

# OCCULT REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INVESTIGATION OF SUPER-NORMAL PHENOMENA AND THE STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS.

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

*"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri"*

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## NOTES OF THE MONTH

THERE have been so many books published recently dealing with communications from the other side that I should hesitate to notice any more in my Notes of the Month unless there was something unique in their character. I think this may fairly be claimed for *Neither Dead nor Sleeping*,\* by Mrs. May Wright Sewall. Mrs. Sewall has been for a number of years one of the pioneer progressive women of America. As the publishers observe, "There is scarcely an organization in America or Europe that has for its object the betterment of human conditions of which she is not a valued member. . . . She has always engaged herself with everyday problems, with hard facts, and with practical details." She is not, therefore, a woman on

the face of it to be readily hoodwinked by illusory messages from the other world. As in the case of many others, Mrs. Sewall's interest in another life than the present arose as the consequence of a death—the death in this case of her husband. "Up to August 10, 1897," she observes, "my motto was 'one world at a time.' From that date I have, with more or less persistency, knocked at doors whose existence

\* London: J. M. Watkins. 7s. 6d. net. Indianapolis, Ind., U.S.A.: The Bobbs Merrill Co.

was disclosed to me by gleams of light that seemed to proceed from other planes." The death of Theodore Lovett Sewall occurred on December 23, 1895, so that it will be seen that she had no desire, as a result of the first anguish of bereavement, to get in touch with her deceased husband. The husband had, it appears, during his life-time taken more interest in the question of a future existence than his wife. They were both nominally Unitarians. "We desired immortality," Mrs. Sewall observes, "as most happy people do. We believed in it much as we believed in the indestructibility of matter, but we felt no certainty of the survival of the separate individual entity. . . . We had enjoyed nineteen years of happiness as perfect as humans may experience. Four years of blissful betrothal and fifteen of incomparably more blissful union." The husband realized that the end was near a fortnight before it actually came. He then spoke to his wife on the subject of survival in a spirit of doubt and uncertainty. "If," he said, "I discover that I survive death, the first thing I shall do will be to ascertain whether or not Jesus ever returned to earth after his crucifixion. You know we have not believed it. But if I find that he did return to his disciples, I shall do nothing else until I shall have succeeded in returning to you, unless before that time you have come to me."

Mrs. Sewall herself had no idea of communicating with her husband after death, either through mediums or otherwise. She was indeed approached by two friends, both of whom urged her to this course, but the proposal shocked her. She gives the name of neither. One of the friends, however, she states, "is not unknown in literary circles," while the other was a lawyer of repute and a highly esteemed citizen of Indianapolis. The suggestion emanating from the latter caused her, she says, great surprise. Mrs. Sewall protested that nothing could induce her to re-establish communication by such means.

The following is the manner in which Mrs. Sewall first found herself brought in touch with the phenomena of mediumship—quite against her wishes. She had not allowed her husband's death to interfere with her public activities. At the time in question she was officially connected with both the National and International Councils of Women as well as being principal of a large private boarding school. "Co-operative nationalism and the world peace to be secured through it," she says, "were then, as they still remain, my absorbing ideal. I was then much on the platform, and in June, 1897, my engagements took me to

A PREJUDICE  
AGAINST  
SPIRITUAL-  
ISM.

Halifax, N.S. While there I received an invitation to be the speaker on Women's Day, set for the 10th of the following August at Lily Dale, New York."

Doubtless the majority of readers of this magazine associate Lily Dale with the spiritualist movement, but no such connection presented itself to the mind of Mrs. Sewall, whose knowledge of spiritualist activities was of the slightest. It was only a few days before she was on the point of starting for the meeting in question that she learned that the engagement would take her into the spiritualists' camp. She did not, however, on this account, regret the engagement, as she took the view that spiritualists, no less than other people, required to imbibe correct views on such matters as women's suffrage. When

LILY DALE. she arrived at the Lily Dale assembly grounds she was met by Mrs. B., the chairman of the Press Committee of the National American Women's Suffrage Association, with whom she had already frequently come in contact, but whose connection with spiritualism she had never suspected. When she proposed to conduct Mrs. Sewall on a tour of the grounds, and to introduce her to some of the most famous mediums, it was a considerable shock to her. She observed that she did not wish to meet any medium, however famous; that the word was offensive to her; and that she regarded it as synonymous with charlatan and ignoramus. Mrs. B. apparently did not take this outspoken criticism at all amiss, though she did not press her proposal. "The next morning," observes Mrs. Sewall, "a solitary walk through the camp disclosed numerous sign-boards bearing legends as repellent as they were novel. Business, test, independent slate writing, trumpet, trance, flower and portrait painting mediums were announced." Though her audience on the occasion of her address was responsive and sympathetic, she was eager to quit the place as soon as possible, and repulsed the

SOME ACCIDENTS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCE. pressing invitation of a friend to investigate the phenomena of spiritualism, urging her engagement on the following day at Chautauqua, New York. Unexpected difficulties, however, arose. The treasurer had been called away for two days. The train service had been altered. The carriage thereafter engaged broke down unexpectedly, and following this a telegram arrived postponing her engagement for three days. The upshot of the matter was that she found herself stranded in the spiritualist camp, and following what to her appeared a quite unaccountable impulse, made an engagement for a private sitting with an "independent

slate writer " on the next day. This is what she says of her experience :

In that sitting, quite contrary to my own expectation, and equally so to any conscious desire, I received letters written upon slates which I had carefully selected from a high pile of apparently quite new and empty ones, had carefully sponged off, tied together with my own handkerchief, and held in my own hands, no other hand touching them. These letters, when read later in my hotel, whither I took them with an anxious incredulity which would not have been disappointed had I found them bare instead of covered with clear and legible writing, were found to contain perfectly coherent, intelligent and characteristic replies to questions which I had written upon bits of paper that had not passed out of my hands.

**SLATE** The whole transaction had been in broad daylight. I had  
**WRITINGS** sat on one side of a small table by an open window that  
**EXTRAOR-** looked out upon a summer landscape where children were  
**DINARY** playing games and groups of people were visible among  
the trees; the medium had sat opposite me, apparently  
doing nothing.

The whole environment was as normal as possible. I myself was open-eyed and alert, perhaps more so than ever before in my life. But as I read the letters, and considered the conditions under which they had been produced and the time that this experience had occupied (less than one half-hour had I been in the medium's studio), I knew as clearly as I now know, after twenty-two years of constant study and experimentation, that I had, so to speak, acquired actual knowledge, if not of immortality, at least of a survival of death—I had learned that the last enemy is destroyed, in that he can destroy neither being nor identity, nor continuity of relationship.

Interviews with other mediums followed, and in particular with a trumpet medium. At the opening of this latter interview her husband, she tells us, said to her through the trumpet: "I worked hard to bring you to this camp, and I thought after all I was going to fail, and that even after you had come you would go away without knowing me. I tried hard to impress you to see Mr. K. so that I might write to you." In her astonishment Mrs. Sewall expressed incredulity with regard to her husband's intervention. His reply was, "You will never know what I have gone through to bring you here. And even after you had received my letter through Mr. K. I feared I should never be able to make an appointment for you with this trumpet medium." Mrs. Sewall observes that in the interviews that she had at Lily Dale, her husband, her father, mother, half-sister, two sisters-in-law a great-grandfather, and little niece, had identified themselves unmistakably and beyond dispute. She made a full record at the time of these communications, and in re-reading them was specially impressed by the earnest exhortations of her husband to caution in communicating what she had experienced, by his

emphatic assertions that the experiences were perfectly natural, and by his repeated injunctions to her in connection with them to "study science," as he phrased it. She was told at these interviews that if she cultivated "meditation and concentration," a magnetic current would be generated, by means of which she would be able to open independent communication herself with the incarnate intelligences, and she was induced by her husband to promise that she would practise this meditation and concentration alone in her own room every day. One of the points to which her attention was drawn and which astonished her most was the statement that the same scepticism prevailed on the farther side of the grave as on this side with regard to the ability of people here to be brought into connection with those who have passed over. Mrs. Sewall subsequently invited the trumpet medium to her house, and afterwards paid her a visit, at which she had a further interview, as she claims, with her husband. In this interview her husband, mindful doubtless of his last conversation with her, speaking about Jesus, observed: "The reason Christ can do so much for us is that he took on all our infirmities. He is the Christ, i.e. the largest and ripest spirit ever humanly incarnated. It is because he was a human being, tested by all human experiences, that he could so help us."

In 1899 Mrs. Sewall sailed from New York for London, her object being to preside over the executive of the International Council of Women convened there in July. Among the letters of introduction given her was one to William T. Stead. She availed herself of this and, having met him in London, subsequently went, at his invitation, to his home at Wimbledon. After a discussion with regard to the objects of her visit, the conversation finally drifted into a psychic channel, and she told Mr. Stead of her experiences in communicating with her husband, and asked him if he would introduce her to the best psychic he knew in London. To her great surprise Mr. Stead replied that if she wanted an interview with her husband he thought perhaps he could help her. Taking a tablet and pencil he added, "You ask your husband anything you wish to, merely asking it mentally. Perhaps he can use my hand to answer." "Mentally," she says, "I posed a series of questions. At the end of each Mr. Stead's hand began to move rapidly, and as if without his guidance over the paper, and to each was given an intelligent reply. These pages, torn from the tablet and given me by Mr. Stead, are before

MRS.  
SEWALL  
AND W. T.  
STEAD.

me as I write. There are references to incidents in the past that could have been known only to Mr. Sewall and myself, and there are statements made (as tests, as my husband said) by which I could judge of their validity as time should pass." "This," she observes, "is the first time I witnessed automatic writing."

Mr. Stead recommended her to a London trance medium. At her second appointment with her the medium told her that during the week she had met Mr. Sewall, and that it had been arranged that he should try to take possession of the medium's organism and attempt to talk with her without assistance. "Vigo," the control added, "our medium, may experience convulsions as this personality takes possession of her organism for the first time. If this should happen, do not be alarmed."

Having given this warning [says Mrs. Sewall], Vigo retired, a slight shudder passing through Mrs. B.'s frame as she did so. I did not see Vigo retire, but I, so to speak, heard her go. For an instant Mrs. B.'s frame became convulsed—a moment of rigidity being followed by contortions ;

presently relative serenity returned, and as a rapturous smile overspread the features of the medium, my husband's own voice—low, gentle, but eager and firm, entirely natural and unmistakable, addressed me. His voice—**A TRANCE COMMUNICA-TION.**—not Mrs. B.'s voice, not Vigo's, but his—filled with emotion ; his whole manner betrayed excitement. He spoke eagerly, telling me what pleasure he had in this manifestation. He said that as it was his first experience of using another person's physical organism, he found it difficult, but thought it a "satisfactory way to effect a return." I was so surprised and awed that I found it difficult at first to act on my husband's invitation to ask questions. Naturally, however, when I had adjusted myself to the situation, I asked him to explain this manner of manifesting. I quote his exact reply, written down at the time : "Why, all there is about it is this : The medium has retired from her body and has loaned her organism to me that I may talk with you all alone without the intervention of a third person ; I never have had such an opportunity before, but I am getting used to it and shall get on very well. I am told that I shall not be able to remain very long the first time, and I feel this is true, so we must talk as fast as possible and about the things that most immediately concern you."

A great part of this curious book is occupied with an account of how Mrs. Sewall, who was suffering from Bright's disease, as was medically certified, was cured through a long course of

ministration from the other plane. Before her cure, which involved some very drastic treatment, could be taken in hand, it was necessary for her to master certain salient principles of psychic law, which were embodied in three lectures which she had to take down at her husband's dictation, who, on his side, had received them from

**A PSYCHIC CURE.**

a celebrated scientist who had passed over. The main argument of these lectures is as follows :

The knowledge of the existence of another world than this has been obtained in the same way as knowledge of foreign countries is obtained by travellers to-day ; i.e. people have either gone to this other world themselves or have received visitors from that world capable of giving an accurate account of what they have witnessed and experienced. A spirit after the dissolution of the bond that confines it within the body is unchanged in character. The change lies in its different environment, and the different methods it has to adopt for movement and communication. It finds itself no longer with a body of flesh, but

**A PSYCHIC PHILOSOPHY.** with another body as real as the physical body, although of finer texture, of which the material is "ether." This fluid "ether" interpenetrates the air and in it we find the elements that sustain our mortal bodies. It is by the inhalation of the "ether" within the atmosphere that the mind is kept in vital relation with the body. Death in severing the etheric bond cuts off the tenant of the body from his connection with the ether that is within the atmosphere. But this disembodied tenant after death finds himself actuated by the same emotions, passions, and aspirations as before. These, indeed, are quickened by his release from the flesh ; that is to say, that though relieved from the body with its carnal passions its tenant still retains the passions of the soul.

The communication between the two worlds cannot be brought about except to a very limited extent without that desire which always precedes attainment, and this desire must, for any general attainment of the end in view, be approximately universal. Those who have survived death must thus send thoughts of longing back to earth, not individually but *en masse*, in order to arouse a corresponding response in the inhabitants of the earth plane. Thus only can the magnetic force of mass, which is a law equally effective on all planes, operate to draw the longings of survivors to the plane immediately reached

**ETHER AS THE LINK.** through death, where ether as an atmosphere and a life-sustaining element takes the place of air. The mind, however, whether on this plane or on the next, is equally sustained by ether, though on this plane it is so sustained by ether operating through the medium of the atmosphere. The mind, therefore, after death, is capable of returning to the earth plane by the etheric route. Men in the past have returned to the earth by this route, but it has not been

till quite recently that the possibility has been widely or generally recognized. In the same manner the Norsemen and others discovered America long before the time of Columbus, but it was not till after the voyages of Columbus that a real connection was established between the two hemispheres. It is in ether that the interpenetrating vitality of the earth's atmospheric envelope consists, and this ether is a condition of mental life on the mortal plane just as it is also the body of the mind on the next plane. Hence it serves as the medium of communication between the two spheres.

Even on earth the mind is always conscious that it is a thing apart from the carnal instrument which it uses for its earthly purposes. So soon as it discovers that the etheric realm to which it has gone is identical in substance with that element within the earth's atmosphere on which it subsisted while in the body, it becomes aware that it can move out of the etheric realm and descend to its former home. This discovery, however, leads to attempts to get into communication with friends on

ATTEMPTS  
AT COM-  
MUNICATION. earth and to consequent disappointment when the disembodied spirit finds these friends oblivious to its presence. The human heart has grown more tender and sensitive and thus more susceptible to the presence of spirit in the present age than it has ever been before, but in any attempts to obtain recognition between one plane and the other it is usually the incarnate entity which takes the initiative, only too often without success. According to the lecturer, the rate at which disembodied thought travels is some 50,000,000 miles per second, whereas embodied thought travels at less than one-twentieth of this speed. This alone is a serious obstacle to the desired rapport. The returning spirit, however, having at last been successful in establishing his proximity with the friend on earth, has not only to awaken his friend to the consciousness of his presence, but also to establish his identity to the satisfaction of this friend. This may be done by reference to trivial personal incidents, but the result frequently is that the effort is ineffectual because it is maintained that no one would return from the grave "to talk about old clothes or a fishing excursion."

