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

—*The Voice of the Silence*

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GIVE US SOMETHING PRACTICAL!

Many a man of the present day dismisses with impatience the suggestion of looking for guidance to the ancient Indian texts. Give us something practical, he demands. Conditions cry aloud for amelioration; the situation calls for action here and now; there is no time to rummage in dusty tomes.

Certain principles of ancient spiritual philosophy we hold are indispensable to vitalize our present thinking and to guide our action.

The world to-day is not wanting in altruists. The wish to serve is strong in many breasts, but the wisdom to do good works without the risk of doing incalculable harm is lacking. Trial-and-error methods have proved their inadequacy to take the place of principles. There were periods in India's past when peace and plenty reigned. It was no mere coincidence that those were also times when spiritual principles were widely practised. One such period was the reign of

Asoka, as is well brought out in an article we print in this issue (p. 402).

We are also convinced that a thorough familiarity with Indian psychology would save statesmen and social workers, and also those they serve, from many a blunder. The *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Dhammapada* are not only of interest for their metaphysical philosophy, but they are practical manuals of psychology as well. They tell us of the nature of man, what his attitude towards his environment should be and how he can overcome his obstacles and raise his standard of living, on the plane of mind and of morals no less than from an economic standpoint.

All true progress waits upon the education of man as man. The acquiring of professional, artistic, technical or mechanical skill is of secondary importance compared with the pressing necessity, if we would act aright, of knowing our-

selves. How many of the world's ills spring from the denial of the fact of human solidarity! Outer differences of race, of sex, of creed, of politics, are to the fore to-day. The ancient Indian scriptures stress the fundamental inner identity of all mankind.

In him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind with the Supreme Spirit, what room can there be for delusion of mind, and what room for sorrow, when he reflects on the identity of Spirit?

The problems of war, of the colour bar, of untouchability, of intercommunal friction, are rooted in separativeness. So are national pride and international jealousy. So the hands of a factory are in conflict with the head; the strong exploit the weak; the limbs of poor Humanity war ceaselessly against each other while the whole body suffers.

Millions are spent each year in charity, but ignorance, poverty and disease continue unabated because the treatment applied leaves their root cause unaffected. Our world needs the teaching that the only lasting reform is self-reform, a discipline imposed by each upon himself. Solidarity with all others and discipline of oneself can alone free the world of tyranny and pain.

Such an experienced and cultured historian as James Truslow Adams whose article we print below refers to "spiritual liberty" and "freedom of mind" for which men should labour assiduously. But how can a man learn to call his soul his own to-day, unless he is taught the principles of the soul-satisfying philosophy of the Noble Ones of all eras and lands, whose original home was ancient and honourable India?

THE CRISIS IN CIVILIZATION

[James Truslow Adams is known to two continents as a historian of great distinction. He was occupied in business, however, during the earlier part of his life, but in 1912 he retired in order to devote himself to study and writing. In the War he was Captain in the military intelligence division of the General Staff, U.S.A. American by birth (his family have been settled there since 1658), he has spent much time in England, and was in 1933 made a member of the Royal Society of Literature—an honour which at that time only three of his fellow countrymen shared. He has been the recipient of honorary degrees from several universities, and is affiliated with many Academies and Societies. In this article he stresses the importance of the freedom of the mind for a progressive civilization—a freedom which has been checked disastrously in this present era of dictatorships.—EDS.]

I have been asked to write a brief article on the above topic. It may be considered hackneyed but it is so only in the sense that every fundamental relation of the individual to his immediate environment

and the universe has been discussed and discussed since the first dawn of human intelligence. Even if we do not accept the details of Spengler's theories, it is clear that previous civilizations, over and over,

have risen, flourished and decayed. Innumerable generations of innumerable races have posed to themselves, at times of crisis, the question which wise men are asking to-day as to ourselves. Is our civilization decaying, and if so, why?

Like many American men around fifty years of age, whether westward immigrants or eastward travellers, I have lived in four worlds—two in time and two in space. I was an observing boy in the 1890's, now incredibly remote from my time world of the 1930's. I have also lived in both America and Europe. I shall not dwell on the physical and mechanical changes of the two worlds in time such as that, in the earlier one, in a well-to-do New York household, we had no telephone, no electric light, that there was not such a thing as an automobile in existence, and so on. I prefer here to stress the spiritual change.

The first temporal world in which I lived, on both sides of the Atlantic, was essentially a world of hope. If we did not have the manifold inventions which have followed, they were foreshadowed. Man's evidently increasing control over nature promised an era of plenty. The doctrine of evolution opened vistas of indefinite improvement. It was a world of increasing foreign trade and travel. It was, for the most part, a friendly world. Practically throughout Western civilization, except in Russia, we did not need passports. It was a world of confidence. The interest we had, or at least *I* had, in foreign countries was historical, artistic, literary and

social, not political. Politics was something that concerned native citizens, not those of other lands.

To-day, it is a world of anxiety and fear and hatred, with each nation closing its doors against all others. The interest in foreign countries has become almost exclusively political, or economic as affected by politics. We no longer think of friendly, kindly Germans or Italians, or of the treasured beauty of their landscapes, life and arts, but of what Hitler or Mussolini may do next. England orders 30,000,000 gas masks to protect the civilian population of that lovely and peaceful island, always hitherto safe behind the British fleet. There is complete lack of faith,—faith in honour, faith in contract, faith in treaties, faith in the future of our civilization.

As I think over my four worlds, and try to ponder what distinguished their earlier civilization, I decide it was not art. There have been previous civilizations, in many times and places, more highly distinguished in that respect. It was not decaying religious belief. That has happened before, usually before a decline. It was not this or that. What has made our modern civilization, what we of my generation have called civilization, unique was, perhaps, three things. One was that, as contrasted with the entire previous history of the race, we had achieved at least the possibility of plenty in place of constantly threatened scarcity, even famine. Another was that, in spite of talk of wage slavery and labour unrest, the common man, judged by almost any standard, was better off than he

had ever been before, unless possibly in America or other new lands in the transitional pioneer stage. A third was that there was greater liberty of individual thought, expression, act and movement than ever before in history.

What had created the potential plenty? Science, invention, and the fairly free interchange of commodities between different peoples. What had created the betterment in the lot of the common man? Since the fact of such betterment is denied by many who wish to change the fundamental organization of society, we may pause a moment to consider it. Taking a short view, we may quote the English Socialist Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Snowden, who wrote in his Autobiography that "I have no patience with those who say that things are no better or are worse than formerly. If they could be put back to the common conditions of my childhood they would know better." Taking a longer sweep, consider one civilization after another,—the Egyptian, with the workmen building pyramids under the lash, the brilliant Greek resting on slavery, the feudal with all the rights of the lord over the peasant and his wife and daughters, our American, half based on slavery. What brought about this amelioration? The increased liberties won by the individual human being, and the increased liberalism of those in possession of power, whether that liberalism was enforced or growingly voluntary.

Considering both these points, which mark the hopeful and supe-

rior quality of civilization, we come to the third, and find all three focus on the increasing freedom of mind. Without that we would not have had science and potential plenty; and brute force would still block the way to the amelioration of the common lot. The lot of the common man is not yet what it should be; nor have we learned so well how to distribute as how to produce. But it is only mind and neither force nor emotion which can solve these problems, if there are solutions to be found.

Why has the hopefulness of my earlier worlds turned so completely to the *malaise* and sense of frustration and hopelessness of the later? Is it not that we are feeling ourselves overwhelmed by force and emotion? Nationalism, which is doing so much to break down our civilization, is merely a product of these two operating on each other. One of the features of our world to-day is the rise of a vast population mass. Another is the rise of the dictator who rules the mass by force and fear. Masses are far more easily controlled by emotion than by thought. Ideas do not thrill crowds and make them move as one. Emotions do. The facts that methods of production have far outrun methods of fair distribution, and that there is yet no way to keep the inventions of science from being used for evil as readily as good, have produced a combination of many of the worst emotions,—fear, greed, envy,—which form a rich soil on which to raise dictators, government by force, and loss of liberty.

The danger to-day to civilization is

intellectual and spiritual. Until the World War, the two worlds in space which I knew, Europe and America, were supposed to be characterized severally by the two aspects of the highest civilization the Occident had known, America by the widest sphere of opportunity for the common man, and Europe by the highest freedom, intellectual and spiritual, of the individual. The foundations thus rested on spirit and freedom, not on force and repression. In the past, the latter have over and over overwhelmed the more enlightened civilizations of their day. At present, their shadows are steadily spreading over the earth, like that of an eclipse of the sun. Russia, Poland, south-eastern Europe, Germany, Italy, some of them leaders in the civilization we had known, are already darkened. In the past few weeks, disquieting news has come from Belgium, Brazil and the Argentine. France, which has called herself "mother of all the arts," is threatened. Holland, Scandinavia and Great Britain form but a fringe of the former civilization of Europe.

In a world torn by economic ills, peoples may submit, as they think, temporarily, to force and coercion and give up liberty for the sake of economic betterment. Much is heard of the "profit motive," but *perhaps the strongest motive which can move an individual or a nation along the path which leads away from civilized values, is the "power and prestige" motive.* Peoples who trust their right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" to the custody of a "saviour of society," even though

he be honest at the start, fare all the same, and badly. Personal liberty disappears. With the loss of liberties,—of thought, press, speech and action,—goes not only the foundation of all that has made modern western civilization so unique and precious, but also even the material foundation. Europe with its population almost quadrupled in a century, and America with its population multiplied perhaps two hundred and fifty times since the days of the barbarians could not have ever contemplated an age of plenty except for the free play of mind working out the problems of pure science, to be translated into applied science and inventions. The periodic famines and plagues, the low standard of living for the ordinary man would have continued for far smaller populations instead of the current discussion centring about the fair distribution of a plentiful feast of good living. If even the material basis of life is not to decrease enormously, with appalling results, the advance of science must continue. We have, so to say, the bear by the tail and cannot let go. But the human mind and spirit are not made up of water-tight compartments. *We cannot expect to be able to maintain that freedom of mind for the scientific research necessary to maintain modern civilization while at the same time we kill off, by brute force, freedom of mind and expression in all other directions.* How can lands in which dictators use castor oil, concentration camps, prisons, exile, burn books and do all their complete power allows them to do to destroy

all of which they do not personally approve as antagonistic to their own fortunes, expect to maintain even that material civilization which has developed only out of the increasing freedom of the spirit of the individual? Yet, with almost religious fervour, driven by the weariness of despair and lack of thought, people after people have turned over their destinies to those who play upon their emotions.

What can be done? Can any individual do anything against the present world momentum due to the combination of social force acting on the vast mass of our yet uneducated multiplied populations? It is obvious to me, at least, that the survival of civilization as we have known it at its highest, depends on the maintenance of liberty of thought and personal freedom. Yet whole nations are willing to sacrifice these for a fallaciously promised economic improvement, higher standard of living, and national power and prestige, even though in no case has the promised improvement taken place.

First of all, *it is necessary to see the problem of the salvation of civilization in terms of the relation of that civilization to spiritual liberty rather than in terms of the relation of a high standard of living to national economic planning, in which the individual is a pawn moved by the will of a central authority.* It may

be that each of us as individuals can do nothing, though to believe that is to let civilization go by default and to yield to defeatism. It may be that the present situation is a passing phase, and that the determined and combined efforts of many individuals in different lands may yet bring home to the people a realization of what civilization has been, should be, and on what it must be based. The adventure may be a successful one or a forlorn hope, but it seems to me that it is one which every man who understands the crisis and would save the world from another dark age, of spirit and flesh, must be willing to embark upon, whatever effect it has on his personal fortunes. It took us centuries to develop free western civilization out of the blind, brute force and despotisms of the past. Are we to surrender all the advance without a struggle, and in a few decades slip back six hundred years? Each must answer according to such beacon as shines for him alone. For me there is only one answer, to fight not only to preserve the freedom of the spirit known in boyhood but for greater freedom that civilization may rise higher. The suggestion of the need of any such fight in the earlier worlds I knew, would have seemed like the green-sickness of romantic adolescence. But in the present and near future, the fight promises to be real and grim.

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

ON SUPERPHYSICAL PHENOMENA

[J. W. N. Sullivan is famous for his capacity for lucid exposition of intricate and recondite scientific facts and theories. In this article he lays bare some weaknesses of the ordinary modern mind face to face with abnormal psychical phenomena, about which we comment in "Ends and Sayings."—EDS.]

The amount of credence we give to any new fact depends not only on the amount of evidence for that fact, but also on the extent to which it enters into our general outlook. This is particularly obvious when the events in question lie outside our ordinary experience, such as the events which belong to what is called "abnormal psychical phenomena." Here the value of a definite body of evidence is notoriously interpreted very differently by people of different prepossessions. Intelligent and careful observers have been known to reject evidence as altogether insufficient which other equally intelligent and careful observers have accepted as entirely satisfactory. The difference lies, at bottom, in their sense of probability which, in turn, depends on their philosophical outlook.

A recent worker in Telepathy and Clairvoyance, Professor Rhine, complains that so little advance has been made in this subject. Instead of going on and investigating the laws and conditions of these phenomena, investigators have had to spend their time in proving, over and over again, that such phenomena really do occur. They remain perpetually taking the first step. Yet the evidence that has already been accumulated is sufficient, it would be thought, to put the matter beyond all doubt.

Here we have a very obvious

instance of the influence of a philosophic outlook on specific beliefs. In his review of Dr. Rhine's book in the March number of *THE ARYAN PATH*, R. Naga Raja Sarma says that to students of Indian Psychology Dr. Rhine's book will seem like carrying coals to Newcastle. Doubtless what is usually referred to as typically Indian Philosophy could accommodate all Dr. Rhine's facts without difficulty. But the typically Western outlook has not yet come to terms with such facts. It is for that reason we have so many investigators apparently engaged in proving over and over again what has been proved before.

