

THE OCCULT REVIEW

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

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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

IT is a good many years since Monsieur Flammarion, the celebrated French astronomer, published his book, *L'Inconnu*, dealing with telepathic communications, the transmission of thought, and psychic phenomena in the world of dreams. In this work he also devoted an interesting chapter at the end of the volume to premonitory dreams, and divination of the future. Monsieur Flammarion has now given us a further work entitled *Death, and its Mystery*,* dealing with death and proofs of the existence of the soul. Since the publication of his previous work he has been in constant communication with correspondents, many of them people of some note, who have had psychic experiences and have narrated them for his benefit. Of

DEATH AND these he has obtained confirmation wherever it
ITS MYSTERY. was possible, and has in this way tabulated many hundreds of letters narrating experiences bearing on the question of the relation of this world to the next. In his new book he has dealt more fully with that fascinating side of psychic pheno-

* *Death, and its Mystery—Before Death.* London: T. Fisher Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.

mena, the perception beforehand in full detail, in dream or otherwise, of events which subsequently took place. Something like a hundred pages are devoted to this subject, and the author has expressed in them views on the subject of the relation between destiny and free-will which are almost identical with those I have voiced in writing briefly on this same subject in an earlier issue of the OCCULT REVIEW. He tells us indeed that he has written a book, not yet printed, *La Vue de l'Avenir*, entirely given up to this question, so that it is obvious that he has a considerable amount of further matter that has not yet seen the light, which he regards as confirmatory of his hypothesis. He sums up the conclusion he has arrived at from this large collection of material in the following words: "Future events can undoubtedly be seen in advance, and with great exactness."

The instances cited of this strange power of precognition are very curious and striking. Here is a case which is at once brief and to the point, and all the more interesting as it is obviously not a dream but a waking vision, in which a lady sees in advance an incident in relation to the death of an uncle with whom she was living and to whom she was much attached.

In June, 1898 [she wrote M. Flammarion], I was living with an uncle whom I dearly loved. As his health had become uncertain, we thought we ought to change our apartment for a house with a southern exposure and surrounded by a garden.

The evening before we moved, at eleven o'clock, I was thinking (very wide awake), alone in my room, of the grief I felt in leaving the well-loved apartment, when all at once I saw the garden of our new dwelling as it was at the time, very shady and full of flowers; then it became clearer, it seemed larger, and I saw it as it must appear in winter. The only verdure left was the green arbour of ivy. And at the same time I saw two undertaker's men, one large and one short, going down the path which led to the street.

This vision, which was very intense, struck me greatly at first, then I thought no more about it in the midst of cares which my uncle's condition caused me. But seven months later, in January, my uncle died, and on the day of his burial, a few minutes before the body was taken away, I saw the undertaker's two men, *one large and one small*, going down the path in the same spot where my vision had shown them to me.

Be good enough to excuse, dear master, the great liberty I have taken in writing to you, and receive my most respectful salutation.

MARIE LEBAS.

15 RUE CORNEILLE, LE HAVRE.

In this instance it will be noticed that though the experience occurred in the month of June, the vision showed the precipient a winter landscape, and the uncle's death eventually took place in January, seven months later.

In another record of similar character the writer, Monsieur A. Saurel, dreamt in 1911 of an incident which took place at the end of the Great War, and in which he figured as an officer.

On a little eminence [writes M. Saurel], the gentle slopes of which were covered with fresh meadows, I saw a large building of mediæval appearance, half small country-seat, half fortified farm. High walls, weathered by storms, surrounded the buildings with their unbroken girdle. Four massive towers, not very high, flanked the corners. Before the principal part and through the meadow there ran a pretty brook, with clear, babbling waters.

Men—soldiers—were fetching water from it. Others were lighting fires not far from stacks of guns ranged along the walls. These men were clad in a curious pale-blue uniform which I did not know, and wore a helmet which seemed to me of a strange shape.

I saw myself clad in the uniform of an officer and giving the orders of the camp.

The part of the country which M. Saurel saw in his dream was quite unknown to him, but it happened some seven years later that his regiment—he was then a lieutenant of infantry—was stationed close to the front in the department of the Aube. The battalion had been marching since early morning, and Lieutenant Saurel had received the order to camp under the walls of a *château* which was, he was told, two hundred metres to the right.

The countryside which appeared after I had passed the last intervening tree [he writes] struck me immediately. It was the same gently sloping meadow, all gay with the flowers which June scatters everywhere; the walls, the towers—all were exactly like those which I had seen seven years before in my dream. All the scene lacked was the pretty noisy brook and the monumental gateway.

As I was noting this difference between the dream and the reality, an adjutant came to ask me where the troop should go to get water. "To the brook," I answered, laughing. The non-commissioned officer looked at me in astonishment. I added: "Yes, if it isn't on this side it must surely be on the other side of the building. Come with me."

When we had rounded the tower at the north corner I saw, without astonishment, the gay brook running over the mossy stones and, towards the middle of the wall, the large gateway just as I had seen it in my dream, with its pillars of old brick.

The two leading sections had already solved the problem of water. Stacks of guns stood at the foot of the walls, in the shadow of which many of my men were already enjoying deeply desired rest.

The vision here was apparently simply a glimpse of the future. Nothing sensational occurred. It was, as it were, an intimation of what lay in store for the dreamer in connection with the by no means important part he was destined to play in the Great War.

Science has given the name of *paramnesia* or "false memory" to such experiences, thereby begging the question of their genuineness. The learned physiologist, Monsieur Ribot, treats them as illusory. "In these phenomena," he tells us, "there is an anomaly of the mental mechanism which escapes us." The real impression, he explains, is thrown into the background, and confused with memories of the past. "To us," he observes, "who judge it from without, and in accordance with what has come to pass externally, it is false that the impression was received twice." The idea, in short, is that the vision is simply an illusory impression conveyed by confusing the present scene with past memories. It is quite clear that, though such an explanation might be a possible one in certain instances, it has no bearing on many of the records narrated with every appearance of *bona fides*. Monsieur Saurel, in the instance above cited, tells us how in the year 1911 he spoke about his dream or vision to his friends at the time, and that it was fresh in his mind seven years later is obvious from the fact that he directed his adjutant "to go to the brook to get water," the brook being one which he had never seen before in waking life.

Here is another case from Monsieur Flammarion's previous work, *L'Inconnu*. It has relation to a dream of his mother's, who evidently was gifted with a measure of second sight.

During a certain summer [he writes] one of my sisters had gone with her husband and their family to live in the little town of Nogent. My father had accompanied them, and my mother remained in Paris. All the children were in good health and no uneasiness was felt with regard to them. My mother dreamt that she received a letter from my father in which she read this sentence: "I am the bearer of a sad piece of news. Little Henri has just died in convulsions with hardly any previous illness." My mother on waking said to herself, "It is only a dream." A week after, a letter from my father contained precisely this very phrase. My poor sister had just lost her youngest child in consequence of an attack of convulsions.

Such experiences lead to a discussion of the reality of free-will and the question whether the future can ever, properly speaking, be held to be in doubt. Monsieur Flammarion on this subject quotes Goethe as saying: "As soon as we grant liberty to man that is the end of the omniscience of God. And if, on the other hand, God knows what I shall do, I am not free to do anything but what he knows." Goethe cites this dilemma, as he says, in order to show that it is not good to touch upon divine secrets. Laplace (quoted by Monsieur Flammarion),

WHAT
GOETHE
THOUGHT.

writing more than a hundred years ago, expressed his opinion on this matter in much less uncertain terms.

We ought [he wrote, in his essay on *Probabilities*] to see the present state of the universe as the result of its former state, and as the cause of that which will follow. An intelligence which at a given instant could understand all the forces with which nature is animated, and the respective situations of the beings which compose it, if it was vast enough to submit these data to analysis and could include in the same formula the movements of the greatest bodies of the universe and those of the least atom—to such an intelligence nothing would be uncertain, and the future as well as the past would lie open before it.

It is difficult, it seems to me, to dispute the logical strength of this position, but does this necessarily involve the denial to man of a limited measure of free-will? Monsieur Flammarion thinks not. He holds that it is not impossible to reconcile our undoubted feeling of liberty in action with a premonitory knowledge of human events. "To see events unroll in the future as we see those that unrolled in the past, does not prevent the determining causes, including the human will, from having their effect."

We may have a friend whose character we understand so well that we know with practical certainty exactly what he will do under certain given circumstances. But the fact of our possessing this knowledge with regard to him does not in any sense limit his freedom of action. Certain antecedents must produce certain consequences, and the character of the actor who is playing his part is one of these antecedents no whit less than the circumstances in which he is placed. The consequences that arise are the result of the interplay between the man's character and the circumstances in which he finds himself. A man does not act otherwise than in accordance with the nature and temperament which he possesses. If he did so, education would be valueless, as its whole object is to form a man's character in such a manner that he shall act the part of a good citizen rather than a bad one. If his actions were a thing apart from his character, the process of education would clearly be waste labour. It has been urged that the unimportant nature of some of the details which have been foreseen in vision only adds to the cogency of the argument which maintains the rigorous necessity of everything that takes place. The conclusion to be deduced is that the uncertainty of the future lies rather in our ignorance than in any doubt which actually exists

CAUSE AND
CONSE-
QUENCE.

as to what destiny has in store. If we think otherwise, surely we must be attributing to the Deity a very perilous experiment in the creation of the universe.

It is difficult to argue that two men, if they were identical in character and in every other respect, would act differently under the same circumstances. As Mr. Chapman Cohen well says in *Determination or Free-will?* *

Let us note that the resultant of any calculation is no more and no less than a synthesis of the factors that are included in the calculation. If we do not understand the factors included in a given synthesis it will be a matter of "chance" what the resultant may be. But if we do understand the nature of the factors and the consequence of their synthesis, possibility and actuality become convertible terms. . . . The only legitimate use of the word "chance" is in reference to the state of our knowledge concerning phenomena. To say that a thing happened by "chance" is only saying that we are not aware of the causes that produced it.

If this position is sound, it follows that theoretically at least the future can be predicted, in spite of the frowns of all the magistrates and all the judges. It may, however, be argued, and I think with great plausibility, that Monsieur Flammarion lays rather too much stress on detailed visions of the future as proof positive of the inevitable character of all events. The mere fact of foreseeing the future in a dream or otherwise introduces a fresh operative cause which may influence and modify that future. Instances of this kind are on record, if they are rare. In one case a dream of drowning, where all the incidents were peculiarly vivid, resulted in the saving from certain destruction of the boating party. The dreamer was himself in the boat, and on recognizing the scene of his dream induced his companions to turn the course of the boat in time, and so avert the threatened catastrophe.

Another case is recorded by Monsieur Bozzano, in which a dream is fulfilled in the greatest detail, but with one slight modification, this modification being the result of the dreamer's own glimpse of the future. The dream is recorded in the present work, but the curious discrepancy is not given, and it is, I think, significant.†

A fencing master of Palermo dreamt that he was in the country going along a road white with dust, which brought him to a ploughed field. In the field stood a rustic building with a ground

* London : Watts & Co.

† Mr. H. S. Redgrove has based a similar argument on this incident.

floor used for store-rooms and cow-sheds, and on the right a rough hut and a cart with some harness lying in it. A peasant wearing dark trousers with a black felt hat came forward to meet him and asked him to follow him, and took him round behind the house. The details of the episode were so vivid in the premonitory dream, including a mule fastened to a swinging manger that blocked the bottom step leading up to the loft, and strings

A SIGNIFICANT DISCREPANCY. of melons, tomatoes, and onions suspended from the ceiling, as well as the presence of two women and a little girl in the room upstairs, which contained a curiously shaped high bed, that when the time came for the incident actually to take place some two months later, the fencing master found himself completely familiar with the whole lie of the land. The consequence was that when the peasant in the dark trousers and felt hat came up and asked him to follow him, he did not do so, as he did in the dream, but instead of walking behind him went on in front, as he already knew the way. Everything otherwise corresponded to the dream. The conclusion to be drawn from such an experience is surely that visions of the kind do not necessarily represent the inevitable—they are not really parts of a film of Futurity—and whatever we may think of the logical strength of the position that the future is predetermined, we must not press the evidence of such psychic experiences for more than it will warrant. Had the fencing master never had his dream we are almost compelled to assume that the incidents of the dream in question would have been fulfilled to the very letter. So, too, with the party in the boat. Had the dream not taken place, the crew, we may conclude, would have perished in the identical manner foreseen in the dream.

Such "films," we may say, really represented what must have taken place had no steps been taken to utilize the warning conveyed. Whence come these films and what are they? **WHAT IS THE "FILM"?** It is impossible to dogmatize, but we may suggest perhaps that they are visions conjured up by those who have passed over, and who can realize better than ourselves how events are shaping themselves, telepathically conveying a warning note to the dreamer of what the future holds in store. But clearly, at least in many cases, they do not represent certainties. The dramatic and pictorial nature of such visions is a well-recognized characteristic of the dream-world.

Whatever we may think with regard to the possibility of foreknowledge, it is plain, as already suggested, that a man's actions are dependent partly on his character and partly on the circum-

stances in which he is placed. When we talk of free-will we are not justified in postulating some power of decision or choice which lies outside these influences. If we did we should be bound to admit the irrational character of the universe, and effects brought about without any causal connection with their antecedents. It would not be by any means a satisfactory universe where things took place in this random fashion; nor is there anything to indicate that in the life of man the chain of cause and effect plays a less important part than in the material world. Many of the discussions which arise on the subject of free-will are based on a misunderstanding of the term. Unquestionably man has a limited free-will and the stronger the man's

THE CHAIN OF CAUSE AND EFFECT. character the less are circumstances able to dominate his destiny. But if we would know what it is that leads him to make this choice rather than that, in any given emergency, we shall have to ask ourselves whence he obtained that character and temperament which led to his making it. We shall have to ask, in short, if we raise the problem of personal responsibility, how far man is responsible for being what he is at birth, and whether his character here is the result of development through many preceding lives, or alternatively if he has been endowed with all that constitutes the individual self at the hands of a capricious deity. If we accept this latter alternative, why should we boggle at accepting also a universe in which caprice and chance hold unfettered sway?

ASTROLOGY AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. We know little, after all, of the extent of a man's responsibility for his actions. Criminals have before now been turned into good citizens by a surgical operation. The character, if the evidence of astrology is anything but worthless, depends not a little on the moment of birth. The difference of half an hour in the time may be sufficient to effect an all-important change in the character, no less than on the future prospects of the child's life. The time of birth has, we know, in numerous cases been accelerated or retarded by the physician in charge of the case. Not only this, but a recently published French work gives an instance in which an experiment in hypnotic suggestion was made, which led to the birth of the child taking place a week or two earlier than the normal date, and this without in any way jeopardizing the mother's health. In a case like this, is the doctor responsible for the character of the child? For if he had let things take their course, it is clear, on the astrological evidence,

that the child's character and fate as well would have been far different from what they actually became.

