the philosophy of the subject"—of dreams. He is referring to certain writers of the seventeenth century. The philosophy of dreams, like that of all other psychical and psychological phenomena, can be found in the Eastern Lore. Thus, for example, in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (IV. iii 9-34) Mr. Mégroz and all our readers will find the basic principles in the description of the four states of human consciousness—(1) Jagrat, waking; (2) Swapna, dreaming; (3) Sushupti, deep sleep—meditating; and (4) Turiya, spiritual realizing.

We draw our readers' attention to our after-note.—EDS.]

The field indicated by our title is of course a vast one, and in such a survey as this it will be necessary to cover big stretches with a general statement, and to make the details and illustrations as representative as possible. The simplest arrangement of the argument will be to treat literature and life as different aspects of human experience, that is to say, as being fundamentally one subject. This subject can then be followed in a very rough chronological order, beginning with the ancient world.

When we look back two thousand years or more, it becomes at once evident that we must include religion under the term "life" and philosophy under the term "literature". Nobody will quarrel with that rough classification, I hope.

Ancient Egypt cannot be quite ignored in a survey of dreams in

the western world, because Egypt appears to be the root of much in the religion and art of ancient Greece, not to speak of Palestine and Syria. Glancing at Egypt, then, what do we find? First, that a more or less systematic study of dreams was closely associated with religious cults. The Egyptians were the first people in the western world to formulate the belief that dreams were of divine origin. They did not assert that god-sent dreams could reach a man only if he slept in the precincts of a temple. Thotmosis IV while out hunting took his siesta, and dreamed that Ra Harmarkhis came and commanded him to clear the sand away from the Great Sphinx, in the shadow of which he was then sleeping. It is, however, quite true that the Egyptians believed that the conditions were more propi-

tious, if you wanted a prophetic dream, when you slept at a temple where there was an oracle. In the Ptolemaic writings are references to the activities of the dream-interpreters at the oracle of Serapis at Memphis. There grew up also complicated and secret systems of dream interpretation which had counterparts in Syria and Greece. In chapter xiv of Genesis, in the Bible, the professional dream interpreters are referred to.

The belief in prophetic dreams brought also the desire for, and the study of, dreams that would cure disease, and the cult of Asklepios at Epidaurus is a striking instance of Egyptian civilisation influencing the Greek. It is not an exaggeration to say that the oracular dream came out of Egypt. With the evolution of the nostrums for causing and for interpreting dreams, in the form of strange spells, often consisting of a string of meaningless syllables, we find the origins of a vast poetic literature of the dream which was to flourish in the soil of European civilisations.

In ancient Greece the giver of dreams was recognized as a god from the earliest times, as may be seen in Homer. Poetry was still very near to religion, and in Greek religion there were many dream-gods, although Hermes was the chief. Other gods besides Hermes could send one of the minor dream deities on a visit to a sleeper's mind. Thus it was that such products of the poetic imag-

ination were absorbed in religious cults. Out of such figures as Phobetor, the Terrifier, who could assume animal as well as human shapes, and Phantasos, who appeared only in the form of inanimate things, the cult of the God of Dreams was fashioned to co-exist with the cult of the God of Sleep. In this way the mantic art and the custom of holy incubation developed. Dream oracles at the temples became what we might nowadays describe as a flourishing industry, and this persisted in Rome after the decay of Greece. It is far from dead in Europe now, although in form it has changed somewhat.

The fact that the shrines and oracles of Asklepios, god of health, were especially sought after by those who desired dreams or the interpretation of dreams, is of significance in view of modern psychological analysis of the dreaming mind, which has established that dreams generally, if not always, indicate unconscious activity in the mind, caused by unsatisfied wishes, or haunting fears. But still more significant of the ancient Greek anticipation of our therapeutic dream interpretations is the remarkable treatise of Artemidorus on the Interpretation of Dreams. Artemidorus lived in the second century. He said his book was inspired by Apollo. It was at any rate the most important piece of oneirocriticism produced by the ancient world. He describes so many typical dreams that his book is like a vivid contemporary picture of Greek life.

Among the prominent theories which he states are the following:

It was lucky to dream of the statues of the gods, or of the gods as human beings.

It was unlucky to dream of robbing the gods' shrines of offerings, or of breaking their images.

It was also a warning of misfortune or unhappiness to dream of washing or perfuming their images and sweeping their sanctuaries.

It was equally unlucky to dream of amorously loving a chaste goddess, such as Vesta, Rhea, Juno and Hecate.

A married man feared to see Vulcan, the betrayed husband of Venus, in his dreams.

Now it will not be difficult for anybody with even a slight knowledge of modern psycho-analytic methods to translate the above statements into psychological generalisations. Each statement gives an example of some kind of typical dream, and it is clear that when Artemidorus said that a dream was unlucky, he meant that it revealed a desire which would offend society and incur punishment if translated into action, or else that it indicated an unconscious feeling of guilt and an anxiety to appease the offended god.

I do not know whether these links between ancient Greece and modern European psycho-analysis have ever been traced in this way, but a study of Artemidorus leaves no room for doubt as to the general drift of his dream interpretation, though of course he says many things which merely reflect floating superstitions. While speaking of anticipations of the psycho-analytic theory I would like to

leap seven centuries, and quote from the early nineteenth century English essayist, William Hazlitt, who wrote in his essay on Dreams:

We are not hypocrites in our sleep. The curb is taken off our passions, and our imagination wanders at will; when awake, we check these rising thoughts, and fancy we have them not. In dreams, when we are off our guard, they return securely and unbidden. We may make this use of the infirmity of our sleeping metamorphosis, that we may repress any feelings of this sort that we disapprove in their incipient state, and detect, ere it be too late, an unwarrantable antipathy or fatal passion.

Comment on this is needless.

I cannot leave the subject of dreams in ancient Greece without referring to a valuable little book by Mr. Alexander Ionides, who has made an English translation, with many of his own notes and comments, of the treatise on Dreams by Synesius, a work very little known except to specialist scholars. Synesius became a Bishop in the early Christian church, but he was essentially a neo-Platonic philosopher. He was born about 363, and became a pupil of the famous woman pagan philosopher, Hypatia, at Alexandria. His childhood was spent on the north African coast, west of Alexandria, where the legendary Garden of the Hesperides is said to have been. After quoting from Sullivan's *Bases of Modern Science*, to show how Platonism anticipated the modern scientific view that there is no clear division between "physical" and "mental," Mr. Ionides observes: "that



the world is *one*, and mental at that, are the basic ideas of Platonism and of the immortality of life. The centre of interest for a Platonist is life—not an external world that is supposed to exist outside it.”

In his *Discourse on Dreams*, Synesius condemns all artificial, external, ritualistic means of divination. He asserts the value of looking within, and of teaching ourselves wisdom through a love of beauty and a clear-eyed contemplation of the contents of our own mind. To him, dreams are an inspiration to effort, a guide in our work. He calls divination, “the most beautiful of all gifts,” since the dream is the pure spring of wisdom. He thinks that divination comes from within us, and is a private quality in each individual soul. “The gods are nought save mind,” he declares. But if we would aspire to wisdom and beauty we must live wisely and beautifully, and “whosoever has a diseased imagination must not expect clear and distinct visions”.

In Europe psychology—the study of the mind or psyche—is a young science: it has not been separated from philosophy for as long as a century. The immense importance of dreams as evidence of the nature of the mind’s activities below the threshold of consciousness was not fully recognized until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Soon after the new study had been taken up by serious investigators, the analytical genius of Freud was applied to it.

But what happened between

Synesius and Freud (taking these names as convenient landmarks)? The spread of Christianity in Europe caused a widespread repression of pagan cults and superstitions, without however weakening the emotional reasons for them. The primitive forces found other outlets, other forms. In literature especially there was a wonderful efflorescence of spiritual power transferred from purely religious ceremonies. Dreams continued to be the subject of wonder and fear, but the dream imagery was more and more translated into literature. There were nearly as many great mystics as there were great poets in Europe in the thousand years preceding the Renaissance of classical literature and deductive science. The writings and experiences of mystics like St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross and St. Catherine of Sienna are closely akin to certain exceptional dream states.

In English poetry all this wisdom and beauty, recovered from the dreaming mind like glittering shoals of fish from the deeps, was used more richly perhaps than in any other literature. Indeed there is so much material to choose from in English poetry that might be called the literature of dreaming, that it would take up too much space here to examine it. Instead we may glance at the work of prose writers. Even in the supposedly sceptical eighteenth century, the greatest of the historians, Gibbon, although he is careful not to betray too much belief himself, pays detailed attention in his

history of the decline and fall of Rome to the numerous recorded instances of dreaming, prophetic and otherwise, in the Roman Empire. One of the great dreamers was Julian the Apostate, and Gibbon's account of his dreams is a very attractive portion of the history. Julian, by the way, died almost the same year that Synesius was born.

The interest in dreams caused a corresponding interest in theories, however ill-founded, and the speculations of ancient authors were dug up and embellished, partly in sincere though fanciful enquiry, and partly as material for literature. Here is a typical passage, from Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* :

Affections of the Senses, sleep and waking. The affections of these senses are sleep and waking, common to all sensible creatures. Sleep is a rest or binding of the outward senses, and of the common sense, for the preservation of body and soul (as Scalinger defines it) ; for when the common sense resteth, the outward senses rest also. The phantasy alone is free, and his commander reason : as appears by those imaginary dreams, which are of divers kinds, natural, divine, demoniacal, etc., which vary according to humours, diet, actions, objects, etc., of which Artemidorus, Cardanus and Sambucus, with their several interpretators, have written great volumes. This ligation of senses proceeds from an inhibition of spirits, the way being stopped by which they should come ; this stopping is caused of vapours arising out of the stomach, filling the nerves, by which the spirits should be conveyed. When these vapours are spent, the passage is open, and the spirits perform their accustomed duties : so that waking is the action and motion of the senses, which the spirits dispersed over all parts cause.

He also informs us that the organ of "phantasy or imagination" is "the middle cell of the brain," while memory has "his seat and organ" at the "back part of the brain".

Another seventeenth century, and greater, prose writer, Sir Thomas Browne, displays much interest in the subject. He devotes an essay to Dreams and also a section of *Religio Medici*. In the latter he says :

Surely it is not a melancholy conceit to think we are all asleep in this World, and that the conceits of this life are as mere dreams to those of the next, as the Phantasms of the night, to the conceits of the day. There is an equal delusion in both, and the one doth but seem to be the emblem or picture of the other ; we are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps, and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason, and our waking conceptions do not match the Fancies of our sleep.

In the essay *Of Dreams*, he remarks that "a good part of our sleep is peered out with visions and fantastical objects," and further on :

That there should be divine dreams seems unreasonably doubted by Aristotle. That there are demoniacal dreams we have little reason to doubt. Why may there not be angelical? If there be guardian spirits, they may not be inactively about us in sleep ; but may sometimes order our dreams : and many strange hints, instigations, or discourses, which are so amazing unto us, may arise from such foundations.

But these pleasing essayists, however entertaining, do not contribute much to the philosophy of the subject. They show us the profound interest in and extensive

knowledge of the classical literature of the ancient world where it is concerned with the nature and meaning of dreams and visions. We have to turn to the seventeenth century Thomas Hobbes for a rational consideration of this subject. The friend of Ben Jonson, Galileo, Gassendi and Dr. Harvey, was a surprisingly original thinker, and his political treatise *Leviathan* when it touches on dreams is the most scientific summary up to that time. He lacks, it is true, a sufficient appreciation of the mystery, the unknown possibilities of the dreaming mind, but idle fancies and superstitions receive short shrift from him. Dreams are called by him "the imaginations of those that sleep," and he therefore examines them as manifestations of the imagination. Such recorded visions as that of Brutus on the eve of the battle of Philippi (like other writers of his time he readily goes to Roman historians for examples) are due, he thinks, to a confusion of the mind waking out of a dream. He then observes:

From this ignorance of how to distinguish dreams and other strong fancies from vision and sense, did arise the greatest part of the religion of the Gentiles in times past, that worshipped satyrs, fawns, nymphs, and the like; and nowadays the opinion that rude people have of fairies, ghosts, and goblins, and of the power of witches.

In this interesting verdict is the germ of another important truth, that the satyrs and other images he refers to are symbols created by the dreaming mind and providing literature and the other arts,

not less than religion, with a universal language of imagery. There is among the poets from the seventeenth century onwards a frequent realisation of this profound truth which modern psychology has more fully elaborated. The mystical Blake was a poet and painter who submitted his imagination so completely to the impulses of his unconscious mental processes that his art often attains its dynamic power at the expense of coherence and form. In the prophetic books of Blake may be seen the consequences to literature of an extreme obedience to the irrational dream impulses. The extraordinarily intelligent poet Shelley, who had a fine gift of philosophical exposition in prose, wrote a note which, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, may be regarded as a presage of the modern attitude. It is such a remarkable fragment that no apology is needed to quote it at length. It is entitled "Difficulty of Analyzing the Human Mind".

If it were possible that a person should give a faithful history of his being, from the earliest epochs of his recollection, a picture would be presented such as the world has never contemplated before. A mirror would be held up to all men in which they might behold their own recollections, and, in dim perspective, their shadowy hopes and fears,—all that they dare not, or that daring and desiring, they could not expose to the open eyes of day. But thought can with difficulty visit the intricate and winding chambers which it inhabits. It is like a river whose rapid and perpetual stream flows outwards;—like one in dread who speeds through the recesses of some haunted pile, and dares not look behind. The

caverns of the mind are obscure, and shadowy; or pervaded with a lustre, beautifully bright indeed, but shining not beyond their portals. If it were possible to be where we have been, vitally and indeed—if, at the moment of our presence there, we could define the results of our experience, if the passage from sensation to reflection—from a state of passive perception to voluntary contemplation, were not so dizzying and so tumultuous, this attempt would be less difficult.

#### HOW THE ANALYSIS SHOULD BE CARRIED ON.

Most of the errors of philosophers have arisen from considering the human being in a point of view too detailed and circumscribed. He is not a moral, and an intellectual,—but also, and pre-eminently, an imaginative being. His own mind is his law; his own mind is all things to him. If we would arrive at any knowledge which should be serviceable from the practical conclusions to which it leads, we ought to consider the mind of man and the universe as the great whole on which to exercise our speculations. Here, above all, verbal disputes ought to be laid aside, though this has long been their chosen field of battle. It imports little to inquire whether thought be distinct from the objects of thought. The use of the words *external* and *internal*, as applied to the establishment of this distinction, has been . . . merely an affair of words, and as the

dispute deserves, to say, that when speaking of the objects of thought, we indeed only describe one of the forms of thought—or that, speaking of thought, we only apprehend one of the operations of the universal system of beings.

This passage from Shelley's *Speculations on Metaphysics* can be left to speak for itself in a Journal with readers such as presumably THE ARYAN PATH has gathered together.