So far as mere evidence is concerned, the facts of Telepathy and Clairvoyance have long been established. Dr. Rhine's is merely the latest and most "scientific" of Western investigations into these facts. Dr. Tischner's book on the same subject, which appeared some years ago, is equally convincing, although perhaps less elaborately "scientific." But the phenomena it records are, at first sight, much more opposed to Western philosophical prejudices than are those of Dr. Rhine. Dr. Rhine is concerned solely with card-guessing, a matter which lends itself to precise mathematical calculation. Dr. Tischner investigates a less clearly defined, but far more extended group

of phenomena. Many of his experiments seem to show that a material object—such as a ring—can carry with it physical and mental associations belonging to the past. Such facts as that the ring came from a certain place, that it made a sea voyage, that it was kissed by a fair-haired lady aged thirty-two, that it was present in a scientific laboratory, and so on, are perceived by a medium who has nothing but a carefully wrapped-up box, containing the ring, to go on. And this can happen when the history of the ring is unknown to everybody in the room, and has to be verified afterwards. Dr. Tischner's book is but one of many books and papers testifying to equally striking, and sometimes much more striking phenomena.

It is quite evident that our resistance to the acceptance of such phenomena, however well authenticated they may be, springs from our general philosophical outlook. Before we could accept them we should have to revise completely our notions of space and time, and also our notions of the relation between mind and matter. That is to say, we should have to give up our most deep-rooted beliefs. Naturally, we resist doing that as long as possible. Some of the published criticisms of Dr. Tischner's book show that any "explanation," however extravagant and even downright silly, is preferred to such a complete overhauling of one's philosophical beliefs.

Nevertheless, such objectors appear, to a scientific man at the present day, as a little old-fashioned. For instance, science has made it

clear for some time past that our ordinary notions of space and time are not adequate even to the explanation of the phenomena of the material universe. First the Relativity Theory, and then the Quantum Theory, have shown that our old division of events into past, present, and future, is not descriptive of the way things actually behave. This way of parcelling out time misrepresents the connection between events which is found to exist in nature. As Hermann Weyl said: "Events do not happen; we come across them." There would seem to be at least two orders of time, that in which all things already exist, and that in which we come across them.

By saying that all events exist in an eternal *now*, science does at least give us a hint of a way of approaching the sort of problems investigated by Dr. Tischner and others.

Another group of phenomena which seems to belong to the same general class is furnished by Mr. Dunne's famous experiments with time. Mr. Dunne had found that he, and a great many other people, have the power of foreseeing events. The instances he gives cannot possibly be explained by deduction or by coincidence. It appears from these experiments that the dreaming mind has the power of travelling forwards as well as backwards in time. Mr. Dunne, as is well known, has been led by his experiences to the singular theory that there are an infinite number of time orders. Normally our minds operate in the first order, but there are times, as in dreams or reveries,

when we become free to move in the second order. These two time orders may be represented as at right angles to one another, so that the whole past and future of one order may be surveyed at a moment of the other. Mr. Dunne postulates, for each person, an infinite number of observers who together make up his personality. These observers exist in different time orders. Physical death is an event which occurs in the first time order, but there is no reason to suppose that it occurs in the others. Thus Mr. Dunne is led to believe that we survive bodily death. On his general theory of time Mr. Dunne has been able to deduce some of the most remarkable results of modern physics—a very impressive fact.

As we have said, *the chief reason why such phenomena are not generally accepted is that they would upset our most deep-rooted beliefs.* And another reason is that these phenomena have not yet been arranged within a system of their own. There is not, in the West at any rate, any general theory of time, space, and the relation of mind to matter, which would make all these various phenomena coherent. If such a general scheme were ever propounded it might be able to accommodate the still more abnormal phenomena discussed by spiritualists. At present the evidence for such phenomena cannot be ranked with that for Clairvoyance and Telepathy, or for such previsions of the future as are recorded by Mr. Dunne.

The phenomena we have been discussing all testify to the existence of "abnormal" powers in hu-

man beings, whether it be prevision, or extra-sensory modes of apprehending existent objects and thoughts. But there is also good evidence for phenomena which cannot be classified in this way. In *The Confessions of a Ghost-Hunter*, by Harry Price, we have the latest account, by a very able and experienced investigator, of phenomena which do not appear to be dependent on human agency. A large number of Mr. Price's investigations have been concerned with trickery and fraud. But some of them have resisted all attempts to explain them in this way. This is particularly true of "Poltergeist" phenomena, where objects are broken and hurled about, apparently without any human or visible agency. There are a number of such cases known to all investigators, and the fact that the phenomena are usually harmless, at least meaningless, does not detract from their extraordinary character. It is difficult to see what extension of present scientific ideas would find room for such things. The fact that man has powers which are not generally recognised does not help us in these cases. Such phenomena are, if we can believe the evidence, extra-human, in the sense that no human powers that we know of, normal or abnormal, are responsible for them.

A philosophical scheme which shall embrace all these phenomena will have to modify profoundly not only our conception of man and of his relation to the universe, but also our conception of this objective universe itself.

J. W. N. SULLIVAN

EMPEROR ASOKA AS A SOCIAL WORKER

[Dr. J. M. Kumarappa, Professor of Social Economy at the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work in Bombay, points out in this article the spiritual basis of the social service rendered by the great emperor, Asoka.—EDS.]

History bears out the statement that in the annals of kingship there is scarcely any record comparable with that of Asoka. While much has been written about him as an emperor and as a zealous missionary of Buddhism, seldom has any study been made of him as a social worker, though in the field of social service, Asoka was as pre-eminent as in that of State administration. Perhaps this is due to the fact that we are prone to think with concern of social problems as a special feature of modern civilization. In point of fact, there never has been a time when cases of social maladjustment have not challenged both the sympathy and thought of the seriously minded of every age. The traditional methods, however, of social service are largely an effort to prevent starvation and perhaps to ease, as far as possible, the pains and ravages of disease. But schemes of direct social amelioration always have an arbitrary, sentimental and artificial character. Even social service as it is undertaken to-day in the light of modern sociological research does not go to the root causes of social evils, since social science deals merely with the measurable characteristics of human beings, which are the least vital in influencing the social process and modifying human conduct. In view of our confused social thinking

and of the ever increasing interest in social service in India, Asoka's record as a social servant and his method of dealing with social problems deserve our serious consideration.

* * *

Young Asoka inherited an empire which extended from Afghanistan in the north to Mysore in the south. As a warrior prince, he was naturally ambitious to make his great empire still greater by territorial conquest. He therefore waged war on the Kalingas and subjugated them at great loss of life and intense suffering to the combatants. The cruel and gruesome consequences of the war, which Asoka recounts in one of his Edicts with much feeling, touched the depths of his sensitive soul and wrought a revolution in his life. (R. E. XIII.) This war to subdue the Kalingas subdued, in fact, his own heart, humbled him in spirit, and ended his passion for conquest by the sword. While the World War to end war ended merely in a pleasant talk about preventing future wars, the Kalinga War was for Asoka the end of all war, although he was not free from provocations to war from the unsubdued peoples of the neighbouring territories.

The conquest of Kalinga meant in reality the conquest of himself, a

spiritual rebirth—a personal regeneration which developed the potencies of his soul and revolutionized his outlook on life. This spiritual experience reflected itself in Asoka's personal habits and in his public policy and administration. Most of the time-honoured customs and institutions of the royal household were now abolished as being contradictory to the principles of right living, and others more in consonance therewith were introduced. The royal tours of pleasure accompanied by "hunting and other similar amusements," in which Asoka indulged for nine years of his reign, were now replaced by what he called "pious tours" to promote the social and spiritual welfare of his subjects. (R. E. VIII.)

And Non-Violence—the principle of observing and enforcing peace not only between man and man, but also between man and every sentient creature—became the law of his new life. To him now the glory and fame of an emperor was the establishment of an empire on the basis, not of violence but of universal peace and love, resting on Right rather than Might. His lust for territorial expansion was sublimated into a passion for transforming men's ways of thinking and living.

Having himself undergone such a remarkable conversion in his own way of looking at himself and his fellow-men, Asoka endeavoured as far as possible to effect such a beneficent change of mind in others. To bring this about in his people, he kept his lofty ideals and conduct constantly before their eyes.

Realizing later the importance of this way of life to human welfare and happiness, he tried to make it a national possession. To this end, he frequently sent out his royal proclamations and moral exhortations to them. (P. E. VII.) In the course of this moral propaganda, it occurred to him that he should so publish his instructions and messages as to make them permanently available to his subjects. (R. E. V and VI.) Thus it came to pass that Edicts were inscribed on rock and pillar, which act has made it possible even for us to-day to learn the message of Asoka.

He was, however, not content merely with sending out these mute messages and exhortations. He was all the time contriving new devices for improving the social and spiritual life of his people. He devised, for instance, his "pious tours," a method of establishing personal contacts with his subjects. While these tours made it possible for him to preach to them and hold conferences with them, they enabled him also to find out for himself not only the real physical and spiritual needs of his people but also their social problems. Asoka observed that they were given to much travelling in the interest of business as well as for the purpose of visiting the sacred places of pilgrimage scattered all over the entire area of this vast country, and that they were put to great hardships and inconveniences owing to the excessive heat of the Indian summer. To make the conditions of travel more favourable, Asoka planted mango

groves and banyan trees along the roads to give shade, and built rest houses for shelter; dug wells and erected watering places here and there for the comfort of both man and beast. (P. E. VII.)

For the purpose of recreation, different communities were in the habit of holding *Samajas*. In these festive gatherings, objectionable practices, such as animal fights, drinking and gambling, were freely indulged in. Since ill-advised recreation is an important factor in personal and social disorganization, Asoka abolished them and instituted in their place instructive and inspiring shows. With the help of these, Asoka sought to present religious and moral plays in the belief that his people, by witnessing them, might try to be like gods in their life and habits. (R. E. IV and M. R. E. I.) There were other social evils, some of which were intimately connected with the practice of religion. The observance of worthless ceremonies, not uncommon to the Brahminical religion of the time, involved unwise expenditure of money; more than that, they led the celebrants to forget the fundamentals, the real essence of religion. Therefore Asoka induced them in various ways to give up such practices, and to pay more attention to things of abiding value. (R. E. IX.)

Further, he found that emphasis on non-essentials often led to religious conflicts. In a country where religion is a basic institution, religious intolerance and antagonism are destructive of group values; they tend to bring about social

disintegration, by giving rise to persecution, strife and hatred. Asoka therefore took pains to inculcate in every way possible the spirit of accommodation and good will towards all faiths, by urging the various sects not to remain self-contained but to exert themselves to a sympathetic understanding of each other's doctrines. Such knowledge, he maintained, would promote harmony and social cohesion. (R. E. XII.) Further, he taught them to believe that the greatness of a sect did not depend so much upon the external support or reverence it commanded or on its numerical strength, as upon its inner essence, its vital principles. Since every sect contained some truth, the attempt of the seeker after truth should be to discover the common spiritual principles of living taught by them all. Even to-day useless religious rituals are driving our already poverty-stricken people deeper and deeper into debt and misery, and communal conflicts are destroying our social solidarity, but our administrators believe in observing what they call "religious neutrality." Emperor Asoka, however, really loved his subjects as his own children and considered no measure too severe to eradicate evil practices, both religious and social, in order to promote their welfare and happiness. Besides, by devoting his undivided attention to the welfare of all communities, and sects, and honouring them all alike, Asoka inspired others to accept the value of his precepts. (R. E. VI.)

Since the diverse peoples committed to his care, were on different

levels of cultural development, Asoka took pains to devise a system of social morals—wide in its scope and catholic in its outlook—which might be imposed upon all his subjects, irrespective of their personal faith and belief. (P. E. II; R. E. XII and XIII.) It is this system he speaks of as *Dharma*. Apart from being practical, Asoka's *Dharma* contained many sound doctrines and philosophical ideas. On the practical side, it included the following virtues: Kindness, liberality, truthfulness, inner and outer purity, gentleness, saintliness, moderation in spending and saving, self-control, gratitude, firm devotion, and attachment to morality. His *Dharma* was, as a matter of fact, another name for the moral or virtuous life, based on the fundamental principles common to all religions. It was not in any sense sectarian but really cosmopolitan and hence capable of universal acceptance and application. It contained basic rules of conduct essential for harmonious relationships and individual betterment. Asoka probably for the first time in history laid the foundation of a universal religion, in order to crystallize a right attitude in the followers of all faiths.

To enforce his social legislation, or regulation by *Dharma*, he ordered his ministers and city magistrates to undertake, like himself, "pious tours." He required them to go in turn every five years, not only to attend to their own official business but also to inculcate *Dharma*. (R. E. III.) By virtue of their vested authority, they were free to enforce

law to prevent anti-social conduct, and build socially desirable attitudes in his subjects. They were also free to bestow favours on adult dependents and others in need of help. Further, they were instructed to acquaint themselves with the causes of happiness and misery, and to admonish those who followed immoral ways to satisfy their sensual appetites. (P. E. IV.) Later this scheme was further expanded and systematized, and made into a separate department of Government Service known as the Department of Public and Social Welfare. It was placed under the management of a body of officers, named *Dharma-Mahamatras*, whose special duty and responsibility it was to prevent social disorganization by checking, as far as possible, anti-social forces and practices. Their function was also to put through various measures of public utility, such as building hospitals, supplying medical men and medicines, providing drinking water, building rest houses for travellers, caring for the destitute and the aged, mitigating the rigours of justice and so forth. The activities of this department extended over a wide field, even beyond the confines of Asoka's direct jurisdiction. (R. E. V.)

