

THE OCCULT REVIEW

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

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VOL. XXXVIII

NOVEMBER 1923

No. 5

NOTES OF THE MONTH

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of communication and claimed that he, too, was in touch with these same Masters independently of Madame Blavatsky. The validity of these methods of communication and the qualifications of the persons through whom he received them have since been called in question, and the position that Mr. Sinnett

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AUTOMATIC
WRITING.

arrogated to himself has been denounced as evidence rather of his own egoism than of his status as a favoured disciple of the Masters. I am not here proposing to discuss the rights or wrongs of these polemics, but rather wish to draw attention to what a very large part automatic writing in one form or another has played not merely in the Theosophical movement, but in the history of psychical research generally. Even the formidable tomes of which Madame Blavatsky was the presumed author have been repudiated as her personal work not merely by outsiders, but by H. P. B. herself. While she was engaged in penning *Isis Unveiled* she wrote to her sister, Madame Jelihowsky, "I am embarked on a great work, treating of theology, ancient beliefs, and the secrets of the occult sciences, but fear nothing for me. I am sure of my facts, more or less. I should not perhaps know well how to talk of these abstract things, *but all essential matter is dictated to me.* All that I shall write will not be my own. I shall be nothing more than the pen. The head which will think for me will be that of one who knows all." Again she writes about the same period from New York to her aunt:—

Professor Wilder, archæological orientalist, and many others who come to me with scientific questions assure me that I am better versed than they themselves are in abstract and positive sciences, and that I am better acquainted with the old languages. It is an AN INEX-
PLICABLE in-
FACT. explicable fact but one none the less true. . . . Explain to me if you please how it comes about that I, who, as you are well aware, was up to the age of forty in a state of crass ignorance, have suddenly become a *savant*, a model of learning in the opinion of real *savants*. In truth I am a psychological enigma, a sphinx and a problem for future generations as much as I am to myself. . . . Sometimes I am tempted to think that my spirit, my own soul, is no longer mine.

Madame Blavatsky thus got into communication with many men of great learning and scientific attainments, who were impressed not only with her writing, but with the great knowledge and insight which she showed in conversation. Professor Alfred Russel Wallace among others wrote to her: "I am truly struck, Madame, by your profound erudition. I have to thank you for opening my eyes to a world of things of which previously I had no idea from the point of view which you indicate to science and which explains problems which seemed to be insoluble."

Since the time of *Isis Unveiled* and the *Secret Doctrine*, many books have been written to the contents of which their authors lay little or no claim. Most of these indeed are of slight value, but the method of their production raises the same problem in

one form or another, and the world still continues to discuss the question as to whether they have been evolved by the sub-conscious selves of the writers or whether they emanate from some extra-terrestrial source. If the latter solution be accepted, we are still faced with the question whether the *soi-disant* writer is the individual he purports to be. The latest of such communications are of course the alleged messages from Oscar Wilde,

FURTHER
MESSAGES
FROM
"OSCAR
WILDE."

which by their piquancy and verisimilitude have aroused so animated a discussion in journalistic circles. I am giving a further instalment of these in the present issue of the OCCULT REVIEW, the intermediaries through whom they were obtained being in this instance Mr. V., who previously wrote with Mrs. Travers Smith, and Miss Helen MacGregor, one of the sensitives employed by the College of Psychic Science. I venture to think that the present communications are no less remarkable and noteworthy than those which have preceded them, though in character they differ somewhat from these. The style, however, is still suggestive of the alleged author, and the vividness of the pen pictures of the intermediate state in which the communicator finds himself conveys the impression, as it seems to me, of a literary talent of the highest order. There is an atmosphere of tragedy about these descriptions which in its strange and arresting realism could, I think, hardly be paralleled elsewhere. "Like Achilles," the writer tells us, "I would sooner be the poorest ploughman on earth than lord of all the astral realms." "Like poor blind unborn things we lie hidden away in the dark chambers of the brain as watchers who wait for a dawn that tarries. In sad passionless procession the scenes of our lives go by." He fears and believes that he is losing his identity, and suffering spiritual disintegration. Of himself and his fellows in suffering on this transitional plane he writes :—

AN UNEN-
VIABLE
FATE.

We become a sort of mental snowball rolling through eternity and ever gathering fresh accretions from the brains through which we travel. Our minds become coloured as moorland streams are by the bits of peat or porcelain clay over which they pass. . . . Suddenly, like some mad thing stung out of sleep, the imagination seizes these living shadows for its prey and worries them into tattered rags of terror. . . . Lost opportunities press their mocking faces close to us. Half-forgotten, long-dead things crawl from their graves and gibber at us. Desire stoops over her ashes and with scorched hands seeks to fan up the old flame. . . . Remorse, a gaunt vulture, red eyed and leprous winged, watches from the air. We, too, watch, but we may not weep.

Oscar Wilde, if indeed it is he, is troubled not least by the absence of the divisions of time, sunrise and sunset, night and day, which break the monontony of earth life. "Here," he says, "we have neither sun nor moon nor any guiding star. Our only measure of time is by the quantity of sensation that swells or diminishes the stream of thought." Without knowing why the change occurs, he and his companions, he tells us, "sink gradually from eternity into time," and the sounds of the world begin to break in upon their consciousness. They "sense again the rustling of leaves or the soft lapping of water by which they may know that they have strayed on some green or golden countryside. The roar of traffic or the tramp of feet tells them it is day."

The great desire of the communicator is to be united once more somewhen and somewhere to his own soul. That is his little taper of hope in infinite darkness. There is something that rings very true in this cry of a soul in pain. It becomes more and more difficult to put it down as some faked communication or upwelling of the subconscious self of the automatist. Indeed the arguments advanced against the genuineness of this and certain other communications seem rather "SUBCONSCIOUS," the critic that such communications are impossible, and therefore that they do not occur. Elsewhere, however, we have strong evidence, in spite of the futility of much automatic writing, that genuine and convincing evidence of the actuality of such messages and of the identity of their authors which is very hard to break down is actually forthcoming. Mrs. Travers Smith has given us such instances in her very valuable little book on the subject of ouija-board communications, *Voices from the Void*. * Here is one of them which was also cited in Sir William Barrett's book, *On the Threshold of the Unseen*.

The message, says Mrs. Travers Smith, was very brief, and her friend with whom she was sitting, Miss C., attached no more importance to it at the time than she did herself. A young cousin of Miss C.'s had recently been killed at the front, and his name was spelled out on the ouija-board. In the communication he stated that he had been engaged to a girl whose name and address he gave in full, and asked that his mother should be told that he wished her to give his fiancée his pearl tie-pin in memory of him.

Lond on : William Rider & Son, Ltd. 3s. 6d. net.

The boy was only nineteen when he was killed, and this seemed a most unlikely story. Miss C. laughed at it, and would not have investigated it but that I asked her to write to the address given and discover if the person mentioned lived there. This letter was returned EVIDENTIAL to Miss C. as incorrectly addressed, and we dismissed CASES. the case as hopeless. Some time afterwards the young officer's relatives heard that he had willed all his possessions to a girl whose name was the same as the one spelt out to us on the ouija-board—though the address was different—and to whom he had been privately engaged. This fact was absolutely unknown to his relatives.

It is very difficult, I think, to dismiss evidence of this kind, except on the part of those who are determined at all costs to reject all proof that cuts against their own materialistic beliefs. In another case the communicator claimed to be a friend of Mrs. Travers Smith from whom she had been estranged for a considerable period.

A mutual friend of his and mine [she writes], who had passed over, communicated by the board, and asked me whether I knew that Mr. V. was dead. I said I did not, and she suggested that I should ring up the private hospital where he was. I did so, and found that he had died about half an hour before. I returned to the board, and the same communicator told me that he would speak to me at the next sitting. He came the following week and for six weeks after, and we could get no other communications through. He seemed intensely anxious to explain the very complicated circumstances which had induced me to drop his acquaintance. This he did in a way which, I am bound to confess, I should never have thought of.

"The wording of these communications," says Mrs. Travers Smith, "and the anxiety this man showed to explain very strange circumstances connected with his life, left no doubt in my mind that I was speaking directly to his discarnate spirit." Such a case is very often more conclusive to the person concerned

than others which on the face of them are far more THE TEST OF INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE. evidential to the outside world. Indeed, intimate knowledge of circumstances and conditions of a private character is probably the strongest evidence of any to the individual recipient of the message.

Mrs. Travers Smith gives another case to which I have already alluded in this magazine, that of "Alicé Franks." The automatists in this case were all blindfolded and yet the name was given of a lady of whom none of them had any knowledge, the address at which she lived and the date and circumstances of her death. These were all subsequently verified. It is surely absurd to explain such a communication by the subconscious knowledge of the sitters.