Only the fringe of our subject has been touched in this survey, but at least one significant truth emerges—that the profound interest in dreams, and the intuition that the dream world is somehow a world of essential reality, has not exactly evolved in 3,000 years of time, but rather has persisted and has been the root of an infinite variety of creative efforts in religion, philosophy and the arts. The extremely important activity of the mystics has been only briefly mentioned because the characteristic of mysticism, in contrast with other human activities, is a reiteration of the fundamental unity underlying the various appearances of reality.

R. L. MÉGROZ

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#### A NOTE ON THE ABOVE

Those who desire to understand the whole problem of the dream state, its cause, process and effect, are strongly recommended to study the Appendix of *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* (pp. 59-79). This gives H. P. Blavatsky's answers to numerous ques-

tions on the subject. Below we give one such answer to "What is it that dreams, then?"

Generally the physical brain of the personal Ego, the seat of memory radiating and throwing off sparks like the dying embers of a fire. The memory of the Sleeper is like an Æolian seven-stringed harp; and his state of

mind may be compared to the wind that sweeps over the chords. The corresponding string of the harp will respond to that one of the seven states of mental activity in which the sleeper was before falling asleep. If it is a gentle breeze the harp will be affected but little; if a hurricane, the vibrations will be proportionately powerful. If the personal Ego is in touch with its higher principles and the veils of the higher planes are drawn aside, all is well; if on the contrary it is of a materialistic animal nature, there will be probably no dreams; or if the memory by chance catch the breath of a "wind" from a higher plane, seeing that it will be impressed through the sensory ganglia of the cerebellum, and not by the direct agency of the spiritual Ego, it will receive pictures and sounds so distorted and inharmonious that even a Devachanic vision would appear a nightmare or grotesque caricature. Therefore, there is no simple answer to the question "What is it that dreams?" for it depends entirely on each individual what principle will be the chief motor in dreams, and whether they will be remembered or forgotten.

At the close of this Appendix H. P. B. tabulates dreams thus:

We may roughly divide dreams also into seven classes, and subdivide these in turn. Thus, we would divide them into:

1. Prophetic dreams. These are impressed on our memory by the Higher Self, and are generally plain and clear: either a voice heard or the coming event foreseen.

2. Allegorical dreams, or hazy glimpses of realities caught by the brain and distorted by our fancy. These are generally only half true.

3. Dreams sent by adepts, good or bad, by mesmerisers, or by the thoughts of very powerful minds bent on making us do their will.

4. Retrospective; dreams of events belonging to past incarnations.

5. Warning dreams for others who are unable to be impressed themselves.

6. Confused dreams, the causes of which have been discussed above.

7. Dreams which are mere fancies and chaotic pictures, owing to digestion, some mental trouble, or such-like external cause.

We would draw attention to *Dreams*, the U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 11, which presents the Theosophical views on the subject, and these are very different indeed from the neo-theosophical sensationalism of everybody travelling in the astral plane and playing the angel as an invisible helper!

—EDS.

## EASTERN WISDOM IN WESTERN LIBRARIES

[We print an interesting statement which comes from Washington D. C.—EDS.]

When in 1784 the first translation of the *Bhagavad-Gita* was published in English, an impetus was given to the study of Oriental literature which has increased steadily in the years between. No doubt, before then, the great libraries of the West harboured some Oriental manuscripts, but the rush to acquire them had not begun, for the interest in them was very much restricted. Nowadays every library is proud of any new acquisition it may be fortunate enough to get.

The West to-day sends out to all Eastern lands men who are occupied in various capacities, and of these a certain percentage take a genuine interest in the literature and philosophy of the land in which they find themselves. To take an instance, Mr. Arthur W. Hummel, the Chief of the Division of Chinese literature in the Library of Congress, Washington, taught in the Government University in Kobe, Japan, in a boy's school in Shansi Province in the interior of China, and in the School of Oriental Studies at Peking. The result of such intimate connection with the people of China and Japan convinced him that the West may learn from the East just as much as the East can learn from the West—a fact that is now beginning to dawn on intel-

ligent people in Europe and America.

A man with the training of Mr. Hummel is therefore obviously the person to be in charge of a valuable collection of Oriental literature, and the Library of Congress has the largest collection of printed Chinese literature outside of Japan and China—some 140,000 volumes, which their custodian claims to be “a key to the accumulated wisdom and humanistic discipline of the oldest continuous civilization in the world”. Many of the books date back to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, their excellent paper and skilful binding accounting for their preservation. The typical Chinese book-binding of wood or cloth is, in effect, a box which protects all six faces of the volume.

The Library of Congress may perhaps be said to specialize a little in Chinese literature, but it has also a very fine collection of Tibetan books. A recent acquisition is a complete set of the Tibetan Buddhist canon in 317 volumes including both the Tanjur and Kanjur. These were printed from blocks stored in the Lamaist monastery at Choni in Kansu Province, China. The transportation of these volumes to America was a very difficult task, but the labour was justified, for they are

superb examples of the Tibetan printers' art, printed in clear cut letters, in good black ink and on heavy paper. They are bound in the Tibetan style, with ribbon ties and heavy wooden slabs at the top and the bottom of the piles of loose sheets, which measure 16 x 61 cm.

It is hoped by comparing translations, both in Chinese and Tibetan, of certain lost Sanskrit originals, to reconstruct these lost manuscripts. Many Chinese and Tibetan scholars are attempting so to do.

America of course has a material advantage over other Western lands by reason of its great wealth. A quite colossal endowment enables Harvard University to cooperate with the Yen-Ching University for the promotion of the study of Chinese and Tibetan. This Harvard-Yenching Institute, as it is called, is engaged in the task of indexing practically the whole of Tibetan literature, and to this end has secured the services of Baron Stael-Holstein of Peking (a great Tibetan scholar), who will direct the work, assisted by Chinese, Japanese and Mongolian scholars.

The acquisition of books and manuscripts is not without romance. Readers of Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* will remember how she writes of the existence of secret libraries. She says :

Moreover in all the large and wealthy lamaseries, there are subterranean crypts and *cave-libraries*, cut in the rock, whenever the *gonpa* and *lhakhang* are

situated in the mountains. Beyond the Western Tsaydam, in the solitary passes of *Kuen-lun* there are several such hiding places. Along the ridge of Altyn-Toga, whose soil no European foot has ever trodden so far, there exists a certain hamlet, lost in a deep gorge. It is a small cluster of houses, a hamlet rather than a monastery, with a poor-looking temple in it, with one old lama, a hermit, living near by to watch it. Pilgrims say that the subterranean galleries and halls under it contain a collection of books, the number of which, according to the accounts given, is too large to find room even in the British Museum.

No doubt the wisdom of 1888 (in which year the book was written), smiled somewhat cynically at this statement, but twelve years later was discovered a sealed cave in Tunhuang on the border of Kansu Province and Chinese Turkestan, in which were found thousands of Buddhist and other manuscripts. The discovery came about this wise. In 1900 a devout Chinese Buddhist priest from Shansi Province undertook, as a work of piety, to rebuild an ancient Buddhist grotto in Tunhuang. In making the repairs he found loose plaster, and on taking out a brick laid bare a hidden chamber filled with manuscripts. It appears that this cave had been sealed for nearly a thousand years, and its existence had entirely faded from the minds of men.

The priest succeeded in keeping his discovery secret from all but a few natives of the place for seven years. But only for seven years. In 1907 Sir Aurel Stein of the Government of India heard rumours of the find as he was

travelling to China by the route followed by Marco Polo in the thirteenth century. Sir Aurel was desirous of obtaining the manuscripts, the priest needed money for the repairs of the temple. The result was an acquisition to the British Museum of about a third of the collection, brought in secret by night to Sir Aurel, who was not permitted to see the cave. Among the treasures obtained were the oldest known Buddhist paintings on silk.

More fortunate than Sir Aurel, in one respect, was M. Paul Pelliot, a well-known Chinese scholar of Paris. He gained entrance to the cave and made a selection from the remaining documents, which included the oldest known printed book in the world, dated 868 A. D. Scattered on the floor he discovered movable type which had been there since the cave was sealed, centuries before the discovery of printing in Europe. This was in 1908.

A Japanese expedition in 1911 made a further depletion, and it was only in 1919 that the Chinese acted tardily to save what was left, some 8000 MSS. for the Peking National Library. But the cream of the collection had already found its way to the British Museum and the Bibliothèque Nationale.

In view of this discovery the above quoted words of Mme. Blavatsky may well gain credence. The time may come when a great body of so-called lost literature may be restored to the world. But these MSS. are carefully guarded and preserved, and will not be given out indiscriminately, for they are too holy and too revealing to be in the hands of the profane. Madame Blavatsky was told by a prominent Cinghalese priest that it was well known that the most important Buddhist tracts belonging to the sacred canon were stored away *in countries and places inaccessible to the European pundits*. These assuredly are not to be bought with gold. The late Swami Dayanand Sarasvati is also quoted in the *Secret Doctrine* as saying :

If Mr. Moksh Mooller, as he pronounced the name, were a Brahmin, and came with me, I might take him to a *gupta* cave (a secret crypt) near Okhee Math, in the Himalayas, where he would soon find out that what crossed the *Kalapani* (the black waters of the ocean) from India to Europe were only the *bits of rejected copies of some passages from our sacred books*. There *was* a "primeval revelation," and it still exists; nor will it ever be lost to the world, but will reappear; though the Mlechchas will of course have to wait.

The rapidly changing attitude of the West to the Eastern philosophies and religions may hasten the day.



## SUICIDE

["C. G." here presents several important facts about suicide, all of which the student of Theosophy will find fully explained in the very first book of H. P. Blavatsky—*Isis Unveiled*.—EDS.]

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"When all the blandishments of life are gone,  
The coward sneaks to death, the brave lives on."

GEORGE SEWELL.

Following the cataclysmic upheavals of the late war, a mighty wave of suicide is sweeping over the land, engulfing some of the most brilliant minds of the day in its resistless current. Great financiers are plunging into the whirlpool of physical oblivion with the recklessness of a love-sick adolescent. Famous artists are being sucked into the vortex of self-murder along with the humblest artisans. All the barriers of wealth, culture and education are being levelled by the steadily onrushing tide of self-destruction. We might hope to find the wave receding by this time, but unfortunately this is not the case. The English publicist, Mr. Andrew Soutar, warns his readers that the epidemic of suicide is on the increase in Great Britain. Dr. Walther Echstein, President of the Vienna Ethical Culture Society, reports that in the city of Vienna alone nine thousand persons attempted suicide during the past three years. The recent statistics compiled by Dr. Frederick L. Hoffman, consulting statistician of the Prudential Insurance Company,

shows the suicide rate in 100 American cities to be 18 per 100,000 for the year 1929.

Such statements as these merit the attention of every thinking man. They show, first of all, that moral as well as physical diseases have a tendency to appear in epidemic form. These epidemics express themselves variously as religious mania, resistance to constituted authority, excessive patriotism, homicide, suicide. De Quincey, in his *Murder considered as a Fine Art*, speaks of the epidemic of assassination which occurred between the years 1588 and 1635, and the *Annales d'Hygiene Publique* record a similar wave of incendiarism in which scores of buildings were fired by persons who felt impelled by irresistible necessity. Dr. Elam\* admits that "certain pathological conditions have a tendency to become epidemic, influenced by causes not yet investigated". He also observes how remarkably the same ideas reproduce themselves and reappear in successive ages,—an observation which has a timely bearing on the present-

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\* See Charles Elam, M. D.: *A Physician's Problems*, page 159.

day epidemic of homicide, crime and suicide which is so faithfully recorded in the columns of the daily press.

The cyclical tendency of these moral epidemics has been noted by more than one observer, and the present-day suicide wave is being studied and discussed in various quarters. Authors and playwrights are bringing the matter up for public consideration; moralists are alternately decrying and bemoaning a situation which can no longer be denied; psychologists are analysing its possible causes, while the Church shakes its head and platitudinizes.

In the September number of *Harper's Magazine*, an interesting synopsis is presented by Mr. Louis J. Dublin, statistician of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company of America. He gives a striking picture of the rise and fall of the suicide wave in chart form, showing its steady increase in the United States during the last seven years. In spite of the number of Negroes in this country, suicide is confined almost entirely to the white population, while the male suicides out-number the female by more than three to one. The highest suicide rates in the world are found among the Germanic and Japanese peoples, the English-speaking races come next, while the lowest rate of all is found in countries which are devoutly Catholic. Mr. Dublin attributes the last condition to the submissive attitude taken by those who accept the yoke of ecclesiastical authority without question,

and regard trials and tribulations as the will of God, to which they must resign themselves without a murmur. In interesting contrast to this is the attitude taken by Dean Inge of St. Paul's, who openly advocates suicide as an alternative for the condemned man and the hopeless invalid. These disagreements among the clergy leave the religious-minded in somewhat of a quandary, and offer little encouragement to those who would naturally seek the advice of the Church on this all-important question.

The fact that the suicide wave is steadily increasing shows that the cause is still undiscovered, the effect still unrecognized, the cure still a matter of conjecture. The scientific world stands as helpless as the clergy before the onslaught of these moral epidemics. The psychiatrist attributes them to melancholia, to complexes of inferiority or superiority, to dementia precox, hallucination, hysteria. But to the layman these are mere words describing the *effect* of some antecedent condition, not the primary *cause*. Can the pathologists and psychologists themselves explain what lies behind these words? Has the cause of these abnormal mental conditions ever been brought under a hypothesis capable of withstanding the challenge of an uncompromising investigator? Let the controversial works of our contemporary alienists speak for themselves!

Before the actual cause of these moral epidemics can be satisfac-

torily explained, the field of scientific research must be extended into regions beyond the range of the human eye or the most sensitive instruments yet devised. The whole nature of the human being—physical, psychic, mental, emotional and spiritual—must be fathomed; the laws of magnetism and other imponderable agents must be more thoroughly investigated; the still hypothetical “astral light” must become more than a mere speculation, and the effects of the images contained in it upon the human brain and mind must be taken into account. Until these subjects are more fully understood than they are at present, it is useless to moralize, for in these days of fearless investigation and critical analysis, mere moralizing is not enough. If we would help the man who hopes to end his troubles by committing suicide, we must be able to show him the *futility* of his act, the uselessness of trying to counteract the laws of Life.

The arguments put forth by material science, religion and spiritualism give us but little encouragement to continue the battle of life. If we are but a “fortuitous concurrence of atoms,” and the flame we call “I” expires when the body is destroyed, why should we not try to extinguish it when the heat becomes unbearable? If—as the Church affirms—our sins may be forgiven even at the moment of death, why not avail ourselves of this “moment of grace” and at the same time end our troubles? If Death trans-

ports us into the “Summerland” of the spiritualists, why struggle longer against the wintry blasts of earth? The very existence of the present day suicide wave is a tacit confession that science, religion and spiritualism have failed to give us the facts of life and death, for, as Daniel Webster once said: “There is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.”