The business of attending to women and their welfare was entrusted to another body of officials called the *Stri-adhyaks-Mahamatras* as stated in Rock Edict XII. These men were specially chosen for their unimpeachable character. Their duty was to teach purity and restraint in sex life to women, and to uphold chastity and fidelity as the

primary virtues; they had also to supervise the places of amusement, patronized and frequented by women, in cities and towns, and prevent female sex delinquency which is so common a cause of the disruption of family organization. They were also instructed to take the necessary precautionary means to check promiscuity in sex relations, and to help women in developing a proper attitude in the realm of sex behaviour. Thus Asoka sought to ensure the purity and stability of family life which is so essential to the well-being of society, and to raise the standard of social morals among his subjects. Indeed, the promotion of the social and spiritual welfare of the people is one of the first and foremost cares of the State, and in carrying out this responsibility of the ruler to his subjects, Asoka spared no pains. (R. E. VI.)

While military conquests were foresworn, the moral conquests of Asoka grew apace, since they were earnestly undertaken as an important part of the daily work of administration. His social welfare mission spread rapidly not only in his dominions but also in the foreign countries beyond the boundaries of his own empire. (R. E. XIII.) It is worth noting, by the way, that the expenses of Asoka's social welfare work in foreign parts were borne by his own people. His international relations were thus governed, as is evident from his Edicts, not by the unbridled greed for exploitation but by the principles of universal brotherhood and disinterested humanitarian service—principles

which still remain to be recognized by the enlightened rulers of the modern world. To an impartial observer, all of Asoka's social welfare activities bear evidence of his deep insight, real discernment and severe self-discipline. Since spiritual regeneration was the objective of all his activities, his programme of social service touched the very core of life-problems, and his remedies tackled the very causes of the diseases he sought to remedy.

Maintaining that self-interest of man was the primary cause of social pathology, Asoka taught Man to conquer the powerful self-seeking tendencies in human nature by conquering himself. This is what his own personal regeneration meant to him. In order, therefore, to reconstruct human behaviour on pro-social lines, he encouraged the ideal of the ascetic, of one who has conquered all selfish desires. Asoka did not set for his people the ideal of absolute poverty. "Commendable also," he says, "is not to spend or hoard too much." (R. E. III.) Asoka himself did not renounce the throne, but he did renounce all its fame, glory and worldly pleasure, and ruled in the spirit of being in the world and yet not of it. Thus he upheld moderation in possession by his own personal example, and instructed his people to renounce all other aims in life but that of living a righteous life, free from the bondage of sin which separates man from man. (R. E. X and XIII.) To realize this ideal, he advocated the practice of meditation, self-examination, self-control and self-exertion. (R. E. IV and X; P. E. I and III.) Under

his wise guidance and inspiring leadership, the ideal of the ascetic began to spread, and a large army of his people adopted that ideal, some even going further than moderation in renunciation. Asoka's repeated insistence on respect for ascetics and liberality in their treatment points to their numerical strength. Such growth of asceticism, or the conquest of the self is, indeed, a compliment to the moral progress of a country. Asoka's own example inspired many persons to include social services as part of their religious duty, and such men he recruited for his mission of social and public welfare.

In this manner Asoka endeavoured to bring Man to a real understanding and confidential relationship with his physical body and with the body of the society in which he dwells—from both of which self-interest (sin) had sadly divorced him. And the results of his endeavours were most significantly successful. After surveying the peaceful and gradual transformation wrought in the lives and social relationships of his people by his programme, Asoka expressed great satisfaction and also hoped that his successors would apply themselves to the increase of this work. (R. E. IV.) The social chaos we are witnessing to-day all over the world points to the evils of

separatism and division. Non-differentiation (*Advaita*) is the root of the mind inculcated. The outlook of oneness, or the kinship with all living creatures, which Asoka strove to cultivate in his subjects, must be the basis of social regeneration.

The fate of society rests on human beings themselves. Enlightened intelligence, tempered with self-discipline and inspired by creative ideals, and emotions, harnessed for constructive service, could, when wisely guided, effect social achievement invaluable to human happiness and social progress. Our modern society demands a moral and economic regeneration. But the preliminary condition, namely, personal regeneration such as took place in Asoka, which would put those in advantageous positions to determine and control the course of human affairs, has not yet taken place. Social workers and statesmen have therefore much to learn from Asoka in whose personality the essence of India's supreme will and national genius found expression. Even to this day the mute stones set up by him in different parts of India proclaim to the world that an everlasting sovereignty cannot be attained through violence but through love and moral uplift, and real happiness and social betterment cannot be achieved but by the practice of self-discipline and Dharma.

J. M. KUMARAPPA

REINCARNATION

ITS REASONABLENESS AND ETHICAL VALUE

[**Claude Houghton** is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and a permanent civil servant of the Admiralty. That, as a personality. As the individuality, the reincarnating Ego, he evinces creative genius of a peculiar type in his *I Am Jonathan Scrivener*, *Chaos is Come Again*, *Julian Grant Loses His Way* and *This Was Ivor Trent*.—EDS.]

In an essay entitled "The Poetry of Barbarism," Professor Santayana, having quoted an extract from a poem by Browning, adds the following comments:—

Into this conception of continued life Browning has put . . . all the items furnished by fancy or tradition which at the time satisfied his imagination . . . And to the irrational man, to the boy, it is no unpleasant idea to have an infinite number of days to live through, an infinite number of dinners to eat, with an infinity of fresh fights and new love affairs, and no end of last rides together.

Now, for the majority of people the theory of reincarnation simply means that each individual soul experiences a succession of lives on this planet until perfection is attained. What happens then isn't so clear, possibly because perfection is difficult to imagine, but the method by which it is achieved is definite enough. One is born, and, as a result, one acquires a body in which to enter the arena of experience. One dies, and, in due course, one acquires another body—and re-enters the arena. These successive terrestrial embodiments of the individual soul continue till eternity is won.

This exoteric understanding of the reincarnation theory has several advantages. It unravels the skein of

many a mystery. It provides a ready-made explanation of the differences between individuals: it accounts for the fetters which bind some—and the measure of freedom others have achieved. It bolsters belief in the reality of the self—and it transforms death's grin into a smile. Above all, it provides an opportunity to evade the ordeal of self-knowledge. And that is most welcome, for the deepest desire of the human heart is to find a short cut to attainment, or, failing that, to postpone the nightmare conflict with ultimate issues. So it is consoling to believe that Time is a collaborator, not an adversary. The necessity for hurry is removed, if there are an infinite number of to-morrows in an endless succession of lives. This belief creates plenty of elbow room, and seems to justify a snail-like progression towards perfection.

Apart, however, from the advantages deriving from this exoteric understanding of the reincarnation theory, is it reasonable to believe that the theory is true? Do we, as a matter of cold sober fact, return again and again to this world? It is very romantic to believe that we lived and loved in Babylon; that we turned down our thumbs in the Imperial Circus in Rome; and that

we shall grace with our presence the monster cities of the future. Very romantic indeed—but is it true? Does an endless chain of linked lives trail behind us? Shall we be living, loving, marrying, quarrelling, writing books, backing horses, or joining up in a war to end war—in the Year of Grace 5000?

Stated in these terms, the theory at once assumes a somewhat preposterous air, but no sooner do we attempt to dismiss it than we instantly become aware of the necessity for some such explanation of the mysteries in which we are enmeshed. After all, the world of nature offers no solution of any kind. It has been said that the meaning of life lies outside it, and it is most certain that common sense cannot hazard even a stammering guess concerning the least of the enigmas confronting us. If the reincarnation theory seems fantastic, it is wise to remember that, doubtless, the Truth will seem spectral. It will not be a night-light dimly outlining the familiar. It will be a flash, blinding us to everything—except the Real. Possibly, therefore, it will be indistinguishable from darkness. Our relations with Reality will determine the issue.

If the reincarnation theory seems fantastic to us, it is for one of two reasons—and probably both. The first is that death suggests grim finality. To the senses, it presents overwhelming evidence that it is what it seems, but it is important to remember that it is when the senses are most convinced that they are frequently most deceived. On broad lines, the history of science is one

long refutation of the claim of the self-evident to be regarded as the true. To the senses, it is obvious that the world is flat; that the sun revolves round the earth; that sky and land meet at the horizon. When appearances are so convincing that only one judgment can be given, it is probable that the senses are deceived. Consequently, it is the overwhelming nature of the evidence presented by death that renders its claim suspect.

The other reason why the reincarnation theory may seem fantastic to us is that familiarity with our present situation renders us unresponsive to its miraculous nature. For Dostoevsky, nothing was more fantastic than the commonplace—and if we regard that statement as a paradox, it is probably because we prefer to remain unaware of the true nature of our actual situation on this spinning planet.

And, indeed and alas, what could be more mysterious, more dream-like, more spectral than the facts of human existence? A catalogue of those facts would read like a synopsis of some tremendous fairy story. What subsequent miracle could out-rival the one that surrounds us? In no other world, in no other life, could we encounter greater mystery than that which shadows our daily experience. If there is a life after death, if we return again to this earth, it would not mean that the Miraculous had suddenly invaded the realm of the Solid, the Known, the Understood. It would be no more than an extension of an already existing miracle.

It is important to realise this. We are so hypnotized by daily routine that everything far beyond the dread circle of monotony seems as fantastic as a madman's dream. Consequently many of us dismiss the reincarnation theory on the ground that individual survival is outside the pale of possibility—not realising that it is, actually, no more remarkable than our present individual existence, which apparently occasions no surprise of any kind. After all, it is more extraordinary that an isolated decimal should exist than that it should prove to be a recurring one!

So let us assume that as a matter of cold sober fact we do return again and again to this world, and that an endless chain of linked lives trails behind us. What, precisely, is the ethical value of this process? What are its implications? What is the centre of its significance?

Presumably the goal of each of us is to become an eternal being—to be wholly liberated from the bonds which fetter us to the transitory and the unreal. Our goal is a total response of our whole being to an eternal rhythm: to be delivered from the limitations, distinctions, and chaotic dreams of self-consciousness—to be one with that which Is.

Now, it is unfortunately a fact that many of us regard Eternity as a kind of inn which we shall enter to find peace and refreshment when we reach the end of the almost endless road of Time. We regard it as something infinitely remote—worlds ahead, lives away—but something which eventually must become ours by the mechanical process of

mere progression.

But suppose the mystics are right in asserting that only in the Now is the Eternal to be found? For Eckhart, eternity is not a state of duration. It is not something that happens to us after death—or something which mysteriously descends upon us in some future earth life. For him, eternity is a timeless Now. And a modern writer, J. Anker Larsen, in his book *With the Door Open* tells us that:—

... the blessed Now of being, and the agonizing Now of happening, are one and the same. To make this truth actual—that is the task which arises from the meeting with Eternity. . . . Existence is no Maya, no delusion, but we are deluded until we open our eyes in the Now where the temporal and eternal are merged into a unity, where a workday becomes a holyday, and life a sacrament. In the being Now, it is apprehended; in the happening Now, it is realized. The eternal sanctifies the temporal, the temporal realizes the eternal.

If Eternity is a timeless Now—a sudden awareness of a universal rhythm—a state of consciousness which knows nothing of time or space, limitations or distinctions—it is evident that we could live a hundred lives without experiencing it. The mechanical process of mere duration will not bring it to us. The eternal Now is being: Time is existence. It is desire for the Eternal, not passive acceptance of duration, which brings us nearer the timeless Now.

If this conception of Eternity be the real one, then the truth or falsity of the reincarnation theory somehow seems secondary. To have lived a hundred lives—to live a hundred

more—what of it, if in each and all we are outcasts from Eternity? And it may be that insistence on the reality of the self, which is inherent in the reincarnation theory, is the supreme obstacle to the attainment of that state of being in which there are no distinctions—in which we are one with all that Is. It may well be that the “I” consciousness is the only barrier separating us from eternal being in a timeless Now.

“Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation.”

This vision of Eternity not only renders secondary the truth or otherwise of the reincarnation theory, but it also illuminates the conception of “immortality.”

He who converts existence into being has nothing more to do with life and death. What happens when I die? The Eternal is, and it is sufficient for me to know that. I am not interested in the question whether a certain Anker Larsen of Langeland will in a few years' time stroll about in another world, whether he will recognize his old friends there and be recognized by them. I shall not discuss whether this is *possible*—who can deny it? But I may say that the descriptions which are received about life after death from the experiments of occultists and spiritualists show clearly the earmarks of a *temporal* life, the only difference being more favourable conditions and longer duration. If I were to enter upon such a life, it would be my endeavour there, as here, to attain the realization of the eternal Now I am not interested in long duration, but in Eternity. And Eternity is Now, and is accessible now.

CLAUDE HOUGHTON

THE ARYAN PATH has always included articles for or against the doctrine of Reincarnation. It may be of interest to readers to have a complete list of the articles on this subject printed up to date—

- On Reincarnation—*By Algernon Blackwood.* March 1930.
 Reincarnation Being True—*By H. W. R.* May 1930.
 Reincarnation and Memory—*By Vera Grayson.* Aug. 1930.
 Reincarnation in English Poetry—*By Philip Henderson.* April 1931.
 The Concept of Immortality as an Issue for Modern Philosophy—*By “Cratylus.”*
 Aug. 1931.
 The Moral Aspect of Reincarnation—*By J. D. Beresford.* Oct. 1931.
 Reincarnation in Islamic Literature—*By Margaret Smith.* Jan. 1933.
 Christian Immortality and Hindu Reincarnation—*By M. A. Venkata Rao.* Feb.
 1933.
 The Ethical Value of the Doctrine of Reincarnation—*By Saroj Kumar Das.* March
 1933.
 The Sufis and Reincarnation—*By Ronald A. L. Armstrong.* June 1933.
 The Sufis and Reincarnation (Correspondence)—*By R. A. Nicholson.* Jan. 1934.
 —*By J. S.* March 1934.
 My View of Reincarnation—*By Clifford Bax.* July 1934.
 The Mind-Body Problem and Human Survival—*By K. R. Srinivasiengar.* July 1934.
 A Note upon Reincarnation—*By L. A. G. Strong.* Aug. 1934.
 Reincarnation: A Reasonable Doctrine But—! —*By J. D. Beresford.* March 1935.
 Reincarnation: Necessary in the Evolution-Mosaic—*By George Godwin.* July 1935.
 The Need of Reincarnation in the West—*By John Gould Fletcher.* Oct. 1935.
 Reincarnation: A Western Theory—*By C. E. M. Joad.* Aug. 1936.
 Reincarnation: Some Indian Views—*By M. Hiriyanna.* Aug. 1936.