There are doubtless very many to-day who will pooh-pooh the evidence of astrology, and it is to be noted that Monsieur Flammarion himself does not accept it, but like many others who have not studied the subject, he is under the mistaken impression that this science is dependent on mediæval views with regard to the relation of the earth to the solar system—a fact which is by no means the case. Astrology is based on apparent positions only, and the arguments in its favour are in no way affected by astronomical theory. Had Kepler not realized this, he would never have admitted its essential truth. Its strongest defence lies in the fact that the proof mathematical is the most cogent of all possible proofs, and this proof mathematical is overwhelmingly in its favour. Nothing is more fully established scientifically than the validity of the figure drawn for the moment of birth, whatever doubt hangs over many of the systems adopted for the timing of events in the life. We cannot ignore the value of this figure of birth in gauging the responsibility of the child born* and the fact that this is so may well make us pause before over-stressing a man's direct responsibility for his life and actions.

“ JUDGE
NOT.” “ Judge not, that ye be not judged,” was well said by the Great Master. The justification for punishment is that it acts as a deterrent and is necessary in the interest of the community at large. Punishment *qua* punishment can never be logically justified.

The vast discrepancy between the higher and lower types now inhabiting this earth makes one wonder sometimes how it came about that they were all brought together in a single planet, and at the same time. Is the difference between man and man due, after all, to the fact that the evolution of one commenced thousands of years prior to that of another, or, to put it perhaps more accurately, that one is older in soul experience than his fellow? For to the spirit of man time, as it seems to me, is measured rather in terms of experience than in actual decades. Or, again, is it due to an essential difference in the primal seed from whence, æons ago, he sprang? In any case, man does not grow by vegetating, but by strenuous effort, and whoever is right in his philosophy of life, the fatalist is assuredly wrong.

* Though we may, of course, explain it as the outcome of the Karma of past lives.

Monsieur Flammarion, a large part of whose present work is concerned with the influence of mind on mind, holds that ideas are transmitted by the vibrations of ether. "If," he says, "it is not a substance which is transported, it is a wave which spreads." He does not agree with Sir William Barrett that there is no parallelism between telepathy and wireless telegraphy. One, he holds, will enable us to understand the other.

Without doubt [he writes in *L'Inconnu*], our psychic force gives birth to an ethereal movement which is projected to a distance like all the vibrations of ether, and is felt by all those brains in harmony with our own. The transformation of a psychic action into an ethereal movement and back may be similar to that which we observe in the telephone, where the receiving disc, which is identical with the sounding disc, records the sound movement that was transferred, not by sound, but by electricity. . . . The action of one spirit on another at a distance is not more extraordinary than the action of a magnet on iron, the attraction of the moon for the sea, the carrying of the human voice by electricity, and other marvels of contemporary science.

The extent to which spirit intervention operates in psychical phenomena is a point on which our author hesitates to express himself in any very certain fashion. He seems in doubt, in citing his very numerous instances, of how far these are attributable to the action of the subconscious self, but clearly the hypothesis that he adopts implies the possibility of spirit intervention, even where the alternative explanation may appear to him to be the more plausible of the two.

Monsieur Flammarion regards telepathy, including mental communications at a distance, as furnishing evidence of the personal existence of the soul. This point I have emphasized in an earlier number of the OCCULT REVIEW, and it seems to me that those who attempt to escape from the spirit hypothesis by postulating telepathy as an explanation fail entirely to grasp the implication which their admission of telepathy involves. If

TELEPATHY AS EVIDENCE OF THE SPIRIT HYPOTHESIS. the consciousness were dependent on the physical body it is hardly conceivable that thought could be transmitted to a distance of thousands of miles. It was precisely the recognition of this fact that made the earlier protagonists of science contend so vehemently against the admission of the truth of telepathy. Our author, however, discounts, and doubtless rightly, the actuality of the visions of saints, angels or gods through whose apparent instrumentality many cures have been effected at Lourdes and elsewhere.

The ardour [he says] of religious conviction is a proteus which changes its form and becomes Apollo, Æsculapius, Jesus, the Devil, the Virgin Mary, a god, or an evil spirit, according to the convictions or pre-conceived ideas of the conscious self. . . . All the sick who go to Lourdes wish to be cured, and in consequence have the image of the cure in their brains. But few of them are actually cured, because not all are endowed with the suitable nervous system to see their desires take shape and act as a supernatural being endowed with marvellous powers.

He cites an instance from classical times, of a man who had cancer of the stomach. This man came to the temple of the god at Epidaurus, fell asleep and had a vision. "It seemed to him in his sleep that the god ordered his attendants to seize him and hold him tightly while he opened his stomach. The man fled in terror, but the attendants of the god caught and bound him. Then Æsculapius opened his stomach, cut out the cancer, and having carefully sewed up everything, released the man from his bonds. Immediately after the god's patient woke up and found himself cured."

I am publishing in the present number some curious verses received automatically by a correspondent in Wales. It may be remembered that in a recent issue of the *Sunday Express* a set of verses showing considerable poetical talent, and also claiming an automatic origin, recently saw the light, and excited no little interest. The remarkable point about the poem, the commencement of which I am now reproducing, lies in the fact that the transcriber has no knowledge of poetry and admits to having had but little ordinary education. The verses were originally sent to me typed as prose, though the sender observed that, "They seem to have some sort of metre." I drew his attention to the fact that they were hexameter verses with a slight variation, and were written in rhythm very similar to Longfellow's "Evangeline." This poem, however, he had never seen, though I think he admitted having heard of it. Some later verses were written in ordinary English blank verse, while again there were passages of pure prose. The poem is a long one, and I can only here give the commencement. I may, however, quote the transcriber's own words with regard to the theme of the entire piece. The trend (he writes) of the whole sixteen messages is to show how missionary work is accomplished in the spirit world, and how Casedyn (its hero) induced many people to throw off the chains of sensuous attractions and follow him to higher planes of being; how

avarice, doubt, remorse, credalism, were in turn abandoned, and their victims emancipated.

The date of the poem is the later period of Roman rule in Britain.

THE MAGUS OF ART

By MEREDITH STARR

THESE are the songs that were sung for a wage
That never was given to Magus or Mage.
See how the runes of them riot and rage !

Lo ! in the East the horizon discloses
Beautiful beds of miraculous roses :
Here, in His Garden, the Magus reposes.

Each rose is a song whose immaculate splendour
Rushes, a storm, to His heart, to surrender
All to a love so ineffably tender.

This is the Garden wherein He redeems
Life to the living, creating in dreams
Edens of rapture by star-guarded streams.

Here He abides, in the Palace of Art,
Whose Glory and Power are His to impart,
Moulding the music that pours through His heart.

Guiding the dreams and the fortunes of man
Into the light of the Ultimate Plan ;
Working the Will of the whole—which is Pan.

TARANTISM IN MADAGASCAR

By W. N. NEILL

TARANTISM was one of those mysterious epidemics that swept across Europe in the dark days of the Middle Ages. It was supposed to be caused by the bite of a tarantula, a venomous spider of a light brown colour with dark spots and short, thick, hairy legs, which frequented the vicinity of the city Taranto in Apulia. According to Muffett,* the Elizabethan entomologist, the symptoms of the disease were: "If the speckled *phalangie* of Apulia do bite any one, there will follow divers and contrary accidents and symptoms, according to the various constitutions, different complexion, and disposition of the party wounded. For after they are hurt by the tarantula you shall see some of them laugh, others contrariwise to weep, some will chatter out of measure, so that you shall never get them to hold their tongues, and other some again you shall observe to be as mute as fishes: this man sleepeth continually, and another cannot be brought to rest at all, but runneth up and down, raging and raving like a mad man. With others again you shall have nothing but sadness and heaviness of minde, brown-studies, unaptensse to do any thing, as if one were astonyed. But let them be affected either with this or that passion, yet this is common to them all, that they are generally delighted with musical instruments and at their sound or noise will so trip it on the toes dancier-like, applying both their mindes and bodies to dancing and frisking up and down, that during the time of any musical harmony, they will never leave moving their members and limbs, like a jackanapes that cannot stand still." The dances and songs composed as a remedy for this malady were called *tarantella*, a word which still persists.

The advance of civilization was fatal to tarantism in Europe as the conditions under which it arose gradually gave way to better things, but in the more remote parts of the earth it has survived. In the year 1861 died Ranavalona, the heathen queen of Madagascar, who had banished all Europeans from her kingdom and had reintroduced the old pagan worship of the land after massacring the native Christians. She was succeeded on the throne by her more enlightened son, King Radama II, and once

* *Theater of Insects*, folio, 1658, p. 772.

again Europeans were permitted to dwell in the land and re-establish the Christian faith. In 1863 the Europeans residing at the capital, Antananarivo, heard vague rumours of a new epidemic which had broken out in the provinces and which the natives called *imanènjana*. A month later it was in the capital itself. Luckily among the foreigners resident there at this time was a Scotch doctor, Davidson by name, who made a special study of the phenomenon and later published the result of his investigations.* The work of a trained medical mind, collecting his information at first hand, it is of inestimable value in throwing light upon the similar epidemics of the olden days, whose chroniclers were somewhat more credulous and less scientific, as is only to be expected from the age in which they lived.

At first only small parties of twos and threes were to be seen, accompanied by musicians, dancing in the public places, but in a few weeks there were hundreds of them in the capital and overflowing into the remotest villages. The persons affected were mostly young women from the age of fourteen to twenty-five and of the lower classes, though not exclusively so. Men were comparatively few in number, perhaps about one-fourth of the total, and all of the lower class. It was practically confined to those of the old religion, for very few of the native Christians gave way to it. The change of sovereigns was responsible for this. The late queen would tolerate no Christian. The new king had reopened his country to European traders and missionaries; a complete reversal in royal policy. The Christians therefore had no longer anything to fear; the reactionary and anti-progress pagan party had. This explains the immunity of the Christians from the infection and its prevalence amongst the lowest and most superstitious orders of the populace. The symptoms were both physical and psychical. Physically premonitory were pain in the præcordia, great uneasiness, stiffness of the neck, pains in the limbs and back, and, in some cases, a slight touch of fever. In numerous cases, however, these symptoms were wholly absent. After two or three days of such debility the true tarantism showed itself. The patients grew restless and excited, especially when they heard music, and finally, becoming uncontrollable, broke away from the restraining grasp of their friends and threw themselves headlong into the frantic dance around some musician. For hours on end they would dance and with tremendous rapidity: the music never seeming to go fast

* *Choreomania: An Historical Sketch. With Account of the Epidemic observed in Madagascar.* Edinburgh, 1867.

enough although the players worked in relays. At first the dance was a monotonous motion of the head from side to side and of the hands alternately up and down. As the music quickened the movement became more of a constant jumping up and down than anything else. While so engaged the performers uttered no sound, save a sigh now and then, while their eyes and whole expression showed a complete abstraction, as if their thoughts were far, far away. The favourite instrument was the drum, but if no drum could be had, the dance went on just the same to the accompaniment of singing or hand-clapping of the attendants. If the music suddenly stopped the dancers either dropped down as if dead or they rushed frantically away at great speed till at last they fell insensible. When this occurred the patient was generally cured. He or she was taken home, and when consciousness returned the morbid impulse had entirely disappeared, although in a few cases there was a slight recurrence of the symptoms on the approach of music.

There are a few interesting sidelights on this strange subject. Not infrequently dancers performed their evolutions with a bottle of water so wonderfully balanced on their heads that not a drop was spilt. Many of them also carried sugar-canes in their hands or over their shoulders as they danced. A favourite rendezvous for the choreomaniacs was a sacred stone in the plain beneath the city, on which many of the Malagasy kings had been crowned. For hours they would dance around this stone, winding up at last by placing their sugar-canes on it as an offering. A graveyard was another favourite ballroom. They would meet there in the evening and dance amongst the graves all night *au clair de la lune*. On describing their sensations after the malady had passed away some averred that, while dancing, they were in direct communication with the spirits of the dead and especially the late Ranavalona. Others said they felt as if a dead body were tied to them and, strive and leap as they might, they could not shake it off. Others, again, thought that a heavy weight had been attached to them which was constantly drawing them backward and downward. The dancers had also strange likes and dislikes. The sight of a hat, a pig, or any object of a black colour positively threw them into convulsions. The hat, perhaps, suggested the European; the pig hatred was a relic of the ancient Arab influence on the island. This epidemic, though so alarming in its aspect and its prevalence, was by no means fatal. A few patients did die, but only when restrained by main force from joining in the dance. Their death would be due to the pent-up

passion and excitement. The safest cure was to allow the afflicted one every freedom, for the physical exercise itself, although abnormal, killed no one.

In the light of these details it is most interesting to re-examine the historic cases of tarantism that occurred in Europe ages ago. There too it only appeared when the public mind was disturbed to the depths. The first outbreak took place immediately after the Black Death had ravaged the continent and when want and woe and wretchedness, combined with intense religious excitement, were the result. The Children's Crusade, which was an epidemic of practically the same sort, was brought about by the recapture of Jerusalem by the Saracens, and it is noteworthy how rapid was the spread of it. The same colour caprice prevailed in it also. The story of the Pied Piper is by some regarded as having its root in this Crusade—which, alas! others say is also a myth—and it may be that the children of Hameln were caught in the grip of a local epidemic of tarantism and exorcised by a piper clad in parti-coloured garments which would have the same soothing effect as his music. The question here arises, may not these symptoms of quite up-to-date tarantism have a far-reaching significance when set side by side with those of the Witches' Sabbath? In Scotland, as Pitcairn pointed out long ago, witches showed an exceeding partiality for churches, graveyards and consecrated ground generally. It was in such sacred spots that they held their orgies, as the reader of *Tam o' Shanter* is well aware. Music of some sort was a *sine qua non* at the Sabbath which could not be properly concluded without the back-to-back dance. On the Continent Satan often took the shape of a log or the stump of a blasted tree to the eyes of his worshippers. He might as well have been metamorphosed into a standing stone of untold age and repute, just as in Madagascar. The broom-stick in Europe may have filled the place of the Malagasy sugar-cane. We also read that the witches sometimes danced each with a cat tied around her neck and another suspended from her waist like a tail: an incubus to be shaken off only by the mightiest of efforts, as in the case of the Malagasy dancers. Mad dancing is of course, regarded all over the world as a sure method of getting into communication with discarnate spirits and deities, so that those dancers who fancied that they had spoken with the dead queen Ranavalona were only handing on a universal tradition. From slight resemblances such as these above noted it would seem that the relationship of the disease called choreomania with the practices of the *Sabbat des Sorciers* would bear keen inspection.