Where then shall we turn for enlightenment? Why not within ourselves? Within the heart of each one of us there lies the feeling—sometimes the full conviction—that the flame we call “I myself” is one which may flicker but can never utterly expire. A few simple experiments will prove that the *Self* is not the body, the senses, the emotions or the mind, but on the contrary is that which acts through the body, uses the senses, controls the passions and trains the mind. If the *Self* is other than its instruments during life, it is but natural to conclude that, although the body be burned to ashes and the earthly thoughts and desires be scattered to the four winds, the *Self* still remains, indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible. If the flame of *Self* cannot be extinguished, suicide is a waste of time and a useless expenditure of energy. All the suicide can hope to achieve by his act is the loss of his body, the instrument through which he expresses himself on the physical plane. But where is the violinist who would wilfully smash his instrument because its strings were

out of tune? The analogy is not far-fetched, for as the learned Kabbalist, Eliphas Levi, once said:

Our souls are, as it were, a music, of which our bodies are the instruments. The music exists without the instruments, but it cannot make itself heard without a material intermediary.

But the physical body is not the only instrument of the Self. There is that ethereal counterpart of the body, with senses capable of working independently of the outer sense-organs, as demonstrated in trance states and somnambulism; there is the emotional nature and the lower reasoning mind which perceives through comparison and contrast. All of these instruments, finely or badly tuned as the case may be, are self-earned inheritances, effects of causes previously set up. This intricate chain of causes already set in motion requires a definite period of time to work out as effects, and determines the natural span of life for any individual. This period of time cannot be shortened, nor can a man's contract with Life be annulled by the wilful destruction of his physical instrument. The lower half of the hour-glass may be smashed by a careless hand, but the stream of sand remaining in the upper receptacle will continue to run on until exhausted. Those misguided souls who, through ignorance of the laws of Life, believe they are annihilating *themselves* when they destroy the body, find to their sorrow that this has not occurred, and that they

... like sentries, are obliged to stand  
In starless nights, and wait th'appointed hour.

During life, the ethereal counterpart of the body, the emotions and the mind are closely interwoven with the physical instrument. When natural death occurs, these leave the body and form an entity of themselves. The *real* man, the "I myself," leaves both the physical body and this superphysical entity behind to disintegrate in their own way and time, and gradually enters into a subjective condition where he assimilates the experiences of his late earth-life and builds them as faculties into the soul. Natural death—as Shelley once said—is a wonderful experience, and is no more to be feared than its brother Sleep. It is a tender act of great Mother Nature, who folds her wings around her tired children and lets them slip for a time into the land of dreams, there to find rest and recuperation from their past labours, and renewed strength for the coming day.

But natural death is quite another thing from suicide, for *suicide is not death*. It is only an intermediary condition between life and death, and the suicide is only a "Half-way," as Sutton Vane's play *Outward Bound* so aptly describes it. In cutting himself off from earth-life, the man has destroyed but *one* of his instruments—the physical body. His senses are still as alert, his desires still as ravenous, his mind still as tenacious of life as before. For the *man himself is still there*, chained to his superphysical form, unable to discard it until the "appointed hour" strikes. His still

living mind reviews in endless reiteration the chain of circumstances which culminated in his final act. Like Sisyphus, he rolls the stone of thought up the steep hill of memory, only to see it roll down and compel him to climb the road of agony again and again. His vivid thought-pictures are impressed upon the sensitive minds of discouraged mortals, inciting them to the same act. And so the suicide-wave grows and grows.

Chained to his earthly thoughts and his mortal passions, the suicide discovers that all the cravings which embittered his earthly life are still with him. But now he is unable to gratify them save by proxy. He seeks avenues through which they may be vicariously satisfied, and finds them in mediums who throw themselves open to what they consider "angel guides," but which are in reality these obsessing entities. These are the *Incubi* and *Succubi* of medieval times, the "spirit brides and husbands" of to-day. These psychic vampires not only ruin their victims, but prepare themselves for eventual annihilation. Rather than submit to such annihilation, they will even seek refuge in the organism of a beast when no human vehicle is available,—explaining perhaps the

stories of "were-wolves".

Woe to those mortals who passively and unresistingly allow themselves to become the victims of such obsessions! Little do we dream that two-thirds of the monstrous crimes of the world have their origin in this mediumistic capacity, and that many of those who perish on the scaffold are but the ignorant victims of these obsessing entities. Passive mediumship is a deadly weed, and should be starved out wherever and whenever recognized.

Who then can save the suicide from such a fate as this? No one but the man himself. No burning of candles, no prayers to gods or saints can prevent the suicide from reaping the effects of causes which he himself has sowed. But the suicide still has the power to avert a worse fate than the one he is now suffering. There is still hope for him if he realizes his mistake, determines to bear his cross, strives against his carnal appetites without allowing them to conquer him or affect living mortals. If he continues along these lines until the last moment of his "appointed hour," he will at that time be able to disengage himself from the entity which has chained him to a living death, and pass on into the subjective condition which brings peace and rest.

C. G.

## WHEN THE SUN ENTERS ARIES IN MODERN INDIA

[N. Kasturi Iyer, M. A., B. L., has entertained our readers, especially the Western ones, with instructive narratives of various Hindu festivals, and once again makes his appearance in these pages with an interesting story of what happens in India when Nature Herself celebrates Her Natal Day.—EDS.]

Both the solar and the lunar systems of computation prevail in India, though in South India they have interpenetrated in popular usage to a very great extent. For example, the lunar month, invariably determined by the beginning of the bright fortnight, takes the name of the solar month in which the full moon occurs! The Lunar New Year's Day (*31st March*) is observed in North India and by the Marathi, Telugu and Kanarese peoples of the South, while the Solar New Year's Day (*13th April*) is celebrated by the Tamils. When the Sun enters Aries—the Ram in the signs of the Zodiac—the solar year begins. The Hindu conception\* is that the Zodiac represents twelve hierarchies of intelligences which are believed to be centres of consciousness in the Person or Purusha, *representing* cosmic intelligence (like Adam Kadmon of the Jews); and when the sun enters the sign of the Ram, Aja, the unborn, the ultimate cause—the New Year begins.

There is great uniformity in the observances on New Year's Day in the various parts of South India. The day begins with a ceremonial

oil bath and hence the entire household is astir long before day-break. The grandmother drops oil on the heads of all members of the family, and they bathe in water procured and heated with semi-religious scrupulousness. New clothes are then worn and sweets distributed. In Malabar and Coorg, a very interesting ceremonial called *kani-puja* is gone through. Fine yellow golden flowers are gathered the previous evening and arranged overnight on a plate of rice over a red silk cloth. A coconut and a few green vegetables are also kept close by. The plate also carries a mirror, a few coins and golden ornaments. At cock-crow, one of the married ladies rises first, lights a few lamps and wakes up other members of the family one by one. They come with closed eyes, groping their way towards the *kani* so that their first vision on New Year's Day may be the gold and other auspicious materials. The most senior male member then gives each one a money present and thus initiates a happy and lucky year for every one present. They then go out in groups, to cast their

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\* For the real meaning we recommend "The Twelve Signs of the Zodiac," by T. Subba Row in *The Theosophist* for November 1881.—EDS.

glances on a cow, a coco-nut tree heavy with fruit, and such other welcome sights. They never use any harsh or abusive word on New Year's Day and note with deep concern the antecedents of the first person who crosses the family threshold. In some places, after the bath, the juice of the "marking nut," which causes a blister when applied, is used for the customary dot on the forehead, since the renewal of the skin is considered symbolic of a new birth on New Year's Day. Anthropologists can easily note that this is an interesting survival of the fire-walking ceremony, undertaken to drive out the demoniac and evil influences.

The hour between cock-crow and dawn is spent in hilarious glee by the children, who let off crackers and similar varieties of fireworks. This drives away the old year with its sorrows and its evils, and purges the neighbourhood of malevolent spirits. New Year's Day is thus ushered in almost everywhere. In some East European villages, for example, every family brings a fire brand into the street, throws it away and exclaims—"The Gods of the New Year! New Year has come round again." In Siam, again, as Frazer describes,

On the last day of the old year, a signal gun is fired from the palace; it is answered from the next station and so on from station to station; till the firing has reached the outer gate of the city. Thus the demons are driven out step by step. As soon as this is done, a consecrated rope is fastened round the circuit of the city walls to prevent the banished demons from returning. The rope is made of

tough conch grass and is painted in alternate stripes of red, yellow and blue.

Such alternate bands of red and yellow are also placed on New Year's Day on the lintels and pillars of Hindu homes.

The souls of the departed are also not forgotten at this time; the day is held sacred for offerings of *til* and water for the appeasement of hunger and thirst, especially at the confluence of holy rivers and the sea coast. The day is specially suited for gifts and charity that lead one on the heavenward path. But it must have been once marked by much merry-making for we have now the significant remnant of universal and unchecked gambling connected with it in the popular mind.

Hindus in the Maratha country welcome the year by raising silk-and-gold standards on long poles, garlanded and decked, which they parade in the streets for mass worship.

Significant of the innate realism of Indian ways is the curious custom of having, as the first dish at the family feast, a mixture of jaggery and bitter margosa leaves, reminiscent of the strange but inevitable mixture of sweet and bitter experiences that form the obverse and reverse sides of the New Year to be. One explanation of this practice is that the margosa blooms at this season. It is considered as the harbinger of the coming year, and is said to possess good medicinal value.

Towards evening, the older heads of the village gather at the temple or common hall to hear

the calendar read\* and to grasp the implications of the planetary revolutions on climate, rainfall, crops and public health. The Indian calendar is named *Panchangam* since it is comprised of five limbs, *Tithi*, *Vāram*, *Nakshatram*, *Yogam* and *Karanam*, and stock has to be taken of each of these by one desirous of prosperity, long life, health, success and salvation. The priest begins the recital with prayers addressed to the Sun and other planetary divinities and then describes the personality of the coming year, before retailing his predictions. The year (Jovian) beginning on 13th April is *Pramoda*, pictured as a five-faced terrible individual, with his consort clasped in embrace. He then goes on to name the members of the celestial cabinet, for, to use a political simile, portfolios are there reshuffled every twelve months. In *Pramoda*, for example, the King (*archon*, *basileus*) is Chandra (Moon) while Surya (Sun) is both Minister and Commander-in-chief. This latter is not a very desirable turn of affairs, since it is bound to result in serious rivalries among crowned heads and a degrading set-back in the mentality of

nations. Budha (Mercury) is in charge of the vegetable kingdom (Chandra supervises grain and cereals) while Saturn or Sani is controlling the clouds and so on. These changes have very revolutionary bearings on human affairs and fortunes. But what generally happens is that the effects of one office being under a god are offset by contrary results accruing from other gods, managing other duties, and a colourless result usually follows. Hence, those who consult the *Panchangam* for stock exchange dealings or accepting armament contracts or preparing national budgets will generally be none the wiser for the adventure.†

When the day wanes, the children of the household are decked in the finest clothes and seated on a dais for the *ārati*, or the waving of lights and coloured water to ward off the evil eye and to immunise them against disease.

And thus the New Year is ushered in, with song and laughter but yet with a frank realisation of the purple and the dark patches of life's chequered paved work. It is a day of sugar and margosa leaf, of universal rejoicing and forgiveness, of the rustling of new clothes and the jingling of bangles.

N. KASTURI IYER

\* Many great and esoteric truths are enshrined in old Hindu rites and symbols—like this particular ceremony. Ignorance and time have disfigured them considerably; the student of esotericism is anxious for their preservation, even in their crude forms, for through them sublime truths once again may be understood, and the rites in their original integrity may be restored. Thus from this quaint custom, which in practice is but superstition, one can learn esoteric truths about the intimate relationship subsisting between man and cosmos, each influencing the other year by year—nay hour by hour.—EDS.

† Modern Astrology—Oriental and Occidental—has lost the key of true interpretation, and therefore to rely on it as a practical occult art is indeed unwise. Like the Hindu rites, etc., in the East, Astrology has done excellent work in the West; for, it has helped to carry the knowledge of the existence of a Secret Wisdom throughout the dangers of the Medieval Ages and dark bigotry up to this day, when danger has disappeared; but it also has brought in its train money-making astrologers and even charlatans.—EDS.



## ARRIVING AT UNIVERSAL VALUES

[**L. E. Parker** has travelled widely; as a Government official and a newspaper correspondent he has lived in Spain, Germany and Switzerland; for three years he made the native tribes of South Africa his neighbours; for four years he laboured as a journalist in South America.

In the following article he pleads for the study and application of all religious philosophies, especially those of the old world. This is the second object of the Theosophical Movement—"the study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and a demonstration of the importance of such study."—EDS.]

We cannot dissociate religion, in its truest and broadest sense, from life and experience. To a progressive nature the great events of life come as a series of ordered experiences which do not change character but develop it. To all objective phenomena we can give a subjective interpretation just because these phenomena pass into experience. As we re-act to facts in an outer world, those facts represent relative states of experience in our inner life. The experiences through which we pass, speaking from one point of view only, may be said to represent extensions in universal consciousness. These experiences may be personal, national, or world-wide and these three are closely allied states. Everything in the universe is contained within something akin to itself but greater than itself. The large is always the small magnified and the small contains potentialities of extension into the great. And in the individual personality and in the world there are the same warring and conflicting elements. The universe is "I," a unity, and awaits our appreciation of that fact.

The great war was thus a

world-wide experience of an initiating character which destroyed established standards, compelled iconoclasm, and now leaves the world groping a little blindly after new values. And the new values necessary to reconstruction are universal values. *The conventional formula which represented religion has been swept away before the advance of science; and science itself staggers a little uncertainly in the face of its discovery of its own relativity.*

Definitions are relative to the relative understanding of man in a relative universe and cannot be applied in any absolute sense. Before we have succeeded in defining caterpillar, it is already butterfly, flits for a moment, eludes our grasp and is gone. The meaning of words also is relative to interpretation, hence it is the function of literature and the arts to convey that which cannot be stated or defined. This is a fact which has been realized by the thinkers of all ages. Many of the world's wisest men did not attempt to formulate their knowledge in written works on this account. Life being paradoxical, it can only be described in paradox; and it is

paradoxical because it embraces several dimensions or planes of consciousness, each subject to its own laws. To the average man, these paradoxes are simply contradictions logically absurd. But it would be equally ridiculous to maintain that a work of art had no meaning just because we did not happen to see it. Therefore aphorism and parable have been employed by sage and teacher, and it is one of the functions of a comparative study of religions to elucidate those truths which are not so much to be explained as to be experienced, tested, and verified. Study itself is experience, a broadening experience, and an enriching experience.

Life as we know it is relative and a means only. The end is not within our conscious effort but the consummation of our efforts. Christianity does not take stages of development into account, except in so far as hell, purgatory, and heaven, popularly interpreted as places, are states of inner being with their correspondences in other religions, but is concerned with life itself.