THE WORLD IS ONE

[Two unsectarian Christians give their views on the unifying of our divided world. **Leslie J. Belton**, Editor of *The Inquirer*, the organ of the Unitarians of England, was connected with the World Congress of Faiths held in London last July. He deals with a topic of very far-reaching importance—"Inter-Religious Fellowship"—and suggests a practical policy of action to secure the desired end. The speech on "Theosophy" delivered at the Bombay Parliament of Religions, held last May, deals broadly with the same subject. This speech has been published in pamphlet form and should be read in connection with Mr. Belton's article.

Bertram Pickard is the Secretary of the Friends Geneva Centre to which he brought his experience of five years as the Secretary of the Friends Peace Committee in London. He is to be the Vice-Chairman of the Friends World Conference which is to meet in the historical city of Philadelphia during 1937.—EDS.]

I.—INTER-RELIGIOUS FELLOWSHIP

Our grandfathers—I write as one born and bred in the Christian tradition—would have held up their hands in righteous horror at the thought of Christians having fellowship with members of non-Christian Faiths. One Christian (a most unchristian!) hymn which believers sang with all solemnity, and may still sing for aught I know, adjured the Almighty to expel "the unitarian fiend," meaning the Muslim; and countless other hymns expressed this same disdain of "heathen" Faiths.

It was this same spirit of exclusiveness, allied with abysmal ignorance of Eastern thought, which inspired the evangelical missionary drive of the later decades of the nineteenth century, and inspires it still, though missionary enterprise has changed its technique, and to some extent its assumptions, and most missionaries are more "knowledgeable" and more chari-

table than ever they were of old.

It is difficult to say exactly when and how the change set in which first softened the asperity of Christian judgment of other religions. Among factors which conduced to this end must be reckoned as of chief importance the labours of Orientalists like Max Müller, and the publication under his editorship, towards the close of the last century, of the "Sacred Books of the East" (the first volume appeared in 1876) and the valiant efforts of H. P. Blavatsky who, as early as 1877, in the second volume of *Isis Unveiled*, testified to the value of the comparative study of religions and who persistently strove for the realisation of the second object of her Movement, viz., "The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study." Nor must one forget that *pari passu*

the world was becoming linked-up through technical achievements which brought Calcutta and Bombay as near to London as Edinburgh had been a century before.

One striking result of this renaissance, if such we may call it, was that remarkable sign of the times, the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. To this congress came leaders of all the historic religions, and many others besides, and among the visitors from the East was Vivekananda, a flaming apostle of unity of whom *The New York Herald* said, "He is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him, we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation." No wonder the missionaries hated this new development towards "sympathy" among the religions!

The seed of a new understanding—at least of the *will* to understand—was sown at Chicago, and it sprang up in a series of conferences, more academic in purpose and personnel than its prototype, in Paris (1900), Basel (1904), Oxford (1908) and Leiden, in Holland (1912). The war effected a break but in 1924 at a conference in London on "Some Living Religions within the Empire," some forty papers were read on various aspects of religious thought and life by scholars and teachers of widely differing faiths.

Also to be recorded in this brief survey is an abortive attempt to form a League of Religions in London following the war, and the World Fellowship of Faiths which, casting its nets widely if not always

wisely, organised a second Chicago congress in 1934.

Derived from the Fellowship of Faiths but distinct in organisation is the World Congress of Faiths held in London this July (1936) under the international presidency of the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda and the chairmanship of Sir Francis Younghusband. This excellently organised and widely representative congress (I write on the eve of its opening proceedings) comprising twenty sessions and four public meetings besides religious services, marks in some directions a departure from previous assemblies of its kind in that its official speakers are under commission not to expound their own religious doctrines but, with a view to promoting "world fellowship through religion," to apply their convictions to problems of the present day. "The Congress will be a supreme adventure," states the prospectus with all the fervour of inspired optimism:—

Into it the most ardent spirits may well throw their best energies. If they do, the sense of fellowship will be quickened to the highest pitch of intensity. Henceforth that spirit would surely leaven all mankind, and, in a world gladdened by it, the poison of racial hatred would swiftly dissolve, occasions for war would never arise, and grace would govern the meetings of men.

It is noticeable, though, that the national council of the Congress contains the name of but one bishop of the Church of England—and he is retired! Orthodox Christians with a few exceptions, stand staidly aloof.

Lastly, an Inter-Religious Fellowship, formed without blare of

trumpets in London this year, represents a valiant effort to found on a spiritual basis an enduring and developing organisation with the avowed object of cultivating sympathetic study of the fundamental beliefs and ideals of all religions and of helping to promote by means of inter-religious education the spiritual unity of mankind. Its programme appears ambitious, but its governing council, representative, religiously and racially, of diverse traditions and schools of thought, is working quietly but confidently in the knowledge that like-minded people in all parts of the world are helping to achieve this same end. At its first public meeting a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Jew, a Christian and a Muslim undertook to answer, each from his own standpoint, two questions: (1) What is your conception of the Supreme Being? (2) How does your religion help to promote World Brotherhood? The meeting, though not especially noteworthy for quality of utterance, marked and helped to strengthen that readiness for inter-religious and inter-racial understanding which in England is one of the more hopeful signs of the times.

II

I venture now, tentatively and in response to the Editors' invitation, to indicate some of the difficulties which promoters of inter-religious fellowship have constantly to meet, and to suggest in outline a policy which, I believe, they might usefully adopt.

(1) "Pat on the back" tea-parties are of little practical avail; no

inter-religious fellowship can fully achieve its purpose by conducting itself in the manner of a mutual admiration society. If it tries to do so it encourages tacit dishonesty; for in the interest of policy and for the sake of politeness, people will tend to assume towards the other man's point of view an attitude which in sober reality they cannot honestly adopt—and to say to-morrow, elsewhere, what they dare not say to-day.

(2) Tolerance is not enough. Tolerance is easy, but it is sometimes question-begging and negative. One should, of course, concede to others that same right to express their views which one expects for oneself; but not on that account ought one to concur, or let it be assumed that one concurs, in views one holds to be fundamentally erroneous. Inter-religious fellowship should not demand of us that we tolerate superstition or acquiesce, for the sake of harmony, in what we believe to be social wrongs. But criticism, if it cannot be avoided, should be constructive and helpful, and courteously expressed. Each man should be met, so far as that be possible, on his own level, with all the sympathy and understanding that are ours to command.

(3) Inter-religious fellowship is incompatible with exclusive claims, by whomsoever they are made. Any religious society or church which assumes to be the vehicle of a unique and final revelation is in virtue of its pretensions self-excluded from inter-religious fellowship and does better to remain in the safe seclusion of its own

sheepfold than to mingle with "wolves" in sheep's clothing outside the fold. In this respect the Roman Catholic Church has at least the merit and logic of its own uncompromising exclusiveness, for never will the loyal Romanist consent to meet on equal terms the members of other Faiths; whether they be Protestant Christians or "Pagans" they are heretics from the standpoint of Rome—fit for conversion but for fellowship, no!

(4) The will to proselytise is likewise incompatible with the spirit which should actuate all gatherings for inter-religious fellowship. This means in practice not that the members of even the more militant of the missionary faiths shall be summarily shown the door (for many a man, individually, is larger-minded and larger-hearted than the institutional Faith to which he belongs), but that within the Fellowship propaganda and polemics shall be barred as inconsistent with the fundamental basis of fellowship and as discourteous to others whose views may be different from one's own. Least of all, it need hardly be said, should zealots be allowed to use the inter-religious platform for open or veiled advocacy of their particular faith. When that is done harmony is destroyed and the platform is at once in danger of collapse. If at times fervent believers are asked to expound their own convictions, exposition, even in their hands, need involve neither an assumption of superiority nor the will to convert.

(5) At the same time—so at least I believe—no less impermis-

sible, or should I say, undesirable, and destructive of fellowship, is the open advocacy of a synthetic faith compounded of fragments of many existing faiths. One cannot *make* a new religion by artificial selection—one may try but one will not succeed. Even if one were to succeed, what final advantage would there be, one may well ask, in a new religion which could maintain its integrity only at the cost of uniformity and ultimately, it might be, of repeating the errors of authoritarian religion? Anything which imposes from without that which man should find within is in the long run a hindrance to spiritual understanding.

(6) Acknowledgment of diversity is a *sine qua non* of inter-religious fellowship. Uniformity of belief is possible only among slave-minds and is neither possible nor desirable in a community of thinking (*i. e.*, awakened) people. An inter-religious fellowship should recognise the fact of the diversity in tradition, conviction and temperamental needs.

(7) But in virtue of its ideal aims, an inter-religious fellowship will seek to mark and to emphasise those teachings which all religions, under varying symbolisms, hold in common. Religion is that which binds and in this sense everything that is divisive, local and non-essential in the several Faiths may gradually be relegated to the background and finally set aside, as universal truths emerge into the light and are recognised for what they are. Thus the more far-seeing and intuitive enthusiasts for inter-religious fellow-

ship will gain a new, more adventurous, more inclusive faith and a deeper understanding of the Design of all existence.

This then, in brief, ignoring specific issues of doctrine and creed, is

a possible policy and praxis for inter-religious fellowship. If world brotherhood is to become a reality it must be sought not only through material, but also, supremely, through spiritual means.

LESLIE J. BELTON

II.—THE QUAKER PRACTICE OF WORLD UNITY

There is no question which touches more closely the thought and life of the Society of Friends than that of world unity—actual and potential.

The Quaker is encouraged, but not surprised, to note that the rational case against war and other forms of violence in human relationships grows stronger every day, whether the question be regarded from the angle of economics, biology, or ethics. But his faith in potential human solidarity is not based primarily upon a rational calculation of necessities, but, rather, upon an irrational intuition of man's true nature and destiny.

This spiritual intuition—which of course is shared with the prophets and seers of all ages—arose, so far as Friends are concerned, in England, in the seventeenth century, when George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, discovered for himself experimentally the Inward Light, or Seed, of God, and insisted that this Light was a universal human possession, at least potentially. He enjoined his followers to "walk cheerfully over the earth *answering* that of God in every man"; and in so doing he both enunciated a revolutionary doctrine and launched a daring spiritual programme.

So far as the doctrine is concerned, it was certainly rooted in historic Christianity. But, though Fox and his followers generally equated the Inward Light with the Living Christ, and even with the Jesus of history, it is nevertheless true to say that this doctrine of the Universal Light was not at all in accord with commonly accepted Christian orthodoxy. The implication, though only partially realised by the early Friends, was clearly to the effect that the One Creator was at work in the hearts of *all* his creatures. Man's duty was not to plant the Seed, but to tender it; or in Fox's unusual metaphor to "*answer* that of God," implying that the cry for divine and human fellowship was already proceeding from the hearts of men, whether they were fully conscious of it or not. It is for this reason that Occidental Quakerism, whilst rooted in the Christian tradition, and characterised by its idiom, has nevertheless some natural affinities with mystical religion of the Orient too.

Turning to Fox's programme, it was primarily unpolitical. That is to say, it was concerned, first and foremost, with the interior coming of the Kingdom, in terms of personal spiritual experience and relation-

ships, rather than with the actual problems of establishing, politically, the Kingdom of God on earth. Whilst there were a few political thinkers of the first rank among the early Friends, notably William Penn (1644-1718) and John Bellers (1654-1725), pioneers respectively in the international and social fields, Fox and the majority of his followers left the actual responsibility for the immediate problems of government to others, concentrating their own efforts upon doing the will of God within the orbit of their own control and influence, though they did not hesitate to challenge, or condemn, unchristian practices in social and political life.

This attitude imparted both strength and weakness to the Quaker movement. It brought weakness in that it tended to obscure from the eyes of Friends some of the chief roots of war and other evils in the body politic, giving them the illusion, especially during a long period of "Quietism," that their dignified and often spacious lives were really unspotted by the economic and political struggles going on around them. But it also brought strength, in that Friends did not for ever lay the blame upon impersonal systems, or remain inactive, pending the slow and cumbersome indications of politics. Instead, whether, for example, in the matter of military service, or of slavery, or again in education, or the treatment of mental diseases, or again in the relief of "enemy" peoples,—they acted experimentally and directly, in ways that were contrary to accepted standards, and thus, by

example, made their contribution to political thought and practice which had its influence upon current ideas and usage.

The dominant Quaker aspiration has always been to realise in daily life, on the outward plane, an experience of human solidarity in harmony with the inner intuition of "unity with the whole creation," as Fox quaintly put it. Whereas the major Quaker achievements have been neither in the field of abstract thought, nor of statesmanship, but rather in the field of what might be styled, perhaps, "spiritual pragmatism"—a field where individual Friends, or groups of Friends, have acted as practical pioneers, with varying degrees of success, on the assumption that an appeal to man's better nature (*i. e.*, the divine in man) was both right and best.

There are five more or less characteristic forms which such action has taken which may briefly be passed in review, because of their special bearing upon the question of world unity.