This attitude of mind, however, is merely the result of the quite unjustifiable assumption that death has transformed the character of the individual concerned. The assumption, again, that return is impossible, retards recognition even when the return is an actually accomplished fact. The rapidity of the



vibrations on the etheric plane renders their impression when transmitted to the earth atmosphere so transient in character that their recipient is plunged in doubt as to the reality of his experience the moment after he has been actually conscious of it. Such communication is far easier in the dark and in silence because under such conditions concentration is a far simpler matter. "The laws that govern individuality are more readily obeyed on the etheric than on the physical plane," and on the former the law that like attracts like has far greater force. Communication between the spheres is made possible by the fact that the ether is common to all spheres within the solar system, whether ante or post mortem, and has the quality which enables it to receive and transmit vibrations of all kinds on whatever plane they originate.

One of the first discoveries made by the departed ego is that although he has left his physical body on earth he is still not without a body of sorts. One of the qualities of this new body is that when active it is projected in the direction of the object of its desire. "Those who love think of each other after death has separated them physically. Their thoughts, clothed in

THOUGHT

CONTACT.

a substance as real as granite but so delicate that a cobweb is gross by comparison, send this substance out like feelers." These thoughts or sentiments when projected mutually by means of the ether become reciprocally attractive, and enable friends separated by death to find each other. Even if the still-embodied person is half sceptical he will say, "I feel as if so-and-so were here," or, "I really could almost believe I felt his touch." If their physical surroundings and conditions are inharmonious, people who die do actually leave these behind, but it is not death that is the cause of this, but the lack of any permanent tie between them and those from whom death physically separates them.

"The vibratory theory of the emotional connection of the two planes of being is comparable with and related to the vibratory theory of light, heat, motion, and other qualities which either belong to physical matter or are expressed through it. . . . The theory that bears the test of application finally comes to be regarded as a law. This is what is demanded by the theory of the vibratory connection of the two worlds. . . .

A PROPHECY

OF THE

NEW AGE.

The time is at hand when this communication between the ante and post mortem states will be the privilege of all, and it will become as general as communication by the use of written and printed symbols now

is." If it be argued that only a small section of the cultured and the psychic could ever acquire the use of this method, it may be replied that countless people who use the telephone and telegraph understand nothing of the nature of electricity or the construction of the machines employed or principles involved in their use. It is the same with methods of psychic communication. The ignorance of the *modus operandi* will not interfere with the universality of its employment. "Ethereic magnetism is the wire on which thought travels between flesh-encased and non-fleshed souls. . . . It is the principle of vitality in that finer atmosphere which not only surrounds the earth planet but surrounds every individual like an envelope, isolating each in some degree from all the rest." This etheric envelope is the ether which, while extending beyond the physical form, interpenetrates all the tissue of the physical body. It survives death and is the body with which the mind finds itself clothed in the after-death state. The element which is the life and power of ether is "etheric magnetism."

These lectures on first principles were the necessary preliminary to Mrs. Sewall's cure. Without them it could not have been carried out. There is no space here to describe the very elaborate methods employed in the curative treatment. It is sufficient to say that magnetism, fasting, and the teaching of harmony through the mediumship of Anton Rubinstein played the principal part in this. The assistance of Mesmer was called in in connexion with the magnetism. It is of course not improbable that the appearance of these great names will rouse a measure of scepticism as to whether the spirits engaged in the process were really the people they claimed to be. Readers of the work must form their own opinions. It may be argued that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and evidently Mrs. Sewall's health was completely restored to its normal condition—a result she certainly merited through her long continued and painstaking observance of the instructions given, and the regime to which she was subjected.

# THE OCCULT LORE OF BURMA

BY SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH, F.R.G.S., F.R.A.S.

THE occult beliefs of the people of Burma have in great part been borrowed from the superstitions which cleave to the three fundamental systems of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Animism. The lore of the two more civilized systems prevails in the beliefs of the upper classes, but the animistic idea is still strong upon the people, especially in the rural districts, where a spiritism of the most fearsome kind holds the villager in terror of the darker spots of the jungle, or the shadowy bend in the road.

Burmese occultism—or at any rate that description of it which flourishes away from the towns—is almost entirely connected with spiritistic beliefs, and this leads me to suppose that at one time the primitive religion of the Burmese, before it was invaded by the more philosophical systems of India, was a worship of the dead. A large proportion of the Burmese people originally migrated from Western China, and it is possible that they brought with them the idea of ancestor worship which is so marked a feature of the religion of that country.

The Burman regards the body merely as a convenient habitation for the soul, which, he believes, can leave or return to its earthly tenement at will. The influence of a sorcerer can restrain it from re-entering the body, during the hours of sleep, and can imprison it in trees or other natural objects, and sickness is invariably explained by saying that a witch or devil has captured the *leippya* or spirit. The *leippya* is symbolized as a butterfly which hovers near the body during the hours of slumber, or after it has been set free by death, when it may become the prey of numerous evil-disposed beings.

The entire Burmese pantheon is indeed spiritistic in character. The agencies which preside over the elements, the sun, the moon and the stars, more closely resemble spirits than gods, and are placated rather than worshipped. In this practice I think I see a phase of great interest to students of religion as well as to occultists, as it indicates a state of transition between the appeasing of a spiritual being and the worship of a god proper. And if the "gods" themselves partake of this almost demoniac character, they are accompanied by a host of entities which are obviously

malign in purpose and evil and destructive in their tendencies. Such, for example, are the *nat* or *scihtha*, the forest-demons, who dwell in trees and groves, and who must constantly be propitiated by presents of food and drink if they are to be prevented from wreaking their evil will upon the wretched peasants of the near neighbourhood. Many of these, indeed, attract to themselves a small host of worshippers, a complete ritual gathers around their cult, and they grow almost into local gods. Some of them, such as Chiton, Wannein, and Hmin may actually be said to have grown into full-blown deities, whose worship obtains over widespread districts, and who are recognized as the guardians rather than the oppressors of a considerable number of villages.

The Indian origin of many of these nats is obvious. The Akathaso, Seikkaso and Boumaso, spirits of the jungle, are almost certainly Indian in type, and may have been borrowed directly from the teeming Hindu pantheon, although the precise entities from which they have been taken are not now recognizable. Their name is legion. No portion of a dwelling is without its spiritual inhabitant, who may lurk in the veranda, the door-posts, the corners, or the hearth. They descend into the bodies of the wild beasts of the forests, which they inspire to evil deeds, and all wickedness proceeds from them, all impiety of thought and deed. Their numbers are added to from the malign dead—but which of the dead is not malign? For the Burman believes that the departed are invariably disappointed and soured by their removal from the land of the living and may quite readily become demons as greatly to be dreaded as any which haunt the forest paths or lurk in the corners of the tree-shadowed road.

This belief in the "evil dead" is not, of course, confined to the Burmans, but has many counterparts both in Asia and Europe. Nowhere, however, does it find such striking illustration as in Burma, where the corpse is taken to the place of burial by the nearest possible route, even if this makes necessary the cutting of a hole in the wall of the house where death has taken place. The people of the villages live in great fear of those of their relations who have recently died. To speak of the dead—as among many Eastern people—is regarded as unpropitious in the extreme. Especially of those dead who have died by violence or accident, who have been hurried out of existence, is the Burman peasant in fear. Such a ghost is bound to be indignant at the circumstances of its removal from life, to feel revengeful and oppressive, and may visit its displeasure on the living in some unspeakable manner should care not be taken to avoid it or exorcize it.

But no spirit is so malignant as that of the woman who has left an infant behind her. The haunting mother is, indeed, by far the most dreadful of all Burmese demons, and is credited with a ferocity of purpose, the mere mention of which is enough to make the hardiest peasant tremble. Inspired by the urge to return to her child, she will haunt a house or village for months, and, if not suitably appeased, may become a fiend without pity, visiting the most dreadful calamities upon the offspring of her living neighbours.

I recall one incident in this direction which greatly impressed a friend of mine during a brief stay in the country. He was the guest of the headman of a large village in the far interior and knew little or nothing of the customs and superstitions of the people. At the end of a long day's sport in the jungle he was returning to the village by way of a much-frequented road, when he saw the figure of a woman in the cotton dress peculiar to the district, emerge from the wall of trees on his left. Surprised that any woman should be there, especially at such an hour, he turned to one of his bearers—he was accompanied by two—and drew his attention to the figure. The man declared that he could see nothing nor could his companion discern any human shape in the gathering darkness before them. My friend, puzzled, was about to twit them upon their poor sight, when suddenly the woman turned, and looked towards the trio with an expression of such dreadful ferocity that my friend halted, and once more turning to his bearers, asked them if they did not see her now. As they still asserted their inability to do so, he briefly described her appearance, and was astounded when they cried out in unison that it was the spirit of a woman who had died in the village not a week before, and shortly after the birth of her first child. Falling upon their faces, they grovelled in the road, and absolutely refused to go forward. My friend, impressed in spite of himself, looked down the road once more, only to see that the figure had vanished. On returning to the village he informed the headman what had occurred, and immediate steps were taken to ensure that the unquiet ghost would not disturb the vicinity. Shortly afterwards he was taken very ill and has frequently assured me that his health has never been the same since.

The Kachins believe that women who have died and left an infant behind them grow into a species of vampire, which they call *swawmx*, and should the child perish also, it is supposed to accompany the evil ghost in its hauntings. The spirits of dead children, too, are believed to inhabit the bodies of cats and dogs.

After a while the vampire is thought of as consisting merely of a head and viscera, which floats behind it like a ghastly flag. These horrible beings haunt the woods and roads at nightfall, and may suddenly drop from the branches of a tree upon the shoulders of the wayfarer and fastening upon his throat, drink his life-blood.

Naturally a separate class, known as *weza* or necromancers, has arisen to act as intermediaries between the human race and the numerous spirits which swarm around them. These are divided into two castes, according to their propensities for good or evil, which are again sub-divided into four classes according to the materials they employ for raising or exorcizing the dead, such as magic squares, iron, mercury, and so forth. The native doctors profess to cure diseases caused by witchcraft, and the Burmese medicine is largely astrological. At Kale Thanngtot, on the Chidwin River, in lower Burma, is a town inhabited solely by wizards and necromancers, and many pilgrims betake themselves to it to have the effects of bewitchment neutralized.

Regarding this place I have heard some extraordinary things. Of course, it is quite possible for a European to go there, although few do so. But should he penetrate to it, he would not be rewarded for his long journey by the unveiling of the marvels he had hoped to see. But in the case of an Indian it is very different, and several of my countrymen have seen things in Kale Thanngtot which, knowing the reputation of the place, scarcely surprised them. One, a trader, who was in the country buying up that wonderful brasswork which sells so well in Europe, and even in Calcutta and Bombay, insists upon it that he saw a fowl taken out of a bag, its head cut off, and then put on again, after which the bird was put on the ground and walked away. A soldier friend has assured me that he saw the same thing done in China. Another traveller in Burma has averred that he saw a *weza* expand himself by some means to the size of a small balloon, collapse and disappear to the sound of an explosion! A Shan in Kale Thanngtot told this man that a cunning *weza* had grown a new finger upon his right hand in place of one that had been hacked off in a quarrel. A terrible silence is said to brood over the village by day. But the night is made hideous with the sound of gongs and the wild chanting of the wizards invoking the spirits of the dead to appear. The surroundings are swampy and deserted, and my informant was told by his bearers, who would on no account go nearer the town than within the distance of a mile, that the marshes which almost encircle it are the abode of beings neither human nor supernatural, but possessing the characteristics of both man and

demon. These, they asserted, were shaggy of body, green-eyed, and terrible in aspect. When my friend advanced, accompanied only by a couple of his personal servants, they bade him farewell as if he were a doomed man. In passing through the woods he was struck by the utter absence of animal or bird life, and could not at all account for the extraordinary noises he heard coming from the deeper parts of the forest. These, he said, resembled the sounds a man might make had he never learnt to speak—such grotesque noises as the dumb sometimes make when in terror or mortal pain.

There is a private class of exorcist in Burma known as *tumsa* or *natsaw*. These are magicians or diviners who do not practise as priests, but employ their arts for the purpose of casting out evil spirits and curing the many complaints which they are believed to bring about. Chief among them is the than weza, who works in iron, amulets of which metal, he assures his patients, will ward off all the attacks of evil spirits. Certain sorceresses profess to be the wedded wives of some of the nats, whom they are thought to be able to coax into a condition of quiescence. The exorcists have merely to undergo a training in ritual, but in the case of those who actually evoke spirits, the mediums, so to speak, the period of preparation is prolonged and severe. Among the more civilized Burmese indeed, this is of an exceedingly arduous kind, and a thorough knowledge of magical and astrological science is essential before a thaumaturgist can gain recognition from the other members of his profession.

The great handbook of divination is the "Deitton," an astrological work of Indian origin. This, however, is capable of use by the most learned castes alone, the more popular methods of forecasting an event being achieved by means of the careful watching of the direction in which the blood of a slain animal flows, the length of a split bamboo pole, or the whiteness or dullness of a hard-boiled egg. A method which may be said to be almost indigenous to Burma as it is also one of the most commonly employed, is divination by means of the bones of fowls. Those wing or thigh bones in which the holes exhibit regularity are chosen. Pieces of bamboo are inserted in these holes, and from the manner in which the stick slants, the augury is read. If it slants outwards, it is a favourable sign, if inwards, the omen is unpropitious. Divination is also made by observation of the entrails of animals and the contents of blown eggs.

The astrology of Burma is derived both from Chinese and Indian sources. No race is so constantly in attendance upon the

astrologer as the Burmese. The Burman knows from his diviner what is about to befall him not only on every day of the year, but every hour of the day, and as he scrupulously follows the advice given him, his whole life may be said to be ruled by the dictates of the starry science. On his propitious days he will be found active and enterprising, but if the day be *pyatthadane*, or ominous, nothing will induce him to undertake any work. The Chinese system in vogue in Burma is known as *Hpewan*, and is almost identical with the Taoist astrological table in use among the Chinese diviners. But this system is often confounded with the Buddhist calendar, and the Burman who has no knowledge of the *Hpewan* is forced to consult an astrologer who is able to collate the two regarding his lucky and unlucky days. The horoscopic influences most in evidence are the day of birth, the day of the week, and the position of the dragon's mouth to the last syllable of the names of the several days. The *Bedinsaya*, or Burmese astrologers proper, make use of a fully developed Hindu astrology, but they seem to be dying out, the Chinese system being by far the more popular.

Magic is mingled with the daily life of the Burmese in a most surprising manner. Charms and philtres are given to ensure success in circumstances seemingly the most trivial, wax figures are manufactured in the likeness of enemies, and are pierced with pins in order that the hated one may perish miserably, and skulls are placed beneath the bed of an enemy with the object of bringing about sickness. Sometimes by means of spells they transform wood shavings or grains of rice into the semblance of a beetle or into worms, which are supposed to enter the body of the person whom they desire to injure, and cause his illness, or, perhaps, his death. If the man thus attacked happens to possess the friendship of a more powerful sorcerer, the latter may afford him his protection, and thus undo the mischief.