There is much to be learnt from the systems of the Indian sages, because they deal with cause and effect, and present the student with complete philosophies of life from different angles of thought, each qualifications of the others. In this manner experiences are made clear as experiences in time having growth and development as their object and a definite end towards which they tend. Hence material life is given an aim, is

ordered by cause and effect, and the universe has a plan which concerns all humanity and all life. The doctrine of reincarnation and evolution, if accepted, has in itself a broadening effect upon the mind and understanding, for we are no longer confined to a single page of the book of life but begin to get an idea of what the book is all about. This is to exchange a world for a universe since we are now concerned with universal values, and relative values lose their significance in so far as they apply to a single plane alone.

This is in itself a paradoxical experience for, while still living in a material world and subject to its laws, we become at the same time aware of laws immeasurably more far reaching in their consequences and more exact in their operation. And it is just these contradictions between the life of experience and the material life which constitute the problems of the great mass of serious thinkers at the present time and make it impossible to reconcile the physical life with the precepts of religion, cause and effect with commands which are the expression of a different condition.

In the present unsettled age and with the advent of modern scientific discoveries, those interested in life are obliged to view it under too many aspects and are the more apt to become confused by its many contradictions due to its relativity. Hence the Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu says, "The more I go abroad the less I understand." A study of nature shows us nature

manifesting in a myriad ways, each way perfect in itself yet only one aspect of the whole. But each aspect, each species, is wholly itself and gives the fullest expression to its life. Man alone limits himself by his reason and by his fixed beliefs and prejudices. We cannot study every aspect of nature and are eventually forced to look for some principle of which all these outer forms are a manifestation, and this was Plato's conception of a science of all the sciences. We find an intelligent principle ordering nature everywhere and everything conforming to its nature, so that intelligence manifests as poise, rhythm, and beauty. We may call this intelligence or principle behind action Tao, the name matters little but it is a principle common to us as to all nature. Recognition of this unity gives us sympathy with nature and enables us to enter into these different manifestations of life and so to gain an understanding of them and union with the whole.

In making a comparative study of religions the same principle applies. We are not actually searching for forms but searching forms to find a principle. And although the modern tendency\* is to concern itself with the persons of great teachers and to subject them to a searching analysis and criticism based upon present day rationalism, considerable specula-

tion, a popular biographical style of writing, and entire insufficiency of data, it is the truth presented in these teachings and not the medium which is of first importance.

Religions which appear upon the surface to be widely different have always essential points in common, we might say one essential point, other points less essential, and some entirely non-essential. But the essential point is the one principle which unites them. Thus apparent contradictions become qualifications, the sum total of religions making up all the different angles from which this one principle may be viewed by different minds and temperaments. No one angle is sufficient, however, because this principle is a unity only to be viewed as a whole. And to quote Lao-Tzu again, "He who grasps, loses."

But to carry the argument further, we cannot say to this person nor that, nor to this country nor that, your outlook and expression is wrong and mine is right. In this sense there is no right or wrong, but to the extent that we do express ourselves either as individuals or nations, while at the same time recognizing our *interdependence* and the unity of the whole, we are right and all our ends similar, to find ourselves and our places in the universe. Temperance is "minding one's

\* This attempt invariably proves unfair, for how can puny minds, comparatively speaking, fathom the contents of Master-Minds, without an effort to grasp what the latter have presented as Teachings for the enlightenment of the former. From the Teachings to the Teachers is a sound maxim. Blind belief in, or blind rejection of, prophets must result if the process is reversed.—EDS.

own business" and so too is brotherhood and unity.

There may appear to be little similarity between Christianity and the ancient religions of India, the one limited apparently to a single life and the other concerned with countless existences. Actually there exists no difference at all save in the presentation of the facts. This is clearly enough stated by Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita* where he tells Arjuna that it matters not whether he regard himself as being repeatedly born and repeatedly dying or as having neither birth nor death. Christianity refers to spiritual existence only, while Indian systems provide the means and ways of discovering this complete life which is liberation from the limitations of personal existence. Patanjali's analysis outlines these steps, while the Christian regarding himself as a spiritual being attempts to rise above the hindrances of material life. He does not dwell upon the negative, which grows the larger from being looked at, for it is not these facts of material life but our attitude towards them which is of chief importance and makes the real distinction between vice and virtue. But we look for solutions to these problems as though they were an end in themselves instead of experiences to shape, mould, and adjust us in our relationship to the whole and to each other.

Between such divergent systems as Taoism, Roman Catholicism, and Indian mysticism, essential points in common may easily be

traced. The doctrine of the activity of inaction is that of the Taoists and incidentally of some of the modern thinkers like Professor Hans Driesch, while the views of Roman Catholic mystics appear to be similar with regard to the contemplative life. The apparently conflicting statements of St. Thomas Aquinas and of St. John of the Cross are compared and reconciled by M. Jacques Maritain in *La Vie d'Oraison*, translated into English under the title *Prayer and Intelligence*. The result of M. Maritain's analysis is a clear exposition of inaction and activity as concordant.

The mystic seeking union by yoga does not differ in essential points from the monk living in constant recollection and self forgetfulness. The former seeks himself and finds the Self seated in the self. The latter regards his God as external to himself, yet practising "The Presence of God," finds Him in the depths of himself in due course. He recalls his mind if he finds it wandering from its object and the Yogi practises concentration with the same object—to steady the mind and make it one pointed.

The modern creeds which have arisen of late years are the thought of antiquity served up in new forms to suit the palate of a new age. Whether these speak of infinite mind and deny matter; or of universal sub-conscious mind and admit it; believe that we cannot see it in true perspective; or like the Spiritualists await the death of the physical body for the

revelation of relative subjective states—these beliefs all qualify each other and belong to relative states in consciousness. Madame Blavatsky's lucid exposition of "maya," an extract of which from the *Secret Doctrine* was published in the April issue of THE ARYAN PATH, makes these qualifications clear. The valley, the plateau, and the mountain present different appearance to the dwellers in the valley, on the plateau, and on the mountain: all three are correct from their own viewpoint. But our views are points of view\* only; we cannot see any object whole and everything we do see we see in time. Professor Einstein's theory of relativity is now accepted by the majority of scientists, but they fail to apply relativity to mind and consciousness. Both are spatial for we speak quite naturally of a wide mind and of a narrow mind, of the broadening influence on a mind of study or of travel; we also say that a statesman has insight or vision without stopping to analyse our meaning.

Our socialists dwell in the valleys of the world and attempt to make their relative position standard for the whole world, but there is no equality in nature because there are different degrees and stages of development, which no human laws can alter. *We cannot in fact name any religious teacher*

*who has taught socialism.* Every religion on the contrary proclaims a spiritual hierarchy and *the universe is a spiritual hierarchy*, while true brotherhood is founded upon an appreciation of relative and essential values. But it is these fixed beliefs, which Bacon calls the idols of the den, the market, and the theatre, that bind the personal mind and make it relative in consciousness. To-day we complicate life by our intellectualisms, our theories, and our attempts to systematise it. Therefore Lao-Tzu as already quoted says "He who grasps loses," and St. John of the Cross, less succinctly but more explicitly, "The more the understanding of particular things and acts of the reason diminish, the more the reason raises itself to the sovereign and supernatural good."

But in making a comparative study of religions we must not omit to notice certain differences natural to different mentality, outlook, and expression of East and West. A study of Eastern systems can teach the Western student a great deal and it throws considerable light on much of the spiritual teaching of Christianity which otherwise must remain obscure. To take a single example, the resurrection of the body is a stumbling block to most orthodox Christians although *Corinthians* 1, Chap. 15, from verse 42 to the

\*The well-known six schools of Indian philosophy are named Sad-darshanani, the six points of view. So often they are regarded as conflicting, but taken together they present a harmonious whole. The seventh or central view-point is the View of the Perceiver Himself, the Real Man. This inner vision provides the uniting and harmonizing factor of the six cardinal points of view. This vision of the Centre, and vision from the Centre is Theosophy, which our author refers to in more than one place as the Ancient Wisdom.—EDS.

end, makes it clear that the spiritual body is referred to by St. Paul. If this passage be read in conjunction with Patanjali's *Sutras*, considerable light on the subject may be gained.

To the Western mind the ascetic practices of the East are too closely allied to magic to make much appeal, and the systems are too analytical. Moreover the Western temperament lends itself more naturally to positivism and activity than to abstract thought and contemplative practices. The Christian religion aims at raising the minds of its adherents above the material in order to safe-guard them against the dangers of self-analysis, morbid introspection, and psychic emotionalism. The acquisition of personal powers is a constant temptation to the student of yoga, who sets so much value on the control of natural forces that he often mistakes the means for the end and misses the natural outcome of his discipline. To seek first the Kingdom of Heaven is both sound and practical wisdom. The Yogi's conception of duty for the sake of duty, strikes the Western mind as too cold and detached to be a virtue. It seems to lack the Christian spirit of charity which gives or does out of a pure love of giving or doing rather than from any sense of imposed obligation. On the other hand the Bhakti Yoga may strike the Western mind as over-emotional and it would prefer to find a mean between Eastern and Western thought rather than to advocate or adopt one against the

other. These differences, however, are relative and unimportant from an absolute standpoint, although important from a relative one. For those who embrace the doctrine of reincarnation and karma there are in fact two principal dangers, the one that of discountenancing details which really matter but which appear to lose their significance in this wider conception of life, the other that of postponing action and of adopting a fatalistic attitude towards circumstances which require adjustment, and appreciation of value.

From both East and West there is much to be learnt and the student of psychology especially cannot afford to overlook the Eastern wisdom and the more profound knowledge of the ancient Seers. The present policy of psychologists is destructive rather than constructive and in this respect they are the antithesis of the alchemists. Nevertheless psychology is of the utmost importance to modern thought and, combined with a study of the Eastern wisdom, it should prove of the greatest benefit to humanity, to human progress, and to human evolution. "Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner" is an excellent French proverb and it is just to enable us to get this broad understanding and attitude towards life, this appreciation of causes and their effects, that psychology, rightly understood and applied, is of such paramount importance at the present time.

This is a principle of rational understanding which, viewed from

a higher standpoint, has universal application in so far as the vision of a few is insufficient to avert world calamities. The real enemy of civilization is ignorance, not alone the ignorance of the unthinking portion of humanity, but the greater ignorance of those who misapply scientific laws to produce sensational effects or for wilfully misleading purposes of propaganda. Thus the effect of war propaganda is still running its course in crime in Europe and has had far reaching consequences elsewhere. This misleading weapon is still active throughout the civilized world, and to insure world peace the whole of humanity must advance together into a realization of essential or universal values. *The welfare of the State as a whole thus depends upon the individual, and upon each individual's recognition of himself as a member of the universe, and of the universe as governed from within itself.*

Hence a comparative study of religions and more especially of the ancient wisdom is of first importance to the individual of every country, because it provides him with a comprehensive view of life and enables him to arrive at universal values. It broadens his out-

look, makes clear the obscurer points of any one religion, and produces in him absolute tolerance of all religious convictions, because he understands that every creed is a relative expression of the one principle that unites all religion, all humanity, and all life. But study itself is insufficient for the discovery of essential values and these values have to be tested by being applied to life itself. The ancient wisdom is of more particular importance because it lends psychology a breadth which, limited as it is to a narrow conception of life, it does not possess at present. Cause and effect viewed from this wider standpoint takes on a new significance and gives the individual a new understanding of his own problems as well as a perfect tolerance and appreciation of those of his neighbour. "Every event great or small happens of necessity," and a study of the ancient wisdom shows that Schopenhauer was right when he said this. And if we are to learn anything we cannot afford to dispense with these experiences of life which help us to modify and adjust ourselves to the universe, not with loss of individuality, but with increased consciousness of life.\*

L. E. PARKER

\* Which in its supreme consummation is Nirvana.—EDS.

## TO WHICH CLASS DO YOU BELONG ?

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

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“Those who have the eye of wisdom perceive the Spirit, and devotees who industriously strive to do so see it dwelling in their own hearts ; whilst those who have not overcome themselves, who are devoid of discrimination, see it not even though they strive thereafter.”—*Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, xv. 11-12.

Our humanity is composed of three classes of intelligences. First, those who not attempting control of the lower tendencies are devoid of discrimination and do not discern the spiritual aspect of their own beings. Second, those who strive to establish a unison between themselves and their higher and divine nature, having perceived that Spirit resides in their own hearts. Third, the wise who have successfully overcome the attributes of matter by knowledge, and see the things of the flesh with the single eye of Spirit.

In this era things of the senses sway the minds of people enormously. All inventions and devices of modern science are undertaken to bestow comforts and conveniences on the body and bodily senses, to energize brain and the lower intelligence. The very existence

of Soul is doubted, and certainly no attention is considered fit to be given to man's higher nature. Our school-instruction and our home-culture emphasise more the spirit of competition and ambition in us than the subdual of the lower tendencies. Therefore, very large numbers of people grow up in the belief that selfishness is necessary to advancement. There is much of unselfishness of a kind abroad : people are good and charitable and helpful to their neighbours, when to act thus does not inconvenience themselves. The rich give out of the abundance of their wealth, and such giving does not cost them any privation or even discomfort. It is natural, therefore, that in our civilization the first class of beings abound. The agencies to arouse them, to help them put their feet on the path



leading to the second stage are very few. In ancient days temples and other religious institutes worked assiduously in this direction; now religious organizations may encourage superstition and blind belief or social service and vague hope, but ignorance prevails about spiritual verities and their scientific practice. This being the age of individualism *par excellence*, it devolves on the individual to take himself in hand. The economic pressure has compelled him to become competitive and ambitious, but even great suffering has not succeeded in arousing many to question the meaning and purpose of life.

Yet, there is a sufficient number of people who have begun the Search. The phenomenal side of Spiritual life is alluring many among them. Philosophy which requires mental alertness and leads to the exposure of intellectual dishonesty is not popular. Such movements as Spiritualism of the western sort, and the other brand of eastern mediumism and worship of the dead, Couéism and species of New Thought and Christian Science are gullibly accepted. There is much straying away from the discipline of the Secret Knowledge, Guhya Vidya of the *Gita*, in following some person who claims to have acquired emancipation or gained initiation! The *virtues* of this stage of human evolution are well defined—industrious striving after the realization of the Higher Self which is within each of us. Such

striving consists of study about the nature of the Higher Self, application in daily life to live as that Self, and promulgation of the ideas about it for the benefit of others. Study, practice, service take us to tread the triple path of Knowledge-Gnyan, Devotion-Bhakti, and Sacrifice-Karma. Each human soul must learn and teach, must devotedly apply and practise, must sacrificingly serve the race as a whole.