(1) The importance of "personal concern" (*i. e.*, of action by an individual under the guidance and impulsion of God) has always been valued highly amongst Friends. One of the forms that "personal concern" took, especially in the earlier periods of Quakerism, was that of visits paid to the heads of States, and other high personages, with a view to exhorting them to use their influence rightly. It was assumed that differences of race, nation, or language would not prevent the "concern," which was,

after all, God's concern, from working the desired effect. This form of personal action is much less common to-day than heretofore.

(2) Friends have played a part in the great Missionary Movement which was largely inspired by the Evangelical Revival of the mid-nineteenth century. Quaker Missions, generally speaking, have differed little from other Christian Missions which, originally at any rate, were based on the assumption that the Christian faith, as a final revelation of God, was destined to supersede other faiths, and that therefore it was not to be expected that those other faiths had any comparable contribution to make to the religious thought and life of the world. Such ideas were bound to be shaken to their foundations by the criticism of the West which accompanied the awakening nationalism, not only of the East (Japan, China, India, Syria), but of Africa too. Moreover the spiritual bankruptcy of Western Christianity, as revealed by the World War, shocked even the most impervious minds into a realisation that, as *The Christian Century* once put it: "We face a riven world, terribly in need of the Gospel in all its parts."

It is simply stating a fact to say that there was nothing in the Quaker contribution to Missions which strikingly marked it out, as it would have been natural to expect in view of the "heretical" Quaker doctrine of the Light, from that of other Christian Missions which, originally at least, were working upon the theory of complete "heathen" darkness. It is also

significant, so far as England is concerned, that when once the modern Quaker Movement, in reaction from Evangelicalism, had recaptured primitive Quaker thought and become conscious of the distinguishing elements in Quakerism, the missionary impulse to work in non-Christian countries waned, only to recapture the imagination of the younger generations of Friends when the Quaker missionary service was fused, in 1927, with the Quaker International Service, from which, it will be noted, the very words "foreign" and "missionary" have disappeared.

(3) Not much needs to be said about the Quaker work of relief and reconstruction during and after the War, since this is perhaps the best known of the activities of Friends in recent times. The reasons for this, however, may have a close connection with the specialised outlook and methods of Friends, as we have noted them. For example, the Quaker Relief Services have never had the character of mere charity (*i. e.*, the giving of material things to those in need). Except where very large gifts have been received from Governments, or non-Quaker sources (*e. g.*, as in the child-feeding in Germany where the Friends administered immense sums donated by the Hoover Relief Mission) Quaker Relief work has been a drop in the bucket by contrast with the size of the problem with which it was wrestling. Nevertheless, it has often had an influence quite out of proportion to its scale. The reason for this presumably is the fact that it has always been

embarked upon consciously as a symbol of spiritual unity between giver and recipient, and with a definite desire to mark the fact that the separation of "enemies" in war, whether international or civil, must not be allowed to stand in the way of reconciling service designed to bridge gulfs and heal moral, as well as physical, wounds.

(4) The Friends International Service, as it has come to be called, arose after the War, and side by side with the Relief Work, out of the vivid consciousness experienced by a few Friends, (notably Carl Heath, who resigned from the Secretaryship of the [British] National Peace Council to become the first Secretary of the Friends Council for International Service), that in the post-war world there would be need, as never before, for small centres or groups, in strategic places, around which like-minded men and women of good will might rally, and through which active forces of mutual understanding and co-operation might be canalised towards a wider integration—a collaboration between Friends and friends of Quakerism which has come to be known as the "Wider Fellowship." Hence sprang into existence Quaker Centres in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Geneva and elsewhere in Europe, to which later were added those of the former "Mission fields" when the fusion took place to which reference has already been made. American Quakerism through the American Friends Service Committee (Philadelphia) co-operated actively, and upon substantially equal terms, in

the work.

The scope of this newest expression of the Quaker aspiration that world unity should be realised in life, here and now, is really very small when compared with that of other religious and international societies. Its importance must not be exaggerated. On the other hand, as in the case of relief work, its visible means and apparatus are no true measure of its value. It would seem to belong to the genius of Quakerism to extend its outreach neither through proselyting, nor propaganda, but by the varying degrees of influence exercised by Quaker Committees, or individual Friends, upon much larger enterprises, which they either promote from behind the scenes, or are called upon to manage by other people, who appear to like the Quaker way of doing things.

Thus we find the Quaker Centre in Paris the virtual home of a large number of Peace Organisations; Woodbrooke in England, the heart of a much larger Adult Educational Movement with international ramifications; the Quaker Centre, in Geneva, the virtual headquarters of a Federation of some forty international societies, and of a Consultative Group which promotes co-operative thought and action of large numbers of bodies working for Peace and Disarmament, with their tentacles all over the world; and so on, and so forth.

(5) There is one final Quaker aspiration and partial achievement which once again must not be exaggerated, and yet which is a symbolic essay, perhaps, in that field of re-

education of the human spirit, to the paramount importance of which Dr. L. P. Jacks so justly pointed in his sane and cautionary article in *THE ARYAN PATH* for May. I refer to the gradual creation, despite the curiously decentralised nature of the Society of Friends in the world (there are actually forty autonomous groups of Friends and no over-body in the organisational sense at all), the gradual creation, I repeat, of a real international Society of Friends, conscious of its world-wide character and unity, despite the diversity of different nations and races. Having been predominantly an Anglo-American movement, the out-thrust both of the Missionary and the International Services has resulted in the establishment of a dozen or so independent national groups of Friends (apart from the Anglo-American groups) which, though small numerically, are making, in varying degrees, their own contribution to the mental and spiritual stock of Quakerism. A series of International Conferences held at various places in Europe (Paris, Amsterdam, Geneva and Prague) between 1930 and 1935 have greatly stimulated the world thinking and consciousness of Friends; and it is

confidently expected that at the second Friends World Conference to be held in September 1937 near Philadelphia (the first World Conference was held in London in 1920) steps will be taken towards a closer regular consultation and co-operation between the Quaker groups throughout the world.

The importance of this process does not lie in the strengthening of a world-wide organisation—Friends are very chary of centralisation, and rightly so—but rather in the deepening of organism, of organic mental and spiritual relationship. This process is not merely one of increasing conference, intervisitation and exchange; it is also fostered nationally by the many educational enterprises of the Society.

In conclusion, I confess that I am somewhat oppressed by the fear that, since the writer is himself a Quaker, and indeed one of the Society's representatives in the field of International Service, the article may savour too much of self-congratulation and praise.

I can only ask the kindly indulgence of my readers who will realise that one either had to refuse the Editors' invitation to contribute to this series or take the risks of acceptance.

BERTRAM PICKARD

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

THE ONE IN THE MANY *

Jacob Boehme (to adopt the modern and more convenient method of writing his name) is referred to, philosophically, as a Theosophist, a term used in this sense to denote "those forms of philosophic and religious thought which claim a special insight into the Divine nature and its constitutive moments or processes"; but his writings do not derive from Esoteric Buddhism, the principles of which, as set out in the books of the Ancient Wisdom, must have been quite unknown to him. He has been called, misleadingly, the "Protestant Mystic" by reason of his education in the Lutheran Faith and of the final confession of adherence to that Faith, obtained from him on his deathbed by the immediate successor of the Primarius (Richter), whom Mr. Earle regards as the "symbol of fanaticism." In fact, Jacob Boehme was, simply, a mystic, a description that need not be qualified by any adjective.

He was born at Alt-Seidenberg on the Bohemian frontier, in 1575. After a rough, general education he was bound at the age of fourteen to serve his term of apprenticeship to a shoemaker in Seidenberg, and ten years later became a master of

his craft at Goerlitz. In the same year he married, and, to quote Mr. Earle, "lived with his wife in a happy and undisturbed union, which was blessed with six children." At first he prospered in his trade of shoemaker, but in 1613 he dropped his trade entirely for the sake of his writing, and afterwards suffered poverty. He died in 1624, at the age of forty-nine. This bare record is sufficient to place him in space and time. It is less easy to place him as a seer, as one of the few who, for some reason that is not explicable in any physiological or psychological terms, have been able, however feebly and partially, to identify themselves with what Boehme called the *Stille ohne Wesen*, the "essenceless quiet," the Nirvana from which all life derives and to which it shall ultimately return.

Boehme was one of the simpler mystics,—St. Paul may be counted as another instance. He had little education, and as a consequence his visions were self-induced and his teachings less dependent upon the reason than the teachings of, say, Confucius, Paracelsus or Madame Blavatsky. Boehme voluntarily submits his intelligence. "I resolved," he wrote, "to count myself as

* *Six Theosophic Points and Other Writings.*
Of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.
De Electione Gratiae and Quaestiones Theosophicae.

By JACOB BÖHME, translated from the German by John Rolleston Earle (Constable and Co. Ltd., London.)

dead in my innate form, till God's Spirit obtained a form in me, and I laid hold of Him, in order that I might lead my life through and in Him. Further, I proposed to myself to will nothing save what I apprehended in His light and will. He was to be my will and my doing." And in his twelfth Epistle, he says, "I can write of myself no otherwise than of a child that knows and understands nothing, neither has even learnt, save what the Lord chooses to know in me."

It is mystics of this order who provide what may be called the "scientific evidence" for the truth of the great first principles that animate Theosophical teaching. In his own simple way, with no guide but his own desire for truth, Boehme in his ecstasies was able to identify himself with the One in the Many, or as Dr. Jung might say, with "the Cosmic Consciousness." And the test of the universal truth of such visions is made by an examination of the material Boehme was able to report after his spirit had sojourned beyond the barriers of space and time. It remains for the logical faculty as opposed to the intuitional, for the reason as represented by the intelligence of scientist and philosopher, to determine the extent to which such seers as this are in agreement in their cosmogonies, whether or not they confirm one another in their account of the genesis and evolution of the universe, and its purpose in relation to material life.

Before we examine Boehme's vision of the absolute, however, one vital consideration must be clearly apprehended. The mystery of vision beyond the barriers has an all-important dependent, which is the equally profound mystery of the relation between the immortal spirit and its mortal representative in space and time. For in every case we find that the account of these travellers is *coloured* by the habit of their characteristic beliefs. The Ancient Wisdom is recognisably of a nature that conforms to the manner of thought and life of the Indo-Aryan peoples. The Chinese Tâo is most appropriate to adepts of Mongolian origin. And in the younger, less pure-blooded races of the West, we find the story of the visionary told in terms that may in some instances appear to be sectarian.

The most obvious explanation of such "colouration" is that it is terminological. Western languages are very weak in those abstract words that abound in the Indo-Aryan; and most of such words as we have are used in so many contexts as to carry an uncertain significance. The mystic therefore has to choose between the effort to invent a terminology of his own, (Boehme's *Ungrund** and *Stille ohne Wesen* are instances of this), and the use of those spatial metaphors which will convey some partial translation of his vision to his own familiar world. Wherefore we find, more particularly in the case of the Roman Catholic mystics, the use of

* Translated "unground" by Mr. Earle but presenting the idea of God "eternally breathing forth Himself.....through the stationary ground of the life."

a religious language that will be "understood of the people." If the Spirit is to take form and dwell amongst us, it must be robed in familiar garments, and those that have understanding will be able to recognise the Eternal habitant of the temporal shape.

But if this consideration of interpretative language is an important one, there is another, still more important, which concerns what was referred to above as the "profound mystery of the relation between the immortal spirit and its mortal representative in space and time." The mystics, and more particularly such minor seers as St. Paul, St. Francis, or our Jacob Boehme, were still held in the limitations and prejudices imposed by the mental vehicle of the particular incarnation through which they manifested their supernal gifts of understanding. (Even Gautama and Jesus were not perfectly free from such limitations.) St. John may have been "in the spirit on the Lord's Day," but on his return his revelation was tempered by the thought habits of his earthly mind. In short the purest visions of the mystic retain some element of the nature that informs the fugitive dream.

This allowance then must always be made before we consider the common factors that provide evidence for the ultimate truths which inhere in all genuine mystical visions. In the case of Jacob Boehme such evidence is peculiarly abundant. It is significant, in the first place that, like Blake,* he should

have reacted so powerfully against orthodox religious teaching. He writes:—

Dear Christendom has been led out of all the apostolic orders or virtues into human ordinances, and in seeming holiness the kingdom of Christ has been made a kingdom of pomp and show in connection with baptism and the Lord's Supper. Men have added ceremonies. O had they but kept right faith and understanding.†

In this passage we cannot fail to perceive the Lutheran mental habit of the personal Boehme, but it is less evident in what follows.

It would be impossible in an article of this length to attempt any exposition of Boehme's philosophy as a whole; if, indeed, it can be regarded as a whole. For example, in his account of the principle of Evil he passes through progressive stages which are hardly consonant one with another, and we are left to decide whether his earlier or his later vision represents the truer inspiration. But a few excerpts from his *Six Theosophic Points* will be sufficient to show that his intuition of the absolute conforms in many particulars to those principles of esoteric Buddhism which he could never have known through any material agency.

Here, for instance, is Boehme's rendering of what happens to the true ego after death or, as modern Theosophy would rather say, between incarnations. "The soul's flesh and blood is in the highest mystery, for it is divine substantiality. And when the outer flesh and blood die, it falls into the outer mystery, and the outer mystery

* See more particularly *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.

† *Threëfold Life*, XIII, 28, quoted by J. R. Earle.

falls unto the inner." This—despite a vagueness of statement concerning the nature of the outer and inner mystery, about which he appears uncertain both here and elsewhere—is a reasonably lucid account of the same transition in Theosophical teaching. And throughout Boehme exhibits an underlying sense of the Oneness of every manifestation of the Divine Will, of the out-breathing into diversity and the in-breathing return to Unity.