THE CLIMBING OF THE HILL

THE EXPERIENCES OF A BARD IN GWYNFYD

By CASEDYN THE BARD

Written down by W. CARLOS

MESSAGE ONE

I SPEAK of a time when this land writhed under the yoke of the Roman.
She groaned in her travail and pain, the hearts of her children undaunted,
Where from the ribs of old Gwalia the three rivers met in the valley,
The people were holding Cymanfa. Southward, high up on the hillside,
The maen-hirs encircled the altar. There, gather'd to worship their Maker
Were people of all the three shires. The Druids, the Bards, and the Prophets
Beneath the benign sway of Brychan perform'd all the rites of the Sun-cult,
When high in the heaven we beheld him enthron'd on his seat in mid-summer.
With harps and with voices we hail'd him, of God the most visible token.
The cohorts of Rome were at Caerdydd, and Fulvus, their leader, was furious
Because of their failure to conquer the men of the brave chieftain Brychan.
His spies bore him tidings that Brychan was holding the summer Cymanfa,
And straightway he sent five centurions to slaughter the people of Mathryn,
And capture or kill the chief Brychan. Our people, unconscious of danger,
Abandon'd themselves to their worship, and joined in the contests of singing
And harping and versification, which were the chief features of effort.
Then suddenly out of the forest the armed men of Rome rushed upon us.
Our warriors all rallied round Brychan, and forming a zone of protection

Endeavour'd to shield all the women and children from hurt by the
foemen,
And form'd such a front that the Romans were baffled in winning
their object,
And had to retire in dejection. But woeful had been their destruction,
For scores of our warriors had fallen, some women and children among
them,
Besides many bards, priests and prophets, among them the writer
Casedyn.

From out of the din of the battle—the flashing of arms in the sun-
shine,
The reek of the blood of the fallen—I pass'd in a moment (in seeming)
To worlds where a calm peace was regnant. At first I was isolate—
lonely,
Then out of the open came loved ones—teachers and kindred and
pupils—
To welcome my advent among them. Methought I had waked from
a dreaming
Engendered by foulness of stomach, and *this* was my real life of living,
The *other*, a nightmare of fancy. Yet—*why had those loved ones been
absent?*

Perplexed by such crude cogitations, I abandon'd all hope of solution,
And entered the *present* with fervour, content to forgo explanation.
I *had* been bereft, but no longer, for *here were* my lov'd ones in *pre-
sence*,
Yet—*some of the links were still missing.*

Dazed by this mist of perception I sank to a state of oblivion,
Or dozed in a state of abstraction, a mystical coma around me.

I woke—to perceive in my presence a Druid of aspect benignant,
Whose features were quite unfamiliar, yet stamp'd with qualities
noble.

I questioned, "Where am I, O Druid?" He said, "In the Valley
of Gwynfyd."

(In the lore of the Bards the three regions were Ceugant, and Gwyn-
fyd and Abred.

In Ceugant—the One True Existence. In Abred—external creations.
In Gwynfyd—the sphere of progression.)

Thus did I learn of my passing from earth in the region of Abred:
And thus did I know that my spirit persisted, and still was Casedyn.
"Oh, the faces of those I had lov'd! Oh, say, were they phantoms,
O Druid?"

"No, real as the peaks of the mountains when day lifts the mists of the morning."

"And what of the earth, O my Master, have I left it for ever behind me,

Or shall I awake on the morrow, and find myself still in the body?"

"No more shall the earth know your presence in physical aspect familiar,

'Unless you return as a spirit, to carry glad tidings from Gwynfyd."

"Gladly would I be the bearer of tidings from Gwynfyd to Gwalia, For sore are the hearts of our people because of the Roman invasion."

"Go—tell them the Romans are leaving, for fierce foes are girding their city;

But, alas, for the comfort of Gwalia the Danes and the Saxons and Normans

Are bent on the conquest of Prydain. She will fall—but with sphinx-like uprising

She will yet be the Mistress of Nations, and reign o'er the ocean of waters.

Her ships, belching fire, will engirdle the whole world from ocean to ocean,

And bring lands, as yet undiscovered, beneath the proud sway of her sceptre."

Thus spoke the voice of the Druid: the message I carried to Brychan And voiced it by means of a novice who yearned for the rank of a prophet.

In Gorsedd assembled the Chieftain, his Bards and his Prophets and Druids,

Were invoking the blessing of Gwynfyd, and pray'd for Heaven's aid 'gainst the Romans.

When Brychan received Gwynfyd's message, he sent word to all the great chieftains

To gather the clans to the mountains. Thus Gwalia preserved independence

All through the long centuries fighting, until the great days of Glendower,

And the birth of the first Prince of Cymru.

MESSAGE TWO

I awoke in the dawn of the morning—for such seemed to be its true meaning—

When the heather breathed fragrant around me and blue-bells rang peals in the coppice;

The oaks spread their giant arms o'er me—the pendant leaves gleaming in brightness;

The ferns curled their fronds 'mid the boulders and draped all the banks with their verdure.

Before me there stretched a great valley, begirt with peaked, fir-
cover'd mountains.

A river of ever-fresh water, pellucid as eyes of a maiden,
Gleam'd like a ribbon of silver, save where the unbrageous shadows
Of foliage darken'd the water. A breeze, like the breath of a mother
Who watches her infant in slumber, blew over the landscape and
flutter'd

The feathery plumes of the grasses, and rustled the oak-leaves above
me.

My soul felt the mute benediction of peace which the scene was
imparting,

And gratefulness welled from my bosom to Him called the Bounteous
Bestower.

Then to my side came my Blodwen, the wife of my heart, whom I'd
cherished—

The wife I had lost with sore anguish. How she came I know not.
She was with me,

And with her the child, little Myra—the plaything and pet of my
manhood.

“Why did'st thou leave me, my Blodwen, when first I arrived in this
country?”

I cried in my great perturbation. “Because that not yet art thou
fitted

To dwell with thy loved ones, Casedyn. *We* have advanced in the
spirit,

Whilst thou art as yet in the earth-thrall. The day comes when thou
shalt be like us,

Freed from the trammels of earthness, and walk in the brightness of
manhood,

Enjoying the high paths of Gwynfyd. But first, O my husband, thy
nature

Must undergo purification, to fit thee for dwelling among us.

We come from a sphere much above this—for this is the first of a
series

Of steps leading up to the mountains—where the people, all freed from
their errors,

Assemble for ever to share in the Plenydd, the Alawn, and Gwron.

Be humble and patient, Casedyn, and follow in faith those who guide
thee.

The knowledge of earth is as nothing to that which lies outspread
before thee.

The wisdom of earth is re-shuffled and new truths gleam out un-
expected,

And facts which appeared so explicit, when viewed from the side of
the spirit,

Appear to have been mere illusions.” “O Blodwen,” cried I, “how
then comes it

That thou, who on earth hung dependent on knowledge that I was imparting,
 Hath now become my instructor ? " She smiled, and her face became radiant
 As mountains reflecting the sunrise. She answer'd, " Because I was destined
 To follow the highway before thee, and thus to obtain many glimpses
 Of glories, outspread, which await us. The *Truth* is *inhaled* here in Gwynfyd,
 Not *learned* by a process of study, and I have but inbreath'd its spirit
 Without any claim to be clever." "Thou ever had'st quick understanding,"
 I cried in my pride of her sweetness, " And gladly I yield my submission
 And sit at thy feet for instruction." "Nay, others will be the unfolders—
 The guides of thy steps to perfection. I must return to my own place
 To wait there until thy home-coming ; yet will I not leave thee all lonesome,
 But often as possible visit, to cherish thee during the journey."
 She whispered "Farewell" and embraced me, and then I perceived her no longer.
 A feeling akin to resentment was dawning upon my sore spirit,
 When, out of the silence, came voices. 'Nay, fret not, Casedyn, we're with thee.'
 My soul was thus soothed with awareness that in the sweet air all around me
 My loved ones awaited my coming. Then a fresh voice impinged on my hearing,
 "Arise, O Casedyn, and follow." I cried, "Let me know who is calling,
 And whither the calling will lead me?" "I am thy Guide; one appointed
 To teach thee the Pathway of Wisdom. Not yet can'st thou see me, yet follow
 The call of my voice when you falter. Ascend to the top of the hill-side,
 And take the first pathway descending. Nay, fear not ; thy loved ones have charged me
 To see to thy welfare and comfort." The Voice then preceded my footsteps
 As up the steep hill-side I clambered, nor paused I until the high summit
 Was reached and I stood on the plateau. I paused, then, to scan the changed aspect—
 The region now lying before me was barren, unfertile, and misty
 Contrasted with that left behind me. A long, narrow valley, bare, rugged,

With bleak, naked hills, scarred and cloven, like stern visaged guards
watching captives.

My heart sank in viewing the prospect, my soul shrank in dismal
foreboding.

I cried out, "O Guide, must I venture? What lieth beyond there to
call me?"

He answer'd, "Thy duty is calling. In that land are many benighted,
Who, drawn by the charm of thy singing, will follow wherever thou
leadest.

Thy task is to lead them up hither and thence to the Valley of Gladness
From whence thou hast come to their rescue. Dost shrink from the
task, O Casedyn?"

I said, "If my song will persuade them to leave this dark Valley of
Sorrow

And mount to the Valley of Gladness, most blithely will I take the
venture."

Then the Voice spoke out in approval, "Thy faith is thus shown by
obedience,

And, bless'd by a clearness of vision, the pow'r to behold me is given."

I looked and beheld a bright vision, a man clad in vestments so
wondrous—

Of hues that would rival the rainbow, and fabric as fine as a sunbeam.
His hand held a harp, such as minstrels would carry with them on
their journey.

"'Tis thine, O Casedyn, be joyful, this harp is the work of thy brethren
Who long have been dwelling in Gwynfyd. Tuned by it, your songs
shall be welcomed

Wherever my guidance will lead you." I looked on the harp with
great pleasure

As soon as my hand had received it: the frame was of chastely
wrought silver—

Its strings like the yellow boar's bristles; the belt was embroider'd of
doeskin.

"Come, wake up the Muses, Casedyn, and fearless descend to the
valley

And sing of the truth as you know it." I touched the fine strings as
he bade me,

And sang of the Valley of Gladness, and out of the heavens all around
me

Sweet voices now joined in the chorus. I wended my way to the
valley,

Unheeding the pathway's rough nature, absorbed in a deep inspiration.

A MYSTICAL EPIC OF THE HOLY GRAAL*

By PHILIP S. WELLBY

IN this poem, those who are familiar with Mr. Waite's former works will find what they have been led to expect, an individual interpretation of a particular phase of the soul's quest for the realization of the Divine. He is not re-telling Malory, or the wonderful French "Queste," which was the source of the great book first printed by Caxton; nor can the reader catch more than a faint echo of the note of research which sounded so clearly in the author's study of the Graal Legends in his work, *The Hidden Church of the Holy Graal*. The castle of Amfortas disappears, and in its stead we find the mystic Zion; the chronicler is merged in the Psalmist, and sings with Asaph:

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." †

Those who would delight to pursue the knightly adventures of Galahad or Percival nobly celebrated once and for all time by Tennyson, may feel some disappointment in that Mr. Waite travels no common ground of legend in this poem; but it may be recalled that Malory gives the adventure of the San Graal for "one of the truest and holiest histories that are in the world," as a colophon says.

Mr. Waite here offers a record of experience based on the sacramental mystery of chalice and pyx, in which all the outward forms finally disappear, and the two characters of his poem Beata Mea and Quæstor Vitæ are withdrawn together into the divine centre. It is a new story of the lover and beloved espoused in God, "a grade of union never reached in earthly nuptials."

Till it was with them, for a moment's space,
As when the spirit is alone with God,
In God's great rapture. . . . (p. 98.)
. . . and in a mode
Beyond all time the Everlasting Love
Was its own object. (p. 137).

"In the present generation," wrote Robert Buchanan, "a

* *The Book of the Holy Graal*. By Arthur Edward Waite. Crown 8vo. Cloth. J. M. Watkins. Price 6s. 6d. net.

† Psalm 1.

poet who deals with Divine issues must be prepared for the neglect of the idle, and the misconstruction of the impatient.* It may be that Mr. Waite's latest poem will be overlooked by the connoisseurs of those fanciful trivialities which are ever poured forth in abundance under the guise of poetry, but the province of the poet is the whole life of man, and in the mystical sense this poem is like a story of life itself, which is called by St. Martin "a grand parable." "It will give place," he adds, "to a grand morality."

The nature of the theme chosen by Mr. Waite may possibly preclude his work from any large share of popular recognition, but it will be read and re-read by many whose eyes have sought to see "the King in his beauty," to whom the glory of God is the sole concern of literature as of life itself, and for whom "the sacraments abide in all our paths, and grace through them flows in." Mr. Waite is thus assured of an immediate audience such as he himself would desire, and, for the rest, his audience is likely to increase rather than to diminish with the lapse of time.

The story of the quest which the poem sets forth begins in dream, and dream passes into reality:—

Where else but in high dreams does quest begin
Asleep or waking?

We follow the lonely maid, Beata Mea, a daughter of life, and Quæstor Vitæ, the seeker-poet, through their devoted pilgrimage—she, bearing the great pyx,

Went up and down in wistful ways of sleep.

He

A second pilgrim in the world of dream,
Though each to each unknown—bore wine therein,
A blessed chalice in his hands held up.

Thereafter follows their meeting in "a holy place," where man and maid joined their life in dream. In the world of reality the action of the poem is furthered by the Wise Master who also first comes in dream:

. . . Unto her
And him it was as though a priest and king
Came out of Salem, carrying bread and wine,
The healing of the nations in his hands.
And she acclaim'd ever in her heart
Priest of the Most High God.

The concluding sections of the work may be briefly outlined

* *Vide* prose note to *The City of Dream*. Chatto & Windus, 188

by their titles : " Of Spiritual Marriage," " Priest and Priestess," " A Golden Veil of Doctrine," " Christ Mystical," and " Within the Veil." Finally, in his own manner, Mr. Waite has given expression to that which has been the theme of mystics and philosophers of all times, the consummation of the Great Work, the Beatific Vision, and the goal of the divine science of the Mysteries :

. . . they discerned
 The omnipotent universal soul
 Of all humanity made one in Christ
 The spirit of the cosmos. . . .
 . . . Then
 It was as if a voice—which was no voice
 Of earth, but like the heavens together run
 And flowing into utter'd harmony—
 Cried " All in All."

The poet's inspiration would seem to be that described by Phædrus, that " of which ascendant Venus is the pure patroness—rapturous love which carries us to heaven in ecstasy, and in the mystic union with Deity discloses things unutterable. In this union the divine element within us is emancipated and rays forth immeasurably, transcending space and time."