Lives of constant endeavour bring us the grand consummation—realization of the Self in us as the Universal Self; man has become God, the Mahatma is born, most difficult to find, as the *Gita* teaches. He is the true Seer; not the so-called clairvoyant who sees invisible things, but one who understands all that is seen not by senses but by the mind purified of all dross and having acquired the intuitive perception. All Sages and Mahatmas have the Single Eye; having learnt to see straight, each sees the truth underlying all, and thus the One Truth. They are all of one mind, one will, one vision.

Let us overcome ourselves: our lusts and appetites, our cravings and avarice, our selfishness and egotism have to be subdued. We have to gain some impersonality in dealing with the events of life, some universal vision which would endow reality to every-day occurrences. This requires knowledge—study of true books, Holy Writ indeed, and among such the *Gita* takes a prominent place.

## THE WAY OF A JAPANESE MYSTIC

[**Hadland Davis**, author of the two volumes on the Persian mystics, Jalalu'd Din Rumi and Jami, in "the Wisdom of the East" Series, and of *Myths and Legends of Japan*, has been a writer since the age of eleven when he started a magazine. His Japanese stories in various magazines have been gathered into book form in *The Land of the Yellow Spring*. In 1908 was published his first work *In The Valley of Stars There Is A Tower of Silence: A Persian Tragedy* under the pseudonym of "Smara Khamara" written after a period of interest in Egyptology and Sufi thought. Association with a group, the Idlers of the Bamboo Grove whose invisible President was Li Po, the great Chinese poet, increased his love for the East. His quest in life has been to find beauty and it is to the East he has always turned.

In our last number we printed two articles about Japan's future; here is an exquisite picture of a noble son of Japan who sought the Way of Peace in the twelfth century—did he find it? Our author feels he must have; Chomei himself was still questioning, still in doubt, at the end of his earthly days. Though ascetic in habits and detached from the world of the flesh, did Chomei unconsciously to himself tread the path of higher selfishness—seeking peace while his fellows suffered? Did the artist in him crush the altruist? Would he have to return to this earth, this Hall of Ignorance, to teach asceticism in art, altruism in life?—EDS.]

Kamo Chomei, born in Japan during the twelfth century, wrote a little book entitled the *Hojoki* ("Notes from a Ten Feet Square Hut"). Even in the English translation of A. L. Sadler much is preserved that is unforgettable in its beauty and wisdom. It reveals one who, leaving the world behind him, found peace in close communion with Nature and still greater happiness in faithfully following Amida-Buddha.

Chomei did not find Japan the fairyland some would have us suppose. He lived during the stormy days of the Emperor Go Toba when there was civil war between the Minamoto and Taira clans. There were the famous heroes Yoritomo, Yoshitune, and Benkei, but men of battle did not appeal to Chomei. He was more interested in philosophy, music, poetry. It may

be that he was unpractical, for he studied the words of that great dreamer Chuang Tzu who taught that "by doing nothing, all things would be done". Such a teaching was not popular in Japan where one man strove to outdo another, to win wealth and social position. Chomei saw beneath the surface of life. He observed turmoil and folly, endless suffering because men sought the perishable fruits of worldly success and missed the Way of Truth. Chomei wrote:

Death in the morning, birth in the evening. Such is a man's life—a fleck of foam on the surface of the pool . . . Dweller and dwelling are rivals in impermanence, both are fleeting as the dewdrop that hangs on the petals of the morning-glory. If the dew vanish the flower may stay, but only to wither under the day's sun; the petal may fade while the dew delayeth, but only to perish ere evening.

The impermanence of mortal life was brought home to the sensitive Chomei with devastating clearness, for he had the misfortune to experience the horror of fire, hurricane, earthquake, plague and famine. There was hunger, disease, and such dire poverty that men broke up images of Buddha and sacred vessels for firewood. Many thousands of people perished in those terrible disasters. Buddhist priests, "moved by commiseration for the countless numbers who died, made arrangements, with the help of other saintly men, to write on the foreheads of the dead the holy character A as a seal to Buddha." It was a gracious and compassionate gesture, for that sacred mark brought enlightenment and entrance into Amida's Paradise.

Chomei has described those Japanese disasters as incisively and vividly as Defoe in *The Journal of the Plague Year*. The horror of all Chomei saw in his stricken country was not whittled down to a mere suggestion. He spared no detail, however painful; but his account has been touched with pity and poetry. He wrote after the earthquake:

Amid all this ruin I will mention a piteous case. The son of a samurai, six or seven years of age only, had built himself a little play-hut under a shed against a wall, in which he was amusing himself, when suddenly the wall collapsed and buried him flat and shapeless under its ruins, his eyes protruding an inch from their orbits. It was sad beyond words to see his parents embracing his dead body and hear their cries of distress.

Piteous indeed it was to see even a samurai, stricken down with grief for his son thus miserably perished, forgetting his dignity in the extremity of his grief.

This Japanese mystic came to the conclusion that a great man grows avaricious, that wealth brings trouble, and that to seek the protection of another is to be his slave. "Where or how," wrote Chomei, "shall we find peace even for a moment, and afford our heart refreshment even for a single second?" This poet, musician, Buddhist dreamer sought peace more than anything else. It was plain he could not find it in the haunts of men who ran after brightly-coloured bubbles that burst before their outstretched hands. Many had withdrawn to some quiet place where the soul could drink of that secret fount that brings happiness. Chomei followed their example, for when about thirty years old he built a little hut "amid the clouds of Mount Ohara".

We read: "When the 60th year of my life, now vanishing as a dewdrop, approached, anew I made me an abode, a sort of last leap as it were, just as a traveller might run himself up a shelter for a single night, or a decrepit silkworm weave its last cocoon." This second hut, erected "in the recesses of Mount Hino," was only ten feet square and less than seven feet in height. He has described it in detail: the movable sun-screen, the shrine and Buddhist shelf with its "picture of Amida so placed that the space between the eyebrows shines in the rays of

the setting sun." There were black leather boxes that contained Japanese poetry, books on music, and such works as the *Wojoyo*, book on Buddhist Paradise, and there was a double instrument with a harp on one side and a lute on the other. Bundles of bracken and fern served for a couch, near which was "a brazier to burn faggots in". Chomei had invented a primitive but adequate water supply by piling rocks round a little basin "to receive the water that runs down from a bamboo spout above it". With an abundance of flowers at his door there was no need to make his garden decorative, and he wisely devoted that small enclosure to medicinal herbs. It may be considered that Chomei aimed at comfort rather than bare necessity; but it is to his credit that he did so much with so little. He never claimed to be an ascetic, and at his little writing desk by the east window he wrote of those turbulent days in the capital and of that joyous escape to the mountains where he found the Way of Peace.

Chomei occupied his time in various ways. In the spring he gazed "upon the festoons of wistaria, fine to see as purple clouds," or listened to the note of the *hototogisu*. In the autumn he listened to the call of the cicada, and in winter "I watched the snow-drifts pile and vanish, and am led to reflect upon the ever waxing and waning volume of the world's sinfulness." Weary of reciting prayers, reading, or playing his musical instrument, he

would walk to a river and watch the boats. He would return in the evening and hear in the wind rustling the laurel leaves a Chinese girl famed for her skill on the lute. Chomei was not unsociable. He took pleasure in meeting the hillward's boy. "He is 16 and I am 60, yet we enjoy each other's company despite the difference in years." They gathered sprays of cherry blossom, maple leaves, ferns, "and some of these treasures I humbly present to Amida, and some I keep for presents." Chomei was an old man. A long religious pilgrimage was a difficult task he did not attempt to accomplish. Without moving a step his eyes followed the hill-tops, and in imagination he prayed at the shrines of Iwana and Ishima. He even plunged into the jungles of Awazu to do honour to the blind sage Semimaru.

This recluse had no cause to regret the step he had taken. So long as he was in or near his hut he was happy, but when he chanced to go to City-Royal for an hour or two he experienced momentary shame on account of his beggarly appearance. His simple dress of wistaria and hempen fabric probably caused unfriendly comment. In his mountain hut, leading a quiet and sheltered life, he was intensely happy. He wrote: "All the joy of my existence is concentrated around the pillow which giveth me nightly rest, all the hope of my days I find in the beauties of nature that ever please my eyes."

We have no reason to doubt

that Chomei loved the mountains, streams, flowers, birds, trees, but had he after all failed as a disciple of Amida-Buddha? Chomei wrote: "I do not need to trouble myself about the strict observance of the commandments, for living as I do in complete solitude how should I be tempted to break them?" There was false pride in that complacent avowal, for complete solitude is no barrier against temptation: indeed, such conditions often invite the most subtle wrong thought and wrong action. A Buddhist priest in China, while repeating in prayer "O Jewel in the Lotus," found himself thinking about a jewel in a beautiful woman's ear, and inquiring: "What lotus-bud more dainty than the folded flower of flesh?" That priest was bound by "the all-encircling growths of the Plant of Desire". Was not Chomei also deeply attached to the beauties of Nature? Was he not also bound by a love of form, though not the substance of a woman, which according to the Twenty-third of the Admonitions is the strongest and most insidious of all desires? Chomei was by no means sure of enlightenment. There were moments when he doubted, when it seemed presumptuous to have built his last hut like that of Vimalakirrti who was able to

accommodate in his small abode about 3,500 disciples of Buddha. Chomei began to wonder if he had done no more than fill his days "with the vanity of exultation in an empty joy". He wrote, and it is the most impressive passage in the *Hojoki*:

My life is now like the declining moon approaching the edge of the hill which is to hide it. Ere long I must face the three realms of darkness. What deeds in the past shall I have to plead for there? What the Buddha has taught to men is this—Thou shalt not cleave to any of the things of this world. So 'tis a sin even to grow fond of this straw-thatched cabin, and to find happiness in this life of peace is a hindrance to salvation. . . . What answer could my soul give? None. I could but move my tongue as it were mechanically and twice or thrice repeat involuntarily the Buddha's Holy Name. I could do no more.

Chomei ends the *Hojoki* on a note of doubt, but we need not share that recluse's fear and uncertainty on his account. Mohammed said, or is alleged to have said: "If thou hast a loaf of bread, sell half and buy the flowers of the narcissus: for bread nourisheth the body, but the flowers of the narcissus the soul." That is what Chomei did for over thirty years, and having left behind him a book of rare beauty and wisdom, he needs no Buddhist priest to write upon his brow the sacred A before he can attain his Nirvana.

HADLAND DAVIS

## IN THE WORLD OF BOOKS

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### RELIGION VERSUS ORGANIZED RELIGION\*

[**John Middleton Murry** once again presents some purely Theosophical ideas in this review. Mr. Murry rightly points the finger of warning against the gospel of happiness and the solely material standard of life which physical science offers. What is said about organized churches equally applies to any and every form of organized religion. Theosophy also faces this danger. All lovers of Wisdom must learn to distinguish between the Impersonal Universal Philosophy and any organization, which must necessarily limit it. Those interested in this line of thought will do well to peruse the U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 1—*Is Theosophy a Religion?* by H. P. Blavatsky.—EDS.]

Mr. Joseph Wheless, fired with an eager but belated zeal to “*écraser l’infâme*,” has compiled a very big volume to prove among other things “that every Book of the New Testament is a forgery of the Christian Church, wrought with definite fraudulent intent”. Of course, in such a proposition, everything depends on what is meant by a forgery. That the documents of the New Testament have been generously interpolated and “doctored” is common knowledge, but they are not therefore worthless, as Mr. Wheless implies. Moreover, I regret to say that he has made no real study of the subject. On the strength of a single quotation from the *Encyclopædia Biblica* he declares that Paul was not the author of any one of his Epistles—a preposterous statement, which Mr. Wheless makes no attempt to justify. He has no historical sense, and no knowledge of the historical criticism of the Bible which has been

one of the great achievements of the last hundred years. Above all, he has no charity, no sympathy, and no imagination. The simple word of Rousseau’s Savoyard Vicar: “*Ce n’est pas ainsi qu’on invente*” concerning the life of Jesus would be without meaning for him. He cannot see that the teaching of Jesus, and much of the teaching of Paul, is evidently the teaching of a spiritual master. For him, Christianity is simply a monstrous aberration of the European mind. It is without any spiritual content whatever. The discovery is not surprising. What we cannot see, does not exist for us.

Not by such means will the infamous thing be crushed. The only way to eradicate Christianity is by understanding it, and surpassing it. After all, the infamous thing was crushed, pretty thoroughly, and by men of far greater genius than Mr. Wheless, by the end of the 18th century. If Christianity has endured since then, it

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\**Forgery in Christianity*, by JOSEPH WHELESS. (A. A. Knopf, London. 16s. net.)

has endured because a fairly large proportion of European humanity feels the need of it. For, in common honesty, we must allow that to be a professing Christian is not only no longer a social necessity in any country in Europe to-day; it is even, in some of the great cities at least, a social disadvantage. In these pages, quite recently, Mr. Joad gave an account of the attempt now being made in Russia to eliminate Christianity.\* In that great country, certainly, it is the height of social folly to profess oneself a Christian any more. It is about as dangerous as it was to profess oneself an atheist in England three hundred and fifty years ago. Nevertheless, Christianity persists in Russia. The old story is being repeated; it thrives under persecution. Christianity must *necessarily* thrive under persecution, because religion can only be vanquished by that which is greater than religion. And the power that expresses itself in persecution is not greater, but manifestly less than the power which expresses itself in a religion which endures persecution.

Every great religion contains an element of true spirituality. This element is endangered the moment it becomes organised into an institution with temporal power, because temporal power strives always after its own perpetuation, and makes this its primary aim. It is, alas, a law of nature that it should be so. In furtherance of this primary aim of self-perpetuation it is necessary

that every organised religion should proclaim: *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. If it were to admit that other organised religions offered an equally satisfactory way to salvation, it would lose its strongest appeal. Accordingly, every sect of Christianity has made that proclamation in its hour of triumph. The moment that proclamation is made by any Church: *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, it ceases instantly to be predominantly spiritual. For that is not a spiritual truth, but a spiritual lie, and perhaps the blackest of them all. It is a direct denial of the Spirit. So far as Christianity is concerned, it is a flat repudiation of the teaching of its founder. And, since all great religions are spiritual in their origin, it must equally be a repudiation of the spiritual truth of their founders.

The true doctrines of the Spirit are many. They are all perfectly coherent, and in the last resort identical. The idiom of expression may differ from country to country and from age to age. But one cardinal doctrine of the Spirit is this: that in no *Church*, as such, is there salvation. Jesus proclaimed this again and again, and was killed for it. Every other true spiritual teacher has proclaimed it. It follows then that no true spiritual doctrine can ever be organised without distortion into a church possessing temporal power, because it cannot hold out the one inducement which appeals to the non-spiritual man, namely, that

\* THE ARYAN PATH, November 1930, pp. 691-695.—Eds.

in this organization, and only in this organization, is salvation to be had.