There are many other records of the kind which seem

to bear the impress of their own genuineness, but these three will serve to enforce my point. The fact of communications from the other world reaching us by means of automatic writing, so far from being incredible, has been attested again and again, and in instances which almost inevitably carry conviction, and there is therefore no justification for the rejection of any particular message which provides inherent probability of its alleged source, though all such messages should be scrutinized in a scientific and sceptical spirit. Assuming that such messages reach us from those who have passed over, it is clear that one communicator takes the place of another in a very sudden and unexpected manner, and it is easy to see how readily some fresh communicator may impersonate any other. Oscar Wilde himself at the commencement of his communications breaks in and ousts a previous communicating intelligence, and at times there seems to be what looks like a struggle on the other side of different personalities endeavouring to control the pen of the automatist. In the case of the Oscar Wilde script itself, certain communications have been rejected as of doubtful authenticity, or as at least not bearing on the face of them the same evidence of their source that other more characteristic ones supply. Sometimes, too, the communicator seems to withdraw and the subconsciousness of the automatist to take his place. At any rate there are what look like grounds for suspicion of this.

It is not a little curious in how many instances the communicating entity when asked what attracted him to the séance explains that he saw a bright light or even a flame. The light surrounds the medium and grows apparently more vivid as he or she becomes more in touch with the spirit world. It will be noticed in the second of the communications from Oscar Wilde given in the OCCULT REVIEW that he alludes to Mrs. Travers Smith as "the *light* that lets me peep again into the world which seems so dazzling now that the Divine Justice finds it his pleasure to keep me in dim twilight."

It is only too obvious how readily automatism of this sort can be abused, and there is, it seems to me, much to be said in favour of the blindfold test in connection with the ouija board which has been tried successfully in numerous cases by the author of *Voices from the Void*, and her co-workers; but methods of this kind necessarily hamper or delay communications, and the automatist may not unnaturally become impatient of them

if satisfied otherwise of the genuineness of the script. Anyone who has tried a hand at all extensively at planchette, the ouija-board, or direct automatic writing, will be aware of the fact that the large bulk of such communications are very poor stuff indeed. When the communicator takes to holding forth and expressing his views generally on religious and kindred subjects, the communications frequently abound with pompous platitudes and unexceptionable generalities of a very commonplace character. Most of the communicators are not narrow or orthodox in their religious views, but the opinions they express, quite excellent in themselves, might have been voiced in almost every case by people of very ordinary intelligence and mediocre abilities. The Rev. Stainton Moses wrote many pages of this sort of matter, very excellent in its own way, but very unilluminating.

In other cases, at séances for automatic writing, we are liable to obtain the most plausible narratives in which full details of assumed occurrences are frequently given, but on inquiry, generally speaking, they are found to lack all foundation in fact. I had myself quite recently a very detailed account given me of a will through which I was supposed to be a beneficiary, which had been put away among papers of mine in a desk in my study. Needless to say no such will existed. Perhaps, however, the most curious thing is that after many lying communications some statement is suddenly made of an occurrence of considerable importance of which no one present had the slightest knowledge, and a name may be given in connection with it, subsequently proved to be perfectly accurate, of a person of whose existence not one of the sitters was aware. I have in my mind at the moment a recent instance in which a sudden and unexpected marriage of a member of the family of one of those present was recorded, and the christian name of the husband duly given. The facts proved to be as stated, but the whole thing came as a complete surprise. Personally I am inclined to think that such communications are liable to come from any one of three sources. Either (a) the subconscious mind of one of the sitters; (b) the actual person who is alleged to be communicating; or (c) an impersonation of the alleged communicator, possibly but not certainly from the spirit world. The only test we can apply is the evidence contained in the communication itself, and unless this evidence is pretty conclusive we are bound to regard all such communications with grave suspicion.

COMMON-
PLACE
COMMUNI-
CATIONS.

POSSIBLE
SOURCES OF
COMMUNI-
CATIONS.

As to the method by which such communications are evolved, this is a subject that has not, it appears to me, received at all the attention that it merits. An explanation is put forward in a recent publication entitled *Voices from Another World: The Waking Dreams and Metaphysical Phantasies of a non-Spiritualist*, by F. Gurtis,* which I think deserves serious consideration. The author, as will be observed from the title, does not adopt the spiritualistic hypothesis, but the acceptance or rejection of this need not, I think, militate against the acceptance of the theory which he advances. Mr. Gurtis holds that the brain is the seat of conscious thought only, and that what is subconscious, equally with that controlling the bodily functions, has its seat in another centre of the physical organism, whence it affects all the functions which the body performs unconsciously, and this centre, he submits, is the solar plexus.

The ganglia [he writes], by which the nerve fibres of the sympathetic system are connected with those of the cerebro-spinal nervous system, consist of nerve substance similar to that of the brain, and each of them forms a little nerve centre in itself, just as the spinal cord and the brain form the great nerve centre of the cerebro-spinal system. It is accordingly quite conceivable that the sympathetic system may make direct use of the motor nerves through the medium of these ganglia. Then everything that transpires in the subconscious, and through its agent in the human body, would make use of this method, and it is for that very reason that these processes do not penetrate to consciousness, because the unconscious ideas and processes do not reach man's brain. They are not consciously recognized by him in his waking state despite the fact that they form an essential, if not the most essential, part of his physical and mental life. When his senses are awake, these ideas and processes are overpowered by the much more impressive processes going forward in the brain. Only in a condition, therefore, in which this overpowering influence is suspended—mainly during sleep—will they be felt.

This theory seems a plausible one. In defence of it the author adduces the fact that many hypnotics have declared that during mesmeric sleep their perceptions and thought do not take place in the brain, but in the region of the diaphragm above the stomach, which is the central point of the sympathetic system or solar plexus. The point is also worth bearing in mind that there is frequently a tendency, especially in the case of the most convincing of the communications, for the medium or user of the pencil or ouija-board to have a ten-

* Authorized translation by Lilian H. Clare. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 8s. 6d. net.

A
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WRITING.

THE
SUBCON-
SCIOUS AND
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dency to lapse into a trance or semi-trance condition. This has been the case with most of the "Oscar Wilde" communications, and it is a point which, I feel, should not be lost sight of in support of the author's theory. If this is the true physiological explanation of such phenomena it does not necessarily establish

STIMULATION

FROM
WITHOUT
OR FROM
WITHIN ?

the fact that these nerve centres are stimulated from within the automatist's own organism. We can equally well adopt the hypothesis that they are stimulated from without, i.e., by the intervention of some consciousness on the other plane, or possibly by the consciousness of some living person who communicates telepathically with the automatist, probably without knowing that he or she is doing so. The author of the book above alluded to draws attention to the fact that the movements of the arms during the functioning of the instruments are not voluntary. "Considered as limbs," he says, "the arms themselves play no part in the movements of the instrument, but the nerves with which they are supplied serve as conductors of the current proceeding from the sympathetic system." How far the brain plays any part whatever in such communications Mr. Gurtis leaves an open question, but his own view is that it does not, and in any case he does not regard it as the driving force which guides the instrument.

The theme of *Where I Made One*,* by Maude Annesley, is the activities of the Anti-Capital Punishment Association in their attempts to save two lives from the last penalty of the law. Their first attempt ends not only in failure, but also in the assassination of Mrs. Hayden, the leader of the movement, by the son of the man whose life she had attempted to save. This son is obviously of a low mental type, and while brooding over his father's death, he has conceived an entirely wrong idea as to the objects of the Anti-Capital Punishment Association, and

A NEW
NOVEL BY
MAUDE
ANNESLEY.

his indignation at the responsibility, as he imagines, of Mrs. Hayden in the matter of his father's death, leads to the tragedy with which the bulk of the story is concerned, and in which the psychic side of things plays a very prominent part. Mrs. Hayden, even before her death, has made a deposition in which she firmly expresses the belief that her murderer was suffering from mental aberration at the time the deed was committed, and dies urging her husband to do everything in his power to

* London: Hutchinson & Co.; price 7s. 6d.

secure a remission in his case of the capital penalty. Her efforts to ensure this after her death result in numerous psychic occurrences, which, it must be admitted, are rather a severe test of the reader's credulity. As Sir Oliver Lodge has told us, the veil between this world and the next has worn considerably thinner recently, but it is hard to believe that it has worn quite as thin as we should be led to suppose if it were possible to accept this story as anything but a psychic romance. The interventions of the heroine after her decease are so numerous and so bizarre that one is in doubt how far even the author herself intends us to take them seriously. Moreover, her cat and dog, who are constantly

THE POSSI-
BILITIES OF
PSYCHIC
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TION.

sensible of the presence of her spirit, instead of showing fear and that horror of the unseen which is so remarkable a characteristic of animals under psychic conditions, actually evince a delight in her presence. If this were the case, one is forced to the conclusion that they did not realize the fact that she was otherwise than in her normal physical body. How then did it come about that the other people in the room failed to visualize her? I do not think a parallel could be adduced from any substantiated record in support of such an experience. Finally, Mrs. Hayden appears twice at the trial, once in the presence of the judge, and once afterwards before the jury when they have retired to consider their verdict, and, on the latter occasion at least, her unexpected apparition produces the desired effect upon the minds of the twelve good men and true, among whom, by the way, there are three women.