There are many passages of surpassing beauty in this volume. Mr. Waite does not labour high-sounding melodies of phrase and metre, that tickle a fastidious ear. He uses blank verse easily, perhaps sometimes carelessly. If Poe's axiom is conceded, that " a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul," the occasional sacrifice of the rhythmical flow of metre is condoned by the corresponding gain in a directness of expression, which is not to be balked by any niceties of scansion. In the lyrical pieces which are interposed between the seventeen cantos of the main poem, Mr. Waite shows that he has a command of unconventional and melodious metre. Here is a stanza from one of these :

In the evening of life
 In an ashen glow, on a path alone,
 It was Thou whom I look'd for from first to last :
 I found Thee, I have Thee, I hold Thee fast—
 Soul-Lord in the evening of life—
 Thine be my leading through ways unknown.
 They are known in Thee ; they are paths above.
 In the arms which enfold me, all paths are love.

(p. 119.)

THE CULT OF THE WITCH

BY J. W. BRODIE-INNES

THE study of witchcraft through many ages and countries leads almost inevitably to the conclusion that it is not a matter of certain countries, and certain centuries, nor of waves of superstition—the cult of the witch is as old as the world, and will last as long. It may come into prominence in one country or another at particular periods, but will never die out, and though names and some externals may change, it remains in all essentials much the same through the ages. The very same forms that were recorded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England and Scotland may be found to-day by those who know where to look for them, and not in this country alone. Many years ago M. Jules Bois, author of *La Sorcellerie au Maroc*, wrote to me that there was no form of witchcraft recorded in the witchcraft trials of two and three hundred years ago that was not practised to-day in Morocco with identically the same formulæ; or, coming nearer home, we find well-known and acknowledged witches in Brittany, constantly consulted by the peasantry, and dealing in spells and love philtres and all the usual merchandise.

This consideration is a great help to the student. If witchcraft were, as some writers seem to assume, an isolated phenomenon affecting only one period of the Middle Ages, it would be almost impossible even to guess at the psychology of a witch. Why should she, with no apparent inducement, deny God, renounce all hope of salvation, devote herself in so many words to perdition and eternal torment, and having done so often un-compelled and voluntarily confess, and that not with any repentance, but exultantly, and with self-satisfaction describing in full her actions?*

It seems incredible, especially as the witches had very little satisfaction, even in this world. And few writers have even ventured on a theory as to how the witch looked out on the world, and what were her motives. Theories of insanity, of inherent and congenital wickedness, or of example producing a species of epidemic, are obviously insufficient to account for the facts. But if we take the witch-cult to be a permanent

* This is the case with many confessions, some, as that of Isobel Goudie, seem to proceed from genuine repentance.

factor in human nature, persisting through all ages and countries, which can be studied in every conceivable variety of circumstances, we may hope to arrive at some conclusion.

Some day we may have a complete history of the proved facts of witchcraft from the earliest times to the present. But in the meantime a full and careful collation of all the records of one country and one age is of incalculable value, and such a collation has now been put forth, dealing with Eng'and and Scotland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with incidental illustrations from France in *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, by Miss M. A. Murray (published at Oxford by the Clarendon Press, price 16s. net), a book of which the importance is only equalled by the careful accuracy of its compilation.

In her introductory chapter Miss Murray propounds a theory, which is indeed the thesis of her work, and which may carry us very far in the investigations of the subject, namely that witchcraft was in fact the pre-Christian religion, the ancient religion of Western Europe, still surviving, and underlying Christianity, and practised by many classes of the community. There were of course very many pre-Christian religions, some fairly well known, others hardly known at all. As, for example, that of the Druids, the Hellenic faith, with its subsequent developments in the Olympian theocracy, the Mithraic, Buddhistic, and multitudes of others. But underlying and permeating them all is postulated one universal cult, which Miss Murray calls the "Dianic," whose modern example is in Ritual Witchcraft, or Ceremonial Magic.

There are many examples in history of the God, or good power, of one generation becoming with scarcely any change of name or attributes the evil power of the next. We may instance Set in Egypt, Lucifer, the bright and morning star, Son of the Morning, the Demiourgos of the Gnostics, and many others. There is, therefore, nothing surprising in the fact that the God of the Dianic Cult should become the Devil of the Christians. Europe was only gradually converted, and though Christianity became the State religion it is certain that vast numbers of the people would remain secretly votaries of their old traditional faith.

It is curious, by the way, that Miss Murray, in giving the dates of England's conversion, on which she sets some store, should give the mission of Augustine A.D. 597 as the date of the conversion of England, entirely ignoring the Celtic Church. This is somewhat regrettable, for in the first six centuries, the time prior to

Augustine, the Christian and the Dianic Cult existed together, and apparently in harmony. It is true we have but scant evidence of this period, and that mainly in poems and legends. Still, there seems high probability that the thread of the Dianic Cult ran through that early Christianity, and that the vigorous opposition came later, when Augustine had introduced the Roman influence.

Now if we assume with Miss Murray that the Dianic Cult was a veritable religion, it is as easy to assume conversions thereto as conversions to Christianity, and to credit the converts with all the fanatic zeal usually displayed by converts, and indeed all conditions were in favour of enthusiastic converts. The religion was the old one wherein their fathers had been brought up, Christianity was new and untried. It seemed harsh and unkindly. Moreover it had nothing to show. We may imagine the old ceremonial magic had definite manifestations, even if only such as are familiar in séance rooms to-day. A convert would regard all the Christian terms as belonging to the false creed he had renounced. He would not stop to alter the names. Heaven, Salvation, Eternal Hope, would all be a part of the errors he abjured. What if the God he was now taught to believe in, to trust, was called the Devil? What though the blessed future was called Hell, or eternal perdition? Names mattered not to him. He embraced *the ideas*, and gloried in his new-found faith. If the early Christian martyrs could go to the stake, exulting in their devotion to their belief, so be sure could the enthusiastic converts to the Dianic Cult.

With this key very much that was obscure and bewildering falls into line. We have only to shift our point of view, and imagine the revelation of a new religion exciting enthusiastic devotion, and kindling a spirit ready to suffer anything, even death itself, for the cause. Read the stories of the early Christians, and try to realize the point of view of the Romans, determined to root out this damnable heresy that threatened their State religion and all they held sacred; and the point of view of the Christians, hankering for the crown of martyrdom to witness to their devotion to their faith. Then reverse the rôles, and imagine the Christians as in the place of the Romans, and the Dianic worshippers in that of the Christians, and a wholly new perspective emerges.

It is from this point of view that Miss Murray invites us to look at the Witch Cult, and she endeavours with much success to outline for us what the Dianic Cult really meant. Her argument is a little spoiled by a tendency to explain all that was

apparently supernatural. This rationalistic standpoint would be more in harmony with the last century than the present, and all history shows us that a purely rationalistic religion never attracted enthusiastic devotion. Instances will appear as we examine Miss Murray's work, but they can be easily discounted, and do not detract from its value.

We know well now that witches usually were grouped into small circles called Covens (perhaps conventions), usually in this country at all events of no more than thirteen, though there were often several Covens in the same town or district. Whether the number had any astrological signification is yet to be investigated; it is probable but uncertain. Over twelve witches or warlocks the Devil presided. He was the God of the Dianic Cult. Miss Murray naturally commences her inquiry into this Cult by examining what was the position of the chief personage therein. "To the witches," she says, "the so-called Devil was God manifest and incarnate: they adored him on their knees, they addressed their prayers to him, they offered thanks to him as the giver of food and the necessaries of life." Yet she says later on, "The evidence of the witches makes it abundantly clear that the so-called Devil was a human being, generally a man, occasionally a woman"; and farther on again, "As it is certain that the so-called Devil was a human being, sometimes disguised and sometimes not, the instances in which these persons can be identified are worth investigating." The evidence, however, amounts simply to the fact that when the Devil appeared to the witches he did so in the form of a man. Isobel Goudie, who goes more into detail than any other, describes his appearance, which differs notably with the occasion. The man who first met her is hardly to be recognized as he who baptized her in his own name in the Kirk of Auldearn, or again as the wild huntsman when the Coven rode after the stags, or the dancer and reveller at Darnaway.

Occasionally, it is true, the leader of the Coven is identified as a known man. But if he is the God of the Cult, then each Coven has a different God, and that God merely a well-known and not very distinguished farmer of the neighbourhood. Such a faith is hardly one that breeds martyrs and fanatics.*

* Some trials largely connected with politics, as that of Dr. Fion, which involved the Earl of Bothwell, nephew of the husband of Mary Queen of Scots, alleged to be head of a large company of witches; or that of Lady Monro, of Fowlis, and various others, require very special treatment. They are exceptions to the general principles of the Witch cult.

Moreover Isobel herself says in one place, "The Lord forgive me that I should call him a man." So Miss Murray's certainty as to the humanity of the God of the Cult appears inconsistent with the evidence. If she had said, "The so-called Devil was a medium controlled by the God," the whole mass of evidence falls into line. It is true that mediums were not known as such in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But the idea was familiar. For example, a worthy minister, an ancestor of my own, who lived in the days of the witch-cult of the seventeenth century, wrote concerning a warlock, afterwards burned in his own parish: "From whence it is evident that the Devil spake through this man. For certainly of himself he had neither the learning nor the skill of language to discourse as he did."

If we take it then that the belief of the Dianic Cult was that their God, whom the Christians termed the Devil, controlled and spoke through a certain man to a small select company sitting to receive such communications, that sometimes he even materialized before their eyes, it is not difficult to understand the fervour of devotion with which such messages would be received, and the fanatic enthusiasm that would lead them to welcome torture and death in defence of their faith, and exult in their confession, even as did the Christian martyrs of the first and second centuries, or the persecuted Catholics in the days of Elizabeth. With this clue, moreover, we can trace the Dianic Cult, here in Europe to-day, though the terms are changed. We do not speak of witches now, but we do hear now and then of a lady-psychic of wonderful gifts and powers. We do not speak of Covens, but we hear of small groups and circles sitting to receive communications, which are accepted with all the reverence that befits divine revelations. And reading through the extraordinary mass of evidence that Miss Murray has collected under the heading of "The God," we can scarcely avoid the idea that the old Dianic Cult is not dead, and the Witch and her Coven may still be found, if we know where to look. A faint and colourless adumbration it may be, but signs are not wanting that it is growing, and fuller and more vivid examples may occur as we proceed.

We find also that witches frequently brought their children when quite young into the Cult. Sometimes even three generations would all be votaries. This is quite consistent with the theory of the Dianic Cult as a religion, sincerely held. But not with the idea of conscious wickedness, a hatred of humanity, or of insanity. A difficulty no doubt occurs in the accounts of the

Grand Meeting of witches when we are told the Devil asked of each one what evil she had done to his honour in the past twelve-month. We hardly conceive of a religion that demands evil deeds of its votaries. Yet it is to be remembered that in the clash of two rival faiths, the good of one may be the evil of the other. We can imagine Torquemador counting all to the credit of his emissaries the number of Jews and heretics tortured and burnt, or Elizabeth's myrmidons proudly enumerating the Catholics betrayed to shameful death. Yet in both cases the faith called forth fanatic enthusiasm.*

So reading through the mass of evidence which Miss Murray has accumulated under the title of "The God," one cannot avoid the conclusion that nothing but a fervent belief in a religion whose God spoke through the witch could account for the proved facts.

The ceremonies of admission to the Dianic Cult have varied greatly in different ages and different countries, from being extremely elaborate to the opposite pole of extraordinary simplicity. This has been the case with all ceremonial magic, which probably reflects the instinctive methods of the expression of ideas of the race and time, from the ornate ritual of Spain and Italy to the bare simplicity of the North. Thus we may profitably consider the instructions given in mediæval books for the making of what are termed the instruments of magical art. The construction and consecration of knives, gravers, burins, etc., wherewith to engrave symbols and sigils on plates of metal, involve cost and technical skill almost prohibitive to the would-be magician. But in other countries it was recognized that the power of the instrument was not in itself, but in him who consecrated and wielded it, and the symbols and names associated therewith had power, just so far as they aroused forces in him. Therefore pieces of painted wood, and paper, or parchment, inscribed with appropriate names and symbols, were just as powerful as the most elaborately made instruments of art. An Italian warlock had his wand made of ebony, engraved by means of a magical burin, at calculated times, with mystic names and seals. Yet tradition has it that Master Michael Scott cut from the hedge a straight hazel rod, and having notched thereon with his knife a few mystic figures, and breathed an invocation of power, he easily vanquished the Italian. In the same way the

* We may remember also that in the case of the Thugs, the worshippers of Kali, the head hunters of Borneo, unprovoked and causeless assassination was the service of their God.

ceremony of admission naturally varies greatly in different times and different countries.

Miss Murray gives three essentials for the admission of converts from other religions on which the ceremonies seem to have been always built up. These are: (1) the free consent of the candidate; (2) the explicit denial and rejection of a previous religion; (3) the absolute and entire dedication of body and soul to the service and commands of the new Master and God. To these essentials symbolic acts were from time to time added, and after a while fell into desuetude, and others took their place. A very common action was to place one hand on the crown of the head and the other beneath the feet, and dedicate all between the two hands to the Devil. Baptism also occurred, but on the whole was rare. Occasionally we find the Baptism of Blood, where the Devil took some of the candidate's own blood and baptized her therewith, giving her a new name. According to some of the mediæval authorities the Blood Rites always connoted black magic; and this brings us to another point that does not emerge very clearly from Miss Murray's work. The Dianic Cult may be, but is not necessarily concerned with, black magic. In fact the evidence of the witchcraft trials does not seem to draw any very clear distinction between black and white. We inquire then at this stage what we now understand by the distinction. Rome in the Middle Ages was very definite. Whatever was done outside of ordinary well-known causation, or supernaturally, was only permissible if done by, and under the sanction of, the Church. If otherwise it was magic and witchcraft, no matter for how good an end, and was to be utterly condemned. Thus many of the witches were convicted merely of healing the sick by touching, rubbing, washing, etc., and these were held equally guilty with those who brought death and disaster. It was in fact the clash of the rival faiths, and the renunciation of the Church, not the evil done, was the real *fons et origo mali*. This intolerance, however, died down, and white magic came to be recognized as that whose incentive is benefit to humanity. Black magic, on the other hand, has for its object hatred and malevolence, and the doing harm to humanity, or to certain individuals. The distinction is quite clear in some of the witch rituals, many of those, for example, contained in the Great Grimoire being definitely intended to work evil. Another item in the Admission Ceremonies on which Miss Murray lays considerable stress was the signing of a Covenant, often apparently signed with blood. This appears to be a comparatively late

addition to the formulæ, but prevalent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which is the time from which the bulk of Miss Murray's evidence is drawn, and it would naturally be an important feature at a time when all the powers of Rome were directed against the Dianic Cult. But in earlier as well as in later days, there seems to have been no such hard and fast definite status of membership.

The same may be said of the special mark wherewith the witches were signed as belonging to the Devil, which was said to be given by the Devil himself at the time of their admission, but very often appears to have been some birth-mark such as is well known to medical science now. Miss Murray's account of these marks is curious and interesting.