The conflict between spirituality and church religion is therefore profound; it is rooted in the nature of things. But the real threat to spirituality in Europe to-day does not come from the churches. The danger is not so much false religions—there are now too many *forms* of Christianity in existence for any one of them to have the chance of tyranny—as false Gods. And the false Gods do not disguise themselves as religions. They are too subtle to need to disguise themselves at all. Mr. Wheless is revealed, at the end of his book, quite prostrate before them.

Millions of human beings—many of them of high mental capacity—have devoted some millions of years of labour or of sloth to Theology and Religion,—lives, years and labour wasted! If these years had been devoted to pure and applied Science, to the discovery and conquest of the powers of Nature, to Knowledge of the Worth While—medicine, surgery, anæsthetics, antiseptics, sanitation—the catalogue is endless; to the outlawry of War by the establishment of Universal Peace: the abolition of Crime, Poverty and Disease—in a word, to the Social Sciences and Service, to Humanism and the Humanities, instead of to Theism and Theology—to what glorious heights would not Civilisation and Humanity have scaled! \*

The visionary enthusiasm of Mr. Wheless is obviously sincere. Only it comes rather late in the day. His fervid hopes were uttered more eloquently all over

Europe from the middle to the end of the 18th century. And what followed? Bigger and more devastating wars than ever before. Not wars of religion, but wars of nationality. And they were inevitable. For if you fill men's hearts with the belief that they are entitled to perfect earthly happiness, and that there is no reason why they should not have it, they will naturally fight each other to get their share of it. Another century of the gospel according to Mr. Wheless, and Europe and America will be made a desert by a war of unbelievable inhumanity, in which all the achievements of "pure and applied science, the discovery and conquest of the powers of Nature, the knowledge of the Worth While—medicine, surgery, anæsthetics, antiseptics" will be ruthlessly mobilised for the mutual extermination of mankind.

"But this is not my gospel," I hear Mr. Wheless object, with pain and indignation. "My gospel expressly includes the establishment of Universal Peace." It is true: the words are there but not the realisation of what they mean. *Men will not have Peace by speaking the words. Peace is the outcome of the spiritual regeneration of individual men, and is a spiritual achievement.* If you limit the "Knowledge of the Worth While," as Mr. Wheless naïvely does, to the achievements of scientific materialism, you fill men's hearts with pride. The

\* THE ARYAN PATH would recommend Mr. Wheless and all who are of his way of thinking to peruse a trenchant article in the October *Open Court* (Chicago) entitled "Occidental Martha" by Lloyd Morris.—EDS.



Science of Nature may be an excellent thing, but only on one condition, that it is subordinate to the Science of Man. Conquering Nature is all very well, provided man has learned to conquer himself. Without that supremely necessary conquest of man by himself, the multiplication of scientific invention is simply giving him a mountain of gunpowder instead of a barrel-ful to play monkey-tricks with.

Mr. Wheless knows nothing of the Science of Man: if he did, he would be more charitable to a religion which, with all its crying iniquities, did retain some vestiges of that science within it. Instead, he seeks to slay one dubious religion in the name of another more

dubious still, and far more dangerous—the religion of the mechanical perfectibility of man, the religion of automatic progress which led Europe to convulsion sixteen years ago, and which (if it is not abandoned) will lead it to still greater disaster. *Our only safeguard against this is a re-discovery of spiritual truth, a re-establishment of the true aims of human living.* We have, painfully and patiently, to re-learn that all progress is an illusion, except it be the progress of the individual human soul towards its own impersonal consummation, its final liberation from the chaos of contradictory desires which makes existence in men and in nations futile and meaningless.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

*Theosophy—A Modern Revival of Ancient Wisdom.* By ALVIN BOYD KUHN. (Henry Holt & Co., New York. \$ 3.)

This is the second volume in a series entitled "Studies in Religion and Culture," which is published under the editorship of the Department of Philosophy of Columbia University.

The publishers introduce the author as "a student of his subject for years," and describe the volume as "the result of painstaking research". We might add that Dr. Kuhn is reported to be the conductor of a study class in *The Secret Doctrine* of H. P. Blavatsky, at the Headquarters of the Independent Theosophical Society founded in New York City in 1899 by Mr. H. W. Percival, a friend and follower of Mr. Judge, with the assistance of several old-time members who separated from the Point Loma organisation of Mrs. Tingley, and who

did not follow Mr. Hargrove into his New York organisation.

All students of Theosophy, whatever their affiliation, will welcome this attempt at a dignified presentation through the agency of a Series edited and published under recognised auspices. The volume is well written; a judicial atmosphere pervades it, which, however, as in the case of courts of human justice, does not guarantee that the judgments delivered are always infallible. This is not to impugn the author's sincerity, his earnest desire to do justice, nor even his capacity to take pains, though the last could have been improved upon; this would have made the volume not only an outstanding one, but would also have invested it with the virtue of a standard work of permanent value.

The book is divided into thirteen chapters, and has a Bibliography and an Index. It especially examines the fortunes

of the Theosophical Movement in the U. S. A., but that does not deter from its value to European and Asiatic readers. The earlier chapters show the bestowal of a greater care, and are, comparatively speaking, more thorough than the later ones; all of them would have become more valuable if dates had been systematically assigned to each event.

The author has aimed at presenting as a connected whole the story of the Theosophical Movement of 1875: its roots in the long past; its American background; its chief exponent, H. P. Blavatsky; her expositions; the development of the Movement through vicissitudes and failures; the breaking up of the Movement into numerous divisions after the death of the Mother who brought it into being and nourished it with her life; and finally its present position, especially in the U. S. A. In gathering data and collecting facts Dr. Kuhn has gone to a variety of sources, and his book succeeds or suffers in terms of his selection. He has wisely kept in mind the corruption of Theosophy which gave birth to neo-theosophy, and yet, in more than one place, he himself seems to have been influenced by neo-theosophy. This becomes visible in Chapters IX and XI. If in preparing his summary on "Evolution, Rebirth and Karma" he had faithfully adhered to *The Key to Theosophy*, he would have handled his Chapter IX differently; as it stands it is likely to give a wrong impression of genuine Theosophical teachings on the subjects treated—e.g., the sevenfold constitution of man, and post-mortem states, etc. Thus his page 246 would have been differently worded if he had kept constantly before him pp. 91-92 and pp. 175-176 of *The Key to Theosophy*. Similarly his Chapter XI (which verges on dangerous ground) would not court a criticism which cannot be better expressed than by the trenchant words of H. P. Blavatsky herself, namely, that of studying "the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* or the 'yoga philosophy' upside down". If our author had summarized *The Key to Theosophy* just as he did *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*; if also he had strictly kept in view the ethical propo-

sitions of *The Voice of the Silence*, his volume would have been more faithful to its aim and purpose, and more akin to the heart aspiration of the author himself.

The book is on the whole accurate, historically speaking, but there are bad slips, such as:—

(1) P. 187.—H. P. B. was not summoned, and did not go, to Darjeeling in 1885; she was "fixed" at Adyar ere she left India. The Darjeeling visit was in 1882. In 1885, as the author truly points out (p. 178), Col. Olcott took "a vacillating course" and this was a bigger blow to H. P. B. than the frauds and forgeries of the Coulobms had been. This course came in for unequivocal condemnation from the Master, who had then to visit H. P. B. at Adyar in order to cure her stricken body. There He left behind His views, which have lain hidden for forty-five years and have only been published very recently; the Master says that the Theosophical Society "has liberated itself from our grasp and influence and we have let it go. We make no unwilling slaves. He [Olcott] says he has saved it? He saved its body, but he allowed through sheer fear its soul to escape, and it is now a soulless corpse, a machine run so far well enough, but which will fall to pieces when he is gone."

(2) P. 333—Mr. Krishnamurti (who, let it be said to his credit, though somewhat late, has liberated himself from the psychic enslavement of his sponsors) was *not* educated at Cambridge. Neither of the two great British Universities would admit the future Messiah-ward of the self-styled "arhats"!

There are also a few other bad slips which should be noted: for instance the overlooking of H. P. B.'s early article "Chelas and Lay Chelas" in the treatment of that subject on pp. 266-267; and the attributing of a wrong source to the important and well known quotation given on p. 300.

Lest the above remarks may be mistaken for fault-finding we shall close with our congratulations to Dr. Kuhn for a lucid presentation of a very complex subject. The book will be read in circles

where previous publications have perhaps not been able to penetrate. We welcome it as a sign of good omen, and may it prove to be the precursor of several volumes which will restore the glorious but

calumniated reputation of H. P. Blavatsky, and give to the world authentic texts and expositions of her marvellous Teachings in this year which marks the centenary of her birth.

S. B.

*The End of The World.* By GEOFFREY DENNIS. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, London. 8s. 6d.)

*Man and His Universe.* By JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES. (Harper, London. 16s.)

These two books may very well be read together, for though they are as dissimilar as can be—apart from the fact that each turns the eye outward upon the ultimate predictions of Western science—the very contrast is itself interesting and illuminating. Both Mr. Langdon-Davies and Mr. Dennis are Western by birth and upbringing, but the former is a scientist (that is of the West), the latter an artist (shaped by the West but *not* of it). *The End of the World* expresses indeed a rebellion of the soul against the intellectual findings of a purely Western science. The author gnaws rat-like at the bars of the cage which imprison his spiritual aspirations. One after another he weighs the cases for and against the various suppositions advanced by science concerning the end of the world, not coldly, not analytically, but hotly as one who sees earth-doom, mandoom, as personal to himself, and in a magnificent prose which wields language with an Elizabethan freedom and power unusual in our day. Destruction by comet, fire, water, drought, cold, divine intervention, to-day, to-morrow, in the remote future, never. All these things he tests and argues, and repeatedly one notes how his every gleam of hope is snatched not from the science of the West but from the Wisdom of the East—the ideas of cycles, of the systole and diastole of worlds, of life migrating from world to world, of the destruction and renewal of worlds by fire and water “through an endless cycle of decaescence, recalcence, there being no one world—rather an infi-

nite series of identical worlds, having lived an eternity of times, with an eternity of times to live. Sometimes we seem to remember, and to foresee.” And it is only in the light of the three fundamental propositions of Eastern Wisdom that it is possible to understand his tremendous last chapter, in which he questions in tones of alternating horror and ecstasy the ultimate problems of the universe conceived as finite and infinite, known and unknowable, real and unreal, rational and beyond reason, living and dead, in time and timeless, friendly and negligent, an illusion, a dream, an emanation of deity.

Mr. Langdon-Davies appears to be quite happy in his trap. Science suffices him, and the result is that he must appear to those of a wider viewpoint too cocksure, limited, even somewhat superficial and a little young. The value of his lively, readable, always clear survey of the development of Western science, regarded as a quest for a knowledge of God through a knowledge of the universe, lies in his account of the way in which an anthropomorphic personal God has receded before the idea of an impersonal principle beyond definition—a notion new to the West perhaps but scarcely to the East! The especial interest of the book centres in its last chapter, which describes the momentous developments of the last thirty years, not the least of which has been the reassertion—again a commonplace of Eastern Wisdom—of the power of mind and spirit over matter. The ultimate mystery (in a universe his science declares to be meaningless) is, he says, that of consciousness. Doubtless it would seem as comic to him, with his certainty that truth lies in the future only, to turn to H. P. Blavatsky as to Paracelsus, whom he

dismisses briefly with scarcely even a modicum of understanding. But Paracelsus, crazy scientist as he might seem, had also his Wisdom. . . .

GEOFFREY WEST

[Geoffrey West is a well-known critic and biographer whose latest volume on H. G. Wells has been much talked about. He wrote in our pages last November a thought-provoking article on "The Varieties of Religious Expression."—EDS.]

*The Meaning of the Glorious Koran.* By MARMADUKE PICKTHALL. (Alfred A. Knopf, London. 18s.)

This "explanatory translation" of the Qur'ān comprises (i) the translator's foreword, 2 pp., (ii) an introduction, 19 pp., (iii) a list of chapters, 3 pp., (iv) a general index, 7 pp., (v) an index of legislation, 2 pp. and (vi) the actual translation forming the main body of the work, 658 pp.

The Qur'ān has been repeatedly translated into English, but never before by an English Muslim. Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall has taken infinite pains over his translation and has carefully revised his work with the help of Egyptian scholars: the result is a translation which, whilst being literal—almost word for word—is yet written in excellent and admirable English. The book, moreover, is well printed, misprints are singularly rare, and each chapter is accompanied by a short prefatory note, giving the period of its revelation and the occasion for it.

The translation is meant primarily for English Muslims but it will appeal also

to those who are neither English nor Muslims: the text is presented faithfully without strain or stress, and the commentaries are reduced to a minimum. The translator has striven to bring his work in conformity with orthodox opinion and has therefore refrained from dilating on such controversial themes as the crucifixion of Christ, slavery, polygamy, divorce, and the status of woman in Islam. Of this last, the translator's remark on p. 17 that woman in Islam attained complete legal equality with man is hardly borne out by v. 34, ch. IV: "Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women)" p. 97. The average reader would have welcomed a more elaborate introduction and a fuller index.

HADI HASAN

[Dr. Hadi Hasan is the author of *Studies in Persian Literature* and other volumes and is the Professor of Persian in the Muslim University, Aligarh. He wrote a most interesting article in our last April number on "The Zoroastrian Calendar and Persian Literature".—EDS.]

*Some Modern Mediums.* By THEODORE BESTERMAN. (Methuen & Co. Ltd., London. 7s. 6d.)

This book surveys the activities of five living mediums, or to be more exact, four mediums, Mrs. Piper, Frau Silbert, Eva C. and Margery, and one psychic, Mme. Kahl-Toukholka,—a distinction not drawn by the author, but clearly made by Theosophy (see "Mediums, Psychics and Religions," THE ARYAN PATH, Sept. 1930).

Some points of interest stand out, though the data given afford the reader

insufficient evidence to judge for himself whether the phenomena are genuine or not. The mediumship of Mrs. Piper, one of the very few entirely above suspicion of trickery, persuades the author of the existence of supernormal powers, but not of "spirit" agency, for the communications, when not personal details, are platitudes and nonsense unworthy of the great names tacked on to them. With this we agree, for Theosophy pointed it out over fifty years ago. There is nothing really new in the way of facts to add to the old records of the S. P. R.,

the phenomena indeed are far less striking in character and quantity. Probably Mr. Besterman has not considered the periodic waxing and waning of psychism through the centuries.

As a whole, this survey inevitably suggests that spiritualistic research induces unreliability not only in mediums, but even in honest investigators like Schrenck-Notzing, so many are the contradictions, distortions and suppressions of facts commented on by Mr. Besterman. What of himself? There can be no doubt about his integrity, but how far can one trust his discrimination? For one thing, is he not too exacting in his requirements as a tester of mediumistic phenomena, mainly due perhaps to his lack of

knowledge about the nature of psychic faculties and their actions. There is no vital attempt at an explanation in this volume. The methods of the S. P. R. can hardly give any psychic science. But it has been studied for centuries in the East, its laws and rationale deduced, checked and proved beyond error, as H. P. Blavatsky showed in her writings. Were Mr. Besterman to bring the scientific thoroughness displayed in this book to bear upon the ancient records, he could do much to raise modern psychic research from the lowly position of unsatisfying experimentation to that of exact science based upon practical and essential ethics.