Many animals, as has been said, are regarded as wizards or evil spirits. Tigers are regarded as malevolent creatures, whose whiskers are exceedingly poisonous. Elephants are looked upon almost as sacred, and monkeys are never destroyed. Should a butterfly enter the house it is considered unlucky, as it may be a *leippya* or departed spirit, but the appearance of a grasshopper is hailed with delight as a good omen. The wind, the fog, the trees, are regarded as objects of fear and awe and must be approached with circumspection, lest they send disease and misfortune or withhold some good. For example, some trees are supposed to bring ill-luck should their roots grow under a house. The bamboo



and cotton-plant are also looked upon as dangerous if planted in the vicinity of a dwelling, and it is thought that, should they grow higher than the house, their sense of gratitude will compel them to provide a funeral cushion and matting for its occupants.

Wer-animals are also fairly common in Burma. These are usually malicious wizards who desire to strike terror in the hearts of the natives, and who, by the use of certain rites and formulæ, believe that they can transform themselves into the semblance of wild animals. One of these rites, strangely enough, consists in the swallowing of broken dishes, and is probably much more harmful to the wer-wolves than to their victims. Women who have been rubbed with oil enchanted by a wizard are said to lose their reason, and to flee away into the woods. They retain their human shape for seven days, and if within that period a man shall submit himself to the same process of being anointed with the magic ointment and shall follow the woman to the woods and strike her on the head with a heavy bar, she shall recover her reason and return home cured. If, however, this is not done at the end of the seven days she is transformed into a tigress.

Such are a few only of the examples and manifestations of the occult in Burma, where many races meet, and where we find all the strangeness of a mingled magic, and a spiritism which is surely not very far removed from that of primitive man.

# THE RIDDLE OF MANIFESTATION

BY F. S. CORYN

THE English language, in spite of the fact that it consists of a larger vocabulary than any other modern language, is, in the realm of occultism, still in its infancy. It seems sometimes almost impossible to express clearly and concisely ideas or even facts in connection with anything that does not apply to the material world, in such a way that the idea or fact may be instantly grasped and comprehended. This, I think, is one of the chief reasons for the multitude of half-convinced or would-be convinced inquirers; those who could be convinced if only the language contained some means—a more comprehensive vocabulary, as a matter of fact—for the passing on of ideas and theories from one mind to another.

The great question of all those who stand, hesitating, upon the brink of an acceptance of occult truths is, "Why?" The most meagre intelligence can grasp the methods and processes of evolution—the doctrine of reincarnation, the law of cause and effect, the great truth of the unity of life. The most hide-bound dogmatist will admit that evolution is a working out of the principles which go toward the making of human happiness. But the question constantly recurs: "Why all this struggle, these countless incarnations, before the human race can arrive at the millennium? Why is it necessary to evolve in order to find happiness?"

The answer is simple, though unilluminating. A letter published in the November number of the OCCULT REVIEW puts the matter in a nutshell:

In saying that "an adequate explanation of the mysterious process of evolution consists in the fact that, through evolution, man may become conscious of the Absolute," Mr. Starr seems to me not to furnish any *adequate* explanation, but merely to push the riddle a little further back and to re-state it there. Yes, that is all very well, but then why should man *have to* "become conscious of the Absolute" at all, and at so appalling a price? What is the ultimate good of it, to either the Absolute or to its manifested relative consciousness, the *genus Homo*, when it is done?

Why indeed should one "have to" become conscious of the Absolute—or wish to become conscious of it? It is the question

which ninety per cent. of those hesitating upon the brink of occult realization are asking. And it is here that we run up against the barrier of the paucity of the English language.

Of course, the plain and simple answer is that a full consciousness of the Absolute, when shared by every member of the human family, would result in the highest form of human happiness which we as yet are capable of imagining. The non-perception of this fact is due solely to a lack of understanding of the true nature of the Absolute; a lack of understanding which is eminently pardonable in view of the fact that in all probability not one single human being, with the exception of the world's greatest teachers—the Christs and Buddhas—has ever been able to grasp its full significance.

And yet, in spite of this, every human being has, consciously or unconsciously, *some* consciousness of the true nature of the Absolute. A simple illustration may throw some light on the subject.

A mutilated, miserable beggar, cringing for a penny, excites my sympathy. Why? Because, knowingly or unknowingly, I am conscious of the Absolute. A happy bridal couple setting off on their honeymoon excites in me a sympathetic happiness. Why? Again because I am conscious of the Absolute, knowingly or unknowingly. In short, a feeling of sympathy is a consciousness of the Absolute, however slight.

It may be pointed out that I have here defined the unknown in terms of the unknown. This is partially true. But in so far as I have assumed "the consciousness of the Absolute" to be undefinable in the English language, or any other language, I have postulated it to be synonymous with another term, "sympathy," which may be more easily defined.

When I experience a feeling of sympathy with the miserable beggar, what actual change takes place in my state of mind? The answer is obvious—I become less happy; I approach more closely to the consciousness of the beggar. Again, what change takes place in my state of mind when I am conscious of being in sympathy with the honeymoon couple? The answer is equally obvious—I become more happy; I approach more closely to the consciousness of the honeymoon couple. Then what is this feeling of sympathy? Once again, the answer is perfectly obvious—it is a consciousness, in me, however slight, of the happiness or unhappiness of another, a *sharing* of that joy or sorrow. Now, having postulated that sympathy and "the consciousness of the Absolute" are synonymous terms, it must follow that a definition

of the former is equally applicable to the latter. Therefore "the consciousness of the Absolute" is the consciousness of the happiness or unhappiness of another; and by *consciousness* of happiness or unhappiness I do not mean simply the abstract *knowledge* of that happiness or unhappiness. Consciousness is more than that. It is the *feeling* of another's happiness or sorrow *in oneself*, to however slight a degree.

It may seem, to some, illogical that so apparently small a thing as sympathy with a beggar should actually *be* a consciousness of the Absolute. But it must be borne in mind that it is only a consciousness of the Absolute in a very minute degree. But let us carry the illustration a little further and trace the development of the consciousness of the Absolute until it reaches its full significance, when it will be clear that it is merely an all-enveloping sense of sympathy.

Suppose that the beggar, instead of inspiring me with that vague sense of uneasiness which, with most of us, passes for sympathy, should be able to inspire me with a real and *complete* consciousness of his misery. Suppose, in other words, I had so far developed my sense of sympathy as to be able to realize and to be fully conscious, in myself, of his misery. It is evident that, under these circumstances, instead of feeling a mere vague uneasiness, I should feel, in myself, a misery exactly equal to that of the beggar who had inspired my sympathy. The same argument applies to the bridal couple. Under these circumstances I should share their happiness in a degree exactly equal to that happiness in themselves.

To carry the illustration a step further: Suppose I so far developed my sense of sympathy as to include, not only a full consciousness of the misery of one beggar and the happiness of one bridal couple, as above explained; but the happinesses and sorrows of the *whole of humanity*? This is difficult to imagine, yet it is but the sense of sympathy developed to the *n*th power. It is, in other words, the full consciousness of the Absolute. It is difficult to imagine, but it is possible; it is more than possible, it is *absolutely essential* if humanity is to achieve its destiny; and it will achieve its destiny.

Having arrived at this much-to-be-desired condition of complete sympathy with the joys and sorrows of the whole of humanity, what will be the effect upon my conduct? What is the effect upon my conduct when I feel a vague sympathy for the beggar? I give him a penny, and thereby somewhat relieve my own feeling of distress at his misery. The answer to the second

question being known, the answer to the first is merely a matter of ratio—an arithmetical calculation. Seeing that all sorrow affects me to the full extent of that sorrow, I should be a fool did I not devote the whole of my energies to the alleviation of that suffering, thereby relieving my own vicarious suffering to a degree in exact proportion to the alleviation of the suffering, in others, for which I am responsible, a result which obviously could not be produced in any other manner. Being vaguely conscious of another's suffering, I seek vaguely to alleviate a portion of that suffering by giving him a penny. Being *fully* conscious of the sufferings of others, I will devote my *full* energies to the alleviation of that suffering.

Now, to carry the illustration on to its last stage. Suppose (and it is more than a supposition, it is a certainty) that every member of the human race should eventually so develop his sense of sympathy as to feel that complete consciousness of the joys and sorrows of every other member of the human race? Suppose, in other words, that every member of the human race should become fully conscious of the Absolute? The two suppositions are synonymous, as has already been made plain. To put it again in other words; suppose the whole of humanity should realize (as it ultimately will) that the happiness of each individual depends directly upon the happiness of every other individual—for this is consciousness of the Absolute?

Under these conditions it would be inevitable, even from a purely selfish standpoint, that every human being should seek his own happiness, not *at the expense* of others, as it is to be feared is often the case to-day; but by the simple expedient of promoting the happiness of others, utterly regardless of self. The most meagre understanding cannot but admit that given these conditions, universal happiness would be the inevitable result.

Many make the error of postulating that the development of a consciousness of the Absolute is the end and aim of the process of evolution. It is not the end and aim of the process of evolution. The end and aim of the process of evolution is the development of a universal happiness of an intensity and purity beyond the dreams of mankind to-day. The development of the consciousness of the Absolute is the means to that end.

So soon as humanity will realize that universal happiness lies in the happiness of others, and not in the grasping at happiness for the self, so soon will humanity arrive at the millennium.

# THE UNFINISHED PRAYER-MAT

(A PHANTASY)

BY ETHEL ARCHER

" I AM born of all Beauty and the Music of all Sound.

" Thou hast uttered a jarring note, and now I must vanish utterly, even into the Orange Green Land of the Twilight.

" Beyond the Sunset no mortal may travel—and yet, if haply thou mayest forget, I may be reborn again of memory and thy Silence."

The Slave bent low above his Task. In his turban the Single Great Jewel alternately flashed and grew dim. In his ears was the sound of running water : a sense of Things that Receded mingled with a sense of Mighty Things to Come.

Blueness, and wondrous depths, beyond which frail infinite memories stirred as the rustling of birds at dawn.

" If haply thou mayest forget." Could it be, then, that he had ever *known* ? And again the Jewel flashed and grew dim, as he drew the Thread and the Pattern grew beneath his hand.

Silence was Purple, and the Soul of all Music was Golden. But how could he combine the two ? And was not one a synonym for the other ? And Remembrance—must not Remembrance be Green ?

And now the Pattern was a living palpitating thing. From a background of Golden Moss grew the Strange Flowers—Flowers whose shapes ever changed ; as Demons intertwined and Strange Gods turned them again, and turning were lost in the fire.

And again, as the Jewel flashed, they changed yet again, and the Golden Moss flamed into the Flower, and the Flower flamed back again into the Golden Moss, and—in the heat of the blazing noon-day sun, he slept.

He dreamed of a Persian rose-garden, and over all was the Soul of Night. The great blue vault of the sky was studded with golden stars, that hung like jewelled lamps in the perfumed darkness, burning for ever in a golden mist the incense of Love.

And the pulse of the great purple Silence  
Throbbled as tense as small harp strings at eve  
Strung by gnomes in some forest enchanted,  
Where frail infinite memories weave  
Sad mystical songs spirit-haunted,  
And spells of strange witchery cleave.

Where ineffably, utterly tender,  
 Dwelleth Tragedy darkly serene,  
 Dimly veiled in her timeless seclusion,  
 Born of that which Shall Be and Has Been,  
 Ever Watchful, Elusive, Eternal. . . .

Tragedy born of the Silence ;—which is the Memory of the Music of all Sound.

From beyond the Sunset she had come to summon him, and gladly he yielded himself to her embrace.

\* \* \* \* \*

Had it been a day or a thousand years ? He returned with a rush to Earth. The air was charged with a warm magnetic fluid ; there was a ringing of tiny bells in his ears, and—he was looking into a pair of mocking green-blue eyes, eyes that held a latent caress, though the mouth still smiled.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Ah ! ” said my friend prosaically, as he jealously drew the Prayer-Mat from beneath my feet. “ I thought you'd like it. It's a beautiful thing. It grows on you.”

“ It does, indeed,” was my answer. “ but you never let me finish ! ”

\* \* \* \* \*

To the maker of Beautiful Things had come Beauty herself, She, the Bride of the Amir. Her cheeks flushed with joy as a warm apricot, her hair beauteous as the sun-kissed wheat. Behind her a trusty slave girl carried a mighty fan of peacocks' feathers.

Loth to disturb him, she had bent above him as he slept, lending herself to his dream. And he, waking, deemed that he dreamed still. In an immortal moment each read the secret of the other's Soul, and was silent.

How long they remained so, spellbound, who can say ? Time was not. But the Shadow from the mighty fan blotted out another Shadow. And, ere they could either perceive it, a dagger flashed in the sunlight.

He fell, the weaver of Beauty, and falling, his dark blood stained the roses at his feet.

So . . . an alien hand has completed this pattern. What became of the lady ? I cannot say, but she was the last thing that his eyes rested upon *this* side of the Sunset.

“ Humph ! ” said my friend critically. “ Not a bad little story ! I am lucky indeed to be in these days the possessor of a magic carpet.”

## RADNORSHIRE LEGENDS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Compiled from MS. left by the late Rev. R. F. KILVERT,  
by his niece, ESSEX SMITH (Author of "Wind on the  
Heath," and "Shepherdless Sheep")

IN the middle of the last century, when Radnorshire was a comparatively little known county, an English clergyman—the late Rev. R. F. Kilvert—became curate of Clyro, near Hay. There must have been in him some touch of the Celtic spirit, some strain of mysticism, for his relations with the parishioners of Clyro, who, though they no longer spoke the Welsh language, possessed essentially Welsh characteristics, seems to have been harmonious from the first. Borrow himself, indeed, might have revelled in some of Mr. Kilvert's curious experiences, and in the strange local legends and tales which were related to him by his new parishioners. "The people of Clyro," he wrote, "are still sufficiently Welsh to be suspicious of strangers, and an Englishman would probably not be thoroughly liked and trusted until he had lived some years in the country. But there is not in Radnorshire the same hostility and bitterness of feeling that is still shown against the Saxon in many parts of Wales. In fact, the people, as a rule, are singularly civil, courteous and obliging, and this pleasant characteristic is not merely superficial, for to those who are kind to them they are demonstrative and really affectionate."

Radnorshire from time immemorial has been a debatable land—the scene of countless battles between Welsh and English, as the numerous remains of castles and fortifications plainly show. Once wholly Welsh, there came a time when the people began to pride themselves on being English, and a thoroughbred Welshman—or a "Welshly person"—became almost a "foreigner." When Mr. Kilvert went to Clyro the Welsh tongue was only spoken habitually in three parishes in the extreme north-west of the county; the majority of the parishioners talked a good clear dialect of English, spoken in a high sharp voice. Their speech was rich in graphic description, and local words, and they were still Welsh enough to pronounce Welsh names with a trick and twang of the "ech" and "ll" which strangers attempted in vain. "In many parts of the county," wrote Mr. Kilvert in his MS., "the people are ignorant; every-



where they are credulous, highly imaginative and superstitious, but they are generally intelligent, and very much alive to the advantages of education—even the children are almost always delighted to go to school."