Passing on to the matter of the assemblies, Miss Murray emphasizes the distinction, often forgotten or ignored, between the Sabbath, which was a solemn and formal religious meeting, whereto only initiated witches were admitted, and the Esbat, which was rather a meeting for business and for instruction, whereat spells were taught, and the formulæ of witchcraft explained to the younger recruits, or sometimes merely for pleasure, or for the manifestation of diabolic powers, as the raising of storms and the like. There is some evidence, though Miss Murray is not clear on this point, that an Esbat was occasionally attended by the uninitiated, before whom the Devil was by no means averse to display supernatural powers. Before the time of the definite hostility between the Christian and the Dianic Cult, the Esbat seems occasionally to have been actually looked on as a recruiting ground.

Both the Sabbath and the Esbat almost invariably concluded with feasting, dancing, and revelry. The proceedings at the Sabbath varied considerably with the race and the time. Compare the accounts of the mad orgiastic revelry described by Goethe in *Faust*, or by Merejkowski in *The Forerunner*, with the description of the proceedings at North Berwick, detailed in the trials of the North Berwick witches, where the Devil mounted a pulpit and preached to them from a black book—a truly Scottish touch this: the difference of the gay Latin race and the serious and somewhat dour Northerners being clearly marked.

Miss Murray gives some extremely interesting notes from various countries as to witches' means of locomotion—mainly flying in the air—either by their own powers, or being carried by the Devil himself, or by some familiar, or by some animal called into existence for the purpose, as Isobel Goudie rode a

windle straw (i.e. a straw blown on the wind) transformed to a horse by the magic spell of *Horse and Hattock*. Miss Murray here says with great truth that, "The belief that witches actually rode in the air seated on some concrete object, such as an animal, a human being, or a stick, is both ancient and universal, and is reflected in the ecclesiastical and civil laws."

It appears also that those intending a flight to the Sabbath used to anoint themselves all over with some magic ointment, which enabled them to fly. Miss Murray has procured some of the prescriptions for these unguents, and has taken medical opinion as to the effect of them in producing delusions, especially the sensation of flying, drawing apparently the inference that the whole voyage to the Sabbath was merely a delusion induced by drugs, and never took place at all. In many cases this may have been so, but there are cases recorded that cannot be so easily disposed of: where witches took messages, and received messages at the Sabbath, knew who was there and what took place, and being examined separately the accounts tallied. This may, of course, point to some form of telepathy, but it savours rather too much of the superior attitude which says, "This is how it's done." In any case, there are many to-day who firmly believe in levitation, and whose recorded testimony to cases they have personally seen may profitably be read alongside of the witches' journeyings to the Sabbath.

And apropos of locomotion, it is rather singular that Miss Murray does not mention here (though she alludes to it in another place very briefly) the testimony of the North Berwick witches of crossing the sea in sieves to meet the Devil in North Berwick kirkyard. So far as I am aware this mode of locomotion occurs nowhere else, and it is peculiarly interesting from the fact of its being mentioned by Shakespeare in *Macbeth*, "But in a sieve I'll thither sail." Only of Scottish witches does Shakespeare refer to this formula, and arouses the question whether by any possibility he can have met with a witch ritual now lost.

In relation to locomotion of witches a few characteristic instances are omitted, as for example the case of the Dornoch witch, the last to be burned in Scotland in 1722, only thirteen years before the penal statutes against witchcraft were repealed in England and Scotland. This old woman was accused of having ridden on her own daughter, transformed into a pony, and shod by the Devil, which made her ever after lame, both in hands and feet.

Also apropos of flying, there is a story in *Aubrey's Mis-*

cellanics of an ancestor of the Lord Duffus, who was suddenly transported through the air from Scotland to Paris, where he found himself in the French King's cellar with a silver cup in his hand. In the year 1695 this cup was still in the possession of the family. In Lord Fountainhall's *Decisions*, vol. i, p. 15, is an account of the rencounter between Mr. David C. Williamson, schoolmaster at Couper, and the Rosicrucians, who could make their spirits bring noble Greek wine from the Pope's cellars to Couper, and feasted the schoolmaster at London "with all varieties of delicate meats, where they were all served by Spirits."

Recurring now to Miss Murray's thesis, considering mediæval witch-cult as a religion, and identifying it with the Dianic Cult, and considering this as the primitive religion of Western Europe, with the sole modification of her theory of taking the leading witch or head of the Coven, not as the incarnate God of the cult, but as a medium controlled by the God, we can with the evidence before us to some extent reproduce some of the leading features of the cult. And the question arises, have we here the mysterious and unknown and carefully concealed faith of the Celtic Druids? Cæsar speaks of their religious, scientific, and philosophic culture with much respect: "They discuss and impart to the youth many things respecting the stars and their motions, respecting the extent of the universe and of our earth, respecting the nature of things, and respecting the power and majesty of the immortal Gods" (Book vi, 14). But, though acquainted with letters, they strictly forbade the committal of their doctrines to writing, thus ensuring that they could never be controverted. The doctrines were confined to the initiated, and thus when their order perished, their teaching, whatever it was, died also. There seems a strong probability that in all ages and all races where it prevailed the Dianic Cult ran like a thread through the external faith of the race and time.

And we know that at least two foreign elements have been mixed and confused with the Celtic, whereby elements have been popularly ascribed to the Druidic Cult, utterly at variance with what we know of their teaching and character. Writers have striven in vain to reconcile Druidic culture with the stories of human sacrifice, the burning alive of multitudes of men and women in huge wicker cages, and the sacrifice of children. These things were undoubtedly done. But they are the rites of the worship of Moloch, brought in by the Phœnician tin traders.

Also Lucan *Pharsalia* (Bk. 1, 444) accuses the Celts of follow-

ing the cruel and pitiless cult of the Scythian Diana—Phœnicians and Scythians—but theirs was not the cult of the Druids.

Now if the cult of the witch be the same as the Dianic Cult, and this has persisted through the centuries from the earliest ages with very little change save in the names, there seems a reasonable possibility of indicating what this universal cult really amounted to, which appears to permeate every form of external faith, sometimes acknowledged, sometimes in open and avowed hostility. And to this end a close and intensive study such as Miss Murray has given us of one country and one period should prove of infinite value, enabling us to trace its manifestations to-day, and by their aid to throw strong searchlights on to the dim past.

If the Dianic Cult was the religion of witchcraft, we ask naturally what was the force that impelled sudden conversions from Christianity, inducing witches, as appears from multitudes of confessions, to renounce almost at once all the religion they had been brought up to, and their eternal hopes, and the answer becomes clear if we regard the cult as a nature religion, vouched by material phenomena. Consider the known phenomena of mediumship, materializations, direct voices, spirit messages, etc., in support of a religion asking no self-denial, or renunciation of natural inclinations, and we have an attractive faith, vouched by miracles, a God who not only promises but performs his promises, and the enthusiasm of the votaries becomes natural.

Turning now again to Miss Murray's description of the "Rites," we find much in confirmation of this theory.

Her chapters on the "Rites" are very full and carefully collated and are extremely valuable, giving many details not ordinarily accessible. They deserve careful study. Moreover, in the period covered by her extracts we get probably the nearest possible approach to the real Rites of the Dianic Cult, lying between the wild luxuriance of Pagan ritual, unrestrained by any hostile faith, and the barren careless performance of ceremonial, when the cult had reached a low ebb, and absence of opposition took away much of the need for organization.

The act of homage with which the Rites commenced seems in some form or other practically universal, and is the natural prelude to the religious ceremonies that followed, the worship of the God of the Cult. These ceremonies varied with the race and character of the people, and reflected their natural mode of expression of worship; puritanically simple in Scotland, they

became elaborately gorgeous in Southern Europe. Hence we have the Black Mass, with all the Catholic ceremonial turned, as it were, upside down, insulting and denying the most sacred symbols of Christianity. Miss Murray particularizes music and dancing as concomitants of the religious functions, and these have been an integral part of Dianic ceremonial in all ages. And to-day the accompaniment of music at séances is almost universal, the singing of hymns being the most usual form. Dancing is perhaps not so usual in this country, though there are certain groups or circles whose rituals chance to be known to me, where ceremonial dances are a constant part of their religious functions, and young girls supposed to have psychic qualities are invited to join in "dancing classes" with a view to their becoming future recruits of the Coven.

But Miss Murray's second chapter on the Rites is perhaps the most curious and valuable in her whole book. It is on Rain-making, and on the Fertility Cult.

Of Rain-making we need say little. It is very seldom practised in this country, though there are some who declare that they have seen it done. But the Fertility Cult is probably the most essential element in the Dianic faith, persisting from the very earliest times of which we have any account, and with very little variation.

The Fertility Cult is really the employment of sex magic to promote the fertility of crops, or of animals, or of the worshippers themselves, and incidentally to bring good luck generally. This was undoubtedly the original intention of the Eleusinian and Bacchic mysteries, though these degenerated into mere orgies in their decadence, and of the Isiac mysteries in Egypt. Dr. Phené considered that these mysteries were the remains of the cult of a much older civilization. Traces may be found to-day in Brittany. Mr. Rolleston, in the *Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race*, gives a drawing made on the spot by Mr. Arthur Bell, showing the Fertility Cult still in full force at Locronan, with the symbols and sacerdotal organization of Christianity pressed into the service of this immemorial rite. Mr. Bell says the clergy take part in these performances with much reluctance, but are compelled to do so by the force of local opinion. In Ireland the goddess Aine, patroness of Munster, was the love-goddess, and promoter of fertility, whose name still clings to the hill of Aine (Knockainey) near Loch Gur in Munster, where she is still worshipped by the peasantry, carrying lighted torches of hay and straw tied on poles, on St. John's Night (see a curious

account of this ceremonial in "Popular Tales of Ireland," by D. Fitzgerald, in the *Revue Celtique*, vol. iv.).

This Fertility Cult still survives among the mediumistic groups and circles in the cult of spirit-lovers, and astral affinities, and many cognate names.

The communications, mediumistically received, regarding these are for the most part kept very strictly secret. Sometimes they are given in a séance or meeting of the group, more often in writing, automatic or inspired, which writings are shown only to select members of the group, regarded perhaps as initiates. I have met with a few of these writings which may be usefully compared with the communications given to the mediæval witches, and detailed in their confessions, many of which may be found in Miss Murray's book. A large number are simply of a gushing sugary type of sentimentality. But some, and these the characteristic communications, are obscene to an extreme degree. These formulæ seem to be carried much farther in America than in Europe, and frequently to mask under the guise of Occult Orders.

Miss Murray's next chapter on the "Organization" is valuable as giving a typical organization of the Dianic Cult at the time and place treated of. It must not, however, be supposed that this was the sole or even the most usual form. The organization of the cult varied as much or more than that of the Christian Church, and at one place and time we may find an organization as strict and logically complete and elaborated as that of the Roman or Greek communion; at another as lax and formless as the freest of non-conforming sects.

It is when Miss Murray gets beyond the Witch Cult that her work appears disappointing. The chapter on Fairies is distinctly below the rest of the book in value. She seemingly takes the view, at one time strongly promulgated by rationalists, that fairy legends were simply the relics of a pigmy race, inhabiting these islands before the coming of the Celtic people. That there was such a race seems pretty evident, and that some of them continued to exist for a long while in lonely and unfrequented places even after the present inhabitants were settled here. Also that many traditions concerning them may have lingered, and been embroidered with others, till they formed a folk-lore of their own, so much we may freely grant. But this after all takes us a very little way. The fairies to this day believed in by the Western Islanders, by the Irish, or the Cornishmen, can by no means be accounted for by any traditions of pigmy races. Or

take such a book as Wiertz' *Fairy Faith in Celtic Lands*. A pigmy tradition might perhaps account for something like a twentieth part of the work, leaving the remaining nineteen-twentieths to be regarded perhaps as fantastic superstition. Yet there is as good evidence of the belief in this as of the Witch Cult.

In the Bodleian Library, Oxford, there is a rare and curious MS. entitled "An Excellent Waye to Get a Faerie." This is a distinct fairy ritual, and, though probably belonging to the Dianic Cult, is quite distinct from the witch rituals, and certainly has nothing to do with a real or supposed pigmy race. There is in fact material for a book on the Fairy Cult, nearly or quite as elaborate as Miss Murray has given us on the Witch Cult.

The stories of Joan of Arc and of Gilles de Rais deserve fuller treatment, but Miss Murray has done good service here in insisting that the two should be studied together, and also that the accounts of the trials should be read in the original. Why it should be assumed that the "Voices" that guided Joan in her girlhood at Domremy were those of human beings is not easy to understand. It may be so, but the evidence, as I read it, seemed much more to indicate that Joan was clairaudient. Miss Murray apparently regards M. Anatole France much more as a serious historian than his own countrymen are inclined to do. A full and complete study of these two stories will be made some day, and will yield extremely valuable results, being, as Miss Murray truly says, "the first great trial of strength between the new faith and the old," wherein the victory was with the new. But such study should be made in the light of modern psychical research, and may be expected to add a new chapter to the history of the Dianic Cult, and the clash of faiths which has produced the witchcraft theories of Western Europe.

The literature of witchcraft is already so enormous that it seems almost impossible that anything novel can be said on the subject. In the French Encyclopædia it was stated that in the Pantheon library alone were some 15,000 works on magic. England and Scotland can show a goodly number, the most authentic and prominent of which are enumerated in the Bibliography appended to Miss Murray's work. The main ground, however, is covered by three—Reginald Scot, Kirkpatrick Sharpe, and the very interesting but little-known Dalyell's *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*. Miss Murray, in giving chapter and verse for all the stories, and linking up the Witch Cult with the Dianic, has struck a new note, and opened wide fields of investigation for future workers.

TALISMANIC MAGIC

By H. STANLEY REDGROVE, B.Sc., F.C.S.

IT is easy—and it may win a certain measure of applause—to dismiss the belief in amulets and talismans as a mere superstition, devoid of any serious interest. I do not think, however, that it is either profitable or wise. The belief in the power of the talisman or amulet is world-wide. It has won acceptance from generation after generation of men, and still persists, in one form or another, amongst many nations to-day. So ubiquitous and persistent a belief demands an explanation. Its very vitality indicates that, false and foolish as many of its forms undoubtedly are, there is at its root an element of truth. What this truth is has been well expressed by Mr. and Mrs. Pavitt, in their admirable work on the subject, of which a second edition has just been published.* They write :

The belief in [amulets and talismans] is by no means so universal as in olden times, and to the thoughtful person many of the attributes claimed for them cannot be admitted ; at the same time, with the growing knowledge of finer forces opening up new powers to mankind and with which we are slowly coming into touch, many people are prepared to admit that there may be some active power in a thought made concrete in the form of a talisman or amulet which may be made for some specific purpose, or for particular wear, becoming to the wearer a continual reminder of its purpose and undoubtedly strengthening him in his aims and desires. †

Or, as I have myself ventured to express it : “ The power of the talisman is the power of the mind (or imagination) brought into activity by means of a suitable symbol.” ‡

Superstitious folk nowadays who believe in the virtue of amulets, go to the nearest jeweller and purchase a lucky pig, or a black cat, or a bit of New Zealand green-stone. This is talismanic magic of the most foolish character. At its best a talisman is something very different. According to the old

* *The Book of Talismans, Amulets and Zodiacal Gems.* By William Thomas and Kate Pavitt. Second and Revised Edition. 8½ ins. × 5½ ins., pp. xx + 292 + 11 plates. London : William Rider & Son, Ltd., 8 Paternoster Row, E.C.4. Price 10s. 6d. net.