The descriptions of the trial, of the scene at the Old Bailey, and of the experiences of the jury are exceedingly good in detail, and true to life. In fact, their realism contrasts startlingly with the psychic undercurrent that is perpetually obtruding itself. As regards the views of the Anti-Capital Punishment Association, with which the author apparently sympathizes, I imagine that a great deal could be said on both sides. As is very well pointed out, you do not punish a thief by picking his pocket. Why, then, should you murder a man for committing murder? Capital punishment cannot be justified by the law of revenge.

"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" may have been a good enough axiom for the Jews at the time of Moses, but it is hardly in line with the modern ideas of which the penal code of to-day is generally held to be the expression. The principal argument adduced nowadays is that capital punish-

IS
HANGING
JUSTIFIED?

ment is the most effective deterrent for murder, and that, were it abolished, murders would be sure to show an alarming increase in number. Statistics, however, from the countries where capital punishment has ceased to be in vogue, do not bear out this belief. An argument on the other side lies in the fact that in various instances men have suffered the extreme penalty of the law, and have been discovered to have been innocent subsequently. You can do a good many things by way of compensating victims of injustice, but you cannot unhang a man when once he has been hung. What the State requires to do in order to prevent murder being committed is to emphasize the sacredness of human life. You cannot do this by taking away the life of the murderer.

From the point of view of occultism, the presence of earth-bound murderers on the astral plane inciting others to the commission of similar crimes is not a pleasant one to contemplate, and there seems some justification for the belief that occult teaching in this matter is by no means groundless. Certainly the repeated suicides in houses where a suicide has already taken place is a phenomenon that requires explanation. The question rather seems to be what substitute to find for capital punishment which would not entail evils worse than the death penalty itself. The ordinary life sentence is hardly calculated to improve a criminal's character, and solitary incarceration, which is in use in some countries in Europe, leading as it almost always does to eventual madness, is too horrible to contemplate. The law still thinks far too much of the punishment of the criminal and not nearly enough of the amelioration of the criminal's character. It is in this direction that the efforts of those who would reform the criminal code should be directed.

I desire to draw attention to an error in the time given for the horoscope of Madame Blavatsky in the last issue of the OCCULT REVIEW. This should read, not 1.14 a.m. August 12, but 11 hr. 16 min. p.m. August 11. The horoscope as drawn requires no modification. It is, of course, understood that it is purely conjectural, only the approximate time being known.

MADAME
BLAVAT-
SKY'S
HOROSCOPE. It is in fact a very arguable point whether Madame Blavatsky was not in reality born under the sign Cancer rather than under its next-door neighbour, Gemini, and even the latter degrees of Taurus would appear not to be ruled out by the rather vague statement made as to the time of birth. It seems to me

that there is a good deal to be said if we go by physical characteristics in favour of Cancer, and it would be difficult to parallel such a type as that of Madame Blavatsky under Gemini, especially as we have no modifying planet rising.

I am inserting a letter in the correspondence columns, by Sepharial, drawing attention to the above slip.

THE BROKEN STATUE

By J. S. M. WARD

O LITTLE God, with maimed and broken features,
 What is thy name, and who first made thy form?
 Why now forsaken, save by jungle creatures
 Who shelter near thee from the thunderstorm?

Thy temple crumbles, and thy fragrant tresses
 Of orchid blossoms fall about thy face;
 Around thy feet the emerald watercresses
 Have wound their tendrils, hiding every trace.

Who built thy form, where now the jungle smothers
 The village which aforeside clustered nigh?
 Where priests and people, husbands, sisters, mothers,
 In days of yore their anthems raised on high.

Thy name I know not, and yet still about thee
 There clings an atmosphere of God Divine;
 Not for the wealth of rajahs would I flout thee,
 By love made sacred—Godhead sure is thine.

Shall all the prayers once offered at thine altar
 Be wasted? and the faith that caused them lost?
 Nay surely! were this so my own would falter,
 The Powers Divine remember what they cost.

O little God, with maimed and broken features,
 Unknown to-day, yet loved in days of yore,
 Above thou dwellest, though the jungle creatures
 Have made their lair within thy temple door.

A NEW MESSAGE FROM OSCAR WILDE

[The following introduction to this further instalment of the Oscar Wilde script has been written by Mr. V.'s brother, a Cambridge graduate. I am also inserting at the end of the script in question a study of its contents and an appreciation of the characteristics of Wilde's style of writing, from the same pen.—ED.]

THE psychic researcher who ventures to cultivate any gift of mental mediumship in his own person, finds himself faced with peculiar difficulties. He feels that he has all the qualities necessary for a right understanding and true criticism of his own work and yet he hesitates to use them. His wide reading and long experience with other mediums avail him little. For if he reads up his subject and seeks to verify the facts he has obtained, he knows that by this very act he will influence the trend of the communications that are coming through him, while his script will, of necessity, lose any value it might otherwise have as evidence of an intelligence outside himself.

Mr. V., as a member of the British Psychic College and of the S.P.R., who has sat with almost every professional medium of repute in this country, realized at the beginning of his automatic writing that he must in this case be prepared to relegate the important task of verification to other hands. Being keenly interested in Mr. V.'s script, both from the literary and psychological standpoints, I gladly consented, at his request, to trace literary allusions, verify matters of fact and generally to undertake such a supervision of the scripts as would be the least likely to interfere with their actual production and their evidential value. Since the appearance of his first script Mr. V. has, with the exception of the newspaper comments, and Mr. Lawrence Housman's new book *Echo de Paris*, carefully abstained from reading any literature bearing on the personality of Oscar Wilde. Previous to these experiments, Mr. V. had read Methuen's Shilling Edition of *De Profundis* (June, 1913), *Dorian Gray* (October, 1913) and *Selected Poems* (April, 1914). None of these books are in his library, but were lent him by a friend, and Mr. V. tells me he did not read any of them more than once. He said, moreover, that Wilde's style did not particularly impress him. "Not," he was careful to add, "because I am impervious to good prose, but because I prefer Joseph Conrad and Thomas Burke among the moderns, and among the classics Ruskin and Sir Thomas Browne." Wilde's writings he once stigmatized as "frothy stuff."

I will take this opportunity of stating that certain resemblances in the first O.W.'s script to passages in *De Profundis*, which were

commented on by critics in the Press, were in the first instance detected by myself and communicated by Mr. V. in a letter to Mrs. Travers-Smith.

All the statements in the script which relate to definite incidents in the life of Wilde, I have now succeeded in tracing to their most probable sources. But I hope to deal with these in another paper. My present purpose is to introduce the reader to certain interesting scripts obtained by Miss Helen MacGregor and Mr. V. at the British Psychic College, through whose agency it will be remembered Mrs. Travers-Smith and Mr. V. were able to begin their first experiments. All Mr. V.'s early work was done in collaboration with Mrs. Travers-Smith, and it was not until the end of July that he tried to co-operate with other persons. Of the nineteen ladies with whom he then experimented, three were "normal clairvoyantes" who were not automatic writers, one (a Mrs. L.) could produce automatic script by herself, another could move a planchette alone, and the remainder, so far as we could judge, had no definite psychic powers of any kind. Only in the case of Mrs. L. was Mr. V. successful in getting the characteristic handwriting and style of "Oscar Wilde," although with one of the "normal clairvoyantes" he obtained automatic writing resembling his own normal hand and purporting to come from a deceased brother. All this happened previous to August 14, on which date Mr. V. had a sitting with Mrs. Osborne Leonard. In her trance Mrs. Leonard made an entirely spontaneous reference to the "Wilde" script, and Mr. V.'s deceased brother, the supposed communicator, on this occasion advised Mr. V. that "if he went to Miss MacGregor at the Psychic College the 'poet-man' would write." This incident is not cited here as having any special evidential value, but merely to show the circumstances which led to the production of the new script.

Sittings were accordingly arranged through Mrs. McKenzie, and the two scripts which follow are the first-fruits of this new combination.

It was observed that, as with Mrs. Travers-Smith, when Miss MacGregor removed her hand the writing ceased immediately and the pencil merely tapped on the paper, seeming to show once more the vital part which the second person plays in the psychic mechanism.

RECORD OF SITTING WITH MISS HELEN MACGREGOR. HELD
AT BRITISH PSYCHIC COLLEGE, SEPTEMBER 19, 1923,
AT 3 P.M.

Mr. V. holding the pencil. Miss MacGregor touching his hand.

OSCAR WILDE: Don't try to think of what I am about to tell you, as the real experience of a living man.

Think of it rather as some fantastic tale, some lurid fragment from Edgar Allan Poe. And yet, in truth, it is but the sober record of what is happening to thousands of those who

A NEW MESSAGE FROM OSCAR WILDE 271

linger near these scenes of earthly sorrow. You must know that we are a sort of amphibian who have a foot in either world but belong properly to neither. We live in the twilight of existences. When we come to you it is as poor stowaways, uninvited guests who must perforce wait in the back rooms while the rightful owner makes merry in the lighted halls. When we sleep we do not know how or where in the world we shall wake, and when we wake it is to no lambent wonder of breaking dawn. We strum out our mean music on borrowed broken lyres. We are the ignoble dupes for whom Destiny herself has no doom, and the very Fates have forgotten us. We spin only to unravel the web of our days. We survive only to sorrow.