Radnorshire was a county particularly rich in folk-lore, legends and superstitions; in 1860 a great number of these had already perished with old folk who had died within the last thirty or forty years, and numbers more were dying every year. But in his parochial visits Mr. Kilvert came across many old people, unable either to read or write, who were veritable store-houses of ancient superstitions and traditional tales, which had never been printed, but handed down orally from generation to generation. Superstition, indeed, played a great part in Clyro life, especially among the elder parishioners, who would be much perturbed if the first black snail of the year was met crawling on the hard road, instead of on grass—this would mean a bad season. It was also reckoned exceedingly unlucky to destroy a swallow's nest, or to set parsley seeds—parsley must always be sown. In many outlying farms, if the "gulls"—goslings—had not been hatched, anyone carrying sallies, or palms, into the house would be liable to be turned out neck and crop, for the sallies were said to bring bad luck to the gulls. Corpses and coffins were generally strewn with southernwood and box; a pewter plate was put on the coffin lid the night before burial, and a lighted candle set on the plate. Many of the old parishioners begged not to be buried on the north side of the church—the "back-side" as they called it—for this was the devil's special domain. It was also considered very unlucky for anyone to hide iron before he died; the spirit could not rest, but must come back to look for it. This happened, so an old woman assured Mr. Kilvert, at a farm called Llanships. A penknife had been hidden in a yew tree near the house, and after the funeral there was no rest day or night, but the night was the worst. The spirit kept rumbling and rummaging about the premises, hunting for this hidden iron; then late at night earthenware plates began to bang off the kitchen shelves, only to be found unbroken on the floor; they were put back again, and the same thing happened over and over again, yet the plates were never broken. Radnorshire folk in 1860 evidently knew something of the Poltergeist!

This same old woman—"I can seem to see her now, her red shawl pinned neatly across her breast over her linsey gown, her high white cap, her keen grey eyes fixed sharply upon me"—had a curious way of finding out the thief when anything had been

stolen She would put the key of the house door into the Bible, on the verse, "Where thou goest I will go," and then would name the persons she suspected, saying at the same time, "Said St. Peter to St. Paul, turn you or turn you not?" At the name of the thief, so she averred, the key would turn.

Cock-fighting was often carried on near Clyro, and sometimes when a fight was arranged, the owner of one cock would bury a prayer-book under the turf in the cockpit ring, believing that the other cock would refuse to fight. Countless superstitions, too, hung about the seasons of the year. On New Year's Day, for instance, the "bush was burned." "From the Chapel farm at Bettws, at three o'clock on the morning of New Year's Day, I have seen the valley of the Wye alight and twinkling with fires, 'burning the bush' at almost every point." On New Year's Day, too, the well was "skimmed," and the first water thus drawn was believed to possess many virtues. On Twelfth Night, twelve fires were lighted in wheat-fields on many of the farms; they were believed to represent the Twelve Apostles, and to prevent the wheat from becoming "blue-ended."

One Twelfth Night, Mr. Kilvert saw the famous custom of Mari Lwyd—"Blessed Mary"—which seemed to him the relic of an old Miracle play or plays. It was also called "The Feast of the Ass" and was said to be a jumble of three events in Scripture history, each connected with an ass—namely, the journey of Balaam, the Flight into Egypt, and the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. "It was between the Christmases, and at eight o'clock I was sitting with some other people round the fire, when we heard tramping outside, and a loud knocking on the door, which was locked. There was the sound of a flute a moment later, and a man began singing—I could not distinguish the words—then a few minutes later another man, inside the room, went to the door and sang what was apparently an answer to the song without. Then the door was thrown open, and in walked about a dozen people, headed by a most extraordinary apparition, an animal covered with a flowing sheet, and surmounted by a horse's skull, to which a bridle was attached. This apparition I saw a moment later, was really a man covered with a sheet; his head was bowed down, and a skull had been fastened on to it. The people sang, collected some money, and then went off; they ought by rights, apparently, to have had an ass's skull, but then, dead donkeys are proverbially hard to come by!"

On Twelfth Night—old Christmas Eve—people in Clyro used to go out and watch the cattle kneel; a farmer assured Mr.

Kilvert that he had seen his own cattle kneel as the cock crew—only seven-year-old cattle, he declared, would kneel; young cattle were never known to do so. On this same night many of the parishioners used to go out and see the Holy Thorn blow; there were many Holy Thorns about the country-side, at Eardesley, Glasbury, and Newbridge-on-Wye, but one of the most famous was at Clehanger, near Hereford. One man from Clyro used to go to Clehanger every Old Christmas Eve and bring back a branch of the blackthorn in blossom. The Holy Thorn was quite bare the day before; it began to bud in the afternoon, and at midnight the tree was in full bloom, but the blossoms withered before noon the next day.

Good Friday, Easter Eve, Midsummer Eve, and indeed every season of the year had its own peculiar customs. But of all days in the year Clyro people held All-Hallows E'en, or Llanhallant Eve, as it was called, the most famous. Many curious customs were practised at this time, chiefly with regard to divination about matters of love and marriage. Girls went out in the evening, and sowed hempseed round the leek or onion bed, believing that the men they were to marry would rake the ground after them. They sang as they sowed—

Hempseed I sow,  
Hempseed I hoe,  
He that is my true love,  
Come after me and mow!

A curious instance of this superstition came within Mr. Kilvert's own knowledge. A servant girl at a country farm went out as usual on Llanhallant Eve to sow hempseed, and suspecting that some trick might be played on her, said to her mistress: "Don't send master out after me!" The mistress promised not to, and the girl went out, and began sowing the seed and singing the song. In a few minutes she became aware of the figure of her master raking the earth after her. She threw down the rest of the seed angrily, and ran in, crying out, "Why did you send master, when you promised not to?" The mistress turned deadly pale, and cried: "He has never left the house! Oh, Gwenny! be kind to my poor children." She died soon after, and the master married the servant girl before a year had passed.

At this season the famous Llanhallant cake was made in many of the outlying farmhouses, all the household helping; the cake contained nine ingredients—flour, water, spice, currants, barm, salt, pepper, mustard, a grain of wheat, or a bean—and was baked in tongs over the fire. Each member of the household

broke off a piece, naming the person whom he or she wished to meet that night, and whoever had the wheat or the bean was certain to marry his love. At Clyro, too, people on Llanhallant Eve used to run nine times round the church, and then go into the porch and listen ; they believed they would hear a bell toll, and a spirit within the church call out the names of all who would die before the year was out. An old man in the neighbourhood did this for many years with impunity, until one Llanhallant Eve he heard his own name, and was so much upset that he went home and died immediately.

Together with these endless tales of old customs and superstitions, bravely cherished by the elder parishioners although fast falling into disuse among the younger, Mr. Kilvert heard much of "farises" (fairies), and of witches. Many an old woman with whom he talked had herself seen fairies—at Builth, at Llanbedr, and Blaencwm, and a miller whom he visited at Rhos Goch used to hear them come into the mill at midnight and dance upon the floor, "and the music was beautiful, yes indeed!"

He was told, too, a strange story of a Llandeilo woman called Llewellyn. She had two children, both girls, such strange wizened little creatures that she suspected they were really changelings. One harvest time, to test this belief, she remarked in their hearing that she was going to cook a dinner for eight reapers and the family in an egg-shell. "Well!" cried one girl, off her guard, "I have lived in the world for five-score years, and never heard the like of that!" "And I," cried the other, "have lived six-score years, neither did I!"

Witches, too, were plentiful, and used to dance a great deal on the top of Old Radnor hill. One witch lived at Lewin Cwmgwanon, near Clyro ; she was so powerful and dangerous that people were afraid to go to her house lest she put the evil eye upon them. Another witch used to repair to Knill Church each Sunday, and occupy herself with cursing the people as they came in to pray. Other witches lived at Bryngwyn and Llandevron, at Glasbury and Nantymel, and one haunted Clyro hill for many a year in the guise of a huge hare, grey with age, which could neither be shot, nor caught with harriers nor greyhounds.

It was said that a Roman road crossed Clyro hill, and came down to the Wye at Hay, passing by Penrhyd (head of the ford) and probably coming down by Cwm Bythog and across Hereford to the Pump House, Boatside and the Wye. All along the Vale of Newchurch and Bryngwyn there were artificial mounds, which had either been fortified, or marked places of burial. "I remem-

ber," wrote Mr. Kilvert, "some men draining at Dol Bedwyn and digging up a dagger with a brass handle, and a knife about eighteen inches long with an oaken handle—the oak was less decayed than the metal. When Dol Bedwyn was first planted with larches, a number of battle-axes were dug up, with spikes projecting from the front and rear—unfortunately their value was not realized and they were sent to the forges and broken up for old iron." There must have been much fighting along the valley, for cannon-balls were often found in the fields, and a beautiful sword, much ornamented about the hilt, was dug up on a farm called Rhyd Clydon near the Rhos Goch. Painscastle, too, was a famous fortification—no ruins stood above the ground in 1860, but the foundations were very extensive. Some men quarrying for building-stone in these foundations once came to two walls running side by side, a little distance apart; between them they found the key of the old castle—an enormous key, the barrel thick as a big man's wrist.

Clyro, too, was not without its share in that haunting Celtic legend of a "lost land." Rhos Goch, and its two hundred acres of quaking bogland had been once, so the old people in the parish declared, the site of a mighty city—the largest city between Radnorshire and London—and they themselves had seen carved oak beams dug up out of the peat. "Rhos Goch," wrote Mr. Kilvert, "always seemed to me a place of magic and marvel. Strange birds haunted it, rare butterflies flitted above the heather; the great Osmunda ferns flowered there in myriads. There were different kinds of heath as well, and what the people called 'bog cotton' and 'burnt leaves,' the latter an infallible cure for burns. Here, too, were the lovely bog beans with their trefoil bean-like leaves, pink buds, and white blossoms, fretted with exquisitely delicate filigree work, half like frosted silver, and half like lace. Rhos Goch teemed with life. There were fish in the pools, and on still warm summer afternoons you might hear the 'drumming' of the snipe as they circled in wide sweeps overhead. Wild duck bred among the pools; golden eye and curlew came there as well, and old people remembered when it had been a haunt of bittern. An old legend told of a dreadful battle which was fought at the western end of the Rhos, which caused the brook to run red with blood for three days, whence some people say the Common got its name of Rhos Goch (red bog)."

An expedition to the famous waterfall of Craig pwl ddu was taken by Mr. Kilvert in company with an old mole-catcher, who

was steeped in the local legends and superstitions. "Did ye ever hear of Burroughs?" he asked his pastor, as they walked over the mountains towards the fall, "the most pestilential practical joker that Radnorshire ever knew? He was a farmer—a fierce, wild man—and much dreaded by all the country-side. Once he drugged a farmer's beer so heavily with tobacco that the man was wellnigh poisoned; another time he put quick-silver into some apple dumplings boiling for the farmers' dinner at the Hundred House, and the dumplings leaped about till all the folk thought they were bewitched. Then, again at the Hundred House, Burroughs took the pudding out of the boiler, and put in a live cat; when the servant came to dish up the dinner, she found only the cat's bones. Burroughs, after that, had to fly for his life, the farmers rode after him, terribly enraged, but could not catch him. Another day, Burroughs enticed a man to come home with him, and made him very drunk—while he was in this state, Burroughs forged a piece of iron round his neck, with a long bar standing out horizontally. The man was obliged to walk home sideways, for the iron bar caught the hedges on either side, and would not let him walk straight."

The mole-catcher also told the tale of Vaughan of Hergest Court, "the terror of Knighton and the whole country-side." This Vaughan owned a wood in which were two deep pools, and in later years the bodies of more than one woman and of several children were found in the pools. After Vaughan died, it was believed that the crimes he had committed would not let his spirit rest, for his ghost haunted the wood, and terrified innumerable people; it used to take especial delight in waylaying women riding home from market at dusk, leaping up on their horses and sitting behind them. At last, strong measures were taken to defeat the ghost. Twelve or thirteen ancient parsons assembled in the Court of Hergest, and drew a circle, inside which they all stood with books and lighted candles, praying. The ghost was very resolute, and came among the parsons roaring like a bull. "Why so fierce, Mr. Vaughan?" asked one of the parsons, mildly. "Fierce I was as a man, fiercer still as a devil!" roared Vaughan, and all the candles were blown out except one, held by a very small, weak parson (also, says legend, named Vaughan). He hid his candle in his boot, and so kept it alight, all the time praying hard, until at length the violent spirit was quelled, "and brought down so small and humble that they shut him up in a snuff box." The ghost made one humble petition—"Do not bury me beneath water!" But the parsons immediately

had him enclosed in a stone box, and buried under the bed of the brook, and Hergest thenceforth was at peace. Owen Glendower was connected either by blood or marriage with the Vaughans of Hergest Court, and probably it was to this family that the lady—his relation—belonged, who was imprisoned and condemned to death by the monks of Radnor. Owen at the time was holding his Parliament at Machynlleth, and took a terrible revenge; he marched towards Radnor, and encamped on the Warren above Water-break-its-neck. Then he attacked the monastery, saved the lady, and hurled nearly a hundred of the monks from the battlements of the castle. When the foundations of the present church were being dug, a number of skeletons were found, supposed to be those of the monks.

Of one of the Vaughans of Hergest it was said that she was born with a snake round her neck, and that the snake always lived near her, coming twice a day and eating with her, until one day it was killed, and the girl soon pined away and died. The truth of this story probably was that the child had been born with the mark of a snake round her neck. The mole-catcher, relating this tale, said that he himself knew of an attachment between a child and a snake, at Cwmddu, near Llowes. This child used to go every day to a large rock with her bread and milk; she was watched, and seen to sit down on the sunny side of the rock, whereupon a snake immediately crawled out and shared her food. The parents, horrified, killed the snake, and from that day the child pined away.

In company with the mole-catcher, "whose stories had cheated several miles," Mr. Kilvert drew near Craig pwl ddu. "On the way we fell in with a coursing party, and saw a curious accident. A strong hare was seen stealing away, and a brace of well-matched greyhounds flashed after her like lightning. After several doubles the dogs were gaining on the hare when she crossed a line of tracks and wheel-ruts. As the greyhounds were bounding over the ruts we saw one of them—a black dog—suddenly tumble and roll over and over—head over heels—then lie still on the turf. Before anyone could reach him he was dead. He had got entangled in the ruts, missed his footing, and, at the tremendous pace he was going, had broken his neck. . . . A little later I heard a strange sound in the air—a faint, but deep and ominous roar. 'That is the water,' said the mole-catcher, 'at Craig pwl ddu.' Far below us, as we stood on the cliffs, a round green knoll rose between the jaws of the narrow, deep ravine. Then we began to descend the cliffs, while louder and louder came the

thunder of the falls, until at last we reached the green knoll. 'Here,' said the mole-catcher, 'stood the tower of a Welsh robber chieftain, who ravaged the country and carried off captives to his stronghold; if they were not ransomed, he hurled them from the top of the crag into the Black Pool far below.' We climbed on down the steep zigzag path, catching for support at the hazel-bushes which fringed it; the thunder had become almost deafening, but the fall itself was still hidden behind the jutting angle of a monstrous black rock, which hung frowning over the rushing stream, and seemed abruptly to close the gorge. At last we came within sight of the fall. Through a narrow rift in the huge black rocks burst a tumultuous mass of snowy foam that plunged forty feet into the black boiling pool below, with a thunderous roar that made the cliffs tremble. Rising sheer from the water's edge, the cliffs stood up black and towering round the pool, while the rocks reeked and dripped continually with the spray. The tops of the cliffs were fringed with brushwood and low trees, and a gleam from the setting sun gilded the rocks at the mouth of the chasm, making the gloom within yet more intense. There was a tradition that the Black Pool had never been fathomed, although the mole-catcher had been present when an attempt was made. A hundred-pound weight was tied to the knotted bell ropes of Trewerne church, and lowered down, but even this length of rope could not reach the bottom. I shall not easily forget the beauty of the scene as we climbed up again from the deep black ravine. From a sky of rose and gold the sun was sinking behind the mountains of Carmarthenshire, while the Black Mountains of Breconshire were bathed in a glow which made them look like a mass of pink granite. Gradually the light changed from rose and lilac to violet, then to deep purple, until at last all was grey, and the horizon settled into a clear 'low splendour' that heralded a frost.