† *Op. cit.*, pp. 10 and 11.

‡ *Bygone Beliefs*, p. 86.

occult writers, whether of Egypt, Greece or mediæval Europe, the making of a talisman is no simple matter. For them, the talisman is the embodiment, in symbolic form, of an idea—nay, rather, at times, of a whole philosophy. Its making not only



requires thought on the part of the operator, but usually more or less elaborate ceremonies are prescribed, well calculated to impress this idea upon his mind and to aid the concentration of his will upon the achievement of the desired purpose.

Strictly speaking, the terms "talisman" and "amulet" are

not synonymous. Talismans proper are always astrological in their symbolism. The object of their use is to obtain the virtues of one or other of the heavenly bodies, which the ancients regarded as spiritual beings. But the term is seldom used with only this restricted meaning, and may, I think, be usefully extended to apply to any symbolic prayer or demand addressed to a spiritual being for aid in the achievement of man's purposes.

As so used, the term "talisman" will be found applicable to, if not all, certainly a large proportion of amulets. The peasant who nails up a horse-shoe on his cottage door, does so unthinkingly. The ancient Greek did much the same thing, but not unthinkingly: he was invoking the moon-goddess Isis.

In no other case, perhaps, is the connection between amulets and the gods so clear as in that of the amulets of the ancient Egyptians. These were not only carried by the living, but, owing to the great importance attached to the preservation of the bodies of the dead by the peculiar religious beliefs of the Egyptians, were lavished on their mummies. Mr. and Mrs. Pavitt devote many very interesting pages of their book to Egyptian amulets, and illustrate these by means of several plates, one of which is here reproduced.

Many Egyptian amulets, in addition to being symbolic in form, have words of power engraved upon them, by means of which they possess a double efficacy. Judging by the vast numbers that still exist, the *scarab* (Figs. 74 and 75) was the most popular of all the ancient Egyptian amulets. Our authors write:

' The scarab was the symbol of Khepera, a form of the sun god who transforms inert matter into action, creates life, and typifies the glorified spiritual body that man shall possess at the resurrection.*

The scarab-beetle belongs to a family of beetles that feed on dung. It lays its eggs in a ball of this material, with the object of providing nourishment for its young, propels these balls by means of its hind legs, which are of peculiar structure adapted to this purpose, and deposits them in holes which it has prepared for their reception. The movement of these balls was likened by the Egyptians to that of the disc of the sun. Moreover the beetles fly during that part of the day when the sun is at its hottest. These facts led to a magical identification of the scarab with the sun god. Furthermore, the Egyptians imagined that all these beetles were male, and that the young were produced

* *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

in a special manner ; concerning which idea Sir E. A. Wallis Budge writes :

The sun contained the germs of all life, and as the insect's ball contained the germs of the young scarabs it was identified also with the sun as a creature which produced life in a special way.*

Two other exceedingly important Egyptian amulets were the *heart* and the *ankh* or cross of life. The heart amulet was employed, not only to preserve the organ that it represented from the machinations of black magicians in this life, but also in the next. The heart was the seat of life, and at the judgment of the dead was weighed against a feather, symbolic of truth and right. Its possession was essential to the obtaining of the desired powers in the next world. It was customary to mummify the heart separately, and it was put under the special protection of the god Tuamutef.

The *ankh* cross was a symbol of life. According to Mr. and Mrs. Pavitt, the loop at the top

represents a fish's mouth giving birth to water as the life of the country, bringing the inundations and renewal of the fruitfulness of the earth to those who depended upon its increase to maintain life.†

They add that the symbol "was regarded as the key of the Nile which overflowed periodically and so fertilized the land."

The more usual theory regards the *ankh* as a phallic emblem symbolical of the dual generative forces of nature. Sir E. A. Wallis Budge says that its origin is unknown, and considers that "of all the suggestions which have been made concerning it none is more unlikely than that which would give it a phallic origin," ‡ though he gives no reason for this opinion. That other forms of crosses have evolved from the *ankh* is highly probable. Two other Egyptian amulets, the *menat* and the *sam* (Fig. 85) are also probably phallic in conception.

Figs. 79, 80 and 81 show examples of the *eye* amulet. This was the eye of Horus. It was a very common amulet, and was thought to bring the blessings of health and protection from evil influences.

Fig. 82 shows an example of the *two fingers* amulet. These were the fingers also of Horus, and symbolized those that he extended to assist his father, Osiris, to climb the ladder that led to heaven. It was used, of course, with the idea that similar assistance might be extended to the wearer.

* Sir E. A. Wallis Budge : *Egyptian Magic* (London, 1901), p. 38.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

‡ *Op. cit.*, p. 58.

The *collar* amulet, shown in Figs. 83 and 84, seems to have been less commonly employed. It was a symbol of Isis, and appears to have been a funeral amulet only, having for its object the giving of assistance to the deceased in freeing himself from his swathings.

The *ladder* (Fig. 86) is another amulet of Horus. It represented the ladder leading from this world to the next.

The *steps* amulet (Figs. 87 and 88) was dedicated to Osiris, and may be interpreted as having been a symbolic prayer to this god that he might assist the soul in its upward progress to the realms of heavenly bliss.

Fig. 89 shows an example of the amulet of the *snake's head*. This was a funeral amulet, used in order to protect the deceased against the attacks of the serpents of Set in the underworld. It was usually made of red stone, and as Sir E. A. Wallis Budge remarks :

As the goddess Isis is often typified by a serpent, and red is a colour peculiar to her, it seems as if the idea underlying the use of this amulet was to vanquish the snakes in the tomb by means of the power of the great snake-goddess Isis.*

Another amulet dedicated to Isis was the *sceptre*, examples of which are illustrated in Figs. 76, 77 and 78. This was an amulet to preserve vigour and youth and to give assistance in agricultural pursuits, Isis having gained her sceptre from her father, husband of Renenet, the beneficent donor of good harvests.

Such are a few of the amulets employed by the ancient Egyptians. Many others of equal interest might be mentioned, such as the *angle* and *plummet* amulets dedicated to Thoth, god of learning, which would endow the wearer with the high qualities of this god; the *tet*, a very important amulet dedicated to Osiris, which gave strength and stability and the power to reconstitute the body in the underworld; and the symbol of *Bes*, god of laughter and good luck, which Mr. and Mrs. Pavitt suggest may be the original of the modern Billiken. Not only the talismanic lore of ancient Egypt, however, but also that of China, Japan, Greece, Rome and Europe generally during the Middle Ages—and, indeed of other nations—is well worthy of exploration. If there is much folly here to be found, there is also something of wisdom. Mr. and Mrs. Pavitt's is not only a fascinating book, which will be read with interest by the general reader, but a guide which will be valued by the student in his researches in the mystic lore of bygone days.

* *Op. cit.*, p. 59.

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.]

PARALYSIS ON AWAKING.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—I have been much interested in the correspondence on the above subject in your pages. I have myself occasionally experienced the sensation, and have become convinced by discreet questioning, etc., that the state is far from uncommon amongst the healthiest and most normal of people, and conclude that it is the result, not of a general abnormality, but of a very temporary condition.

Though my training is medical and physiological, I am far from being a materialist ; but whether the ultimate cause be external or purely internal, there can be no doubt to my mind that the immediate cause is a physical one.

In the vast majority of the less severe cases at any rate, the victim is lying upon his or her back. We know that this induces a tendency to dreaming. The great blood sinuses in the skull pass downwards and backwards draining the blood away from the brain, and are more assisted by gravity in this position than in any other, if the cerebral circulation is slow, as it is in sleep. Unless pressure is maintained by increased arterial activity, there must follow a temporary anæmia of the higher centres.

Anæmia causes at first increased excitability—as in a finger which becomes painful from cold ; and later loss of sensibility—as when the finger becomes numb. Cerebral anæmia, aggravated by lying upon the back, causes first the excitability and nightmare effect, and, if more pronounced, the loss of sensibility at those places where the blood supply is most deficient. The motor and sensory areas of the cerebrum are in such a position that they would be naturally among the first to be drained of their blood supply. Some of the higher centres for thought, memory, etc., would also be drained, whereas others, concerned more nearly with habit and reflex, would not so easily be starved. The lower brain, concerned with the automatic working of the organs, would not be affected. In all cases the shock to the victim and his efforts for release should—as it appears in effect to do—increase the heart-beat and the arterial supply to the brain, which, on receipt of the necessary minimum of oxygen, immediately releases the victim from his immobility. Any small movement possible would have the same effect.

I am aware that this does not by any means dispose of all cases. But the effect of excitement—mental, as caused by music perhaps; or physical, due to nerve strain and fatigue—upon the sympathetic system affects the blood supply not inconsiderably. We are, most of us, aware of the thrill which leaves us cold and shivering, caused by some excitement of mind or body, and that this effect should in extreme cases constrict the cerebral capillaries is probable.

Faithfully yours,

J. D. HINDLEY-SMITH.

MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Although I fear undue intrusion on your time and attention, the letter of Miss Kittie F. Dent seems to ask me for the sympathy of actual experience.

Some years ago I had an attack of semi-paralysis on awaking. Alone in a flat, almost deprived of the power of movement, I did not realize that I was speechless until somebody happened to call and found me helpless in a chair and very ill and unable to speak a word.

I was well aware that my condition was not due to *physical* causes, as the same thing had happened previously, when a terrible vibration from a man's finger, pointed at me in scorn and anger, had produced in me a condition described by the doctor, who was subsequently called in, as a "very narrow escape from complete paralysis of brain and body." It was, and I knew the agent was not the initiator of that attempt to wipe me out of existence.

I wonder whether your correspondent experiences (as I did) a condition of cold, a cold that seemed incapable of thaw?

To go back to the second attack, during sleep: The day passed, and friends who came tried to bring back the natural state by warmth, food, etc., but in vain. A long illness ensued, and on the morning following the beginning of it, I received a postcard, addressed and written in curious letters, so that it could never be identified with the writer.

The words on the card were: "Beware! The influence is cast forth. Beware how you hinder its progress. There is a stronger spirit than your own encompassing you about. It depends upon yourself whether it makes or breaks you."

The veiled threat contained in these words, coming from a source afraid to disclose its identity, had no power over my determination to "impede" to the utmost of my power a "spirit" that *could* desire to "break" such a person as myself, unless I, coward and recreant, weakly submitted to and acquiesced in the wrong being done to the world of men and women, *under cover of high pretensions.*

It is true I have been "broken," am still being "broken," by this same "influence," which has brought about the condition of speechlessness and semi-paralysis on *three* occasions, and on others nearly so,

and I escape only by undying courage and will and the refusal to "go under."

It therefore occurs to me that there may be other sufferers, and from the same cause. Would it not be mutually helpful if we came together for mutual defence against a subtle all-but-omnipotent occult power being *secretly* used to silence the voice of Love and Truth?

My assailants—whoever they may be, and under whatever cloak they hide—make this one mistake. In all the universe there is no spirit stronger than the spirit of the mother whose love defends her children from foul wrong, *and at all costs*.

Mr. Brodie-Innes writes more truly than he knows, "Is it not time, etc.?"

How long must we SUFFER and *find no help*?

Yours faithfully,
INCOGNITO.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—In answer to the letter in the OCCULT REVIEW from Miss Fellowes, I would like to say that the experience she speaks of is a most common occurrence with me. The first time it happened was when I was seventeen, on my recovering from an anæsthetic after a severe operation. I was terrified! The symptoms are exactly as Miss Fellowes says, complete paralysis, and awful panic. Since then, it has happened very frequently, but until about seven years ago, I didn't know in the least what caused it. When I became interested in Spiritualism, I met many people who told me many things. Among others, a clairvoyant told me that the experience under discussion occurs when the spirit is returning to the body after having left it during sleep. The terrifying paralysis is due to the fact that the spirit has not entirely retaken possession, so that one's senses, so to speak, return before one's faculties, hence the inability to move a hair even. It is an awful experience, and I dread its recurrence, for the struggle seems to last hours. I remember, last summer, one particularly bad time, when I knew (I don't know how) that the bed clothes were over my face and I was stifling, and I thought I was shrieking to my friend to shake me, kick me, anything to wake me, whereas she said I hadn't moved, she having been awake all the time. I am always afraid that some day I shall be buried alive, fully conscious, yet entirely unable to lift a finger to prevent it. I cannot conceive anything more awful. The queer part is, that just before the struggle begins I am always conscious of being entirely out of my body and can see plainly everything in the room, including my own body in bed. A little while back, it happened so often that I used to be afraid to go to sleep, and at last took to praying, last thing, that I might not be allowed "out" during that night. I have been told that trance mediums experience the same sensations on recovering from a trance, and certainly, judging by appearances, it looks very like it. As Miss Fellowes suggests, it

would be very interesting to hear of other experiences in this direction. By the way, I believe that an anæsthetic does not deaden the senses, it drives the spirit out of the body entirely, for the time.

Yours very truly,

JESSIE E. P. FORELAND.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—I read with interest in your REVIEW the letter contained therein headed "Paralysis on Awakening," as I have lately had similar experiences. During the last month or so I have experienced this strange cataleptic feeling twice, but I also remember experiencing it when younger. Upon awakening after a few hours' light sleep, I have found myself very much in the condition your correspondent describes. The nervous system seems completely paralysed, and I am totally unable to move or utter a cry. It lasted for a little less than a quarter of a minute, after which feeling returned from the head downwards. During my first experience I, of course, struggled to regain consciousness, firmly "willing" myself to become normal, but the second time (as it was quite possible to "think" at the time) I was more able to analyse the condition. It seemed as if the astral body was only retained by the brain-consciousness. Even for Occult Research it is hardly the kind of condition one feels like encouraging, unless knowledge as to the actual forces at work is possessed. I should therefore be glad to know if any of your readers can explain these experiences,

And remain, yours faithfully,

FREDERICK R. WARD.

"GRANBY LODGE," 26 PRIORY ROAD,
HASTINGS, SUSSEX.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—It is over twenty years since I had my first experience on awaking and having the feeling of complete paralysis. I then thought (I was only a boy) that it was a trance, and my fear was that I should be having a long one and be certified as dead. But since that time I have been in the state a few times. I have noticed it has been, without exception, when I have been lying on my back.

It certainly seems to require a lot of will power to awaken, but you do not feel any the worse for the experience, only interested, but if you give way to fear it seems to take longer to waken. I also have noticed that if you do not use your will enough to thoroughly awaken yourself you will fall back into the trance condition.