He is not less inspired in his treatment of Reason, though hampered by a continual fumbling for statement which necessitates condensation by a choice of passages here and there from his pamphlet on the divine intuition, "shewing... how all is from, through and in God; how God is so near all things, and feels all." For Boehme reason is the "folly of the wise," and "knows not how the wise man is delivered in himself and freed from the inherited folly by immergence of his own will." Reason's "will is gone from God into selfhood, and boasts itself of its own power, and sees not how its power has beginning and end."

In this matter of the human as opposed to the divine will, he is, also, very illuminating, although he has been tempted in this connection to evoke the image of "the fierce, wrathful devil," a conception at variance with the broad principles of his teaching. Apart from this unnecessary image, however, Boehme manifests a clear realisation of a will in Nature, "broken

off" from the Divine will, and striving "against the Unity, viz., the Eternal one rest, the one good," and in paragraph 17 of Chapter II he writes:—

If it be possible for him [man] to stand still an hour or less from his own inner willing and speaking, then will the divine will speak into him. By which inspeaking God's will embraces his [man's] will in Himself, and speaks into image-like natural external Reason-life; and dissolves and illuminates the earthly imagination of Reason's will, so that immediately the supersensible divine life and will buds and incentres itself in Reason's will.

That is an admirable statement of a process in contemplative mysticism; but Boehme, speaking only out of his own happy personal experience, takes no account of the difficulties and dangers that beset those who able, perhaps, to hold themselves for "an hour or less" from their own "inner willing and speaking," lack nevertheless the protection afforded by Boehme's advanced spiritual development.

As a final instance of Boehme's intuitional realisation of the universal principles he could never have learned from books or contemporary teaching,* may be cited his treatment of Magic, the fifth of his *Six Theosophical Points*. The first three paragraphs (out of twenty-four) are all that can be quoted here, and it should be understood that he is speaking throughout of what we should call "White Magic."

1. Magic is the Mother of Eternity, of the being of all beings; for it creates itself, and is understood in desire.
2. It is in itself nothing but a will,

* He was evidently not acquainted with the works of Paracelsus who died in 1541, nor does Boehme derive from him.

and this will is the great mystery of all wonders and secrets, but brings itself by the imagination of the desirous hunger into being.

3. It is the original state of Nature. Its desire makes an imagination, and imagination or figuration is only the will of desire. But desire makes in the will such a being as the will in itself is.

This is, indeed, but a very brief and imperfect indication of Boehme's teaching, and is intended only to draw attention to that side of it which demonstrates his power of arriving at occult truths by the single means of contemplation.

The translation of his vision is specifically coloured by the thought habits of his Lutheran upbringing, but behind the expression the student of occultism, the potential mystic, all those who have the simple desire for understanding, will recognise, it may be with a thrill of the divine nostalgia, those eternal truths that have found translation in so many and such various creeds. Jacob Boehme, like all true mystics, had a passing sight of the One in the Many.

J. D. BERESFORD

The Sounding Cataract. By J. S. COLLIS. (Cassell and Co., Ltd. London. 7s. 6d.)

This is not the place to attempt a purely literary appreciation of any novel. Mr. Collis's new book claims a review here because his past contributions to these pages have been of a kind to suggest that any of his work will contain something of interest to ARYAN PATH readers. Undoubtedly it does, if to less degree than his previous volume, *Farewell to Argument*. Robert Delaney, its central figure, is a man in search of his soul, and of—it is the same thing—a purpose in life. A born orator, the ready tripping of his tongue flings him into the military Irish Republican movement, from which he backs out when he realizes his lack of any conviction worthy the sacrifice of another man's life or (perhaps still more) his own. That he has in doing so to kill a semi-madman in self-defence worries him apparently not at all, and he plunges with equanimity, and for the greater part of the book, into London popular journalism, emerging after a love-affair or two to return to Ireland, "where men had still a chance of making life creative and real," and where woman's love, it seems, runs deeper.

In that return, and its allied purpose of helping to save Ireland from unhappy

England's "swinish dash down the hill into the pit of unplanned industrialism," he is, one gathers, supposed to have found himself, but it is not too convincing. One does wonder whether, as in Robert's first essay, the quickness of the tongue has not deceived his true self-perception. Robert seems in fact a basically superficial character, lacking that one thing he seeks—imaginative integration. Accordingly the book itself seems wanting in positive centre, and the interest is found to lie principally in the by-the-way comments on men and movements with which the hero comes into contact. There are an Irishman's views of the English middle-class, a people devastated by their "total absence of religion," their ignorance of the meaning of worship. There are—at some length—his criticisms of the Oxford Group Movement as, religiously, "unconscious parodies of the real thing." There are some solemn, some jesting, remarks on the cheap stunts of the modern newspaper.

Not a first-rate book even by its author's own previous standard, it has at least this interest and value—that it is by a man to whom religion in its highest, not merely a theological and ethical, sense, is the quest and motive-force of life.

GEOFFREY WEST

The Last of the Empresses. By DANIELE VARÈ. (John Murray, London. 15s.)

During the last phase of the Manchu Dynasty in China, the most notable figure on the political stage was that of a woman—the Empress known in childhood as Little Chao, in girlhood, when she entered the Palace, as Yehonala, in middle age as Tz'ü-hsi, and in her declining years simply as the Empress-Dowager, or more familiarly as the Old Buddha. Her strong, magnetic personality has already inspired many books, chief among these being the historical account of her reign by Bland and Backhouse, the personal impressions of Miss Carl, who painted her portrait, and the reminiscences of her lady-in-waiting, the Manchu Princess Der Ling. So many-sided was she that the estimates of her character have varied to an astonishing degree. By some she is regarded as the incarnation of all that is wicked, others were so carried away by her charming and gracious demeanour that they found it impossible to believe her to be anything but a much-maligned saint. Here we have a fresh attempt to appraise her qualities and trace her career; it is the best and fullest account that has yet been penned.

Nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice,

is the golden rule for a biographer, and it has been scrupulously observed by Signor Varè. This Italian diplomat, like most foreigners who have spent their lives in the Far East, knows English well; but very few, one imagines, can write English in such perfect idiom. Moreover, he has an indefinable charm, a lightness of touch, and a happy gift of anecdote which must surely bring him a host of readers. The book is hardly to be classed as a full-length biography. The material is insufficient for that, especially since the Revolution has swept away so many records of the past. But reinforced with some illuminating extracts from the history of her times, it presents us with an unforgettable picture of this strange and fascinating woman.

That the Empress Tz'ü-hsi was guilty

of some fiendish acts of cruelty in her long career cannot be disputed. She may be forgiven for her short-sighted foreign policy and the ferocious edicts directed against the enemies of her country, as she conceived them to be. Ignorance of the outer world was only to be expected in one confined at so early an age in a harem and relying for information mostly on eunuchs. But there were other dark deeds which must leave an ineffaceable stain on her memory. In justice it should be remembered that several times in her life she had to face dangers which might well have proved fatal to one less resolute in temper. To be removed from power in an Oriental Court, as Signor Varè reminds us, often means to step down from a throne into a grave. Such a moment arrived at the death of the Emperor Hsien-fêng, when a tense, grim struggle between Yehonala and the Regents ended in the complete discomfiture and execution of the latter. This was all in the game. But her attitude towards the succeeding emperors, her own son and nephew, was far less excusable. And twice, when female rivals disappeared from her path, she was more than suspected of foul play. Then came the Boxer rising. Her folly in provoking the foreign Powers was offset by the splendid courage she showed in a desperate emergency, when single-handed she quelled a riotous mob of soldiers headed by Prince Tuan. But her cruelty flashed out just before the flight from Peking, when the Pearl Concubine was thrown alive down a well. And finally, it appears to have been more than coincidence that Kuang-hsü "ascended as a guest on high" only a couple of days before the decease of his terrible aunt. One cannot but feel that the words she uttered on her deathbed formed the most stinging condemnation of her career:—"Never again allow a woman to hold the supreme power in the State...Be careful not to allow eunuchs to meddle in Government matters."

Two criticisms which I should be disposed to make of a delightful book are that there is some inaccuracy in the rendering of proper names, and that the

illustrations have little or no connection with the text. The frontispiece, however, is an authentic portrait of the

Empress, and well exhibits the iron will which was the dominant characteristic of this extraordinary woman.

LIONEL GILES

Psycho-Analysis and Social Psychology. By WILLIAM McDUGALL, M. B. (Methuen and Co., London. 7s. 6d.)

Psycho-Analysis and Social Psychology is the outcome of a series of lectures delivered under the auspices of the University of London (May, 1935) in which Dr. McDougall had subjected the system of Freud to "ruthless" yet "entirely friendly" criticism. He tells his readers that he singled out the system of Freud for his critical onslaught because he considered it to be built on foundations of truth, which means nearer than any other to the system elaborated by himself. We are indifferent to whether Freud is guilty of "sub-conscious plagiarism" or whether Freud has adopted any of McDougall's theories without explicit acknowledgment.

Two main arguments of the book are noteworthy. (1) McDougall is convinced that the hormic psychology he advocates is the only scientific psychology. (2) Leaders of the psycho-analytic movement like Freud, Adler and Jung have made excursions into "social psychology," and the improvements and restatements of old psycho-analytic views in their works may be traced to their assimilation of it. McDougall hopes for a fusion of his social psychology or hormic psychology with psycho-analysis, which would be free from the errors of both.

From the standpoint of Indian psychology, neither psycho-analysis nor hormic psychology is adequate to deal with the characteristic phenomena of human nature and man's baffling constitution. On what is this hormic psychology grounded? In McDougall's own words, on "the principle that human activities are prompted and sustained by impulses and desires which spring from deeply-rooted innate dispositions (variously called propensities, instinct-

ual dispositions or instincts)" (p. 113). Freudian psycho-analysis, on the other hand, is grounded on the Oedipus complex, the libido, the sex-urge and its repression, the ego, the super-ego, the terrible ID, and so forth.

If the independent status of psychology is to be vindicated, its leading doctrines should be capable of explaining individual and social conduct. The psychology of motivation is a most significant study if it be pursued without prejudices and predilections. Consider, for instance, the international tangle to-day, typified in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict and in the re-militarisation by the Germans of the de-militarised Rhineland Zone. It is the motive that is the spring of action. To seek to justify particular trends of social, national, and racial activity as due to impulses and desires which are said to spring from deep-rooted instincts amounts to throwing the entire burden on the nature and constitution of *Instincts*. To my mind, hormic psychology solves no psychological problem worth the name by postulating—I am unable to discover it if they are claimed to have been demonstrated—a number of basic or foundational instincts from which impulses and desires are alleged to spring. Indeed the hormic psychology creates more problems than it solves. What is the nature of these instincts? Are they purely psychological or as in German classification para-psychological? Are they physiological? Are they psycho-physical? Bergson also is responsible for the apotheosis of instinct. The Bergsonian intuition has been claimed to show a remarkable resemblance to the instinct of animals. Whatever its appellation—hormic, psycho-physical or other,—a psychology grounded on instincts, which in animals and in men are held to be blind, can be accepted only *cum grano salis*.

Nor is the Freudian apotheosis of the libido or the sex-urge entitled to acceptance. Whatever the value of the technique of the psycho-analysis cult, Freud's emphasis on the *libido* and its repression as determinants of man's volitional endeavour may attract sentimentalists but cannot be accepted as a demonstrated theory of universal validity. His interpretation of dreams is a case in point. Repressed wishes predominantly sexual in character are fulfilled in dreams. This view loses its universal validity if even a single dream fails to fall in this category. Freud was kind enough to write to me, in acknowledging receipt of my paper on a "Theory of Dreams" in the light of the Upanishads, that he could not get much out of it, and yet the Upanishadic doctrine of Compensation was not far removed from his own theory of wish-fulfilment. But this is by the way.

Indian psychology discredits all attempts to trace social endeavour to aim-inhibited libido—the Freudian shibboleth. The *Gita* (xvii. 14 and elsewhere) demands the stern subordination of the sex-urge. The Indian standpoint is that the sex-instinct is not the source of energy at all. It is a downright obstacle. Rational control of the sex-instinct is "Brahmacharya" or "Sariram-Tapah," neuro-muscular discipline. What is an obstacle cannot at the same time be viewed as a source of energy. The *positive* source of energy is certainly the Self or Atman which is ignored by European and American psychology. The *Yoga-Sastra* plainly proclaims that higher spiritual experiences can be hoped for only after the removal of the obstacle of preoccupation with sex-values.

Consider the psychology of religion, religious attitude, religious endeavour. Neither instinct nor aim-inhibited libido is adequate to explain them. Freud's attempt to trace the origin of religion to the helplessness of childhood is rightly condemned by McDougall. But is an

aspirant or a student any the wiser for tracing it to instincts instead?

If human activity is essentially determined by a group of instincts, each instinct or a group thereof being considered a reservoir of energy which may be liberated under suitable conditions, the higher spiritual values remain psychologically unaccounted for. Hormic psychology is just the psychology of the jungle-existence. If hormic psychology be the last word, and if the Lamarckian principle of transmission of acquired characters be the final explanation, the conclusion obviously is that the scientifically advanced and so-called civilised nations are alone competent to inhabit the globe. Hence hormic psychology is just imperialistic psychology. That this conclusion is not exaggerated will be apparent to students of McDougall's *Ethics and Some Modern World Problems*.

A useful system of psychology must achieve two ends. It should attempt a scientific explanation of its subject-matter. It should indicate the goal of life and the means of reaching it. The hormic psychology and the aim-inhibited libido-psychology leave mankind with just a jungle-life psychology. Mankind will gain little indeed from the fusion of the two varieties for which McDougall pleads. If mankind is to enjoy peace and calm of the spirit, it must turn to Indian psychology.