"On the way home the mole-catcher related prodigious tales of his own horsemanship, and of feats he had performed while hunting—on one occasion he had leaped a turnpike gate eight feet high, and cheated the toll. On another they had found a strong fox near Presteign, and taken him without a check straight across the hills to Rhayader. Every horseman but himself was thrown out by the pace and length of the run; at last even the hounds were beaten, but the mole-catcher swam the Ithon and hunted the fox alone, until it gave up, and lay down exhausted near Rhayader!"



# OCCULTISM AND ART

By LEO FRENCH

"Partout le grand artiste entend l'esprit répondre à son esprit. . . . Le sculpteur ne fait-il pas acte d'adoration encore quand il aperçoit le caractère grandiose des formes qu'il étudie, quand, du milieu des lignes passagères, il sait dégager le type éternel de chaque être?" (Auguste Rodin. From *L'Art*, pp. 239 and 52.) "*Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness.*"

IF occultism, true to its definition, consists in the study of the divine mind in the universe, cosmic and human, then art in its no less universal significance of Beauty's universal apperception and revelation, "Spirit divine through forms of human art," must prove a study of divine signatures to those who seek the Life through each form.

Were not the Planets the first cosmic artists?

For ever singing as they shine:  
"The Hand that made us is Divine."

"The Hand of God," whose work as cosmic artist is no less representative in the universal scale of catholicity, than His aspect as Master-occultist?

What if the two be inseparable? Their interpenetration leaps to the eye of those who read above and beneath the living lines and colours in Nature's book; no less in her revelations through the works of those artists whose quality of universality is the insignia of genius.

Regarded in this light, Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo proclaim themselves cosmic occultists in all their greatest—i.e. most representative, because most self-revelatory, works.

In Da Vinci's "Vièrge aux Rochers," in his "Last Supper," in his "Head of Our Lord," what profound implicit occult inspiration communicates its life to those whose vision is occultly sympathetic and receptive! In Angelo's "Piéta" and "The Delphic Sibyl," the divine fire of spiritual occultism burns, glowing to-day with contagious flame for those whose lips are touched with the live coal of devotional occult response. What save this power of portraying the mysteries through Beauty's medium distinguishes great from merely fine art in all ages?

Truth to tell, art is no lesser teacher than occultism. Occultist

and artist are confrères and collaborators, any assumption of dictation or direction on either side is unthinkable to those who perceive their interpenetrative indissoluble mutual relationship.

The twentieth century, in its adolescence, has already inscribed on its walls, in deathless characters, such Master-artists as Rodin, whose universal sculptured poems bear witness to the Hand of God; in such figures from the gallery of cosmic archetypes as "Le Penseur," "La Pensée," "Le Poète et la Muse," "Invocation," "Appel Suprême," and many others. Nor less, in kind, the contribution of G. F. Watts, whose "Spirit of Christianity," "Dweller in the Innermost," "All-Pervading," and "Diana and Endymion" breathe the same spirit. All great occult truths express themselves in one universal sacramental language, whose medium matters not, to those partakers of the Sacrament whose combined insight and devotion proves them faithful, worthy communicants in the Universal Elevation of the Host of Life. Here, indeed, are no pontifical dogmas, the thrill of each communicant is expressed by the same Master (Rodin) as "the vertigo of the Infinite. What worshipper at the Shrine of Beauty,\* "occult, withheld, untrod," knows not this authentic thrill, this shudder of the mortal called upon "to see God and live," to behold the beatific vision, on Earth's mountain, though in transfiguration's illumination?

The very word Originality, *sine qua non* of Greatness in all arts, denotes perception of, insight into, the essential and inevitable: no art is great without this attribute; combined with architectural plastic form and æsthetic suffusion ("the light," etc.), it joins issue with occultism as revealer of mysteries. Between students and masters of either occultism or art, yawn crevasses and gulfs, to be crossed and bridged by their aspirants and neophytes, "according to the measure of godhead's achievement resident in both." Greatness is greatness, all worlds over, and may be left to instruct and defend itself. The universal artist is his own interpreter to those rhythmically constructed and constituted to receive and partake the universal sacrament, bread of thought, wine of inspiration, wheat and grapes, transubstantiated sunfire, light, air, dew, rain, earth's communion, whose sublimation raises the communicant above earth, only that he may perceive and receive her ætheralized form. "Speak to the Earth and She will teach thee." Lore of Proserpine, Demeter, and that of the Master Nazarene; these are held in equal reverence by the cosmic artist and seer.

\* D. G. Rossetti, from *The Blessed Damosel*.

This universal *Credo* finds expression to-day in such musicians as Holst, whose "Planetary Symphony" and "Savitri" proclaim his catholicity of inspirational response; great sacred music in the true universal significance of the word. The reaction to so-called realism, deplored by superficial thinkers, marks a transition epoch only. The new realism will not confuse itself with the old materialism. True realism proclaims the glory whereof idealism does but catch the reflection, the image of Truth adumbrated, veiled, because Man cannot bear those heights and depths of shining burning light, i.e. Truth unveiled in the Spiritual Body of Absolute Beauty. Therefore did Venus Urania return to Elysium, and Venus Aphrodite take her place, Man being not yet of pure enough sight to behold Beauty in absolute Deification, and live. But Love is Beauty's Minister, "serves to feed her sacred flame." Whether that love be sacred or profane depends upon the lover as recipient. Love is ever sacred, profanation is the crime of sacrilege, precipitating appropriate Nemesis in all ages, without respect of persons.

Leonardo's "Vièrge aux Rochers" presents the occult inspirational power of Da Vinci at its height and depth, and is far more truly representative of the Master as *Master*, than the fascinating and most long-suffering Monna Lisa! The catholicity of Beauty, its appeal through myriad forms of Nature, and the Seven Arts, constitutes the Universality thereof, no less than that of Occultism, breathing its mysteries through Krishna, Buddha, The Christ, and the Spirit of Beauty Universal. To the artist, says Rodin, all is beautiful in Nature, save that which expresses insincerity, falseness, pretence, hypocrisy, in any form . . . in all true fundamental expression Beauty reveals herself to the eye of the artist-seer. *Vision*, concludes the Master, is the test of the artist—*he who sees*, and can reveal Beauty so that the incarnation thereof manifests to her lovers.

Yet confusion between essential beauty and mere regular contours on the one hand, with cult of the bizarre and violent on the other, exists among us to a deplorable extent.

In the writer's opinion, the chief, indeed crying necessity of the moment, from the æsthetic aspect of occultism, is that of giving spiritual sacrificial help, from within,\* offering that power of silent creative thought-formation, which belongs to all true occultists (distinguished from psychic conjurers and arm-chair dilettantes) on the altar of Beauty. The recognition of Beauty as a daily necessity, neither a luxury nor a fad. The dissociation of Beauty

\* i.e. True occult help, invisible on the physical plane only.

from sectarian "isms" of cults, cliques, coteries, however commendable in themselves. The raising of the standard of Beauty over the still ensanguined battle-field, the proclamation of her universality; freedom from all ascetic arbitrary shalt and shalt nots, as from the hideous libertinage which snatches its rank pleasures among the weeds of life, mistaking them for flowers, marvelling when corruption overtakes them as profaners of life's law of universal harmony and temperance. To create an atmosphere of appreciation and reception of Beauty, this will provide a universal college, not made with hands, called after no great man, sealed with the stamp of no occult school, save the university of occult thought.

"The passion and the joy whose fountains are within." The occultist who helps to dissociate these eternal inner forms from any outer specific limitation, who gives his life, no less, to the service of Beauty's Universal Temple, the Shrine of Life: He celebrates, with Michael Angelo, the Sacrament of the divine marriage of Truth and Beauty, occultism and art, made in heaven, awaiting realization on earth.\* "From the Stars of the uttermost height comes down that splendour, and to these it draws the heart's desire."

\* Michael Angelo.

# THE TWO LAWS

By BART KENNEDY

I STOPPED and listened. The voices and the sounds of the organ blended together. As I stood out in the sunlit air it seemed as if I had never before heard anything so beautiful.

This small old church! It had stood through the centuries on the edge of this quiet English village. And music had lived in it on many, many Sabbaths. Even as it was living now.

The light of the sun was softening and shining upon the windows. It was coming towards the close of the summer day. The scene was a scene of glorious peace. And the music that came forth from the little church was as if it were the soul of the day speaking.

"How beautiful," I thought. And there came to my mind thoughts strange and vague and complex concerning it. Surely was it that there lived within this music the essence of the profound wisdom that had taught man to adore the mystery and beauty that lay behind life. This music came from man, it was man, and still it was God. Man was then God. For if—

The chain of thought was broken suddenly. For all at once there came upon me the sensing of other sounds. I had heard them through the whole of the day, but I had not seemed to have noticed them till now. Indeed I had heard them through the days and the weeks and the months. I had become used to them.

They were breaking in upon the music that was coming from the little church. Rolling, far-off, thunderous sounds. Sounds of death and destruction. Sounds menacing and dread. Out in the distance, over the land and over the sea, men were fighting. Millions of men. They were fighting because fighting is the law. They were slaying in the midst of immense sullen sound the conscious hearing of which had just come to me.

But the war-sound so sullen and terrible seemed to take away nothing from the beauty of the music that came from the church that had stood here through the centuries. This music was as a quiet calm light living in the midst of a tempest. The dread sound affected it not. It had a life beyond it. A life compelling and beautiful and holy.

I stood, listening to both. They were now of a like vividness

to me. I tried to trace some relation between them. For both were of man. In this one was even as the other.

But I could find no link between them. They were as voices coming from worlds set far apart. Though I knew, as I listened, that they were of man, still it did not seem in actual fact as if they could be so. They were the expression of two laws that were not to be reconciled. Laws that affected man—that, indeed, were of him. Laws contradictory and antagonistic. One the utter negation of the other.

A voice soared up out of the music. A beautiful voice, singing alone.

And now there came into the air a great droning sound. High up above was passing a swift chariot. A war-chariot going out in the direction from whence was coming the immense, sullen sound of the war that was raging in France. There was in the great drone of the plane a sinister under-sound. As if the threat of death were passing through the upper air.

And the beautiful voice still came forth. In it there lived the warmth of fraternity. How strange and complex was the soul of man. Who was to understand the mystery out of which he was compounded? He was at once an angel and a being of destruction. He was at once of the light and the darkness. A being who slew and at the same time saved.

A being guided by two laws that were not to be reconciled.

And it came to me that I was listening to the speaking of the very soul of the world. To me was being revealed the inner secret. Beauty and horror, light and darkness, life and death, love and hate were of the same woof. One balanced the other. Fraternity was then but the half, even as hate was but the half. Surely this was so. Fraternity when put in the sense of being the sole law was but the expression of a dream that was vain. It had always been so in the past. It was so now. I was standing here, the actual witness of it. I was hearing the voices of the two laws that balanced.

What would come to pass in the future? Would love and fraternity reign? Would hate and destruction die away?

There were those who said that it would? But this had been said through the hundreds and the thousands of years that had gone. And it was even now as it ever was. The words of the prophets and the seers had come to naught. The two laws had reigned side by side.

Would they always so reign?

Who was to know, or who was to tell? It might be that

one was the necessity of the other. It might be that one contained and held the other. It might be that it was not given that man was to attain to the wholeness of peace in the scheme of earth-life. One did not know.

However, it was as it was. And to accept it was braver and better than to endeavour to think it away. The truth was that the mystery of man was hidden away from himself. He knew not the forces out of which he was compounded. He was a being of jarring elements. He was of the things that surrounded him and out of which he sprung. A being of war and peace, of harmony and disharmony.

One who obeyed two opposite laws.

I was now going slowly on my way. I could still hear the music from the little church.

And out in the distance the sound of destruction was living.

## COSMIC LOVE-SONG

BY LEO FRENCH

WHAT is Love? 'Tis not Desire,  
 Harness me a horse of fire,  
 Bid him rush through air and tell,  
 Fetch me Love, from heaven or hell.

What is Love? From fire and air,  
 Not one throb of grief or care  
 Shall escape from me to mine,  
 Love through passion grows divine.

What is Love? Ask water's soul,  
 Nay! She floweth to her goal,  
 Fountains play and oceans churn  
 Till they each their guerdon earn.

What is Love? O earth, reply.  
 Nay! For love can never die,  
 Never fade nor change nor banish  
 Pain from joy, nor ever vanish.

Muses, furies, dance their measure,  
 In the poet's blood their treasure  
 Turns to gold, and that is Love,  
 Hells of fire Love's heart doth prove.

# DREAMS

BY HELEN MARY BOULNOIS

ALL my life I have dreamt. As a small child I often had to question myself sharply : Did I dream that, or did it happen ? This merciless internal sorting strengthened faculties of accuracy and of memory. Yet one occurrence I have never to this hour quite decided. Not yet do I know if I dreamt it. All my life I have dreamt (like many others) of lifting the feet from the earth and gliding.

I firmly believed that I once did this when about four years old down a flight of stairs in a house we were in for a short while. At eight, nine and ten years of age I told myself it had occurred. Later, I relegated it to dreams—a vivid dream, no doubt dreamt in the house where I thought it happened.

But even to this day as I write I have my doubts. For one thing I had my hand on the top of the bannisters and it rested lightly there during that heavenly descent. I was too short at the time to reach the bannisters ; but that too might be part of the dream.

A few days ago, talking to a friend of these things, she seriously told me she did it several times as a child.

“ Did anyone see it ? ” I asked.

“ No, I had to be alone.”

“ How did you do it ? ”

“ Just took my feet up and got into the place where you go. You glide, slide, float.”

Had she dreamt it too ?

Much has been written about dreams. Has anyone yet satisfactorily explained their source ? My own belief is that they are caused by the automatic continuation of the working of the conscious mind, which during sleep is unrelated (unhitched, were the better word), both to current events and our own deep-seated reality. This mind, no longer controlled from the within nor fed from the without, continues to work, exactly as a mechanical toy lifted off the ground will continue to revolve. The movement becomes both swifter and at the same time futile.

But my next idea I can only put in the form of a question. Has the process of thinking in words anything to do with the



action of dreams? Or if not with their action, with our remembrance of them?