Quite lately I had the following experience in this connection.

Instead of going straight to bed I made myself comfortable in a cosy arm-chair, with another chair to put my feet on, and prepared for a nap. Well, shortly I fell asleep; presently I awoke up, and then I

found it was impossible to move. I was not dreaming, because I could see the different objects in front of me quite clearly, as the room was lit up with electric lights, but instead of being nervous I was interested, having had similar experiences before and noticed that if you give way to fear it takes longer to awaken and you feel worse afterwards. I also find that if you relax yourself you will fall asleep again and waken up feeling none the worse for your experience. To proceed: I struck my face with my hand and apparently felt the sting of the blow. I then passed my hand down my body and felt distinctly the cloth of my jacket, and presently I seemed to disengage partly from my body and looked upon it with interest. The only part I could not see was my face, although I tried very hard to do so.

I then gave up trying, as it made me feel distressed. I thereupon fell asleep again and awoke feeling none the worse. I also found I had not moved my hands at all, and felt no sense of sting or mark on my face. Had my astral left my body temporarily? My wife years ago saw me apparently enter the kitchen whilst she was having tea, and nearly dropped a cup upon seeing me, as she thought (I was away at the time working). The second time she saw me was during the night making my way to the bed, but upon looking round she found I was fast asleep. I may add I enjoy good health.

Yours faithfully,

GERALD BRADBURY.

HOME OR HUME.

Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—In your notice of the Life of Daniel Dunglas Home, in a recent number, you mention that he always pronounced his name "Hume," which is the name of the Scottish Earls of Home. It may interest your readers to know that David Hume, the historian, and John Home, the author of *Douglas*, who were great friends, considered that they bore the same name, though they differed about the spelling. David Hume died August 25, 1776. On August 7 he added to his will, in his own handwriting, the following codicil:

I leave to my friend, Mr. John Home of Kilduff, ten dozen of my old claret, at his choice; and one single dozen of that other liquor called port. I also leave to him six dozen of port, provided that he attests under his hand, signed John *Hume*, that he has himself alone finished one bottle at two sittings. By this concession, he will at once terminate the only two differences that ever arose between us concerning temporal matters.

It seems that John Home considered claret to be the only wine that a gentleman should drink.

See *An Account of the Life and Writings of John Home, Esq.*, by Henry Mackenzie [Edinburgh, 1822], pp. 163, 164.

Yours very truly,

JOHN CYPRIAN RUST.

THE VICARAGE, SOHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

THE DANGER OF SEANCES.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—May I be allowed a small space in which to thank Mr. J. W. Brodie-Innes for his helpful and instructive article on "Concerning Obsessions."

I must, as a Spiritualist of thirty-seven years' study, confess to a feeling of suspicion as regards the reality of many of the supposed spirits who manifest so readily.

It seems that with many of the mediums their spirits are too much like the publican's whisky—always on tap—circumstances and conditions making no difference.

As to the danger attending many of these sittings, the sooner spiritualists realize that the danger is a fact, the better, as an experience which came under my notice once proved to me.

In the year 1908 I left London to come to this city, and I found there was a small society holding meetings on Sunday evenings and also Monday evenings.

The first meeting I attended interested me very much, as I witnessed proceedings there I had never seen before.

Each medium who submitted to control (and there were several) had to further submit to being magnetized to restore them to their normal condition, and you may imagine my surprise when I witnessed the process, five or six different persons crowding round the medium; some making passes, some upwards, some downwards, some in a kind of windmill fashion. A more fantastic exhibition I had never before seen. I noticed particularly one of the mediums, a man of about 35 (I judge purely from appearance), and I had a strong impression that it would be far wiser for him to refrain from giving way to control of any kind.

I have some little power of psychometry and clairvoyance, and although circumstances have dulled them more or less, yet I do at times get striking impressions which invariably prove correct.

I mentioned my opinion to one or two who were inclined to be friendly, and later from further observations stated my fear that the end in his case would be the madhouse. I am sorry to have to record that my fears proved true.

At the same time I was impressed that he would recover, that if he refrained from sitting, all would be well, but a resumption of sittings would end in suicide. Results proved my impressions right. He came from the asylum, was induced to sit again, and finished his career shortly afterwards by cutting his throat.

Is it to be wondered at? Hardly; in fact it is only to be expected by anyone who has the most elementary knowledge of these things.

I know of another case of a lady in delicate health who submits to as many as eight or nine different controls in the short space of two hours. Surely madness lies that way.—Yours sincerely,

COMMON SENSE.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

IN the new issue of *Psyche*, the relation between Art and Psychology is the subject of an editorial which is designed to introduce two articles and incidentally to account for their presence. They are on "Music as pure Psychics," by Dr. H. J. Watt, and on the "Analogy of Sound and Colour," by Mr. C. J. Ogden and Mr. James Wood. The editor says that these studies will be of particular interest to "those who believe that the artist and the psychologist can make useful contributions to each other's knowledge," and that their closer co-operation cannot therefore fail in importance to both parties. The reason is obvious, namely, that Art of any kind is of value only in so far as it reacts on the human mind and produces some effect therein. It is said also that "artistic endeavours or appreciations" are notable guides to mental characteristics, and that "no theory of æsthetics and no standards of criticism are of any value unless they are built on a psychological foundation." In the view of Dr. Watt, whom it is pleasant to read, not only because of the appeal of his point of view but his way of expressing it, Music is "pure psychics" seeing that it consists of "pure sense and feeling." It is also divine because its qualities are "moulded by indefinable forms and linked to the soul by ineluctable bonds." He speaks of its scientific study, of the lines which this may follow, and draws from their consideration the conclusion that "psychology, physiology and biology embrace the whole range of knowledge required for a full study of the natural basis of music." But the fact of this basis does not signify for him that music is the child of Nature: it is a grandchild rather, sprung from "the forceful and imaginative mind of man and the delicate receptive sense of hearing." It is the same with all the arts, for all art is a world in which mind and sense combine for the fullest realization of their powers. But this "world of pure psychics" is the child of a world of pure physics. As regards that analogy between sounds and colours which is the subject of the second article, we know that many psychics see colours corresponding to musical notes, colour-blendings corresponding to chords, harmonies and so forth, but in the study under notice there is no word of these possibilities, in the sense that what is heard with the ear produces something correspondent which is seen with the eye, meaning the clairvoyant eye. Some analogies are called psychological, as for example between duration of note and area of colour, interval of pitch and luminosity, order of note and hue. It is said also that "the cornet, flute and french horn are found best to give the sensation of Red, Orange and Yellow, the violins Yellow-Green or Green, the oboe Blue and Blue-Green, and the contra-bass Purple." But the reaction of these sensations seems to be on the eye of mind. So also when it is said

that "variation in *Pitch* alters the *Tone*" in music, while "variation in *Luminosity* alters the *Hue*" in colour, the analogy—convincing as it is—appears purely intellectual. The article is not a little technical, but its tabulated parallels between sound and colour will interest a great many, including the psychics who merely hear and see, not thinking of a law in the coincidence.

The Buddhist Review has an article on the personality of the Buddha by an Eastern contributor, writing from Himalaya; it is a subject which introduces once again the distinction between the Hinayana and Mahayana schools of thought. The authenticity of certain teachings attributed to the Buddha is one of the questions at issue: it is accepted and maintained by the latter and denied by the former. From the standpoint of Western scholarship it is allowed that "most of the specifically Mahayanist doctrines are apocryphal," a finding which "depends upon the evidence supplied by historical criticism." But the writer—who presumably represents the school—goes on to indicate that Indian thought attaches little or no importance (1) to historical evidence, (2) to the dates when certain doctrines may have been formulated, and (3) to the names of the persons by whom they were developed or "elaborated." It is said to be extremely difficult for either school "to separate with absolute certainty that which Gotama really taught himself from that which his most eminent disciples added to his sermons or modified in his doctrines." But in any case no accepted and great religious reformer is regarded as having invented his own doctrines: he is "one who repeats the teaching of the Eternal Wisdom," or in other words is "one who demonstrates to mankind the uncreated, everlasting Truth." Now, it seems obvious from this point of view that doctrine which is invented can only be false doctrine, whether in East or West, for no one invents truth, in the sense of creating or making it up. On the other hand, in the proper sense of invention, which is that of finding or discovery, a teacher of new doctrine—which is also true—has certainly invented it. The identity of the discoverer may be indifferent to Eastern minds, and in this case the Hinayana Buddhists must have rejected teachings of the opposite school on some other grounds which do not emerge in the article: they are presumably false doctrine, and we need therefore some canon of criticism on the subject. If the numerous "personages" of their so-called pantheon personify for Mahayanists "the different aspects of the one knowledge," their rejection by others must signify that they stand for illusions and not for eternal realities. We are told also that what Gotama abandoned on the threshold of the illumination "which made of him a Buddha" was precisely the personality of Gotama. We can realize the truth of this during the state of attainment; but when it is added that his personality "sank into the infinite ocean" from which all illusions emerge and was then lost, we remember that he, *propria persona*, continued, after his illumination, to live and teach on earth.

Le Voile d'Isis has begun its twenty-seventh year of issue by the publication of several articles which maintain the utility and repute of our chief occult contemporary in France. We may mention in passing a study on the true social state which introduces and develops the analogy between the individual and the body-general of society first established, we believe, by Saint-Yves d'Alveydre under the name of *Synarchia*. The thesis of the article, which appears over the pseudonym of Sair, is that the same biological principle governs the individual and the social state, because an identical physiological law operates in both organisms, and there is a strenuous attempt to apply practically that which is formulated in theory. Those who remember Papus with sympathy for his various activities will be interested by a treatise on the first elements of Hermetic Medicine, delivered originally as lectures in 1909. It proceeds on the hypothesis that diseases may be of astral, physical or spiritual origin. The conclusion is promised in our contemporary's next issue, and it will be better to deal with the subject in its completed form. The contribution which has naturally attracted us in a particular way is by M. Boué de Villiers and is called the "Secret Doctrine of Christ," proceeding on the basis that if we seek to understand the Christian Mystery it is necessary to distinguish clearly between the Human Christ Who was Jesus and that Divine Christ Who is God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, of Whom the Messiah of Nazareth was the manifestation here on earth. Emerging apparently from these there arises the Symbolic Christ, and these three aspects of what is called the Christian Mystery are to be considered successively. The present section deals with the Human Christ. M. de Villiers is a lucid and consistent writer who draws his reader with him, but it is amazing to pause and reflect on the matters of pure speculation which assume in his pages the mask of historical certitude. We are told (1) that in view of His exceptional gifts the parents of Jesus of Nazareth placed Him in an Essenian monastery; (2) that the Essenians were Jewish initiates; (3) that they possessed an esoteric tradition which had passed from India to Egypt; (4) that St. John was connected with one of their branches; (5) that Jesus remained in their charge until the age of nineteen; (6) that He then went to complete His instruction in Egypt; (7) that as regards His public ministry there was opposition on the part of some Essenians, for whom it connoted the revelation of great mysteries to the ignorant; (8) that soon after the death of Christ the Essenian confraternity was dissolved; (9) that those who became the disciples of the Nazarene established the Gnostic sect; and (10) that in the course of the centuries the Gnostics became Albigenses. These statements are presented as if they were matters of common knowledge which anyone might confirm by the open records of history. They are of course by no means new; we have met with them frequently among those who retail romances in the guise of historical fact, in the reveries of

Gabriel Rossetti, Eugène Aroux and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley; but it seems almost incredible that we should meet them again at the present day. The Secret Doctrine of Christ does not emerge in the present instalment of the study, but we shall probably meet with it later as a reflection from *Pistis Sophia*.

The Harbinger of Light reviews the progress of Spiritualism during the past year from the chair of its editor, and gives expression to a sense of gratitude at the results attained. We agree that the period has been "marked by developments far exceeding the most sanguine expectations of its most enthusiastic advocates." We could have wished, however, that Mr. W. Britton Harvey had dwelt on the advance in scientific verification of phenomena—on the work, for example, of Dr. Geley and other competent investigators in France—rather than on the opposition of materialists and "the orthodox section of the Christian Church," regarded as tributes to progress. Among general news, we note that the Victorian Association of Spiritualists has celebrated its fifty-first anniversary, and that the remarkable Sydney phenomena, to which we have referred in these pages, are still awaiting investigation under strict test conditions. . . . *The International Psychic Gazette* has an interesting leader on a Society of Communion, which is to be distinguished from a Society of the Communion of Saints, founded recently by the Rev. Charles Tweedale. The new venture proposes "to study and make known the findings of Psychical Research as loyal servants of our Divine Lord Jesus Christ." It is possible that such an undertaking may not carry the subject very far: that will depend on the experience and zeal of the people who have launched the undertaking—we are told that they are Anglican clergy—but any proposal for the reconciliation of the Church to the fact of Psychical Research in all its forms, spiritistic and otherwise, must command our sympathy. . . . M. Camille Flammarion is still dealing in *La Revue Spirite* with the question of "posthumous manifestations" and is collecting a large and not unimportant dossier from private sources. Our French contemporary has started a new volume, which makes a good beginning, with articles on Spiritism in Art and Spiritism before Science. The latter affirms (1) that Spiritualism is not as yet a science, (2) that the pretension to science is interdicted henceforward to materialism, and (3) that it has become a thing of mere dogmatism and faith. . . . Our friend *The Progressive Thinker* gives space to a very long article which testifies that "God was the founder of Spiritualism," and that its teachings were practised by "His only beloved Son Jesus Christ." It is advanced further that those only who know nothing of Spiritualism regard its believers as rejecting God and the Bible. These statements are worth noting, not for their intrinsic value, but as a sign of the times, and in view of the fact that during the course of nearly seventy volumes *The Progressive Thinker* has never been a friend of orthodoxy.

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REVIEWS

BIBBY'S ANNUAL, 1922. Edited by Joseph Bibby. Liverpool:
Joseph Bibby & Sons, Ltd. Price 2s. 6d. net, post free 3s.

It is with pleasure that we have to acknowledge receipt of a review copy of this admirable yearly publication issued by the house of Bibby. The customary excellence of the illustrations and literary matter is fully maintained in the present issue. Constable's beautiful landscape, "Dedham Lock," and de Wint's "Cornfield" are reproduced with a depth of tone that faithfully preserves the main characteristics of the pictures.

Amongst other features of especial interest are the plates of Leonardo da Vinci's famous picture of "The Last Supper" in colour, Blake's well-known "Allegory," and "The Garden Court"—one of Burne-Jones's series of paintings illustrating the legend of "The Briar Rose." As regards the text, several well-written essays touch upon the truths of Theosophy applied to the life of the workaday world.

The Editor may be sincerely congratulated on the contents and production of this highly interesting and educative periodical.

P. S. W.

LADY AGATHA. By Beatrice Chase, Author of *The Heart of the Moor*, etc.
London: Longmans, Green & Co., 39 Paternoster Row, E.C.4; 55 Fifth Avenue, New York; Bombay; Calcutta; Madras.
Price 7s. 6d. net.