The Self has to be recognised as the psychological unit and the inexhaustible source or reservoir of energy. The mind (*Manas*) has to be recognised as independent inner-sense (*Antah-karana*) which determines the cognitive, emotive, and conative moulds of behaviour.

And the most essential thing in the life of modern mankind is the control of the mind (*Chitta-vritti-nirodha*).

I may perhaps note that about half the book under notice is devoted to appendices which contain reprints of contributions previously written.

R. NAGA RAJA SARMA

Srimad Bhagavadgita Rahasya or Karma-Yoga-Sastra. By BAL GANGADHAR TILAK. Translated by BHALCHANDRA SITARAM SUKTHANKAR, M. A., LL. B., Vol. II. (Tilak Bros., Poona, Rs 4.)

This second volume of Tilak's *Gita-Rahasya* completes in two chapters the exhaustive philosophical analysis of the religion of the *Gita* as a combination of spiritual knowledge, devotion, and action to which I paid tribute when reviewing the first volume in the January number of THE ARYAN PATH. These concluding chapters are followed by a long Appendix in which the relation of the *Gita* to the Mahabharata, the Upanisads, the Brahma-Sutras, the Bhagavata religion, Buddhist literature and the Christian Bible is considered from a historical point of view. And then we come to the actual translation of the original stanzas of the *Gita* with commentary to which the eight hundred preceding pages have been perhaps the weightiest introduction that they have ever received. Tilak himself seems to have felt that after such an introduction the stanzas might be left to speak for themselves. For in his Preface he admitted that "when the whole matter has been thrashed out in this way, there remains really nothing to be done beyond giving a plain translation in the Marathi vernacular." Nevertheless he found reason for expending more of his indomitable energy, particularly in refuting commentators who, in his view, stretched the

meanings of certain words in the stanzas for supporting their particular doctrine. And his running commentary contains in fact much helpful philosophical interpretation of the text with references to the chapter of the *Gita-Rahasya* in which any subject has been dealt with at length. The same thoroughness marks his translation and at times conflicts somewhat with his desire "to bring out the plain, broad, and principal meaning." Such a stanza as the following will suggest how industriously, but often rather cumbrously, he strove to convey the precise meaning.

O Kurunandana, in this (path) the (mental organ in the shape of) Reason which performs the *vyavasāya*, (that is, the discernment between the Doable and the Not-Doable), has got to be one, (that is, concentrated); but the *buddhayah* (that is, the Desires) of those whose Reason is not (in this way) concentrated, are many-branched and (of) endless (kinds).

A tendency to labour his point and not to trust sufficiently to his reader's intuition is in fact the most noticeable defect of his great qualities. So incessantly indeed does he hammer home his central conviction that the *Gita* does not support the doctrine of Renunciation, but contains an exposition of Karma-Yoga, that the reader is in danger of being merely numbed into acquiescence. Yet though we may question his emphasis here and there, no more comprehensive mind has surveyed in our time the eternal problems of life.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

Distribute or Destroy. By BRYNJOLF BJORSET. (Stanley Nott & Co., London.)

The world has been living in the shadow of the great depression for the last seven years. Side by side with the catastrophic decline in production and trade and the terrific increase of unemployment, there is a striking consensus of opinion that all this need not have happened and need not continue. We have been hearing of "poverty in the midst of plenty" till the expression has become a *cliché*, and a stream of books has been issuing from the publishers,

all of which seek to show that all our sufferings are due to our incapacity to organise the process of production and consumption. The volume under review is one such, with its significant and even sensational title. The thesis of the book is a simple one, though the writer in his desire to marshal opinions in his favour does not develop his own ideas sufficiently or coherently.

We are told that "the one great problem to-day is how, in a practical way, which gives full rein to the force of individual initiative, to distribute among all coun-

tries and all peoples the endless bounty of the world." On the day that conditions permit a full use of the apparatus of production, the results will utterly stupefy the uninitiated. As a matter of fact there is now a great deal of under consumption, and "masses of men, women and children are being permanently stunted, physically and mentally, through under-nourishment." Then why is mankind suffering unnecessarily and denying itself the fruits of abundance, and why is production "for the whole world collectively between 1/5th and 1/10th of capacity"? The answer is that the system of distribution is defective. The most important and dominant feature of the mechanism of distribution is the system of money and credit, which needs improvement.

This brings us into contact with the other well-worn truism of the day, *viz.*, that the depression is due to monetary disorganisation. So far no one scheme of monetary re-organisation has obtained anything like general acceptance. An illustration of the lack of agreement on this vital point is to be found in the pages of the book under review. Various schemes of monetary reform are examined

and compared by the author; and among them figure the energy theory of wealth of Professor Soddy, the social credit proposals of Major Douglas, the stable money proposals of Eisler, the depreciating currency of Silvio Gesell, and the proposals made by some Norwegian economists. Room is also found for an "honourable mention" of the views of Professor Marshall, Professor Irving Fisher, and Mr. J. M. Keynes. The diagnosis has been made, and the patient is advised by all to "have a change"; *where*, it is yet a matter of controversy.

What the writer has done is merely to state definitely his view that the world's economic ills can be redressed by monetary re-organisation, and give an assortment of the proposed methods by which such a reform can be carried out. It is no fault, or at any rate it is a fault that can easily be understood and sympathised with, if the writer has merely made a conspectus of different proposals without arriving at any clear-cut solution himself. The volume can be considered to be a contribution to a statement of our economic difficulties at the present day, though not towards their solution.

N. S. SUBBA RAO

Lucretius, Poet and Philosopher, By E. E. SIKES. (Cambridge University Press. 7s. 6d.)

It is a pity that the author of this book devoted only two chapters to Lucretius the Poet and as many as seven chapters to Lucretius the Philosopher. It is as though a critic of Milton had dwelt briefly on the imagination, the visualising faculty and the art of expression of the Poet revealed in his "Paradise Lost" and dwelt at length on the details of the story of the apple, its origin and history. In the case of both Lucretius and Milton their poetry is their strength, their philosophy is their weakness. A philosophical or a theological poem is more or less a contradiction in terms. "Didactic poetry is my abhorrence," said Shelley; and many lovers of poetry will heartily agree with him. True poetry should be based on

life and experience and not on a system of life or systematized experience. For systems come and go, and schools flourish for a time, but life goes on for ever. Experience is universal, but doctrine is only local and temporary. It is, no doubt, sometimes said that the poet should be judged not by his subject matter but by what he makes of it through his imagination and emotion. This is one of the fundamental tenets of romanticism. But it is obvious—and that is the element of truth in classicism—that a poet who exercises his imagination and emotion on something great or permanent is at a far greater advantage and more easily succeeds in giving poetic pleasure to his readers than one who exercises them on what is trivial or temporary. Moreover, we have to distinguish what is primary in a great

poem from what is only secondary. For instance, even in the mature comedies and tragedies of Shakespeare we find frequent references to mediæval scientific beliefs, fanciful Natural History and Elizabethan customs and manners. But these are all subsidiary to the moving situations of romantic beauty or tragic pity. They form, as it were, the drapery to the grand or gracious figures that crowd his stage. Whereas in the poem of Lucretius the position is reversed. The poet's materialistic philosophy which he derives from Epicurus is the main thing there. It occupies the centre of his poem. The topics on which Lucretius expends his art and eloquence are the atomic theory, the problem of knowledge, the doctrine of pleasure, the mortality of the soul, the denial of Providence and the origin and growth of life; whereas his wonderful descriptions of Nature, his vivid and arresting metaphors, his poetic treatment of the old myths in spite of his sceptical philos-

ophy, his almost epic conception of the life-force in the universe, in fact all the beautiful things for which we go to his poem are only things by the way. They are like flowers that grow in the crevices of a crumbling edifice. Therefore, we repeat, if the author of the book before us had written more adequately about the poetry of Lucretius and more briefly about his philosophy and had analysed the peculiar kind of pleasure that *De Rerum Natura* still gives to some readers his work would have been more valuable. But as it is, in more than half the book Epicurus, the founder of the school to which Lucretius belongs, figures as prominently as Lucretius himself, and an account of his outmoded philosophy is rather dull and uninteresting. And in the few chapters that are devoted to Lucretius the Poet the treatment is so inadequate and the illustrations given are so few that one feels that the author has not done justice to the most vital part of his subject.

D. S. SARMA

The Science of Hypnotism. By ALEXANDER CANNON, M. D., PH. D.

Hypnotic Power: Its Cultivation, Use, and Application to Psychotherapy. By COLIN BENNETT.

(Rider and Co., London. Each 3s. 6d.)

The literature of hypnotism grows faster than the knowledge of the forces at work in its diverse phenomena. Two facts emerge most plainly from these two volumes: the ignorance of practitioners of the rationale of hypnotism and their blindness to the dangers involved.

The first volume forfeits all claim to serious consideration by the pseudo-occult atmosphere and psychic claptrap of its closing chapter, which travesties spiritual realities. The highest antecedents are claimed for a mumble-jumble of platitudes, and the author claims an exalted status for himself which, however, does not make him independent of "information received from hypnotic and mediumistic sources."

Both books discuss methods of hypnotizing but Mr. Bennett's book includes details whereby the novice can test the

hypnotic susceptibility of friends and relatives without their cognizance.

Mr. Bennett claims that "it has been proved many times over that the subject cannot be made by it to act contrary to his or her moral inclinations." This may be true as far as present action is concerned. The outward expression of a "suggested" misdeed may fade out at the operator's will, but may not the active living germ artificially implanted in the subconscious corrupt the moral nature, lie dormant perhaps for years and then become suddenly awakened by some unforeseen circumstance to realization?

Both books admit that a person falls into the hypnotic trance more easily each time until he does so instantly upon receiving from his hypnotizer the suggestion to sleep. Even in the Bennett volume the possible dangers of hypnotism are inadequately dealt with and the chief peril of all is ignored, *i. e.*, the enslavement and paralysis of the subject's free will.

E. M. H.

The Fool Hath Said. By BEVERLEY NICHOLS. (Jonathan Cape, London. 7s. 6d.)

While still at school, Mr. Beverley Nichols lost his faith in orthodox Christianity as a result of reading Shelley. He has now reverted to his early religious beliefs, and in the first part of *The Fool Hath Said* tells us how he rationalised the process and convinced himself that the naïve "fundamentalism" of the "Oxford Group" is entirely consistent with reason, science and historical fact.

Mr. Nichols wields a dexterous pen, and invests the time-attributed arguments of the apologists of orthodoxy with a flavour of novelty. He is eminently readable, and his book, backed by the weight of his name and the lavish advertisement of his publishers, will doubtless be widely read and will influence many to believe, provided they already have the will to do so.

In attempting to establish the truth of the alleged physical resurrection of Jesus, Mr. Nichols makes a great point of the fact that so many of the early Christians—contemporaries or near-contemporaries of the supposed event—believed in it with an intensity of conviction that inspired them with readiness to die for their belief. He considers this as proof of the objective reality of the resurrection; and yet nothing is more certain than that in all ages men have been found prepared to accept blindly, and to suffer martyrdom for, any doctrine or supposed happening however incredible, if only its appeal to their emotional natures were strong enough.

Christian apologetics would carry more weight with non-Christian readers if they took into account and dealt fairly with non-Christian systems of religious philosophy. Even Dean Inge, a man whose learning and insight all of us recognise and respect, writes as though the frontiers of the kingdom of the mind ran no farther east than Jerusalem and Alexandria. Mr. Nichols exhibits an even narrower parochialism of outlook: his only mention of Eastern religions being when he quotes approvingly Mr. Noel Coward's phrase "a gloomy merging into everything" as being "a good

description of Buddhism"!

The second part of *The Fool Hath Said* comprises sections on "The Crusaders of 1936," "Christ and Sex," "Christ and War," and "Christ and Money." To many readers these will prove the most interesting portion of the book, for the author's opinions—though some may think them unsound or exaggerated—are always challenging and provocative of thought. In "The Crusaders of 1936," Mr. Nichols describes a Buchmanite "house party" at which he spent a sort of religious honeymoon. As he saw it, this gathering of people of various nationalities and social classes genuinely succeeded in reviving the devotion and evangelical fervour which tradition ascribes to the early Christian communities before the Church became corrupted by worldly success and the patronage of Constantine. Even after making due allowance for the observer's bias, there can be no question that the "Oxford Groups" are exercising an extraordinary influence—in some cases for good—on those who join them. For example, we are told of drug fiends who renounce their "dope," estranged husbands and wives who are re-united, people who have defrauded the tax collector being inspired to make restitution. But even so, as far as an outsider can judge, this movement appears to differ in nonessential point from the old evangelicalism, which has flowed and ebbed so many times since the Reformation; and as Puritanism, Methodism, Evangelical Anglicanism and Salvationism, has gone through periodical cycles of revival and decline. Mr. Nichols speaks with enthusiastic approval of "guidance" and "sharing," two specially emphasised features of Buchmanism which were practised under other names by some of its predecessors. But to an outside critic it might seem that "sharing," or confessing one's sins in public, would be at least as likely to generate a spirit of self-righteousness as to evoke genuine contrition and desire of amendment. Again, to rely blindly on "guidance," supposed to come direct to the inner man from God and to bring

detailed directions for the conduct of the daily business of life, might easily have the effect of making the believer imagine that all his impulses were divinely inspired. This seems specially likely to happen when the first ardour of conversion has worn off.

On the subject of sex, Mr. Nichols has much to say that will commend itself to all who aspire to a disciplined life, whether Christians or not. He assures us that Christ gives us the solution to the problems of sex, as to all other difficulties. But what solution? Well, each individual must ask Christ and get "guidance" from him in his own particular case.

Here again there appears to be no little danger that the answering voice, which may sometimes be from above—from our own higher nature, as some of us may think—*may* often have a less august origin, and merely objectivise the desire of the lower man to obtain religious sanction for the indulgence of his animal impulses.