This needs explanation, for not every one has asked themselves and found out if they habitually think in words or in images and pictures.

As sleep comes on, the dreamer is mistily aware of images rising; he sees things, rather than says things, inside himself. Is it the force engendered in us by the habit of translating images and occurrences mentally into words that gives us the grip, enabling us later to recollect that dream? For between the man who does not dream at all, and the man who remembers his dream, is the man who dreams but never remembers.

Can it be possible that the dream we hold is the one that without knowledge we have translated into words?

Keenly aware as I am of this floating off of mentally spoken, lucid thought into vague images, as one sinks into slumber, I can only affirm the fact without attempting explanation that words carried into my brain on waking are often the clue to the dream I have just left. Though sometimes so small a fragment drifts into waking thought that the story or connection gets lost. Thus I woke this morning with the words ringing in my head:—

“Ask the Hayes, if you know them. They can tell you.”  
What it was all about, I know no more than I know the Hayes.

Better worth repeating were words seemingly caught from the lips of a young mother:—

“Charlie shall have some notion of time and distance. I make him guess when we’ve walked a quarter of a mile, or make him say how long we’ve been out of doors.”

“Pretty sensible!” I thought as I woke, reminding myself that awake such a thing might not have occurred to me. Who Charlie’s mother was and why she was talking to me faded from recollection. It was the clear mental enunciation of words in both cases that brought the phrases into my waking life.

Does the mind, just before waking or even on waking, resume its ordinary habit of mind—that of translating thought into words? Or does the mind resume this daily habit (presuming it has acquired the habit), and dream in words so soon as the hazy, misty place between waking and sleeping is left behind, and the self is really sunk in slumber?

Distinctly I can remember the translation of thought into words in delirium; but what does one do every night of one’s life?

A point to be noted is—even the fact that the waking words

are mentally spoken does not carry the convincing quality which makes the dream spring from one's own most intimate depths. Rather one listens for more or tries to remember what happened behind, as if the vagaries reach us from some independent source.

Instantly on waking we resume possession of the conscious, working mind. With a little attention we can catch the exact moment at which we do this. It may take the form of an assertion: "Hullo! I'm dreaming." And the dream is shaken off.

To state my main argument again in other words: during sleep, the conscious mind, no longer directed, babbles. Possibly it babbles perpetually all the time we sleep, while we sometimes catch and sometimes do not catch its babbling. We may have set a top spinning that we cannot stop; while the intelligence, aided by the habit of mental translation of thought into words, probably adds stimulation to the pace.

Why does the break (or escape) of the conscious thought from the deeper self during sleep result in the loosening of control?

Possibly in the deeper self and not in the conscious thought lies the Will to control. That nameless Now-you-get-up-and-do-it, which consciously or unconsciously every sane person carries behind or beneath his conscious thought. Though again this Will is probably only one of the qualities of that self we recover on waking.

The question really needs no answer except the one that every dreamer must be ready to give, i.e. that part of his brain certainly does go on working, though he no longer holds the helm of direction.

Interesting efforts have been made lately to show that the "babbling" of the mind in sleep is deeply directed by certain currents of our lives. In a wide, general sort of a sense this must be the case; but the little picture or image of the passing dream seems a vagrant and irrelevant thing in the ordinary slumberer. Suggestions, if followed to their source, often prove to be of most trivial origin.

The closest touch I have had with regard to the direction of errant dreams was with a school-friend who talked aloud in her sleep. That is to say, she gave verbal expression, chiefly in ejaculation, to her dreams as she dreamt them. We were but children. Four of us slept in a room.

My delight was to join in the conversation and give propulsion to the direction of her dreams.

"The door's shut," she muttered in distress. "I can't get out!"

"Get out of the window! Quick! Quick! Get out of the window, I tell you."

Practice soon revealed to me that unless drama were accentuated it was difficult in the first place to reach the dream. Once, however, connection was made, it became easier and easier.

"But it's so high!" she objected.

"Get on the chair. Now hold my hands and drop."

"My feet don't reach the ground!"

"Yes, they do," I insisted, delighted that she was believing herself dangling in mid-air, simply on my suggestion. "Mind the lilies!" She loved flowers. "You are breaking them."

"No, I'm not. I haven't broken one."

"Well, get over the lawn quick! Down by the pigsty. Oh! The pig has escaped!"

Here followed an exciting chase after the pig over flower-beds into a yard and away to a field, each of us taking up the tale from the other, until a voice from another bed said:—

"If you little ones will go on talking, I'll report you both to-morrow."

Giggles from the fourth bed, where the jest was appreciated of reporting a girl for talking in her sleep.

Some time back a theory was mooted that a dream, however long it seemed to the dreamer, only lasted a few seconds. The other two girls in the room would gladly have testified to the lasting quality of these dreams.

But without extraneous assistance, what causes the sequence in the dreamer's mind?

Some of us have suffered torments not only in childhood but in later life from the hideous images, the exaggerated emotions of dreams. Can we get at their source and break their power?

Uneasy or painful physical conditions, as every sufferer knows, rapidly translate into these images. "What did you eat for supper?" may be old-fashioned and prosaic, but nearer the mark than vague psychical lucubrations. In bodily anguish and fever, the dream grows into delirium. Strange border line between sanity and insanity, terrifying to the unaccustomed listener, yet possibly no different, except in the intensity induced by the severity of suffering, to my schoolfellow's imaginary escapade with window, lilies and pig.

A night of delirium while suffering from empyæma (abscess on the left lung) returns to me vividly as if it were a few weeks instead of over twenty years ago.

I dreamt I was the younger of two brothers who had properties

adjoining. Both tracts of land were covered with fir trees and furze. The land of the elder brother was blazing with fire, which died down as it approached my own property. This enraged him so that he tore off bits of burning brand and kept lighting the furze that ran by my fence in the hope of its spreading to me. I, aware that he had some ancient cause of grudge, seized his hand—partly to prevent his using it—worked it up and down, and cried aloud: "Dear old chap! Let's be friends."

As a matter of fact I was sitting up in bed, shaking my own two hands, saying the words aloud to the terror of the old woman who was sitting up with me. The way she begged me to desist roused me to customary consciousness. I found out what I was doing, recognized it as a dream, and so impressed it upon my waking memory. It is easy to see the physical suggestion in this instance. The two properties were the two sides of my own body—the one in agony as of blazing fire, the other comparatively unmolested.

Most dreamers have their own experience of dreams directly suggested by physical sensations. Anybody yearning for experiment might easily prepare one. Sleeping on a hair-brush might not be a bad way to begin.

Next to physical condition I believe the repercussion of emotion, notably of fear, feeding and distorting the imagination, to be the strongest suggestion. One thing is certain. In sleep our emotions become more exposed. It is as though denuded of the clothing actual experience (with its innumerable side issues) affords them—they are exposed raw and naked to any images imposed upon them. Or yet with more accuracy, it may be said, they summon images to match their own exaggeration.

Snakes were the terror of my childish dreams. What these had to do with the lesser fears that even the most hardened child must necessarily endure in infancy, might be difficult even for a psycho-analyst to determine; but with the cessation of the small recurrent fears of childhood, snakes ceased to crawl on the windings of my nightly paths.

Packing feverishly for a train or trying in vain to get dressed must be common property in dreams to all. A horrible sense of utter incompetency brings on overwhelming and disproportionate despair. Is the sense of incompetency really there and the dream sent to match it? But we suffer no such self-depreciation in real life. Is the incompetency sent to match the despair? A moralist might say we ought to know both more intimately than we do. But I must confess to an inability to match morals to

dreams. The more so that morality so often fails there. The agony of wrong-doing in dreams is frequently not the sense of stain, of being lowered, that one cannot endure in real life, but fear of detection. One watches a murder quite complacently ; yet when the corpse is in the boot-hole and the Bishop, who comes to call, insists on hanging up his hat there. . . . It is more than a relief when the corpse walks in unconcernedly at another door and sits down at the tea-table.

At the same time a haunting dream of my girlhood always chills me in recollection with the belief it was the allegory of unused capabilities.

In the dream I suddenly remembered we had a garden across the road. I flew for a key, unlocked a door in a wall and went through to find myself in a wilderness of overgrown, untended, miserable trees, shrubs and plants. Sense of guilt was not missing there. Many a pillow has been wet with tears for my unkept gardens.

Certain other recurring dreams bring singular happiness, though perhaps simple in their natures. There is a chalk scar where two paths divide on high downs in my dreamland. If I walk or ride up there at night, a still happiness pervades my being which lasts all the next day.

Very few of us can govern our dreams and choose our friends and associates in that dim land, in spite of Peter Ibbotsen, who learnt to "dream true." Most of us in early life have cuddled down in the bedclothes to dream again some happy morning dream. Sometimes its rapture is recovered (though the scenes may change) sufficiently to make us listen with certain sympathy to the song that used to wail through Victorian drawing-rooms :—

"Oh! Do not wake me! Let me dream again!"

Again, few of us, I suppose, can love in life—probably mercifully—as we do in our dreams. Nor can we paint, sing, compose,—(neither we nor the critics will ever know if the genius is fundamentally sound)—with the same heavenly rapture. Dreams of motion—swimming, dancing, sailing, flying, above all, lifting up the feet and gliding through space—tend to make dream life one we would be sorry to abandon.

A curious gap exists in dreams in the time the dream mind takes to assimilate facts from daily life, such as some change in fortune or mode of life. This no doubt varies with different people. As a girl I considered it took about a fortnight before a change in family history penetrated into dreams. This is not speaking of special visions, which must stand in a class apart ;

but of the ordinary muddle dream we mortals dream every night, of going out and posting letters and our boots coming unbuttoned and the policeman at the corner taking us up because they are hanging down, and any other rigmarole that may divert and beset us.

Dreams of prescience are of another order and must be dealt with separately. Too many authenticated instances have occurred for denial of such things. Is there any explanation? Possibly not, yet certain phenomena may be analogous. Can there be a knowledge deeper than the getting-at-things alone permitted to the conscious mind?

I am privileged to know a dear old lady of Irish descent, who relates many instances, when she has clearly seen in dream the doings of different members of her family in far parts of the earth, later corroborated by them. "Can you explain that?" she asks with certain triumph, implying that no one can.

# OCCULTISM—TRUE AND FALSE

By JOHN SPENCER

## IV. SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE OCCULT DEVELOPMENT

IN my first three papers I have now described the general nature of the Path of Adeptship, defining its basis and aims, and distinguishing it from three other things with which it is often confused—Spiritualism, Natural Psychic gifts, and Black Magic. The time has come to begin the filling in of the outline, and to consider the most important principles to which the occultist must conform in the course of his development if it is really to help him towards his goal.

I emphasized quite early the necessity of a high moral standard as a preliminary qualification. Let no one imagine that the development of occult powers can take the place of such ordinary humdrum virtues as truthfulness, purity, unselfishness, love, and the other good qualities which we look for in our fellow-men without any psychic development at all. It has been said that every stage of progress in occult knowledge and power should be preceded by *two* steps in moral progress, if it is to be taken safely. This much at any rate is certain, that without moral stability and progress no regular and permanent occult development can be made, and even if spasmodic and uncertain powers were achieved, their use would simply react to the detriment of the possessor. That this must be so is obvious: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation," and if a man is simultaneously seeking to awaken his higher spiritual faculties and to indulge his lowest passions in lust or drink or dishonesty, the resulting psychological conflict may well end in serious nervous disorder or actual insanity. To this extent there may be some truth in the popular superstition among the ultra-orthodox that dealings with psychic phenomena of any sort tend to drive people mad. As in any other case those who wish to achieve a particular purpose must adopt their means to the end and lead the suitable life. If the Oxford and Cambridge crews trained on suet pudding and unlimited tobacco we should probably have a popular outcry demanding the suppression of a sport which killed everyone who took part in it. The answer would be, of course, the danger is not in the boat-race, but in the boat-race on wrong training. So

to the outcry against the dangers of spiritualism and occultism the true answer is : The danger is not inherent in occultism or in spiritualism, but arises because people are foolish enough to rush into these things without attempting to live lives appropriate to them or to undertake the necessary study before they begin experimenting rashly. An electric power station is a perfectly safe place for the electrician in charge, but if an amateur starts fooling around there without even taking the trouble to put on proper rubber appliances he is asking for trouble.

The first requisite therefore of the would-be occultist is that he should attempt to obtain mastery of himself and his lower nature. "Oh ! yes," the reader may reply ; "the most orthodox and narrowly literal person would tell us that. It is not peculiar to occultism." No one ever suggested that it was, but the matter is not so simple as it sounds, many individuals and religious bodies have gone grievously astray over it by treating mastery of self as though it meant *complete suppression* of everything but the purely spiritual side of a man's nature. This is the error of the ascetic throughout the ages : it is the error of Mr. Pussyfoot Johnson in this year of grace 1921.

The true principle at which the occultist aims is one not of total suppression but of *balance*. By balance I mean much what Aristotle meant when he defined virtue as a mean between two extremes. All nature is full of pairs of opposites—light and darkness, love and hate, and so on. Between these opposites there must in each case be a half-way house which is in itself neither, but might incline equally easily to either. Between light and darkness is twilight, between love and hate is indifference, between asceticism and licence is temperance, and so on. It may be urged, "But why praise or aim at a thing so negative as this point of balance ? Does it not fall into the condemnation of the Church of Laodicea, as being neither hot nor cold ? Is not love far better than indifference, for example." This objection is really based on a misconception. It is quite true that without love no one will get far on the Path of Adeptship, or of moral progress at all, but what is wanted in this connection is not the blind infatuation which refuses to recognize any imperfections, but the calm and dispassionate affection, which seeing both sides, good and bad, of the person loved can temper justice with mercy (but not with weakness, a totally different thing), and give help where it is needed. If two people have a difference the worst possible arbitrator would be a man who had affection or ill-will towards either party. Only a person who is, as regards them, at the point of balance, can see



both sides impartially and decide justly between them. So it is with the conflict of tendencies in a man's own nature. All natural passions and desires are given for use: nothing in nature is inherently evil; evil springs from the ignorant or wilful misuse of things good in themselves. It is no satisfactory cure for the excessive indulgence of natural appetites to ignore them or suppress them entirely. It is as bad a mistake to take no account of the needs of our physical life, as to take no account of the needs of our spiritual life; it is moreover a mistake which will result in injury to the spiritual life itself. The cure for drunkenness is not a rabid and fanatical teetotalism: it may indeed be doubted which is spiritually more destructive, drink or intolerance. Neither is anywhere near the point of balance. The man who had attained balance on this point might or might not so far as concerned himself decide for a number of perfectly valid reasons either to follow the Pauline advice to "take a little wine for his stomach's sake," or to abstain from it. But he would certainly disapprove equally of over-indulgence in alcohol, and of total prohibition of its use to persons who could use it without abusing it. He would probably hope more from reforming the drunkard than from penalizing the sober. But at the same time if he was really balanced, he would recognize that the question of the best policy in dealing with the social evils of drink is a matter of opinion and not like a mathematical fact, and that people who differed from him had a perfect right to their opinions, provided they had taken the trouble to inform themselves of the factors of the problem and were not propounding pure prejudices, supported by garbled facts.