E. W.

*Foundations of Mental Health.* By LEONARDO BIANCHI; translated by G. A. Barricelli, M. D.; with foreword by Francis X. Dercum, M. D. (D. Appleton & Co., London. 10s. 6d.)

Many of the facts in this "anatomical-psycho-physical" work by the Italian humanitarian, held to be one of the world's greatest experts in nervous and mental diseases, will be valuable to psychiatrists. It is a book concrete with observations, figures and his own clinical experiences. That his deductions from them lead to mental health, however, is somewhat questionable. It is true as he says that bodily vigour as well as education in will, attention and moral sense are its foundations. But, we ask, after closing the book, what shall be the basis of that very education? As it seems to us unless we go deeper than Prof. Bianchi, there can be no lasting improvement in the system of instruction in

mental and physical hygiene, in sex and religious education, in the penal code and penitentiary system, in elimination of alcoholism and tuberculosis. These evils he discusses are but effects of a root disease which eats the vitals of our civilisation, a symptom of which is the belief that practising eugenics will bring the millenium. If the idea of the immortality of Man the Soul were the foundation for mental health, would we turn to the thought of breeding bodies like animals pure and simple to improve the race? Thus our late learned professor of the Royal University of Naples cannot for all his reasoning explain the musical prodigies he cites nor why "Mendelian laws are not always applicable to the heredity of man's physiological and pathological characteristics," which are clear and comprehensible in the light of Reincarnation, each man reaping in repeated lives on earth what he has sown.

S. T.

*The Modern Dilemma.* By HUGH I'ANSON FAUSSET. (J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., London. 2s. 6d. net.)

The book lays bare the decadence of the *true* religious spirit and the prevalence of scientific materialism, and pre-

sents in a dignified and lucid way the aim and purpose of life. The ideal which one should aspire to is "an *art* of life," by a "creative attitude . . . in which the head no longer excludes the heart, nor the heart recoils from knowledge in

fear that its cherished sanctities will be cheapened or violated".

The author points out that "the word imagination has been so misinterpreted that instead of meaning the creative principle which includes in its action all other faculties, most people associate it with irresponsible fancy or amiable day-dreaming". The true province of imagination is soul perception, for "the Imagination is the picture-making power of the human mind. It is the greatest power, after Will, in the human assemblage of complicated instruments . . . It is therefore the King faculty inasmuch as the Will cannot do its work if the Ima-

gination be at all weak or untrained." (Judge, *Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 139)

By the practice of true patience, by the passion for Truth, by seeking for real Self-Knowledge, by "learning to withdraw into ourselves as a necessary prelude to truly going out of ourselves," Mr. Fausset observes that we shall know the meaning and purpose of life.

*The Modern Dilemma* is an interesting and thought-provoking book. It brings home to the minds of the students of Eastern Wisdom many a familiar passage from the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* and *The Voice of the Silence*.

L. M.

*Spirit in Evolution—From Amœba to Saint.* By HERBERT F. STANDING, D. Sc. (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. 10s. 6d.)

According to the archaic wisdom of Theosophy evolution is an unfoldment from within outwards. The process of growth of every being, be it man or god, plant, animal, sun or solar system, is primarily a development in range and expression of intelligence; the development of form, a by-product of the inner growth, is always incidental. To the students of the ancient wisdom, evolution begins in Spirit and has its end in Spirit, with the harvest of experience gained during the pilgrimage.

In the book under review the author in his development of the trend of organic evolution from the amœba to the saint observes that "cosmos is a unity and that every smallest part is related to every other part" and that "life is a process and not a state . . . The process is one of continuous activity and the higher the type of life, the more energetic and varied is this activity . . . Activity is the characteristic of life and fulness of life is fulness of free, conscious creative

activity . . . To live is to be a centre of activity and to act is to adapt oneself to certain environmental conditions so that life is a perpetual becoming." His philosophical outlook leads him to conclude that the realisation of the highest spiritual concepts—Truth, Beauty, Goodness and Love—by man brings on a "new solidarity with humanity and a new realisation of oneness with all souls of whatever name who are sharers in the Universal Spirit". He envisages the whole world-process as a fundamental manifestation of Divine purpose and activity and is convinced of "the validity of that contact of the human soul with the Creative Spirit".

The philosophical deductions of Dr. Standing would have been in line with the ancient teaching, were it not that they lack the background of the archaic wisdom which considers the whole of nature—organic and inorganic—as sentient; everything down to the smallest atom is soul and spirit ever evolving under law which is inherent in the whole, and dispenses with the purposiveness and activity of a Creator, an anthropomorphic Personal God.

B. Sc.

*The Modern Dowser.* By LE VICOMTE HENRY DE FRANCE. (George Bell & Sons, London. 3s. 6d.)

The art of using the divining rod for discovering hidden things is of immemorial antiquity and during the sixteenth century it was primarily used for locating ores or water concealed under the earth. Modern dowsing, according to our author, is not only used in mineralogy and geology for the discovery of ores, oil and water but in biology for the finding of diseases in plants and animals. After a brief historical introduction to well known French dowsers—chiefly “the humble country clergymen of France” the benefactors of the art of divining—M. le Vicomte comes to the conclusion that “in electricity rather than in unknown forces is to be found the source of the remarkable phenomena of the rod; and so it is in reference to electricity that we base our system of instruction,” and that it has nothing to do with either “psychical origin” or “auto-suggestion”. Neither

does he regard the opinion of Sir William Barrett who relegated it to a “subconscious, supernormal, cognitive faculty”.

As a practical guidance to divining the author sets down ten experiments with the pendulum and observes that after a good scientific knowledge of the objects of search and “when you have performed the ten experiments with the pendulum and repeated them many times you will have learnt the essential business of a dowser’s trade”. Although M. le Vicomte purports to be scientific, yet these experiments lack much scientific exactitude. However, one fact pre-eminently emerges from the study of this little book, that of a widespread belief in ancient days as in modern times of this unknown human faculty.

But for whatever useful purpose this faculty can be used the art of dowsing does not lead one to develop those few hard spiritual principles essential for treading undeviatingly the straight and narrow Path.

B. Sc.

*The Travels and Settlements of Early Man: A Study of the Origins of Human Progress.* By T. S. FOSTER, M. A. (Ernest Benn Ltd., London. 21s. net.)

Some substantiation, as surprising as it is fascinating, of much written some fifty years ago by H. P. Blavatsky in *Isis Unveiled* and the *Secret Doctrine* may be found by the diligent student among the closely packed facts in this anthropologically-learned work. Cramped as scholars still are by the imperceptible fetters of an ecclesiastical, dogmatic past, what chronologies Mr. Foster gives under the indefinite guise of “Chellean,” “Acheulean,” “Mousterian cultures” and so forth prevent him from fitting all the bits of his mosaic into place. Furthermore, to judge from the sequence of his chapters on the Neanderthaloid races, Aurignacian, Grimaldi and Cromagnon man to “the coming of Sapiens,” he is hampered by the notion that mankind evolved from savagery into civilisation.

Man to him, of course, is a late Ter-

tiary animal at least over 500,000 years old—on which point scientific opinions still differ. He gives us with care the evidence for a wide-spread civilization in ancient times but its date is left uncertain.

Summarising but a few of his array of facts—in his “Palæolithic drama” of the early Stone Age, flint-using hunters from some Asiatic habitat are found scattered in Europe, India, Indo-China, Japan, Mesopotamia, South and West Africa. An adventurous and inventive “Neanderthaloid” race has left similar cultural traces in Natal, China and Japan, and Egypt. At one time *in the early history of man* North and South America were connected with Asia, and linguistic similarities show there must have been cultural associations at an antecedent date. Easter Island sunworship is associated with Egypt and there are similarities between its stone remains, those in Polynesia, and the cities in the Indus valley. Five discontinuous regions of native

America, indicating ancient and superior culture, show affinity with early trading centres of Asia and Oceania. These vestiges of "a superior culture" in widely distant parts of the earth are accounted for by our author on "the Anatolian hypothesis"—for which adjective perhaps may be substituted another.

Are Palæolithic men and this extraordinary civilization coincident or succedent?

We are not told definitively. Instead of the civilization succeeding Palæolithic men, is it not possible that Palæolithic men succeeded the civilization? Perplexities as to Mr. Foster's "when" may be resolved by looking at his massed facts in the light of a science more ancient than that of the West, which illumines, too, a few facts from another work of his, *From Savagery to Commerce*. The teaching of this ancient Science is to be found in Vol. II of the *Secret Doctrine*. It tells how travels and settlements of Early Man begin in the Secondary age when a continent reigned supreme over the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific oceans—Lemuria. Easter Island with its stone relics is a remnant of that primeval civilization which was submerged beneath the waves 700,000 years before the dawn of the Tertiary period; the flat-headed aborigines of Australia are its last surviving offshoot and the Papuans (Mr. Foster indicates them to be the most ancient of the Pacific races) Veddahs, Andamanese and Hottentots of indirect Lemurian descent.

Miocene and Pliocene men of the Stone Age are the direct descendants of a stock from that other continent, Atlantis, which followed Lemuria. Bridging the

ocean between America and Europe, it survived in part (Ruta and Daitya) to the Eocene period, 850,000 years ago, the last island, Poseidonis, vanishing only 11,000 years ago. The Mongols who fled to Central Asia some 700,000 years ago are of its stock; the Polynesians, Malayan and Indian tribes belong to its earliest surviving sub-races and the Guanches of the Canary Islands are also in direct line of descent.

When a cataclysm engulfed practically the entire continent, an Atlantean remnant sought refuge in a high Asiatic plateau (Mr. Foster keeps in mind an Asiatic plateau), was swallowed up in an early Aryan sub-race and spread to Egypt, to Greece and other parts of the freshly-emerging continent and islands of Europe. Thousands of years later other Atlanteans invaded the new continent. Some of the defeated newcomers fled to Africa, then connected with Europe (as our author shows), and these undeveloped tribes and families fell into a still more abject and savage condition. From Egypt, which was thus first settled some 400,000 years ago, initiates later journeyed by land to supervise the building of menhirs, dolmens (which Mr. Foster traces in Europe—"Stonehenge was designed by an artist equipped with Eastern science"—North Africa, Palestine, beyond Baluchistan in India as well as in North America) and colossal zodiacs in stone. These symbolic records of universal history built by the heirs to the cyclopean lore left to them by generations of magicians, both good and bad, remain to this very day the world over as imperishable monuments to a mighty past.

M. T.



## CORRESPONDENCE

### H. P. B'S WRITINGS

In your February issue ( p. 111 ) the reviewer of a book by Jacob Böhme draws a parallel between that mystic and Mme. Blavatsky. She states: "Böhme struggling with medical alchemy and astrology is the prototype of Madame Blavatsky dragging in citations from a hundred sources of no real value to her argument." Permit me to dissent most emphatically from this view—for this reason. Mme. Blavatsky's concern was to present Theosophy in a manner that should convince her public of its demonstrable genuineness. In a pamphlet entitled "Some Observations on the Study of the Secret Doctrine of H. P. Blavatsky," the writer pertinently says :

It is often claimed by her critics that she wanders into byways and digressions in presenting her subject, that she often flies off at a tangent and labours unnecessarily to prove her point by quoting ancient texts and modern authors. In this connection let it not be forgotten that H. P. B. was an occultist, and that no occultist ever put his teachings before the public on his own authority alone, unsupported by corroborative testimony of occultists of previous ages. H. P. B. could never say : "I have had a vision ; it is your duty to accept it." She, as an occultist, was obliged to give all the evidence that she could gather to support her teachings, and this she has done.

She also could not dissent from the conclusions of the scientists of her day, without adducing quotations from their works stating their views.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, which is not crowded with quotations but presents simply the philosophy, Mme. Blavatsky adopted a Question and Answer form. The Theosophist answerer is subjected to the most strict examination as to the validity of his philosophy by the sceptic enquirer. No blind belief is demanded ; on the contrary it is discouraged.

Miss Ward says both of Böhme and H. P. B. :—"Both saw but felt terrible difficulty in describing and explaining vision in its fulness—that is of course common to all seers." This may be so ultimately, but H.P.B. had no difficulty

in expounding what she chose to expound. Let me quote once more from the little pamphlet :—

Sometimes people complain that H. P. B. did not know how to write clearly and lucidly. That is not so. Readers of *The Key to Theosophy* can testify to the fact that the author of *The Secret Doctrine* possesses the faculty of expounding her teachings in a very lucid, clear-cut and straightforward manner . . . if at any time she followed a method other than that, it was with a distinct purpose in view. . . *The Secret Doctrine*, when correctly studied, produces a definite change in those who study it. The specific method which has been employed in writing the book brings out a particular kind of faculty in the student—the faculty of spiritual perception.

If this view be taken, as I take it, Miss Ward's comments on Mme. Blavatsky—and, perhaps on Jacob Böhme also—are misleading.

Bombay

T. L. CROMBIE

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### AN AMERICAN STONEHENGE

The readers of THE ARYAN PATH will be interested to learn that Professor E. B. Renaud, of the University of Denver, has forged one more link in the ever-lengthening chain of evidence connecting the now separated continents of Europe and America at some remote period of history. I read of his recent discovery of stone circles in Colorado which appear closely to resemble that of Stonehenge and suggest a definite cult of solar worship in the early days of American civilization.

The Colorado circles are not constructed on so grand a scale as the pre-historic Britons achieved at Stonehenge, but the Indians had a most impressive setting for their rites. One group of circles ranged from one pace to nine paces in diameter ; another group of circles was formed of larger monoliths, each with a larger stone post in the centre.

The similarity between the Colorado and Stonehenge circles gives further evidence of the Atlantean theory, discussed so thoroughly in the *Secret Doctrine*. It also offers new corroboration to H. P. Blavatsky's assertion that "there was a

time when the four parts of the world were covered with temples sacred to the Sun and the Dragons." These "Dragons" of antiquity were the symbols of Immortality and Wisdom, while the Hierophants who taught the Sacred Science which gave both, styled themselves the "Sons of the Dragon".

The Atlanteans of the middle period were called the Great Dragons, and the first symbol of their tribal deities, when the "gods" and the Divine Dynasties had forsaken them, was that of a giant Serpent. (*Secret Doctrine* II: 756)

Some of the descendants of the primitive "Serpents of Wisdom" peopled America during the palmy days of Atlantis. Were not The Druid priests descendants of the last Atlanteans, and therefore did they not symbolize their Deity as the Egyptians did their Mystery God, and as the Hindus still symbolize their Vishnu—under the form of the "Mighty Serpent"? Their esoteric teachings were connected with the universal Wisdom-Religion, and thus presented affinities with the exoteric worship of all.