That interesting literary duality, Beatrice Chase, otherwise Olive Katharine Parr, breaks an unusually long silence with this charmingly written romance, of which the *mise en scène* is Grey Tintagel by the Cornish Sea. Miss Chase is so well known for her delightful word-pictures of Dartmoor, its purple tors, and dusky tarns, and her vivid character-sketches of its village celebrities, that it was only to be expected she would bring the same gift to bear on her portrayal of life and scenery in the Delectable Duchy. One chapter in particular, describing a storm and shipwreck on the wild Cornish coast, is a remarkably powerful piece of writing, not unworthy of comparison with such famous examples of literary craftsmanship as are to be found in the storm scene of Charles Reade's *Hard Cash*, and the shipwreck in *David Copperfield* where Ham Peggotty is drowned.

The story ostensibly deals with the love-affair of a typical Prince and Princess of modern romance—in which the course of true love might have run anything but smoothly but for the loving machinations of the fairy-godmother, whose name gives the title to the book. Intense pathos, and the interweaving of more than one life-web, bring us to an ending of the story happy alike for those who remained in this world, and for those who found that "Death is only the removal of the fleshly barrier which holds the soul apart. They pass, these souls, to the spirit world to be eternally united in a union the intensity of which we flesh-fettered mortals can only dimly conceive."

EDITH K. HARPER.

SIR JAGADISH CHANDER BOSE : HIS LIFE, DISCOVERIES AND WRITINGS.

7 ins. \times 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins., pp. viii. + 40 + 248 + 1 plate. Madras : Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co. Price Rs. 3.

THIS book contains an interesting sketch of the life and work of Bose, together with a number of his speeches and abstracts from his writings. Bose's earlier scientific work was concerned with electrical phenomena, and it would seem that he anticipated Marconi in his discovery of the possibility of transmitting electric signals through space without the use of connecting wires. He then turned his attention to the borderland lying between physics and physiology. By means of various pieces of highly sensitive apparatus invented by himself, he claims to have discovered a far closer degree of similarity (nay, rather, identity) between animal and vegetable life than has hitherto been suspected. Plants, according to him, respond to an external stimulus in practically the same way as do animals, though the response is quantitatively minute. They not only show the phenomenon of death, but also that of periodic sleep; they may be stimulated by suitable drugs, narcotized by others, and killed by an excessive dose. Indeed, he goes so far as to assert that plants, like animals, possess a nervous system, and he maintains that even certain materials hitherto regarded as entirely lifeless, such as various metals, exhibit also to a certain degree the characteristic responses of living matter. In a word, Bose claims to have broken down the barrier between the living and the non-living and to have pointed to the essential unity of all science.

To my mind, however, before we can accept Bose's theory concerning the identity of animal and vegetable life, there are certain difficulties of interpretation that must be faced. Does sensitiveness, for example, necessarily imply sensation? A galvanometer may be highly sensitive; but I do not think we are justified in saying that it *feels* the current. As concerns the fact of plant response, Bose has demonstrated this beyond question; and one is filled with the greatest admiration for the inventive genius displayed in the various pieces of apparatus he has constructed. Moreover, in Bose himself we have an example of the true man of science—absolutely devoted to the quest of truth for its own sake. To read his life is to become inspired by some of the great ideals which animated him, and this book, in which his life is so well displayed, deserves to be widely read and appreciated.

H. S. REDGROVE.

THE DISOBEDIENT KIDS. By Božena Němcová. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ \times 12 $\frac{1}{4}$; pp. 48.

Prague : B. Kocí. London : Philip Allan & Co. New York : Harper & Bros. Price 6s. net.

FOR the translation into English of this series of charming little Czecho-Slovakian fairy stories, we are indebted to Wm. H. Holden, Ph.D., and Professor V. Smetanka. The title of the book is not to be interpreted colloquially. "The Disobedient Kids" are young goats whom the wicked fox devours as a result of their disobedience. As is the way with fairy stories the world over, obedience leads to happiness and disobedience to disaster; self-sacrifice brings joy, and self-indulgence brings misery; good actions are rewarded and evil ones punished. Children should follow with breathless interest the various actors in these stories, from the devoted little hen who saves the life of her faithless mate; and the

flock of silly sheep who get themselves formed into a tremendous circle and follow each other round and round for ever; to *Paleck*, or "Little Thumb," who outwits the avaricious merchant. The illustrations by Artus Scheiner, both in colour and black and white, should prove a further source of delight, for they are most skilfully drawn and finely reproduced. As something off the beaten track in the way of children's story-books, something of real artistic and literary merit, the *Disobedient Kids* should satisfy the most exacting taste.

H. J. S.

AUTUMN SONGS AMONG THE LEAVES. By Elise Emmons, Author of "Summer Songs among the Birds," etc. London: John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court. Price 2s. 6d. net.

HAVING tuned her lyre in harmony with Summer, Winter, and Spring, Miss Elise Emmons now offers us a fourth volume of seasonable verse with Autumn for a setting. Full of cheery greeting, and Franciscan delight in the spirit of Nature and Nature's God, Miss Emmons's efforts are always pleasing. "To-day," "The Anchor," and "Our Glorious Dead," are, each in its different manner, amongst the best in this large collection, and I quote "A Prayer to Nature" as illustrating Miss Emmons in her happiest vein:

"Give me thy strength, O Tree, to last,
And to withstand the wintry blast!
Give me thy sweetness, lovely Flower,
To fill the world with joy each hour.

"Give me thy wondrous power, Green Grass,
To spring again when sorrows pass.
Give me thy freshness, perfect Air,
To heal and comfort everywhere."

EDITH K. HARPER.

THE FUGITIVE. By Rabindra Nath Tagore. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., St. Martin's Street. Price 7s. 6d. net.

THIS recently published work of the great Indian poet-mystic has all the familiar beauty and peculiar pathos of his writings. Turning over its pages is like counting the beads of a Rosary on a silver chain. Each bead, each prose-poem, gleams with a radiance, sometimes, as from the depths of the soul, like the fireglow in the heart of an Oriental onyx, sometimes but a shimmering on the surface. Yet through all there runs the insistent human cry for love and for sympathy and help from unseen Powers in this intricate enigma of life, which gives and withholds, eddies and swirls, until the soul trembles helplessly before:

"The night throbbing with the thoughts that gaze in awe at the abyss of their dumbness."

The child yearning for his mother hears the trite assertion, "She is in heaven." He "raised his eyes to the sky and long gazed in silence. His bewildered mind sent abroad into the night the question, 'Where is heaven?'"

"No answer came: and the stars seemed like the burning tears of that ignorant darkness."

The boy's father, dumb with the same anguish, confesses:

" I tried to wreck all the shelters that ever I had in and about me. . . ."
But :

" Suddenly I felt a voice saying—

" 'Ungrateful!'"

" I looked out of the window and a reproach seemed to come from the star-spangled night—' You pour into the void of my absence, your faith in the truth that I came.'"

A deep, subtle, but very human truth, underlies the story of the ascetic in the wood, striving for an ultimate Paradise, unmindful that it was near him all the time, in the shape of the girl who gathered twigs and took him fruit and water every day. At last she went away, and he remained with eyes shut as of old. After long years :

" The Lord of the Immortals came down to tell him that he had won Paradise :

" ' I no longer need it,' said he.

" The God asked him what greater reward he desired.

" ' I want the girl who gathers twigs.'"

A lament over the world's unrest and apparent hopelessness brings the poignant thought that Song is useless. " The air is harsh with the cry, ' Victory to the Brute!' . . ."

" My lute said, ' Trample me in the dust.' I looked at the dust by the roadside. There was a tiny flower among the thorns. And I cried, ' The world's hope is not dead!' . . . The road said to me, ' Fear nothing!' and my lute said, ' Lend me thy songs!'"

EDITH K. HARPER.

THE FINDING OF SHILOH, OR THE MYSTERY OF GOD "FINISHED."

By Rachel J. Fox. Pp. xvi + 371. London: Cecil Palmer.
Price 8s. net.

ALTHOUGH Shiloh is a person in the official translations of Genesis xlix. 10, some scholars doubt if the translators have interpreted this difficult passage aright, seeing that the word Shiloh occurs nowhere else in Hebrew as the name of a person. Commentators who would diminish the present-day interest of Shiloh are, however, emphatically "up against" the followers of Joanna Southcott, who gravely affirm that she was the mother of a spiritual Shiloh. The present volume presents us in the course of a commendably coherent narrative with a living Shiloh alleged to function through the body of one Octavia, a widow. The chief credit (or responsibility) for announcing Octavia to be the "spiritual Child of the God-man Jesus" belongs to the authoress of an amazing book called *Out of the Vortex*, who believed herself to be in frequent communication with St. Andrew, the apostle, not to mention One yet more revered. Before Octavia (of unstated surname) became the Shiloh of a new sect, her herald had made two admitted blunders in regard to the appearance of this mysterious being.

It would be very unfair to impute megalomania to anyone concerned in the launching of Shiloh, and yet I am bound to say that it strikes me as highly probable that certain spirits, delighting in the companionship of three ladies intensely conscious of the importance of potential motherhood, fooled them, not maliciously, and perhaps not altogether consciously,

to the top of their bent. This is not to say that insanity is imputed to any one of the three ladies. But experience has proved that imagination is only too apt to get ahead of a sense of reality in the case of those who think they surrender their hands or tongues to excarnate visitors. Miss Fox, Mrs. Exeter, and poor, persecuted, clever Octavia, were cradled, so to speak, in sweet sounds whenever they were addressed by the spirits who set them at work. Now there is nothing more narcotic to the critical sense than love, and I seem to feel it all through Mrs. Fox's book, administering a sweet narcotic instead of the truth, without which no religion has the eye of a lighthouse to attract the critical as well as the credulous.

The book contains much about the failure to persuade the bishops to open Joanna Southcott's famous box in accordance with the stipulation of Southcottians. The bishops are willing to open it in a spirit of respect for the past, but have had reason to form the opinion that Southcottians are not really desirous that the writings should be read. Another feature of Mrs. Fox's book is an account of the Fall, where Eve figures as the first human being who sinfully produced Adam! To give the reader a taste of the religious sensationalism of this curiously fascinating book, I quote a marriage oath agreed to in 1919 by four ladies "knit to Octavia by faith in her call": "I take Thee, O God, my Maker, to be my wedded Husband, and I claim vengeance over Satan, as a wife claims vengeance over her Husband's murderer."

W. H. CHESSON.

LES MORTS VIVENT-ILS. Par Paul Heuzé. Paris: La Renaissance du Livre, 78 Boulevard Saint Michel. Price 6 francs.

VOICI LA LUMIÈRE. Par Henri Durville. Paris: Henri Durville, 23 Rue Saint Merri. Price 8 francs.

MONSIEUR HEUZÉ has issued one of those serious inquiries into the present state of psychic research which are badly needed to save an important investigation from becoming a laughing-stock in the hands of quacks and impostors. He begins with a good-humoured attack on that ridiculous form of after-dinner entertainment, table-rapping, in which the Smiths of Surbiton summon Napoleon or de Musset.

M. Heuzé writes in a dispassionate, judicial manner. He has investigated the theories advanced by Sir Oliver Lodge, Camille Flammarion and similar leaders of thought. The mysterious "ectoplasme" and the experiments of Schrenck-Notzing, the interest attached to the famous case of Eusapia Paladino, none of these escape his sincere and convincing pen. One feels a little nearer to the world of everlastingness after reading Monsieur Heuzé's book.

Voici la Lumière is also in a spiritual key. Its author, Monsieur Henri Durville, is one of that talented trio of brothers, les Docteurs Gaston Henri and André Durville who, between them, have written so many enlightened volumes on magnetism, hypnotism, the aura and similar vital subjects. *Voici la Lumière* is a mixture of Emerson and Eliphaz Levi. It has the French initiate's belief in the power of a Transcendental Ray, pleasingly intermingled with the hope and trustful optimism of the great American philosopher. M. Durville advocates both physical and psychic harmony. As he so beautifully puts it:

" Puis, j'ai montré que l'être humain, bien contraint bien équilibré, sûr lui-même, peut rayonner autour de lui, relever les volontés défaillantes. Magnétisme expérimental et curatif, suggestion verbale et mentale, hypnotisme, ré-éducation psychique, hauts phénomènes du psychisme (télépathie lucidité, intuition), tous ces phénomènes si passionnants et si mal connus jusqu'ici s'offrent à lui pour lui mieux faire pénétrer toutes les ressources de la nature humaine.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

AN INTRODUCTION TO MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM. By William Montgomery McGovern, Ph.D. London: Kegan Paul & Co., Ltd. Pp. 233. Price 7s. 6d. net.

THIS is an important and masterly contribution to our knowledge of the Chinese and Japanese phases of the subject, to which it has special reference. The value of the work is enhanced by the fact that the author is not only a profound Chinese and Japanese scholar, but is himself an ordained Buddhist priest. The book opens with an introduction dealing with the doctrinal evolution of Buddhism, followed by chapters on the epistemology and logic, while a short history of Buddhism and its principal sects, and an Appendix giving a survey of the principal types of the Buddhist scriptures, conclude the volume.

The description of the manner in which the great cloud of metaphysical theory and speculation grew out of the earlier, more precise form of Buddhism will prove of value to those whose inclinations lie in this direction. But there is little encouragement for it to be found in such teachings as are attributed to the Buddha himself, who, as is well known, eschewed the esoteric, the hidden and the secret. It is conceded by the Mahāyāna that all theories, hypotheses and doctrines, including its own, belong to relative truth, and are capable of modification and development as the result of increased knowledge. As regards the Absolute, it is admitted that it transcends both matter and mind, and is inconceivable if not unrealizable. For this reason therefore it is surely beyond discussion. Nevertheless the discussion was entered upon, and as we consider it we are led to reflect upon the wisdom of the Buddha, of whom it is said that, when confronted with such discussions, he remained silent. Among other things, they resulted in the elaboration of a wealth of mystic and miraculous events which were supposed to have attended the Buddha's birth and earthly career. But, despite all this, there is presented faithfully in the Mahāyāna the specific doctrine of Anātman (Anatta), the non-existence of a permanent ego-soul, or Ātman, which last is a theory peculiar to the Hindu (Brahmanical) theistic philosophy, and its derivatives, such as modern Theosophy. The five Skandhas (Khandhas), or attributes of being, and their subdivisions, are maintained. The method of re-birth, or the re-arising, of the being is also very clearly and convincingly explained. The work demands the close attention of all students of Buddhism, and should find a place in the libraries, not only of Buddhists, but of all who are interested in the study of psychology, occultism, and kindred subjects. Its perusal will arouse a pleasurable, and perhaps an impatient, anticipation of the larger and more comprehensive work on Buddhism which the author has now in preparation.

J. E. E.