It is a strange thing, this birth into a new brain. You may analyse it or dissect it as a scientific curiosity, but for us who hang in fearful poise twixt the daylight and the dark it is an experience no less terrible than strange and one which repetition cannot rob of its terrors. By some central mystery of existence Life's oldest pangs must accompany Life's newest creations.

We are deaf and blind, paralysed and dumb. We have no sense of motion in any part of our bodies. To attempt to describe our semi-bodiless condition is like trying to describe a negation. The stirring of white limbs, those innervations of beautiful muscles, those warm flushings of the blood, are gone from our remembrance for ever. We may indeed talk of these things but we may not know them any more. The very mode of our mental vision is different. You have your little patch of inward sight, projected somewhere in front of your bodily eyes, bright in the centre, blurred at the edges. But with us mental images appear as inscribed on the inside of a hollow sphere. They lie all around us and we attend to them all at once. "Up and down" do not signify for us. Suppose we are looking at some mental picture in which there is both earth and sky. Then by a simple rotatory movement of the attention we can shift the sky to any part of the sphere.

Like poor blind unborn things we lie hidden away in the dark chambers of the brain, as watchers who wait for a dawn that tarries. In sad, passionless procession, the scenes of our lives go by. It is like some strange mental mirage, some moving panorama in the blind night. We watch without real joy or sorrow. And yet there is an arresting quality about it. These pictures are no idle shadows, waking dreams that we can put behind us if we will. They appear to be part of the very fabric of our renewing existence. We must attend to them as you

must attend to hunger or to sleep. They grip us like fire. They make us afraid. Presently other pictures come and go of things that are strange to us. They are the memories of the brain in which we are incarcerated. It is only after long experience that we learn to know them for what they are, the old adage "Seeing is Deceiving" being as true in the astral world as it is anywhere else. Strange to say, later on these memories appear to us as part of our own experience. We become a sort of mental snowball rolling through eternity and ever gathering fresh accretions from the brains through which we travel. Our minds become coloured as moorland streams are by the beds of peat or porcelain clay over which they pass. When we try to recover our earthly personalities in their pristine purity, it is like looking for the lost ends of threads in some mighty maze of labyrinth.

Suddenly, like some mad thing stung out of sleep, the Imagination seizes these moving shadows for its prey and worries them into tattered rags of terror. A stage is set, and to the hollow music of the drums of doom, masked puppets, in horrible mimicry, play before us the drama of our lives. Missed Opportunities press their mocking faces close to us. Half-forgotten, long-dead things crawl from their graves and gibber at us; slow-creeping things trailing dreadful, slimy shrouds. Desire stoops over her ashes and with scorched hands seeks to fan up the old flame. Death and Old-Time look on and mock her with blackened grinning skulls. When she sees them she creeps wearily away. Remorse, a gaunt vulture, red-eyed and leprous-winged, watches from the air.

We too watch but we may not weep.

Yes, Imagination swings her goad and all the maddened Past gallops before our frightened eyes. There are times when our life——

(Writing stops here. Interval for tea.)

(Mr. V.) Can you carry on this interesting message just where you left off? We would like to hear the end of it.

(Message continues.)

Yes I will go on.

There are times when our life seems such a little thing that it might be compressed into a single span of the mind, but now it lengthens out into almost limitless perspectives of pain. We agonize through great deserts of time. On earth Time is a prisoned thing that flies on wings of silver a little way from her gilded cage in the dawn to the portals of the sunset and home

A NEW MESSAGE FROM OSCAR WILDE 273

through the dark. The returning rhythms of night and day, of bud-break and falling leaf, mark the resting places of her flight; by the moving finger of shadow that marks the trail of the trekking sun, by a swinging globe of copper or by a beating heart you may measure the separate pulsations of her wings. But we have neither sun nor moon nor any guiding star. Our only measure of time is by the quantity of sensation that swells or diminishes the stream of thought. Thought and Time move indeed in inverse ratio; when thought races, Time limps like a lamed thing; Thought languishing, Time runs swiftly on.

At long last the first faint stirrings of organic life make themselves felt within us. A strange sudden blurring on the mental retina repeated at long intervals. Then a sound as of far-off thunder, hammering on some hollow hill. That is the heart-beat. Many days seem to elapse before we hear it again. Then, slurring across the sounds of the heart, syncopating into the vast stride of its rhythm comes the sound of the breath of life. It is like a storm-blast through a forest of pines, and it dies away sobbing in a myriad murmurs. After we have counted many thousand of these horrible beats by some subtle change in our sensations or by some mental adjustment or some slowing down of our processes of thought, things begin to assume their normal proportions.

We sink gradually from eternity into time.

Slowly, and as through a confusion of falling water, the sounds of the world begin to break in upon us. More painfully than a little child who is learning to read we seek to disentangle them, to distinguish their separate articulations; to recognize the rustle of leaves or the soft lapping of water by which we may know that we have strayed on some green or golden countryside; the roar of traffic or the tramp of feet that tells us it is day. And then human voices sounding like the voices of gods.

[Mr. V. being anxious for more light on the subject of the above script, made arrangements for a second sitting with Miss MacGregor, at which certain questions were put to the communicator.]

RECORD OF SECOND SITTING WITH MISS HELEN MACGREGOR,
HELD AT BRITISH PSYCHIC COLLEGE, OCTOBER 8, 1923, AT
4.20 P.M.

Mr. V. holding the pencil. Miss MacGregor touching his hand.

Mr. V. first put the question :

“ Is your world a purely mental world ? ”

The answer, which came immediately, read as follows :

Oscar Wilde: “ It is a world of the imagination. The gift of imagination was the greatest gift the gods had given me on earth. Where others could dimly discern, I, with flashes of inward sight that startled even myself, could actually see. I need hardly say what a perpetual solace this gift has been to me during the long years. It has made my night, day, peopled my darkness with gracious forms, lighted for me a pathway through the dead centuries, and opened for me the very gates of heaven, even though sometimes it has shown me the horror of the secret places of hell. When I first came to this place and realized the terrible limitations under which I should have to live, and the utter impossibility of any return to the physical life I had known, I resolved to live by the imagination alone, to create new worlds for myself. And so I strayed into many antique heavens and learnt the secrets of many strange hells. I have seen ‘ Osiris ’ seated on a lotus leaf weighing the hearts of the dead, or, wandering by some black river of Lethe ; I have watched the son of Peleus, spear in hand, ‘ coming with great strides ’ across that starry mead, or old Sisyphus pushing that ponderous rock up the fire-scarred slope. But I wearied of them all very soon. Even the amaranth and the asphodel, those two flowers that the Greeks deemed to be everlasting, are not so fresh as they were, and the fields of Dis have grown a little dusty.”

(Time 4.39½ p.m.)

Mr. V. then asked the question : “ Last time you spoke here, were you trying to describe your normal conditions in the astral world or your sensations on entering a physical brain ? ”

Answer : (Oscar Wilde) “ Simply my awakening to physical consciousness.

“ It is only seldom that we attain to any very clear consciousness of our surroundings. More often, supine and wretched we wait through the day until at last, like tired children, we slip back into sleep. The little light that has struggled fitfully all day to pierce the gloom, dies with the sodden day. On one occasion I remember how, though I was absolutely blind and quite deaf, yet through the one sense that remained to me I was able to recognize the place where I was. It was a chemist’s shop and I spent many miserable hours, or maybe days, among the perfumes of the pharmacopœia. After a time I passed into unconsciousness again, and when I woke it was in another place.”

A NEW MESSAGE FROM OSCAR WILDE 275

(Time 4.52 p.m.)

Question : " To whose brain are you attached at present ? "

Answer : (Oscar Wilde) " To your own."

Question : " How is it you are able to communicate through Mrs. Travers-Smith, if, as you say, you are imprisoned in my brain ? "

Answer : (Oscar Wilde) " That is most probably another part of myself, a poor fellow-unfortunate who suffers even as I suffer."

Question : " What do you mean? Surely there are not two Oscar Wildes ? "

Answer : (Oscar Wilde) " Does that cause you to wonder? Yes, it really is so. Quite possibly our name is legion. The soul is no indivisible unity, no solitary shadow seated in its house of sin. It is a thing, highly complex, built up, layer upon layer, shell within shell, even as the little brown bulb of the hyacinth that thrusts out green shoots from the darkness. Or again the soul is like a wise lord who has many servants who are also his friends, and sit at the same board with him and share in his councils. The master is moved on to his destiny of glory or of dishonour, but his poor servants pass into a bondage that is worse than death. In their speculations on human destiny the Greeks were right, as they were in everything else. Ah! how terribly right they were! We read in Homer that the wraith of Achilles wanders disconsolate in the lampless gloom of Acheron, but he himself, we are told, feasts with the deathless gods.* And like Achilles I would sooner be the poorest ploughman on earth than lord of all the astral realms.