New York

C. C.

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#### RACIAL SUPERIORITY

After reading Dr. Kohn's article in your February issue on "Is There a Cyclic Rise and Fall in History?" I was reminded of an article I had read last year (*Science News Letter*, June 21st, 1930) on a Chicago Professor's conclusion as regards the cyclic rise and fall of nations. Professor Fay-Cooper Cole is anthropologist of the University of Chicago and the National Research Council, and his findings refute all claims to exclusive racial superiority, thus agreeing with the teaching of Theosophy.

History, he says, shows no record of such superiority, Nordic or otherwise. On the contrary, it shows a procession of "Great Races" throughout the ages, each Race in its turn imagining itself to be the culmination and apex of all human history. In corroboration of his statements, he cites the case of Egypt in 2500 B. C. At that time the Egyptians would certainly have considered themselves the superior race, and would have been justified in that conclusion. A thousand years later the Mediterranean peoples could have made the same claim. If the tribal kings of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* had been compared with the Cretans of the Minoan period one would have been laughed to scorn; yet they overcame the Cretans and by the year 500 B. C. had produced the golden days of Greece. Later the once rude Romans wrested the leadership from Greece, and became in their turn the superior race. But the northern barbarians in their turn overthrew the Roman power and are now the leaders of civilization.

Apparently then the fact that a nation or race is dominant at any particular time is no assurance that it will retain its leadership. Archaeology and history teach us that civilization has shifted from one region and people to another and that the less advanced people of one period become the leaders in another age.

Therefore the Theosophical teaching is justified, namely, that the real cultural superiority of an individual or a race does not lie in physical might or prowess which are impermanent. That which in Theosophy is known as the Deathless Race is composed of those giant souls who, having conquered the spirit of might by that of justice and right, live by the force of giving, of altruism, of sacrifice.

Bombay

L. P.

## ECHOES OF THEOSOPHY

*"The sun of Theosophy must shine for all, not for a part. There is more of this Movement than you have yet had an inkling of."*—MAHATMA M.

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The real atheist is the man who, in the life which he lives and the thoughts of his heart, denies the possibility of any noble purpose greater than himself and greater than mankind as he knows it, with which men and women can hopefully co-operate, and in which they may find rest to their souls. Though such a man profess with his mouth all the articles of religion, though he say, "Lord, Lord," a hundred times a day, he is in essence more atheistic than many who explicitly deny the existence of God.—LOUIS A. FENN (*The Spectator*)

We cannot understand the idea presented by any type of symbolism until we learn to "read" that type of symbolism. So it is with our Mysteries. We receive the degrees, have the symbols presented to us, and call ourselves Masons. It would be as proper to take a savage from the jungle, present him with a set of educational books of which he could not read one word, and call him civilized.—R. D. MCNEW 32<sup>o</sup> (*The New Age*)

The man who elevates himself makes himself simpler and more integral, and at the same time more solid and strong; he strips his life of a thousand secondary and non-essential appearances and activities, freeing himself from the superfluous and useless vegetation, like a fruit tree whose productive capacity is increased by a wise pruning.—PROF. VITTORINO VEZZANI (*Hibbert Journal*)

The death penalty degrades the community that permits it.—*The Clarion*

As the influence of Asia begins to reassert itself as it soon will, out of its long search in religious experience to find salvation, it will bring forth a fund of findings of incalculable value.—H. A. MILLER (*World Unity*)

The gradual fading out of the churches will no more inhibit that kind of experience which religious men in all ages have enjoyed, than the lapsing of the Royal Academy will prevent men producing and enjoying great art. The evolution of religion in the future (if religion is to survive) will therefore be one in which the experience of the great mystics will increasingly become the experience of the man in the street.—C. E. M. JOAD (*The Spectator*)

Our present industrial era has been vulgarized by an absence of quietude and repose. Each advance in mechanical facilities has been accompanied by an advance in noise. This has brought our city people a new kind of disease that might be termed peace shell-shock.—FLOYD W. PARSONS (*Advertising & Selling*)

Popular respect for science is not likely to be increased by mere translation into professorial or laboratory lingo of sayings as old and as familiar as the Book of Proverbs.—HARRY ROBERTS (*The Spectator*)

## ENDS AND SAYINGS

"—————ends of verse

*And sayings of philosophers."*

HUDIBRAS.

Prof. Sir J. Arthur Thomson has written an article on the subject of "Clairvoyance" in two instalments, in *John O' London's Weekly* for 3rd and 10th January. Summarizing his findings is not difficult: giving several interesting examples he concludes that the known cases of what is called clairvoyance are but cases of hyperæsthesia; the record of extraordinary sensory acuteness, both visual and auditory, should be thoroughly examined, and pressed into service to explain cases which are ordinarily ascribed to clairvoyance; "what we are driving at is the common-sense conclusion that the limits of sensitiveness vary greatly and are not to be dogmatically defined"; it is too soon to abandon the hyperæsthetic interpretation of clairvoyance. To support his contention Prof. Thomson illustrates: Ants and bees utilize olfactory cues which mean nothing to ordinary men; a hypersensitive student makes straight for a particularly disagreeable fungus in the heart of a wood; some people hear high-pitched voices of bats, to which most are deaf; a botanist in a slow going pony-cart picks out with his keen eye an unusual flower amid a tangled bank of vegetation; ornithologists and entomologists are often experts in identifying a

passing bird or insect. Apropos of what are claimed to be higher feats of clairvoyance the learned scientist says, "If they are absolutely reliable they put the hyperæsthesia theory out of court and remain an unsolved problem."

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So far Prof. Thomson. What has Theosophy to say about clairvoyance? First, to face the hyperæsthesia theory: Theosophy suggests that a line should be drawn which is the boundary limit of physical sensory acuteness. Each of the senses responds to a particular range of vibrations. Thus those of a certain range alone are responded to by the eye; those of a certain other range are responded to by the ear; and so on. Between ordinary sense activity and the extraordinary one, designated hyperæsthetic, the difference is one of degree, not of kind. Hyperæsthetic action is but an extension of normal sense-activity, and it will reach a limit beyond which it is not possible for physical senses to function. Theosophy agrees with Prof. Thomson that it would be wrong to misname hyperæsthesia and call it clairvoyance. Hyperæsthetic phenomena are on one side of the above named boundary line, while clairvoyance phenomena belong to the beyond.

Occultism teaches that there are two sets of senses in each man. The known senses are but the outer covering of the inner and invisible centres. The latter are substantial, though beyond the range of the microscope; and the substance composing them is called astral, and is in essence electrical and magnetic. In ordinary sense-activity as well as in the hyper-æsthetic one, the two sets work conjointly. When the basic centres of senses, the astral souls of the physical ones, function independently, receive direct impressions and respond to them, and at the same time affect certain brain glands, psychic clairvoyance results. But the latter is as different in *kind* from true spiritual clairvoyance as it is different in *kind* from ordinary or hyper-æsthetic sensitiveness.

The term clairvoyance is loosely and flippantly used, and embraces under its meaning a happy guess due to natural shrewdness, or hunch, and also that faculty which was so remarkably exercised by Swedenborg. This latter type, once again, we repeat, is different from real spiritual clairvoyance, the faculty of not only seeing through dense matter, but understanding what is thus seen. The chief characteristic of psychic clairvoyance is that the faculty is not under perfect control of its possessor, and he is not able to use it at will; and, what is more, that which is seen is not understood. This psychic clairvoyance exists in certain mediums and sensitives

as well as in the animal kingdom. These visions depend upon the greater or less acuteness of the senses in the astral body (the *Linga Sharira* of the Hindu psychologist, well translated as Design Body). They differ very widely from the perfect, almost omniscient spiritual state, in which densest matter is made to disappear at the will before the spiritual eye of the Seer, and the vision thus induced is irrespective of time and distance. This the Hindus name *Divya-chakshus*, Celestial Eye, the Eye of Shiva, which enables a man to perceive any object in the Universe anywhere, and which faculty can be developed by *right* Yoga practice. The Buddhist psychosophy knows it under the name of the first of the supernormal powers (*Abhijñā*) acquired by Sakhyamuni, the same as the Hindu name *Chakshus*, "the Eye". It is the *Enoichion* of the Greeks and *Auta*, the Eye of the Egyptian Horus. The Jewish Kabalists symbolized it as the Luminous Mirror, *Aspaqularia nera*, distinguishing it from *Aspaqularia della nera*, the non-luminous glass-darkly. If modern investigators looked for explanation of this phenomenon in ancient texts they would receive guidance which might be likened to a veritable Ariadne's clew. As to the adventurer who thirsts after this psychic power—let him learn that the "Opened Eye" of the spiritual Seer is not the ordinary power of seeing at a distance, and behind closed doors; it is rather the faculty of spiritual intuition

through which direct and certain knowledge is obtainable. "Alone the Initiate, rich with the lore acquired by numberless generations of his predecessors, directs the 'Eye of Dangma' towards the essence of things in which no Maya can have any influence."

Mr. James Agate, the well known dramatic critic wrote not very long ago in the London *Daily Express* of the general indifference, and hence inefficiency, that English people suffer from. He gave some humorous, but none the less significant instances. The result of this indifference is naturally unhappiness. The cure is work. "We cannot be perfect beings, but we can all do our job perfectly, or with such perfection as lies within our personal competence. . . . As a practical philosopher, my point is that the only enduring happiness comes through work." Thus writes one thoughtful man among a multitude of the thoughtless. Will his wise words be heeded?

The Western world is mad for change. It is indeed mollusc-like in its tendencies, for, just as that gasteropod spends all its energy in clinging to the rock, so the Western social world uses its whole endeavour to escape being bored. The result is that it succeeds in boring itself literally to distraction. To its aid are called night clubs, cinemas, talkies, travel-luxuries—in fact all the resources of commercial modern science—and even in some cases the churches, which provide weird and strange

services to suit the taste of a possible congregation.

And all this is done to avoid monotony. "The daily round, the common task" certainly does *not* furnish all that the modern world demands. It spells monotony, drudgery, and this must be avoided at any cost. One of the definitions of monotony in *Chambers's Dictionary* is "irksome sameness or want of variety". But if one pursues night and day what ought only to be legitimate objects of recreation (refreshment after toil) then one is indeed courting assiduously the hated monotony, although ostrich-like, one will not acknowledge it to oneself.

After all, what is this monotony that the Western world strives to avoid, and, alas, due to infection, the Eastern world also to a certain extent? Put simply, it is routine work, the doing of the same task day by day. And from the materialistic point of view that is now so strongly entrenched in the West, it may be wise to avoid such work. "Oh! take the cash and let the credit go," is the cry. And men follow this policy with the result—that they are *bored*. There is no change in variety, for they have transformed variety into routine work—their dreaded enemy.

The real root of the trouble lies in the fact that Western civilization has no stable basis, no true philosophy of life. It is built on shifting sands. If men and women stopped to think a moment—but this is the last thing they will do, for they are afraid—

they would perhaps see that it did not matter at all what their allotted tasks were, but it mattered everything *how* they performed them. Rabindranath Tagore once said in effect that each morning is a new surprise to God. Routine work then need not be dull, or surely God would have been bored long before this in manufacturing new mornings, and closed down!

This terrible bugbear of monotony is in reality a great spiritual teacher. Variety, impermanence are the marks of the personal man—and the personal man must die. But there is within each of us a spiritual man. "I am the ego seated in the hearts of all men," says Sri Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and the true object of each human being should be to purify the personality and let the Spirit express itself. While all our energies are directed towards variety, we are simply making our personality impermeable to the recreating influence of the Spirit. We do not give It a chance.

Life as it actually is demands of most of us that we should earn our daily bread. This compels a certain amount of routine work, and it is well that it should be so, for it gives us an opportunity to realize, if only we will, the Power which makes all things new. This Power is the power of the Spirit within us, and it may and can act in every circumstance and change in the life of the personality, provided any opportunity is given. The Spirit is the one permanent reality and those who have felt its power assure us by their lives

and actions that drudgery may be made divine.

It is this permanent centre within each one of us that the Western world knows nought of really. India has always known of it, although from time to time the knowledge has been dimmed. If only the energy that the West displays in seeking after the impermanent could be diverted inward to seeking the true divinity, the true power, what a change would then be wrought!

It is not for nothing that the Eastern philosophy is now being prominently brought forward in the Western world. One more thing however is needed—that the people in this land of India (the possessors of Ancient Theosophy) should *live* according to the dictates of their immemorial philosophy, and thus set an example to their Western brothers and sisters, bring spiritual light into their darkness, and lead them from the unreal to the Real.

The question of what causes the odour in flowers and in animals has baffled the scientist for a long time. That every plant and animal has a specific odour is a well recognised fact, but how it is produced or why it should be so are questions not easily answerable. The recent observations on the loss of scent by the Musk plant (this is not to be confused with the real musk which is an animal substance and is obtained from musk deer) grown in England and British Columbia has revived the interest in

this puzzling question. The biological explanation of the smell of plants and animals is that it is due either to physiological activity, or perhaps is an outcome of chemical reactions that take place within the living organism. But all vital activities cease on the death of a living organism and yet some flowers (as musk used to do) such as lavender, when kept dry, will emit scent for a very long time. This clearly shows that merely chemical or physiological activity is not the cause of the perfume. Nearly fifty years ago Professor Yaeger of Stuttgart found that treating the blood or "blood meal" of an animal with a certain concentration of Sulphuric or any other decomposing acid produced the characteristic smell of that animal. The fact that there is not any visible or experimentally ascertainable difference between the protoplasm of an animal or a plant led him to believe that the very molecules which made up the constituents of the protoplasm of the animal or plant contained the invisible odoriferous element. Such invisible particles were transmitted to offspring by the protoplasm of the germ cells of the parents and thus was explained the reason why the offspring of any species reproduces the specific odour of its kind. The inherent odoriferous element con-

tained in the protoplasm—the vital substance of living organisms—is, according to Professor Yaeger, "odorigen," or basis of scent in flowers and animals. Dr. Salzer writing on Professor Yaeger's work on smell and its basis (*Theosophist*, Vol. IV.) infers that what acts in the protoplasm are the scents, and perhaps these are the life principle itself. The cause of epidemic and other diseases is a disarrangement or inhibition of specific odours. Thus, in short, vital phenomena might themselves be the result of the activity of this odoriferous substance.

That the odour cannot be attributed to physical causes seems evident, but the student of Theosophy will find a very illuminating suggestion in a Note which appeared in connection with Dr. Salzer's article. This is, that the odour of the plant is not a material attribute which can be detected by physical science instruments, nor is it the life principle—*Jiva*.

Dr. Yaeger's "odorigen" is not *Jiva* itself, but is one of the links which connects it with the physical body; it seems to be matter standing between *Sthula Sarira* (gross body) and *Jiva*.

If this be so, it seems certain that scientists will not be able to explain the loss of scent in the Musk flower so long as their experimentation is conducted on a strictly material basis.