In a former work, *Cry Havoc*, Mr. Nichols appeared as an ardent advocate of pacifism, and in the book under review a section is devoted to the same topic, special stress being laid on those sayings of Jesus applicable to it. Now there are but a tiny and insignificant minority in the modern world who do not detest war. But among the vast anti-war majority there are very few indeed who do not believe that occasions may arise when it is the duty of a good man to fight; and all pacifist propaganda which ignores this fact is apt to fall flat. It is disappointing to find that Mr. Nichols specifically refuses to discuss the question, "Is Force ever justified?"—for this point is basic to the whole problem. If it is wrong in all cases to constrain men by force, there can be no organised state, for in the last resort the state always depends on the actual or possible use of force. Police, armies, codes of law, magistrates, would all

have to be scrapped; and the only form of social life tolerable to the man of ideals would be the Christian-Anarchism of Tolstoy. If, however, it is right on occasion to use force to make men do their duty to society or to prevent anti-social violence, then its justification will depend on the circumstances of each particular case.

No one doubts that the use of force—either by military or police—is always wrong as an end in itself, or as a means to a bad, *i.e.*, selfish end; but its use for the protection of the weak, the maintenance of public order and resistance to aggression is another matter entirely.

Wars and revolutions are no isolated phenomena, but are the outward and visible effects of selfishness, greed, fear, suspicion and jealousy, which poison the relations between national and economic groups; and Mr. Nichols is on very firm ground when he advocates for the avoidance of war the practice of justice, generosity, reasonableness and brotherliness by nations and individuals. His suggestion that the warlike restlessness of the Japanese, largely due to pressure of over-population, might be allayed if they were permitted to occupy the vast tracts in the north of Australia which are unsuitable for settlement by white races, will commend itself to sensible men; and he might have added that the danger of war in Europe would be reduced to vanishing point if the powers who were victorious in 1918 were to restore the German colonies, and to re-unite with their mother countries those communities of Germans and Hungarians which the treaties placed under foreign rule. To allow nations or individuals no hope that their grievances will be redressed by peaceful means, is to invite them to fall back on means other than peaceful; and the ultimate responsibility for the violence, which in such a case is inevitable sooner or later, is on the parties who refuse to do justice voluntarily.

R. A. V. M.

THE LAND OF PSYCHE AND OF NOUS

At the End of a Long Quest — Charles Richet and Laura Finch — Look Within — Redemption: A New View — Dr. Inge and Mysticism.

After forty years of untiring research into the claims and phenomena of Spiritism, Mr. Hamlin Garland testifies (1) that, as an investigator, he finds himself at the point from which he started; (2) that he remains a seeker and a questioner; (3) that he would like to share the believer's concept of the spirit world, in the "new and lovely country," where friends and relations "in restored youth," await his coming; but he is precluded by a variety of considerations, some of which are recited.* A few are of moment; but when it is asked where space can be found for the untold "quadrillions of discarnate spirits," we remember that this was answered by implication beforehand, long years ago, when George Macdonald affirmed that "there is plenty of room for meeting in the universe." Another poet also describes the Cosmos as without end or beginning. The unadorned point of fact is, however, alone important. Here evidently is an alert researcher, who can say towards the end of a life of quest, speaking of psychic occurrences, witnessed by himself, under his own test conditions, that if they did not happen, then his testimony on any phenomenon in the world about him has not "the slightest value" to him or

to his readers. And yet, like Omar Khayyam, he comes out by the same door where in he went, so far as Survival is concerned. There is also Mr. Robert Blatchford, once a materialist and now assured on the phenomenal aspects of Spiritism. He is a little on the side of doubters and therefore on that of Mr. Garland.† For Survival and Reunion are things "too good to be true," though he regards his position as illogical, in view of the evidence. The real difficulties remain untouched by both. From Egypt and its *Book of the Dead*, from antecedent time immemorial, to the latest so-called proofs palpable of immortality, as Epes Sargeant termed them, over sixty years since, human imagination has offered a thousand pictures of life beyond the grave in the likeness of earthly life. Its heavens are a terrestrial Paradise, its hells the bowels of Etna and other volcanoes. As regards the body of humanity in any proposed world to come, the male may be with the female, "neither male nor female"; but the sexes are differentiated there as here, and Spiritism has been in recurring Galanty Show difficulties on the presence or absence of internal psychic parts of personality corresponding to those of the physical *corpus vile*. Reams

* *Journal of the American S. P. R.*, April, 1936, pp. 109-119. The contribution is entitled "Summing up the Evidence," and is an extract from a forthcoming book.

† *Light*, April 30th, 1936, p. 277.

have been written of recent times on the astral form, and Hereward Carrington has introduced a big volume filled with supernormal photographs, taken on the spot, of the said body in various attitudes. We may quote in justification the Hermetic Doctrine of Correspondences, concerning that which is above being like that which is below and its very numerous counterparts in the Jewish Holy Kabbalah; but these things are of dogma outside evidence. Orthodox Christian Eschatology has been the worst offender throughout its history. Yet if most of us have emerged therefrom it is not to be supposed that we have reached firmer ground in revelations of the séance-room and of automatic scripts. It is the same old story written in another key, precisely the same imagery varied and coloured to modern liking. But the old problem remains: why is the world to come in the image of this earth of ours?

Meanwhile the "convincing evidences of Survival" are with us, ever and continually.* The Earl of Balfour may regard Myers as oversanguine in holding life after death to be proved;† but it remains that Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, a time-honoured worker in the psychic field, agrees with Myers.‡ Lodge also agrees, and there are others on the Continent of Europe, not to speak of America, where the most notable

have borne their witness and have passed away. The Vale Owen Scripts were read among us by tens of thousands and doubtless convinced many on the image-making side of things. They must be left to stand at their value, as temperaments and minds elect; and so also with the more important fact that the proving of Survival is not Immortality made evident. As to this and its larger issues, few perhaps have noticed a pregnant alternate view of the whole subject; but we ourselves welcome it, not alone because of the new chord it strikes on the harp of psychic thought but because of him who awakened it. The reference is to Charles Richet, concerning whom there was a recent conflict of opinion respecting his belief in a possible life to come. Mme. Laura Finch tells us (1) that she worked for ten years with Richet and (2) was afterwards absent in India for another decade. She returned, however, and met him once again. He asked whether she had "found the secret," that is to say, in the Far East. When she answered over and over that she had indeed, the great Biologist rejoined; "It is as Jesus and Socrates said: *within you*. The Secret of Eternal Life is found within the heart." That is better and truer than all the "convincing evidence" on the external side. It may well be that Richet carried the assurance with him to the next stage of being. The things that matter most are conceived

* Cf. *Light*, April 16th, pp. 241, 242, the record of one who has "taken a lot of convincing."

† *Proceedings of the S. P. R.*, May, 1935.

‡ *Light*, April 23rd, p. 267.

and realised here in that way and no other.

What in the last resource is that which, according to a poet of the past, "brought death into the world and all our woe"? How is it to be understood and presented in cultured circles of Christian religious belief? The answer is that it seems relegated to the background by a tacit but general consent. No one pretends to regard the fable of Genesis—of Eve, the apple and the serpent—except as Eastern allegory, while it is doubtful whether any two persons would concur as to the hidden meaning. It is not expounded therefore in the cultured circles and is not offered to debate. It lies outside the practical politics of religious teaching. Rome of course would repudiate the supposititious circles, as it denounces the allegorical nature of the mythos in Genesis. There is no room in its Doctrine of Redemption by the Blood of Jesus Christ for a parabolic understanding of the Fall. But even Rome has little to say in its preachments on the Fall of Man. The dogma is adequately defined and is left at that. An attempted new view on the whole subject is therefore something of a surprise, especially when it comes from a writer who holds the old theology of God incarnate in the Christ of Nazareth. It has been produced by Mr. Ashley Sampson and may be summarised briefly thus.*

(1) The Christian scheme of Redemption is logically impossible apart from the Doctrine of the Fall. (2) In the

nature of things, only that which is lost requires salvation. (3) Long prior to the race of man appalling lusts and cruelties were "ravaging the world." (4) A theory of the Fall which does not take all Nature into account offers no full solution of the problem involved. (5) The more we study the material universe the more it is realised that "matter is tainted at its source," and the more we are driven to assume that the postulated Fall anteceded the material universe. (6) It was a Fall in the Spiritual World, "a fall of spirit to a material level." (7) Matter was "originally the creation of God" and was therefore good in itself; but it was diseased and vitiated by that which came into its deeps. (8) A fall from spirit into matter, "by the creation's own will" can alone acquit God of responsibility for the taint in matter. (9) The history of the material world is that of a painful return to the condition from which it has lapsed. (10) It is to be understood also that the Spirit of God is at work therein "through the hideous panorama of evolution." (11) But in order to reconcile the world to Himself God had to meet it on its own ground, to assume "the fallen shape and enter matter." (12) In the words of St. Paul, He had to "become sin for our sake." (13) So only could a Loving Father direct His creatures on the path of "slowly feeling" their way back unto Himself. (14) In this wise it is possible to amplify enormously our conception of the Christian redemptory scheme and to regard this as "not merely achieved for man alone but for the whole material creation."

It is to be understood that the Spiritual World is or at least includes the World of Angels and that we are back therefore in the Scripture Mythos concerning those hierarchies of being which "kept not their first estate." The pseudo-Dionysian cohorts sank down below all that we understand

* *Contemporary Review*, May, 1936, pp. 605-612.

as life and dwelt apparently in the raving chaos out of which the present Cosmos has evolved. The potential animal life contained therein developed through myriads of æons, only to follow through other countless ages, and even to this day, the "hungry search for blood," with its consequent "orgy of pain, disease and death." The story of the animal creation before man appeared is that of man himself, but intensified as mind unfolded by slow degrees within him. It is one of incredible cruelties and lusts.

We are reminded from the beginning of one pregnant fact, namely, that the Christian Scheme of Salvation is founded unescapably on a Fall of Man hypothesis, and that Mr. Sampson's rather grotesque variant is not especially worse than the equivalents of pre-Thomist Theology, of the *Summa* bequeathed to the Church by the Angel of Schools, or—for that matter—of "Paradise Lost." This is why it has been worth while to present the scheme at some length. Mr. Sampson has offered unawares the most severe indictment of Redemption by Blood that one has met with for a few years. We are left wondering which of the modernised Christian Churches literally believes therein.

In his comparative retirement, Dr. W. R. Inge has been looking through notebooks which he kept during a period of thirty years and has provided some extracts recently for our meditation and content.* As might be expected, there are a few

brilliant sayings, not a few trenchant statements and an occasionally barbed sentence—as for example, when he describes the clergy, to whom he belongs—as makers of spectacles. It is of course a definition which distinguishes undesignedly the minister of Protestant Communion from the priest of the Roman Obedience. He speaks, however, of Mysticism—in which his interest has never failed from the beginning of his literary life—but it is always as one who watches from without rather than belongs thereto. Tauler's "union with the Divine Life of Christ" is for Dr. Inge "an inward transit to our archetypal ideal"; but this is only the travelling of a path which leads, and if "union" means anything, the end is Christhood. There is also a definition of Mysticism as an attempt to bring a dark background into light and "conquer it for consciousness." But it is not so described and no Mystic would tolerate the definition. We shall continue to keep on our shelves and to prize also the former Dean of St. Paul's contributions to the great subject; but if he will forgive us—they are excursions only. Mysticism is a perpetual exploration of the inward God-Idea in unconditionally dedicated love; and when it absorbs the whole man he is betrayed no longer by the images of darkness and light, subject and object, personal and impersonal; for he has lost the notion of the "union" in the living realisation of Unity.

A. E. WAITE

* *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1936.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE WRITER'S FUNCTION AND RESPONSIBILITY

During this month when the International Congress of the P. E. N. Club of poets, playwrights, editors, essayists and novelists meets in Buenos Aires, our thoughts turn naturally to the function of the writer in society. His rôle as the interpreter of life is indispensable; his range of possibilities and his influence are vast. If he rises to the height of his calling he may strengthen the supports of civilization; if he wields a poisoned pen he undermines the very foundations of our common culture. Deliberately or blindly every writer makes his choice between allying himself with constructive forces or becoming a co-worker with the forces that tear down and destroy.

In any field of human endeavour, responsibility is proportionate to power. Few classes in society wield such power as does the writer; hence his responsibility is correspondingly heavy. Monsieur Jules Romains, a prominent French P. E. N. member, recently stated the position admirably. His remarks as guest of honour at a dinner in New York under the auspices of the American Centre of the P. E. N. are paraphrased in *The Saturday Review of Literature* (4th July).

He admitted the possibility of the creative spirit anticipating, and even wishing for, with a kind of suicidal defeatism, the destruction

of the culture within which it works, but he declared that the competent writer who is unaware of, or indifferent to, the implications of his time must be set down as an enemy of his kind. Monsieur Romains visualized it as the province of creative artists to foreshadow the will of the future, and to be aware in their work of what humanity hopes and expects. The great French writer urged upon his hearers the necessity of lifting their imaginations to a world level, even though their immediate concern was with a short story, a sonnet, or a play.

And *The Saturday Review* adds:—

One book, powerfully conceived, deeply truthful, highly imaginative, may do more for the cause of civilization than all the "action" which all the writers of the world could carry through in a year.

But the converse is equally true. The writer who for money or cheap fame or out of natural depravity will stoop to pander to the lowest taste, to morbidity, vulgarity or prurience, is a powerful public enemy. He sings the lure of the morass and the weak souls whose vision of the heights is dim may turn back from the climb they have essayed. He gives a specious colouring to vice, a glamour to indecency. Ideals become mere sentimental vapourings and all the values that mankind has wrought,