I have dealt somewhat fully with this instance of temperance, in the hope of making clear what I mean by this principle of balance, as a step in that self-mastery which is an essential part of occult training. Put in more general terms, a balanced man may perhaps be defined as one who has achieved an unprejudiced attitude towards life making use of all its elements in due proportion, yet able to forego them without hardship if need arises; just and merciful in his dealings, without letting justice make him harsh or mercy make him weak. (The injunction to forgive your enemies does not necessarily imply that you must leave them at large to injure your neighbours as well. That is hardly doing to your neighbours as you would wish them to do to you. On the other hand justice can sometimes be better served than by making a criminal of a man who steals because his family are starving. It all comes back to the question of balance.)

It will soon be seen that this aim is in reality not any easier to attain than the more usual one of countering a vice by the cultivation of the opposite extreme which was erroneously supposed to be a virtue. He who would be balanced will find he has not only to curb his pet weaknesses but also very likely to cultivate in moderation qualities he may rather have prided himself on not possessing. If the hot tempered man must learn to curb his temper, equally the man who is too easy-going may have to cultivate the art of being righteously angry when occasion demands it. It is no more the part of a balanced person to witness a display of cruelty to children or animals without protest than to throw things at his wife if the dinner is five minutes late.

Most emphatically, this balance is *not* a vague "other-worldliness." The physical body may be the lowest and in some senses the least important part of man's nature. But it *is* a part and must be given its due place in the development of the man as a whole. It should certainly be the servant, not the master of the higher spiritual nature, but it is much better to have a developed, healthy and efficient servant than an atrophied, diseased and inefficient one. Therefore while you are in the physical life, by all means "see it steadily and see it whole," taking in moderation all the good and innocent things it has to offer. Some writers, I am aware, say alcohol, tobacco and meat should be absolutely eschewed by any who would develop occult faculties. It may be so with some of the Eastern methods of development, which are not well-suited to Western races and customs, and probably require a stricter and more rigid rule in these matters, but for the methods of which I have experience the moderate use of these things appears to make no difference. I use the last two regularly and drink alcoholic liquors occasionally. It appears to be a matter for the individual according to his health. Vegetarianism does not suit everyone, and the greatest necessity from a physical point of view for occult work is good health. No clairvoyant or astral work ought ever to be attempted when over-tired, ill, or worried, if it can possibly be avoided.

If any would-be occultist is tempted to neglect his physical health in the impression that thereby he is assisting his spiritual development, let him remember that every time he seeks to rise in consciousness to the level of the spiritual he must start from the basis of the physical, and the stronger that basis is the greater strength he has for his task and the more clear and coherent are his experiences likely to be.

## CORRESPONDENCE

[*The name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, is required as evidence of bona fides, and must in every case accompany correspondence sent for insertion in the pages of the OCCULT REVIEW.—ED.*]

### SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—I am surprised that an Occult paper should contain a review praising up the brochure upon "Spirit Photography" by Mr. Whately Smith and Patrick. If the reviewer desires to see the long series of errors and mis-statements in this article, he should apply to Mr. Frank Barlow, Bryntirion, Springfield Road, Moseley, who is among the best authorities in England upon the subject. This gentleman's crushing answer was refused admission to the Review in which the original attack appeared, on the ground that it was about to alter its character.

To anyone, like myself, who knows Mr. Hope, and knows also the character and care of the researchers who have worked with him, this attack from two young and inexperienced men (in which Hope is represented as a fraud, and people of the calibre of Sir W. Crookes or Dr. Taylor, Editor of the *British Journal of Photography*, are classed as dupes and fools) is as impertinent a performance as I have ever read.

Yours sincerely,

A. CONAN DOYLE.

4 MOSTYN TERRACE,  
EASTBOURNE.

### PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—During the summer of 1920 I was conducting classes in Harmonial Philosophy in St. Paul, Minnesota, U.S.A., in a church where the congregation was taking a vacation; so the only time the place was occupied were the evenings of my class, twice each week.

The water faucet was in the basement, and one evening, as I started down to get a pitcher of water, I heard a scuffling—rather in the air than on the floor—as I turned on the light from the head of the stairs. Upon reaching the lower floor I heard light voices—probably on the mental plane—complaining because of the rude disturbance, and distinctly saw people of the elemental plane moving about in the large room. In my mind I heartily apologized for interruption, got the water for which I came, and withdrew.

During the interim until next class I thought much of the experience, and related it to my hostess who was to accompany me there. Upon arrival I asked her to go quietly down, without turning on the light, and look and listen. She immediately returned, declaring she neither saw nor heard anything, but certainly "felt" much: a presence, a something which she felt confident was more than the suggestion made by what I had told her of my experience.

The evening was very sultry and warm—oppressive. I went to the room below. There were the tiny sprites busy in their movements. They seemed rather friendly to my presence; and "communicated" to me that they were making use of the unused room to prepare cool currents of air and that very soon the evening's oppressive condition would change. I returned; several members of the class had arrived and were complaining of the intense heat. I confidently assured them that the air would very soon be delightfully cool—and it was.

We are doubtless Spiritual Reality *involved* in material temporality: and sometimes—perhaps frequently on the part of some—we contact other planes of consciousness. Surely we should cultivate all constructive phases of possible Growth and Unfoldment. What theory better explains the currents of the air, the growth of vegetation, the atomic activities of all planes of manifest life, than the theory of Elementals?

I am, yours faithfully,

JOHN WILLIS RING,

Founder-President, The Harmonial Institute for Re-Education.  
4328 ALABAMA STREET,  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

## PERIODICAL LITERATURE

*THE Eastern Buddhist*, of which a first issue has reached us, promises to prove an important contribution to an important class of periodical press production. It appears at Kyoto, Japan, and six numbers are proposed in the course of each year, as an official publication of the Eastern Buddhist Society. There are articles on Zen Buddhism, as a "purifier and liberator of life," the word "Zen" being held to signify an "art of seeing into the nature of one's own being"; on the philosophical foundations of the Shin sect, in which the religion of enlightenment connoted by original Buddhism has become a religion of salvation; on Mahāyāna Buddhism, which is spread over China, Nepaul, Tibet, Mongolia and Japan; and on Buddhist hymns, those under consideration belonging to the thirteenth century and being the work of an author who was also founder of the Shin sect. Finally, there is an admirable biographical and interpretative account of the Buddha himself, his renunciation, his attainment, and the meaning of that name by which he is known. Altogether, the first number is excellent, offers real contributions to our knowledge, and deserves all the success that we wish it in concluding these brief words of appreciation and welcome.

We observe with some interest that after a long period Miss Mabel Collins has returned into the arena of theosophical magazine literature, by contributing an account of her early psychical experiences to the columns of *The Messenger*. She adheres to the familiar speculations of H. P. B. and most of the early theosophists, holding that the manifestations of Spiritualism do not come from discarnate human beings, but from elementals, otherwise Nature-spirits. The evidences for this view did not appear then and do not emerge now, though Miss Collins provides long and interesting particulars as to the fact of her own conviction. She had amazing experiences with Eglinton, Hanby, and other mediums who, for reasons of her own, she prefers not to name. . . . *Theosophy in England and Wales* gives the interesting point of information that Mr. A. P. Sinnett has left an autobiography, which will be issued shortly under the auspices of the Theosophical Publishing House. . . . A *Theosophical Quarterly* of New York has reached us for the first time, though it has been in existence for nearly twenty years. We have been impressed by its unusual critical and even literary ability, as evidenced by articles like that entitled, "On the Screen of Time," by another called, "Dante Sketches," and by an excellent review of six comparatively recent Dante books, which have been taken together for comparative study, after the manner of our old friends, the historical *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*. . . . It is a pleasure to see that *Papyrus* has not ceased publication, though

the likelihood was mentioned in its pages some months ago, as we noted with regret at the time. It may be remembered that it is the official organ of the Theosophical Society in Egypt, and it continues as formerly to appear partly in English and partly also in French. There are articles on the necessity of reincarnation, on Science and Occultism and on Science before Theosophy. *Papyrus* is published quarterly. . . . We have also *Teosophia en el Plata*, a new venture which appears at Buenos Aires. It will be understood that at such a distance from centres it depends largely on translated matter, but the Argentine section of the Society is represented in its official capacity; the dimensions of the Review are considerable and it is produced in a very creditable manner. . . . *Theosophisch Mandblad* is the organ of the Society in the Dutch West Indies and is published at Weltevreden. It has an article on Theosophy in reconstruction, in the last issue, and an extended translation of Yoga aphorisms. . . . In *Divine Life*, which is an organ of Theosophy after its own manner, or as conceived and established by Mrs. Lang, the publication is continued of her work on life in the spiritual world. It has reached the ninth chapter, being in reality her autobiography on the inward side, and not—as the title might suggest—an account of the “spheres” revealed by spirit-communications.

*The Harbinger of Light* gives particulars of amazing phenomena in Sydney, through the mediumship of John Coffey, now resident in that city, but a New Zealander by birth. They include materializations of faces and hands, levitations and trumpet-speaking. The occurrences are termed bewildering, and certainly suggest that the old physical manifestations have returned in all the power of the Home period, if not of that described in Colonel Olcott's *People from the Other World*. It is said that the medium remains normal and “controls the phenomena.” The account is written by the Chairman of a Psychological Research Society which has developed at Sydney out of a séance-circle. *The Harbinger* appears at Melbourne and is not at present in a position to offer any opinion, but the editor, Mr. W. B. Harvey, has been invited to attend the demonstrations, in order to verify the statements made. . . . *La Revue Spirite* assigns as previously the place of honour to its long series of contributions from Camille Flammarion, and there is little need to say that they deserve this distinction. There have been articles recently on Napoleon and psychical phenomena, on the world-wide diffusion of psychical investigations, and on premonitory visions. It seems scarcely twelve months since we noted in our contemporary's pages a report of proceedings at Père Lachaise, commemorating the anniversary of Allan Kardec's departure from this life. The anniversary has returned and has been celebrated once again, not only at his tomb in the cemetery, but at various centres of Spiritism all over France. In Paris the proceedings included a discourse at the sepulchre by M. Gabriel Delanne and the recitation of poems. . . . A writer in *The Two Worlds* discusses “the larger consciousness” under the notion

of a new mental world discovered, and we are obviously in agreement when it is affirmed that the light of science is beginning to penetrate the dark and mysterious recesses of human nature ; but it is scarcely true that F. W. H. Myers—though of precious memory—was the first to “propound,” whether or not he was the first to “prove,” that “besides the working consciousness of man there is another and a larger consciousness.” We remember Johann Gottlieb Fichte and his *Way to the Blessed Life*, with its memorable and suggestive intimations concerning the field of normal consciousness and all that lies beyond it. . . . In recent issues of *Light*, Mr. A. J. Wood institutes some comparisons between the revelations of Swedenborg and those of the Vale Owen scripts on space in the world of spirits, on the spiritual body and the soul in animals and plants. . . . *The Progressive Thinker* recurs, as it does continually, to the question of reincarnation, and makes two errors over matters of fact : (1) That there is no memory of alleged past lives ; on the contrary, occult records are filled with alleged recollections, not to speak of what is heard in occult circles, and they are one of the difficulties of this obscure subject, for they are usually put forward by persons whose remembrances are as worthless as would be their views on any important subject. (2) That Spiritualism has never taught a return to this life through any “accepted leader.” What about Allan Kardec and all, or nearly all, the annals of French Spiritism ? It is another difficulty of the subject, for in countries where spiritists have adopted reincarnations on a *priori* or whatever grounds, the real or putative messages from the other side tend to confirm the belief, and when the latter does not obtain it is quite unknown to the “spirits.” In another issue Mr. Edgar Lucien Larkin proposes that Einstein “may have received his theory of relativity from above,” namely, from “the seven spirit-spheres now scientifically known to surround the earth.” To look through the columns of our progressive contemporary is not, therefore, without its reward, nor again when it undertakes to show the untrustworthiness of Biblical chronology. . . . *The Revista de Espiritualismo* of Parana has just entered on its sixth year of publication. It is devoted to the propagation of spiritism, the occult sciences and experimental psychology. It is also the official organ of a Society which regards these subjects from the doctrinal standpoint of Allan Kardec, being the standpoint of reincarnation.

*The Messianic Messenger* continues to proclaim its gospel, and curious are some of the points, reminding us now of *Oahspe* and again of Hoene Wronski, who had also a Messianic programme, but early in the nineteenth century. That of the little Californian periodical proposes to unify Mystic Judaism, Esoteric Christianity and the fundamental truths of all the great religions. There are inspirational messages couched in perfervid terms and occasional detached thoughts on the unity of life, mystical illumination and love at the centre of our being. The form is crude, the American orthography looks awful

in serious records and some suggested etymologies are mad; but there is a ring of sincerity which inclines the heart to lenience. Some revelations look like Jane Lead returned to testify, having learned little between the days of the Philadelphian Society and those of the Universal Brotherhood, now in session at Oceanside. . . . *Anthroposophy* has short papers on the power of Art, on Goethe's theory of colour and on dancing. There are also notes and references to lectures by Dr. Steiner. . . . *Azoth* has articles on the cross and crucifixion, on the path to freedom and the problem of the ether. The studies on Goethe the Rosicrucian are continued from month to month, but the poet's connection with the Order in any defined sense does not appear. . . . Mr. George Chainey has produced a third issue of *The Universal Standard*, in connection with a School of Interpretation. We are told that Babylon is religion enveloped in mystery and that the captivity of the Jews therein signifies a separation of spiritual life from intellectual and material activities. The Tigris and Euphrates represent spirit and soul. It is difficult to see that this kind of reverie can lead anywhere in the world of ordered thought. . . . According to *Rays from the Rose-Cross*, the revelation of the Bible explains the Book of Nature, while the Book of Nature confirms the Book of Revelation. It is added that the one is the symbol or correspondence of the other and that the work of creation is made intelligible through the Scriptures. It is true that the things which are without are sacraments of the things that are within, but as the sacraments are many so are the Bibles also, for the word of man at its highest is a reflection of the Word of God. We are in more general agreement with a dogmatic statement of Max Heindel which affirms that "life has neither beginning nor end."

*The Freemason* reports on the authority of "information" to hand that a prominent French-Canadian Mason, being at the point of death, his relations were anxious that he should be buried according to the rites of the Latin Church, to which they belonged and of which he was once himself a member. The report is confused, meaning obviously that he should be fortified by the last Rites, including the Viaticum or Sacrament of Holy Unction. In any case, the priests of the Church made the inevitable stipulation that the sick man should renounce Freemasonry, which is forbidden to its members. There is no statement as to what happened in the end, but our contemporary comments that "such instances" are not infrequent, especially in Montreal, and that the Masonic authorities of this district "are exercised as to the wisdom of initiating French-Canadians who have not formally renounced Roman Catholicism by joining Protestantism." In other words, they are contemplating the advisability of reviving the Constitution of Freemasonry by exacting from candidates the qualification of a definite form of denominational Christianity. There must be something amiss with that "information," though it has evoked no comment in the Notes which cite it.



## REVIEWS

EXIT HOMO. By A. St. John Adcock. London: Selwyn & Blount, Ltd. Pp. xii + 47. Price 3s. 6d. net.