" Whenever a human being dies, such things as I am creep forth into pain. At death's disintegration we are flung off like so many shrivelled but still living shells. We are doomed to live because we are endowed with a dynamic energy that will not let us die.

* It should be " Heracles " not " Achilles " whose phantom remains in Hades. In " Butcher and Lang's " *Odyssey* xi. (577-606) we read : " And after him I descried the mighty Heracles, his phantom I say ; but as for himself he hath joy at the banquet among the deathless gods, and hath to wife Hebe of the fair ankles, child of great Zeus, and of Here of the golden sandals." The context of the script suggests that Wilde has here confused Achilles with Heracles. The reference to Achilles preferring the lot of the poorest ploughman on earth to the lordship of the astral realms is, however, correct. In Butcher and Lang's translation Achilles speaks to Odysseus as follows : " Nay, speak not comfortably to me of death, oh great Odysseus. Rather would I live on ground as the hireling of another with a landless man who had no great livelihood than bear sway among all the dead that be departed."

“ I loved Oscar Wilde—I was his soul’s friend. I was closer to him than hands or feet. I dwelt with him in the same temple of flesh. When he was happy I rejoiced also, and when he was sorrowful I, too, put ashes on my head. Our hearts gladdened together at the blooming of the chestnuts, or saddened under the still stars. What he dreamed I helped make come true. His life became my life and his secret my secret. I journeyed with him in life’s caravan and I parted from him at the door of the tomb.”

(Time 5.12½ p.m.)

Question : “ Have you any hope of reaching a happier state ? ”

Answer : (Oscar Wilde) “ I yearn to be united to my soul. Somewhen and somewhere I must surely meet my soul again. That is my little taper of hope in infinite darkness. For I am confident that in God’s divine economy nothing can be lost, and that in the universe there can be no enduring unhappiness. From the very shackles of our sorrow, it may be, there is forged the glad, the far-heard music of humanity, and ours may be the tears that make the world sweet.”

(Time 5.25 p.m.)

THE MEANING OF THE SCRIPT

No one who reads these communications can fail to be impressed by the state of profound unhappiness which they reveal. If we have read his meaning aright, Wilde has been harried from one living organism to another until he has become mere flotsam and jetsam on the stream of existence. As the fabled jinns were for ever clambering over the constellations and prying into heaven, so this astral adventurer peers into our world through human peepholes. Physical life lures him like a loadstone and he cannot escape its thralls. For some miserable fleeting satisfaction of the senses, or some love of notoriety it may be, he is willing to undergo again and again all the throes of re-birth, all the long agony of returning consciousness. We would suggest that the same evil soul-forces which encompassed his earthly ruin are responsible for this spiritual collapse. And this evil ferment, carried over perhaps from his own soul’s infinite past, ran its course through his life and apparently has not finished working yet. Another interesting feature of this first script is an allusion to a distorted sense of time. Though Mr. V. was unaware of it, certain experiments have been carried out on the appreciation of time by persons partially under the influence of an anæsthetic. At the first whiff of the chloroform the patient was told to begin counting aloud at his normal rate : 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. As the anæsthesia progressed it was observed that the interval of time between successive counts rapidly increased. For instance, the patient said

“ Seven ” and then waited a full two minutes before saying “ Eight. ” Doubtless he imagined that he was still counting at his initial rate. Such aberrations in the time sense throw light on Wilde’s statement that “ Many days seem to elapse between successive beats of the heart. ”

It would, I feel, be premature to attempt to discuss the extraordinary views on the nature of human personality which are hinted at in the second script. Much more work has obviously got to be done before any theories of value could be formulated. I will here content myself with the remark that the theory of dominant and subordinate selves was advanced by that distinguished psychologist Prof. William McDougal, and that neither Miss MacGregor nor Mr. V. was acquainted with McDougal’s work. The idea that the subordinate selves survive the dissolution of the body as well as the dominant self is, I believe, new and startling, and opens up a great field for future investigation.

THE STYLE OF THE COMMUNICATIONS

At the outset we may ask ourselves the question : “ Apart from his fantastic theories of art and life, what are the peculiar qualities which make Wilde’s prose vivid and wonderful for us and distinguish it from the work of perhaps greater writers of his own day such as Ruskin and Stevenson ? ” And when I speak of Wilde’s prose I am not thinking of those writings of his which depend for their effect almost entirely on a skilful use of the inverted proverb and the perverted aphorism—peculiar kinds of cleverness in which Wilde excelled. I have in mind rather the subtly impressionistic passages of *Dorian Gray*, the epic prose of *De Profundis*, and the jewelled style of the *Fairy Tales*. Now, it has often been said that Wilde’s special contribution to literature was a passion for curiously-coloured decoration ; and the most casual inspection of the pages of what might be called his “ middle period ” shows that they abound in “ pearls and rubies, ” “ bowls of amethyst, ” and “ cups of jade. ” We read of men with “ honey-coloured hair ” and women whose lips are like “ a scarlet fruit. ” The sea is “ a targe of polished silver, ” the moon is sometimes “ a clipped piece of money ” and sometimes a “ yellow skull, ” and the night sky “ a monstrous peacock’s tail starred with golden eyes. ”

Decoration, then, is an outstanding quality of Wilde’s style ; but I do not think it can be the true secret of his appeal. Indeed, we shall find that some of the passages in *De Profundis* that charm us most, and seem most truly characteristic of the man, are singularly free from over-loaded ornament or artificial decoration of any description.

Rhythm his prose has in varying degrees, from the swift staccato sentences of *Dorian Gray* to the lectern music of *The Young King* and the studied movements of *De Profundis*. Wilde had also a wonderful instinct for the correct combination of the aspirate and the sibilant, the succession of labials, the sharp sounds of the “ d, ”

“t,” and “n,” and the changes of vowel in such a sentence as the following, taken from *The Birthday of the Infanta*: “The chestnut had its spires of white stars and the hawthorn its pallid moons of beauty.”

It would be safe to say, however, that no fine writing ever yet depended for its success on sound and rhythm alone. Good prose must give us pictures as well as polyphonic effects; it must appeal to the mind's eye no less than to the mind's ear. All good writers must be able to visualize, and although Wilde, as he himself admits in our script, possessed this power of inward sight in greater measure than most men, yet the mere fact that he visualized would not serve to distinguish his work from that of, say, Stevenson or Ruskin. It is, we venture to suggest, the peculiar manner of his visualization which gave a unique distinction to almost everything that he wrote. The true secret of his charm will, I think, be found to consist in this—That while other writers give us pictures of still-life Wilde almost invariably visualized life in action. He seizes life always in some exquisite moment of action. Wilde arrests action for us at the moment of its greatest energy, just as the Greek artist captured and transfixed for ever the running figures on Keats' famous vase. He sees “the grape-gatherers threading through the vines” and “the reapers bending over the corn” and “Nature hanging the night with stars.” We feel that things are happening even as we read. His very flowers are never content merely to be beautiful in their beds. “The flame-like crocus springs from the grass” to look at the laughing girl, “the narcissus stores the cool rain,” and “the primroses nestle round the gnarled roots of the oak trees.” And it is the same when he is personifying abstract qualities. Philosophy, becoming young again, “dances over the hills of life,” and where another man might have said “There is pity for you in my eyes,” Wilde says, “Pity looks at you out of my eyes” (*Prose Poems*). This faculty for visualizing action at its most interesting moment is, I think, the most distinguishing characteristic that runs through all Wilde's prose. Paradoxical as it may seem, action, the thing that he affected to despise most in life, is the thing that has made his work live.

This quality of active visualization is well illustrated in the present script by the passage which begins “Suddenly like some mad thing stung out of sleep. . . .”

I have found it interesting to compare this particular passage in which Wilde's passion for the grotesque and terrible is displayed in a marked degree with a parallel passage out of *Dorian Gray*. This reads as follows:—

“The suspense became unbearable. Time seemed to him to be crawling with feet of lead, while he by monstrous winds was being swept towards the jagged edge of some black cleft of precipice. He knew what was waiting for him there, saw it indeed, and, shuddering, crushed with dank hands his burning lids as though he would have

robbed the very brain of sight and driven the eyeballs back into their cave. It was useless. The brain had its own food on which it battered, and the imagination, made grotesque by terror, twisted and distorted as a living thing by pain, danced like some foul puppet on a stand, and grinned through moving masks."

We must leave it for the reader to decide whether our passage suffers by comparison.

But, of course, his style has other constant qualities. A good prose is doubtless like a good cake, inasmuch as many ingredients go to the making of it.

Perhaps from the standpoint of rhythm his most distinguishing characteristic is a dramatic sense of climax in the construction of his paragraphs. The swift sentences follow on each other's heels like waves, and each sentence adds its momentum to the marching mass; the last sentence is a sort of epitome or commentary on what has gone before, and the end has been foreseen from the beginning.

Here, again, we may venture a comparison between the opening paragraph of the script and the one passage in *De Profundis* which stands nearest to it in form and spirit. The passage in question reads:—

"With us prison makes a man a pariah. I, and such as I am, have hardly any right to air and sun. Our presence taints the pleasures of others. We are unwelcome when we reappear. To revisit the glimpses of the moon is not for us. Our very children are taken away. Those lovely links with humanity are broken. We are doomed to be solitary, while our sons still live. We are denied the one thing that might heal us and keep us, that might bring balm to the bruised heart and peace to the soul in pain."

Again we must leave the comparison to the reader. In our opinion Wilde seems to reach a more tragic intensity in the script even, as the occasion is greater.

Here and there in the scripts I have detected slight echoes and traces of minor mannerisms. For instance, in *De Profundis* there is a phrase "No echo coming from a hollow hill," which might have suggested an image in the script. The expression "A shadow seated in a house of sin" is to be found in *Dorian Gray*. But since in *Dorian Gray* Wilde is quoting Giordano Bruno there seems no reason why he should not do so again.

The use of the word "No" as it appears in our script in the phrase "No lambent wonder of breaking dawn" was a favourite mannerism of Wilde.

HAVE ANIMALS SOULS ?

By HORACE LEAF

DESCARTES' contention that animals do not possess self-consciousness and thought and therefore rank only as machines, is no doubt largely responsible for the opinion still so widely held in the Western world that animals have no soul. Even Hume's powerfully supported opinion that a careful consideration of the behaviour of human beings and the higher animals indicate that the same causes are at work, has proved almost powerless against his more religious fellow-philosophers. Yet there can be no doubt, as Hume said, that the pride and humility of animals, as well as their expressions of love and fear, to mention a few only of their qualities, imply that "causation operates in the same manner upon beasts as upon human creatures."

The increasing interest and affection shown by the present age towards animals has already reinforced the weight of opinion in support of Hume's arguments, and to his method of observation has been added experiment. The study of animal psychology has passed out of the exclusive care of the philosopher, for the scientist now plays a more conspicuous part. Nor is interest limited only to the higher forms of life, such as the horse, the dog, and the ape. The lowly unicellular animals have come in for a fair share of consideration, with astounding results. The question now is not, Have animals intelligence? but rather, Where does intelligence begin among them? If reason is evidence of the existence of a soul independent of the physical organism, we seem to be well on the way to proving that all animals survive the shock of death.

To the generous-hearted, broad-minded person this discovery would rank among the greatest ever made. For the occult student it would mean the confirmation of his belief and the fulfilment of his hope; as with William James he can say, "For my own part, then, so far as logic goes, I am willing that every leaf that ever grew in this world's forests and rustled in the breeze should become immortal."

It is, of course, very difficult to interpret animal behaviour: we cannot easily get near to them mentally. "Cogito ergo sum" is correct. We can be absolutely sure of nothing, except that individually we exist. Undoubtedly, however, we know less of the

consciousness of a worm or a bat than of that of our fellow-man; but we are justified in adopting the same methods of judgment in the one case as in the other. This is why the modern thinking horse and dog are really serious problems. When Zariff, one of the Elberfeld horses, spontaneously and correctly informed his master that "Albert has beaten Hänschen," it looked very much as if the animal understood when Herr Krall gave orders to his men under no consideration to ill-treat the horses. The same reasoning applies in the case of "Rolf," the calculating dog, who could also spell and even, it appears, express a rational opinion on theological subjects. As has been suggested, these wonderful abilities may be the result of purely subliminal action on the part of these beasts. If that explanation should be the correct one, the spiritual kinship of animals and mankind will be just as securely established as if the actions were the outcome of conscious effort, for man is known to have a subliminal mind.

The principal fault of the theory of a soulless animal world is its over-simplicity. It attempts to solve the problem by simply dismissing it as unworthy of further consideration. There is no chemical test for mentality, and nothing short of that sort of proof should warrant a positive denial of its existence among animals. Mind is never the same in its manifestations through any two beings, even of the same species; this is a fact which applies to the lowest forms of animal life as well as to men and women.

If we approach the study of animal psychology in the same way that we do human psychology, we shall soon find ourselves carried towards the point of view that animals have souls. With Hume we may be compelled to say: "No truth appears to be more evident than that beasts are endowed with thought and reason as well as men." We shall at least be compelled to say this of some beasts. If the ultimate issue leads us to the belief that all life is the expression of one original substance, much will have been achieved which should broaden our sympathies and widen our sense of duty and responsibility.

In no case ought we to try to interpret actions as the outcome of high psychical faculties if they can be explained by any other means. The simpler the explanation the better, although it is an open question whether automatism, chemical action, or instinct are really simpler explanations than that of intelligence for complex actions perfectly adapted to various circumstances. Take, for example, the movements of animalculæ.

(1) They are often quite different from those of another of the same species under similar circumstances.

(2) Their restless roving is not at random, and when food is scarce it is intensified, passing insensibly into "hunting."

(3) Many of the simplest animals exhibit quite definite reactions to stimuli.

According to Professor J. Arthur Thomson :—

They respond by particular movements to changes in temperature, in illumination, and in the chemical composition of the medium. As there is no nervous system, but simply an inborn protoplasmic organization, we may use the phrase *unicellular organic reaction* for what is in a far-off way comparable to the reflection of a higher animal.

Thus early in the scale of life is the note of individuality struck, as shown by these simple forms reacting differently to different circumstances ; for it must be remembered that different individuals act differently under the same tests.

The amœba has long been regarded by those who prefer the mechanical explanation of lower forms of life as merely a reservoir of energy, its various movements being viewed as an outflow of this energy in response to different stimuli. But those who have closely studied them have found that it is impossible to thus describe their ways. The amœba does not act with the regularity that would be expected of it if it were merely pressed, as it were, into physical moulds. On the contrary, its actions are uncertain and excellently adaptive, showing the operation of an internal directive force which apparently acts in a very intelligent manner. We are told authoritatively that, "The moving amœba shows in its transient differentiations a trafficking with time," which is another way of saying it learns by experience. Its reactions are not stereotyped ; no one can predict what its movements will be from a knowledge of its external circumstances.

The same applies to the paramecium, a minute cigar-shaped infusorian, abundant in water with decaying marsh plants in it. This animal is justly regarded as of a low order. Yet its behaviour is so intelligent in its limited environment that, according to Professor H. S. Jennings, it is impossible to conceive any form of intelligence compelled to function through its peculiar organism acting in a better manner under the circumstances.

One other instance may be given. Like the paramecium, the stentor is a unicellular organism. During recent years considerable scientific attention has been paid to its ways. It is an excellent example of how the behaviour of the lowest forms of animal life is modified by experience. The stentor abounds

in marshy pools, attaching itself by the narrowed end to water reeds, surrounding the lower half of its body with a mucus-like sheath, the so-called tube.

For the purpose of experiment a cloud of carmine particles is introduced into the water currents passing the ciliated mouth of the stentor. Whereupon it bends to one side, and thus often avoids the particles. But if this movement fails and the particles continue to come, it tries a second method; it suddenly reverses the ciliary movement, and the water is driven away from its mouth. This may be repeated two or three times. If this does not get rid of the obnoxious particles, the stentor tries a third way. It contracts its tube and suspends activity. After half a minute or so it re-expands, and if the carmine particles still reach it, it contracts again and again. It will do this many times, and after each contraction stays a little longer in its tube than it did before. Finally, if success does not reward its efforts, it breaks its attachment and swims forwards and backwards away from its tube. This constitutes its fourth endeavour. Thus we see this simple creature by a series of perfectly rational actions, each more pronounced than the former, endeavour to get rid of unpleasant stimuli. According to Professor Jennings:—

The same individual does not always behave in the same way under the same external conditions. . . . The reaction to any given stimuli is modified by the past experience of the animal, and the modifications are regulatory, not haphazard, in character.

Among unicellular forms of life, then, we see what appears to be testing and rejecting: attempts to do the best thing under the circumstances of so reasonable a nature, that if the creatures and their environments were not mentioned one would easily mistake their actions for those of human beings.

When these things are done by brainless, nerveless creatures we naturally remain in doubt as to their true origin, because of our shortcomings. If, however, we attempt a reasonable, unbiassed deduction from them, it will doubtless favour the belief of some conscious and reasoned endeavour on the animals' part. That is to say, it will favour the existence of at least an embryonic soul in these lowly forms; and if a soul in man is evidence of the conscious survival of death, why in one case and not in the other? The true solution of this aspect of the problem rests doubtless on scientific evidence.

INDIAN SYMBOLISM

By V. B. METTA

SYMBOLISM plays a very prominent part in Indian life. The Indian symbols were born of race-consciousness thousands of years ago, and are therefore quite different from the symbols which modern literary men and artists evolve from their individual consciousness. They therefore make an immediate appeal to and are understood by all classes of people in the country, while the modern ones make no immediate appeal and have no intellectual meaning for the majority of those who read about them or look at them. And for this very reason the Indian symbols inspire respect or reverence in their beholders, while the modern ones excite nothing more than intellectual curiosity or pleasure at the most.