IN these days of official sharks and sheepshearers the voice of a lyrical satirist should attract as large an audience as Philomel. Mr. Adcock has a pretty wit which recalls the brilliance of England's "Augustan age." His burning contempt for a "free" press "shackled with secret gyves" is splendid, though they have never been secret enough to be mistaken for watch-bracelets. Mr. Adcock's aphoristic skill is well illustrated in the couplet:

" We lose our sense of touch  
And feel not what we handle overmuch."

On page 15 the author's clarity clouds a little, and on pages 40-41 he is not altogether fortunate in his descent to an elevation just above doggerel; but Mr. Adcock is nevertheless both a poet and a philosopher. He seems to tingle with the spiritual fire he radiates.

W. H. CHESSON.

FREEMASONRY AND THE ANCIENT GODS. By J. S. M. Ward, B.A., F.R.ECON.S., F.S.S. With an Introduction by the Hon. Sir John A. Cockburn, K.C.M.G., M.D., etc. Demy 8vo. Cloth. 373 + xxii pp. Fully illustrated. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., Ltd. Price 30s. net.

It is only six years since Dr. Albert Churchward published *The Arcana of Freemasonry*, in which he put forward a strong case for the derivation of Masonic Ritual from the Ancient Egyptian Mysteries, elaborated with a wealth of illustration and analogy collected during his researches into the Origin and Evolution of Primitive Man, and the signs and symbols in use in remote ages. This work did not appear to receive immediate recognition from a large number of Masonic students, but the present volume by Mr. J. S. M. Ward shows that the seed then sown did not fall by the wayside, but found its way into rich soil. Not confining his attention to Egypt alone, Mr. Ward has sought the true origin of Freemasonry in the ancient initiatory rites and Corroboree Ceremonies of our pre-historic ancestors. He contends that the signs which are still found among savage men the world over, being not merely similar to those of Freemasonry at the present day, but having also the same significance, furnish sufficient grounds for the adoption of his conclusions that the "Anthropological School" of research, as he terms it, should contribute evidence of greater value as to the origin of Freemasonry than the "Authentic School," which concerns itself chiefly with historical and documentary material.

As a Mason of experience and proven enthusiasm Mr. Ward is assured of an attentive hearing. He has collected and ably presented matter of intense interest to every Mason. His main argument is that Freemasonry is the basis of the Mysteries, not the Mysteries cut down or mutilated. Whether he takes us to India, Africa or the Middle East

he contrives to adduce striking and convincing evidence in support of this claim, which it is impossible to dismiss as negligible or inconsequent.

The book is one which must enable anyone who reads it to make a real advance in Masonic knowledge. Appearing as it does hard on the heels of Mr. A. E. Waite's masterly *Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*, it adds to the ever-increasing testimony as to the vitality of an institution which can embrace so many aspects of life and thought, both of the past and of the present. Indeed "Masonry is many-sided," as Sir John Cockburn says at the beginning of his admirable Introduction to this work, and we concur with him in his statement that no library, and few Masonic students, can dispense with the possession of a copy of this valuable Exposition of the true meaning of Masonry. The volume is well printed and adequately illustrated, and contains a short, though useful, Bibliography and General Index.

P. S. W.

MASONIC LEGENDS AND TRADITIONS. By Dudley Wright. Crown 8vo, pp. viii + 152. London: William Rider & Son, Ltd., 8 Paternoster Row, E.C.4. 1921. Price 5s. net.

By a process of exhaustion, we have most of us reached the conclusion, or have accepted as a working hypothesis, that the Hiramic Myth of Craft Masonry was first formulated in the years which followed immediately the foundation of Grand Lodge in 1717. It is not for such reason to be regarded as a lying fable; on the contrary it is comparable to Bacon's *New Atlantis* or Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in the sense that it is a morality, a tale possessed and permeated by an allegorical motive. It belongs in this sense to symbolism, and is part as such of the speculative Masonic system. It is neither of history nor tradition, and it has been allocated to these in the past only by minds devoid of critical gifts. In so far as it is a myth with a meaning there is a broad sense in which it seems to have been framed on the Ancient Mysteries, the death and resurrection of the god. When the High Grades developed there were some which emerged in a direct sense from the central story of the Craft, but their makers knew nothing unfortunately of the old Mystery-pageants, and they were among those who took the Hiramic Myth literally. There rose up in this manner a series of barren Grades, embodying further fables to extend the original story; but unlike this they were stories without a meaning. There was no morality "veiled in allegory" or "illustrated by symbols." In his account of Masonic Legends Mr. Dudley Wright has eschewed these things of imposition and vanity, which might have filled his volume easily, and has had recourse to the curious storehouse of the Old English Constitutions and to accessible rabbinical sources. To those who are not Masons his collection is almost sure to be new, and perhaps as much may be said of the rank and file in the Brotherhood. There are chapters on the Temple of Solomon in lore and legend, on Solomonic traditions, on Hiram King of Tyre, Hiram Abiff and even the Queen of Sheba, for whom a niche has been found—for better, for worse, as it may be—in Masonic archives. It should be understood that these things belong to the lighter side and the accidents of a great subject, but they have their place on its outskirts, and they are left here to produce their own impression, without discussion of their value. There are a few which have an aspect of importance which will appeal only to students as they connect with the Secret Tradition imported by Freemasonry from old antecedent sources.

A. E. WAITE.

**FOUR MYSTERY PLAYS.** By Rudolf Steiner. In Two Volumes. Vol. I, *The Portal of Imitation ; The Soul's Probation.* Vol. II, *The Guardian of the Threshold ; The Soul's Awakening.* London and New York : G. P. Putnam's Sons. Price 15s.

THE reader must bear in mind that there are enormous difficulties in translating a work of this kind unless the translation is done either by the author himself or by an initiate who has not only absorbed the spirit of the author's thought, but who has also awoken in himself creative and executive powers of a very high order. But in spite of the fact that these difficulties have not been successfully overcome, since the translation lacks concentration and is not sufficiently poetic, the spirit of these mystery plays cannot fail to work in serious students in such a way that, if they follow the hints here given, they will gradually discover in their own being the truths mirrored in the plays.

Dr. Steiner leads the discerning reader from the Portal of the Temple, through the ordeal of spiritual dryness, past the Guardian of the Threshold, into the heart of the Temple itself.

The process described in the plays (which form one continuous series) is the Rosicrucian Initiation—an initiation particularly adapted to modern days. We are shown the spiritual development of an artist, a scientist, a philosopher, an historian, a mystic, and a man of the world. The characters are interlinked both on the physical and spiritual planes, and react creatively upon each other as their soul-forces ripen in the warmth of the spiritual sun.

Dr. Steiner is certainly an adept of a high grade ; he is head and shoulders above any member of the English Theosophical Society ; and those who feel drawn to the Rosicrucian path should procure and study his works, in which clear and efficient guidance for the performance of the Great Work will be found. In the process of this Work the true nature of man is gradually revealed :—

His head doth mirror heaven's very self,  
The spirits of the spheres work through his limbs,  
And in his breast earth-beings hold their sway.  
To all of these opposed, in all their might  
Appear the demons, natives of the Moon,  
Whose lot it is to cross those beings' aims.  
The human being who before us stands,  
The soul through which we learn to feel desire,  
The spirit who illuminates our path :  
All these, full many gods have worked to mould  
Throughout the ages of eternity ;  
And this their purpose was : to join in one,  
Forces proceeding out of all the worlds  
Which should, in combination, make mankind.

MEREDITH STARR.

**MAN'S UNCONSCIOUS SPIRIT: The Psychoanalysis of Spiritism.**  
By Wilfrid Lay, Ph.D. London : Kegan Paul. Pp. 335.  
Price 10s. 6d. net.

THE chief effect of this thoughtful volume is of a substitution of the subliminal self of the spiritualist or spiritist for what the latter believes

to be another intelligence communicating with him. The author calls attention very justly to the resemblance between the processes of the automatic writer (e.g. Elsa Barker) and the writer who, without any thought of occultism, writes (as he thinks) at the dictate of his own will. He is very properly critical of inferences, and forces one, like a psychoanalyst worthy of the name, to bear in mind all the physical channels of our receptivity before becoming the Mandevilles of the spirit world. Needless to say he has a great if not altogether a happy belief in the power of the "unconscious" self, and he says, "If I had to choose between 'scrapping' my conscious mental activities and my unconscious ones, I should certainly throw over the former, as being the least advantageous for my welfare."

Speaking personally, I can distrust every spiritualistic doing which is the result of human collaboration; but my spiritualism rests, as (I scarcely doubt) does that of many others, on objective tokens of activity which I cannot ascribe to myself without indulging in a particularly unhealthy kind of self-conceit. They are proofs to me, if not to others. The ragamuffin who picks up a "crisp" fiver must expect to encounter the scepticism of innkeepers familiar with the Bank of Engraving.

W. H. CHESSON.

SELF-HEALING BY DIVINE UNDERSTANDING. By W. Owen Hughes, Author of "The Way of Health and Abundance," etc. Williamson & Co., 10 Hamlet Court Road, Westcliff, Essex. Price 6s.

THE author of this work—states an editorial note at the beginning of the book—"is a recognized Christian Healer of seventeen years' standing," and he has long acted in connection with Mr. F. L. Rawson "as a successful leading practitioner." Those who are familiar with Mr. Rawson's methods will have no difficulty in following the line of argument expressed by Mr. Hughes in the present volume. The author states that he was a mental and physical wreck when first he met Mr. Rawson. He was also an agnostic. From this pitiable plight he claims to have been rescued by the realization of Spiritual Healing, or Divine Understanding. Records of personal experience must always carry more weight to the average man than merely abstract theories. There is a widespread and increasing recognition that we must alter our standard of "values" and believe that we are truly spiritual beings "made in the image of God." And without going perhaps all the way with Mr. Hughes one can allow that there is much force in his line of reasoning. He optimistically declares:

"As a race we are nearer perfect health, harmony and satisfaction than we have ever been, although there would seem to be prevalent so much sickness, hardship and sorrow. Yet the majority of people are dissatisfied, and more or less unhappy. There is, however, a remedy which is based on a scientific and logical foundation; health thus founded on law and principle is permanent, and cannot be destroyed."

But are not doctors and surgeons often great channels for healing? And do not many herbs and fruits play their beneficent part in the Creator's scheme?

Mr. Hughes strongly discountenances hypnotism, describing it as dangerous both to subject and operator, and alleging that disease apparently so cured, returns often in a worse form. EDITH K. HARPER.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER. By Catherine Clay. London: Arthur Stockwell. Pp. 73.

CHILDREN of various ages will be amused by the verses in this little book. They are unequal in merit, but one of the best tells of an elephant who, thinking to do a kindness to his friend, the hen, sat on her eggs to keep them warm during her absence. There is also something quaintly attractive in the story of the two snails, one of whom was "weak and very thin, the other strong and fat"! The author usually contrives to point a moral, but it is a pity that so many of her verses are spoilt by careless construction and awkward inversions, such as—

"And many a lovely shell  
Upon the white sand lay,  
The boy from time to time  
To pick one up did stay."

Similar examples could be multiplied, but the book will no doubt give pleasure to the small public for which it is intended. E. M. M.

THE DESERT AND THE SOWN. By Margot Robert Adamson. London: Selwyn & Blount, Ltd., 22 York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C.2. Price 3s. 6d.

IF, as I believe, beauty in art is the result of suffering, then the writer of these poems has suffered much. The light of genius illuminates many lines, such as:—

O Thou who givest song in the night-season,  
And music when the morn with dew-wide wings  
Breaks through the pallid grays  
Of early dawning days  
In the wild raptures of the leaping springs;

and also the following from "A Celebration to Ishtar":—

The rhythmic cymbals' beat  
Of bitter hearts and sweet,  
Shall sing thee, when the wings of morning span  
The whole world's reflux tide,  
The heavens from side to side,  
The dawn of the triumphant ways of Man.  
When heaven and earth shall slip  
And meet there lip to lip,  
More glad than since the starry dance began;  
The vine of the lit skies  
Shake down its heavy fruit,  
Exult from leaf to root  
With hymns of thy returning Dionyse!

A wild, breathless, spiritual beauty breaks like sunrise through many of the poems and fills the reader with the sense of triumph, mastery and adventurous flight which accompanies the discovery of a new dimension of consciousness. MEREDITH STARR.

THE CLEARER VISION. By Gladys Murray. London: Erskine Macdonald. Price 3s. 6d.

THE immaturity of Miss Murray's art is especially noticeable in the long unrhymed verses which consist chiefly of prose split up into narrow vertical columns, but there is decided promise in the rhymed stanzas such as

"The Queen's Bower," "The Secret of Life," and "The Primrose," which runs as follows:—

Little flower in tender bud  
 Are you awaiting the sun's decree,  
 Or will some unknown loving sprite  
 Kiss you awake in the dim moonlight?  
 Fairy fingers under the leaves  
 Gently drying your dewdrop tears,  
 Wooing the heart so coyly hid  
 Deep in a mist of primrose fears.

MEREDITH STARR.

PICTURES FROM THE GREAT LOVE-MOTHER'S BOOK OF LIFE. No. 7, Series 3, "The Living Temple." Published by the Author, Miss Bruce Adams, "Aurora," Oakington Avenue, Wembley Park, London, N.W. Price 2s. net.

THIS booklet is one of a series of "Visions of the Innermost," set down in the form of picture and verse "by the disciple to whom they are given." There are indeed three series, each consisting of ten booklets, and each booklet containing either one or two reproductions in colour. That of the vision of "The Living Temple" is extremely delicate in colouring and harmonious in design, and arouses a desire to see some of the others described in the author's catalogue. Those interested may like to visit the Sanctuary at the address given above, where the pictures are on view daily from 11.30 to 12.30 and 2.30 to 4.30 (Sundays and Mondays excepted).

E. M. M.

IN THE POWER OF THE INFINITE. By the Rev. J. Frederic Sanders, Minister of Manly Congregational Church, New South Wales. London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd. Price 3s. net; in cloth binding, 3s. 6d. net.

A WELCOME spirit of optimism pervades the pages of this thought-inspiring book, which is dedicated by the author to "The large and growing number of Christian people who, having withdrawn from the Fold of the Orthodox Church, dissatisfied with her teaching, still retain a profound regard for the Truth she enshrines." Among many eloquent and interesting chapters, the two entitled "The Kingdom" and "The Chart," contain what to many readers will be the author's finest expositions of spiritual consciousness, but each chapter holds within itself "Some gem of purest ray serene. . . ."

"The Christ-Kingdom lies in no distant sphere. Heaven is conditioned by neither time nor place. . . . Heaven is here. We shall never be nearer heaven than we are at the present moment. There is no 'other' world, there is only one world, God's world—Heaven—and in that world we are now dwelling. . . ."

The Nazarene long ago told us this, and it has been reiterated to-day by His Messengers in the Unseen, though it is too often forgotten in the materialistic probings of what passes for "Spiritualism." Even though the Rev. J. F. Sanders may soar at times into heights too transcendental for ordinary human nature, his book is full of stimulating and practical suggestions on New Thought lines. It is an excellent idea to give an Appendix reference to his many most appropriate quotations.

EDITH K. HARPER.