The Swastika, that most universal of symbols, which represents the apparent movement of the sun from east to west every-day, is generally used in India as the symbol of moral regeneration and happiness. It is, however, used at times as the symbol of Fire, since fire is generated by the rubbing or crossing of sticks. People therefore paint it on their safes or on the walls of their houses, so that they may not be burnt. The Sauwastika—the cross with its right arm pointing downwards and not upwards as in the Swastika—is an inauspicious symbol, because it signifies Chaos and Dissolution. The lotus, because it springs from mud, represents the origin of the Universe from primal Darkness and Chaos. The open lotus is used as a symbol of the sun. It is a symbol of the material Universe when Indian deities sit or stand on it. The third eye (urna) which you see on the statues of Buddha, and for which Shiva is famous, is the soul-eye, or the eye of spiritual insight. The wheel symbolizes Law in Buddhism, while Vishnu's chakra symbolizes the sun. The tree is often used in Hinduism as a symbol of the Universe, but in Buddhism it signifies the Church. The serpent is a symbol of both Good and Evil in India. The Shesha Naga on which Vishnu reclines, and which upholds the Universe, is the symbol of Infinity. The serpent is a protector, and so you see the hood of a serpent above the head of some of the statues of Buddha. He brings wealth, and so he is painted on the walls of Hindu houses. He is wise, and hence Buddha was called the "Maha

Naga"—the Great Serpent. The snake round Shiva's neck, however, is the symbol of Evil, because he is the creature who destroys life. He also symbolized the Dasyus or the aborigines of India, and so Krishna, the Aryan Prince, vanquished the serpent Kaliya, that is the aborigines of the country. As he sheds his skin and appears with a new body periodically, he symbolizes Re-incarnation. When he has got his tail in his mouth, he is the emblem of Infinity.—It is quite likely that the Indian serpent as the symbol of Infinity went to China and was there transformed into the Dragon.

The small, round stone often placed under trees in India, is the symbol of the Mundane Egg. The Hindu Trinity, composed of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, symbolizes the three main forces of the Universe, namely, those of Creation, Preservation—and Destruction—to be immediately followed by Transformation. These three gods are often represented together, to show that they are three different aspects of the One and only Supreme Being. Vishnu by himself is often represented by the Cosmic Pillar, which supports the Universe, while Shiva is represented by the lingam, which is either the symbol of generation or the pivot of Cosmic forces—like Vishnu's pillar. The Buddhist Trinity, composed of Buddha, Church, and Law was often symbolized by the Trisul—a sort of trident. Kama, the Indian Cupid, is always represented with his eyes open, because he is gazing with rapt attention at the object of his love. Ganesh, the portly god with the elephant's head, is the symbol of worldly prosperity, because he is all body, but no spirit. He is also the symbol of social stability. The coming of spring is represented in Indian art by the asoka tree blossoming when it is touched by a young maiden's foot, the young maiden being, of course, the symbol of spring. Indian sculptors are very fond of representing Shiva dancing the great Tandava dance. This dance of Shiva symbolizes the movement of Matter for making new forms when thrilled into activity by the Universal Spirit. The god stands upon the dwarf Tripura, the symbol of the World, the Flesh and the Devil. He holds an hour-glass-shaped drum in one of his hands—the symbol of the vibration of life, while in another he holds fire, the symbol of the destruction and purification of the body, and the grace which the soul gets thereby. He also wears a woman's ornament in the lobe of one of his ears to show the bisexual nature of the Supreme Being.

There is a good deal of colour symbolism used in Indian art and life. Black is sometimes used to represent the Supreme

Being, because it signifies the absence of colour. It is also used for inspiring terror, and so Kali, the dread goddess, is painted black. On some occasions it denotes Space in Indian art. White is usually a symbol of purity; but when a man exchanges a white turban for his usually red one, it is a sign of extreme mourning. In the Buddhist art of India, priests put on yellow robes, because yellow is the symbol of Humanity, whose servants they are. Green represents the animal kingdom in that art. In Indian gardens, the red flowers represent Brahma, blue flowers stand for Vishnu, and white flowers symbolize Shiva.

Geometrical symbolism is also much employed in India. God, in this kind of symbolism, is represented by a dot. The equilateral triangle is the symbol of God manifesting Himself in the Cosmos. The three sides of this triangle represent His three aspects, namely, those of the Creator, the Preserver, and the Transformer. When this triangle stands on its apex, it conveys the idea of expansion or evolution, but when it stands on its base, it expresses the idea of contraction or involution. The intersecting triangles signify the mystic lotus, which is the casket containing the Jewel of Life. The circle represents Infinity, while the spiral represents either the Evolutionary Force, or the snake, or the mystic word "Aum."

The Hindus paint certain symbolic marks on their foreheads and arms according to the sect to which they belong. The followers of Vishnu paint perpendicular lines, a triangle shield, a cone, or any other similar form with its apex pointing downwards because, among other things, Vishnu represents water, whose tendency is to go downwards. The followers of Shiva, on the contrary, paint such a figure with its apex pointing upwards, because, among other things, Shiva represents Fire, whose tendency is to go upwards.

I may also mention in brief the symbolism of the Indian garden, its trees, flowers and birds. It is laid out in the form of the cosmic cross, so that it has four divisions, which represent the four divisions of Paradise. There is a mound placed in its centre to represent Mount Meru, the legendary mountain which is believed to occupy the centre of the earth. A tree representing the Tree of Life is planted on this mount. Some of the gardens are laid out in three terraces, to symbolize the three worlds. The weeping willow represents Majnoun, the immortal lover of Mohammedan stories, and the water lily represents his beloved Leila. Sometimes Majnoun is represented by a cypress, and Leila by a rose bush. Two low-growing fruit trees, such as a

lemon and an orange tree, placed in the midst of a parterre of flowers, mean that these lovers, separated by an evil Destiny in life, are united in Paradise. The dark purple violets signify the gloss and perfume of Leila's hair, and the tulips and roses represent her lips and cheeks. The champak (jasmine) is the favourite flower of all lovers, because it is beloved by Kama. The tulsi (sweet basil) is the symbol of the human soul longing to be married to the World Soul in the form of Krishna. The swans are invariably kept in Indian gardens, because they are auspicious. The green parrot is very often to be seen in these gardens, because he is the messenger of Kama, whom all lovers naturally worship.

THE CYCLAMEN

By PHYLLIS M. JAMES

WHEN we are baby buds we fold our wings,
 And turn our delicate faces to the earth,
 Hiding the brave, unutterable things
 That marvellously moved to give us birth—

Deep mysteries they,
 Which must not reach the ears of every day.

Then as we live and grow, our wings are spread
 Under the moon like snowy butterflies
 Bewitched in sudden flight ; or, blushing red
 Beneath swift glances from the searching eyes

Of wind and sun,
 In rosy dalliance is our life begun.

So we continue in our whirling grace—
 Frail fairies, poised for flight on coral feet,
 Ready to flutter from our resting place
 Into the airs where wind and sunshine meet ;

But we are chained
 By spells to earth, and here we have remained.

Cyclamen we are named—the circle flowers
 Whose petals form a chalice on each stem,
 Symbols of the round cup of Life, its hours
 And days all held within a circle's hem—

Eternity,
 The endless ring without a boundary !

BLAKE AND SWEDENBORG :

A STUDY IN COMPARATIVE MYSTICISM

By H. STANLEY REDGROVE, B.Sc. (Lond.)A.I.C., F.C.S.

THE question of the relation between Swedenborg and Blake is an exceedingly difficult and involved one. It will not, of course, be possible, within the confines of a brief study such as the present, to present anything approaching a complete answer to this question ; but, at least, I shall attempt to throw some light on an obscure problem, and to point out certain facts connected therewith which seem to me to be of importance.

In dealing with Swedenborg's and Blake's works we are not confronted with two independently constructed systems of thought. Blake's father is said to have been " a dissenter," and it is possible that he was amongst the early converts to Swedenborg's doctrines ; at any rate Blake began to be acquainted with these at an early age. This fact, one might think, ought to simplify the question with which we are concerned : in truth, however, it complicates it. For to Blake's early acquaintance with the doctrines of the Swedish philosopher-seer were, no doubt, largely due (i) his very thorough assimilation of certain of Swedenborg's teachings and modes of thought, and (ii) his capacity for so very thoroughly disliking Swedenborg on occasion. It is this fact, namely, that Blake is at once so Swedenborgian and so anti-Swedenborgian, coupled with the inherent difficulty of interpreting Blake's frequently obscure language, that renders the question with which I am concerned one of the hardest in a region of hard and obscure problems. Moreover, it must be remembered that Blake was subjected to other potent influences, particularly that of Boehme, the inspired shoemaker of Goerlitz ; and although Boehme's and Swedenborg's teachings have much in common—especially do they agree in regarding Christianity as primarily a matter of life—Boehme and Swedenborg seem to have pulled against one another in Blake's mind.

Swedenborg was essentially a man of science, and when he gave up his scientific calling to enter upon another sphere of labour, he did not leave his scientific attitude of mind behind. Blake, on the other hand, was essentially an artist, who distrusted

science, as tending, he thought, to bind down imagination. In one poem, for example, he writes:—

You don't believe—I won't attempt to make ye:
 You are asleep—I won't attempt to wake ye.
 Sleep on! sleep on! while in your pleasant dreams
 Of Reason you may drink of Life's clear streams.
 Reason and Newton, they are quite two things;
 For so the swallow and the sparrow sings.

Reason says "Miracle": Newton says "Doubt."
 Aye! that's the way to make all Nature out.
 "Doubt, doubt, and don't believe without experiment":
 That is the very thing that Jesus meant,
 When he said "Only believe! believe and try!
 Try, try, and never mind the reason why!"*

whilst in his picture entitled "Newton" (1795), Newton, as a symbol of Science, is represented by a naked, youthful figure, intent upon a geometrical figure upon the ground, the dark sky in the picture corresponding to Blake's concept of the mind of empirical science.

Swedenborg, though he claims to have passed through assuredly the most extraordinary and exciting experiences, never exhibits excitement. He is always cool, level-headed, analytical. Blake, on the other hand, is always in a state of intellectual excitement: he is bubbling over with exuberance, or exploding with honest indignation. Swedenborg saw that no detached statement could be altogether true: he is, therefore, always qualifying, supplementing, defining, with an eye to scientific precision; and he is always alive to that element of truth present in the current opinion of his day. But if Swedenborg would convince by accuracy and precision, Blake would convince by violence and paradox. Swedenborg could denounce when conciliation was impossible, Blake always denounces—his opponents in art or philosophy are invariably "murderers," "liars," or "slobbering fools." Blake never expresses a great truth unless he does so in an exuberant and excessive—perhaps some will say, exaggerated—form. In a word, Swedenborg was a Swede, whilst

* From *The Rossetti MS.* See Oxford Edition of Blake's *Poetical Works*, edited by Dr. John Sampson, pp. 138 and 139. On the other hand, in *Jerusalem* (1804), he writes: "O ye Religious, discountenance every one among you who shall pretend to despise Art & Science! I call upon you in the Name of Jesus! What is the Life of Man but Art & Science? is it Meat & Drink? . . . Let every Christian, as much as in him lies, engage himself openly & publicly before all the World in some Mental pursuit for the Building up of Jerusalem" (Maclagan and Russell's edition, 1904, pp. 92 and 93).

Blake, if the tradition that he was an Irishman is not true, let me say, ought to have been one.

There are some persons who react as intended to Blake's fiery words, to whom Swedenborg's more precise style proves boring or (as to Blake himself) irritating. There are others who find intellectual satisfaction in Swedenborg's works, but are repelled by Blake's paradoxes. And there are some more fortunate minds, and I count myself amongst their number, who can admire both these great geniuses and appreciate their several different qualities. To such, any attempt to value one at the expense of the other would appear invidious and repellent.*

In her *Mysticism in English Literature*, an excellent work on a subject concerning which sane books are rare, Dr. C. F. E. Spurgeon says:—

Blake knew some at least of Swedenborg's books well; two of his friends, C. A. Tulk and Flaxman, were devoted Swedenborgians, and he told Tulk that he had two different states, one in which he liked Swedenborg's writings, and one in which he disliked them. Unquestionably, they sometimes irritated him, and then he abused them, but it is only necessary to read his annotations of his copy of Swedenborg's *Wisdom of the Angels* (now in the British Museum) to realize in the first place that he sometimes misunderstood Swedenborg's position, and secondly, that when he did understand it, he was thoroughly in agreement with it, and that he and the Swedish seer had much in common. †

It was assuredly in that state in which he disliked Swedenborg's writings that Blake wrote, probably in 1790, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, in many ways the greatest and most forceful of his works. There Blake wrote as follows:—

I have always found that Angels have the vanity to speak of themselves as the Only Wise. This they do with a confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning. Thus Swedenborg boasts that what he writes is new; tho' it is only the Contents or Index of already publish'd books . . . he shows the folly of churches, and exposes hypocrites, till he imagines that all are religious, and himself the single one on earth that ever broke a net. Now hear a plain fact: Swedenborg has not written one new truth. Now hear another: he has written all the old falsehoods. And now hear the reason. He conversed with Angels who are all religious, and conversed not with Devils who all hate religion, for he was incapable thro' his conceited notions. Thus Swedenborg's writings are a recapit-

* Mr. W. B. Yeats, unfortunately, cannot be included. (See his Introduction to *Poems of William Blake*, in "The Muses' Library").

† Caroline F. E. Spurgeon: *Mysticism in English Literature* (1913) pp. 30 and 31. The full title of the book referred to in the quotation is *The Wisdom of Angels concerning Divine Love and Divine Wisdom*. The annotations have been published by Mr. Ellis in his *The Real Blake: a Portrait Biography* (1907).

tulation of all superficial opinions, and an analysis of the more sublime—but no further. Have now another plain fact. Any man of mechanical talents may, from the writings of Paracelsus or Jacob Behmen, produce ten thousand volumes of equal value with Swedenborg's, and from those of Dante or Shakespear an infinite number. . . .*

Of the items of this violent criticism it will not be necessary for those who know Swedenborg, to point out that not one is justifiable. The highest of Swedenborg's angels never reason, because they have divine truth inscribed on their hearts, and perceive as true that which is true.† Swedenborg's "Memorable Relations," contained in his works, relate conversations and other experiences with evil spirits as well as good, and it is surely inconsistent to deny the validity of the former whilst admitting that of the latter. And I know of no philosopher more free from conceit, and of a more humble temper of mind. Nor was it Blake's constant or final attitude towards Sweden's great philosopher-seer. The year previously, at any rate, Blake appears to have been a whole-hearted disciple of Swedenborg. In that year, the first General Conference of the New Jerusalem Church—a religious organization based upon Swedenborg's theological doctrines—met in Great East Cheap, and according to the Minute Book, the signatures "W. Blake" and "C. Blake" are, together with those of other persons who attended, attached to the following declaration of faith:—

We whose Names are hereunto subscribed, do each of us approve of the theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, believing that the Doctrines contained therein are genuine Truths, revealed from Heaven, and that the New Jerusalem Church ought to be established, distinct and separate from the Old Church.‡

These signatures are almost certainly those of William Blake and his wife Catherine—unfortunately the original Minute Book is lost, so that a slight doubt as to their identity must remain. A large number of resolutions of this conference, asserting belief in the various distinctive doctrines of Swedenborg's theological and philosophical writings, are reported as having been passed unanimously, so that presumably they had Blake's assent. It seems probable, also, that for a time at any rate, Blake was an attendant at the New Jerusalem Church opened in Cross Street,

* Oxford Edition of Blake's *Poetical Works*, pp. 258 and 259.

† See for example his *Heaven and its Wonders and Hell*, § 270.

‡ See the *Historic Notice of the Early Conferences*, by J. R. Boyle, prefixed to *Minutes of the First Seven Conferences of the New Church . . . reprinted from the Original Editions* (1885), p. xx.

Hatton Garden, in 1797, though later in his life he ceased from attending public worship. There are, moreover, some explicit references to Swedenborg in Blake's later works, written in a different spirit from that in which the Swedish mystic is referred to in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. In *Milton* (1804), Swedenborg is entitled—rather ambiguously, it is true—"strongest of men, the Sampson shorn by the Churches,"* whilst in the *Descriptive Catalogue* (1809) he is a "visionary" whose works "are well worthy the attention of Painters and Poets; they are foundations for grand things," and he is referred to as agreeing with Blake in his denunciation of learning without imagination.† Further, in 1825, towards the close of his life, Blake spoke of Swedenborg to Crabb Robinson—according to the latter's Diary—as "a Divine teacher," who "has done much good, and will do much," adding, however, that Swedenborg "was wrong in endeavouring to explain to the rational faculty what the reason cannot understand."‡

Blake's criticism of Swedenborg in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, it is important to note, is not at all an orthodox criticism. It is not the criticism of a materialist, but of one spiritualist or idealist (there is no univocal term) directed against another. The genuineness of Swedenborg's spiritual experiences, that he was vouchsafed a revelation and conversed with the inhabitants of the other world, Blake never questions (at least, so far as these conversations are with angels), but takes, as it were, for granted and beyond dispute—though it is just this claim which to the ordinary mind must seem so extraordinary and difficult to credit.

The reality of vision and the substantiality of spirit were facts of prime importance with both Swedenborg and Blake. Swedenborg never tires of reiterating that the spirit is the real man, perfectly organized and possessing senses and functions corresponding to every one which is associated with the body; and he invariably contrasts the natural and the spiritual realms on the ground that, whereas the things of the latter are substantial, those of the former are merely material. In *Heaven and its Wonders and Hell*, for example he writes:—

* Maclagan and Russell's edition (1907), p. 19.

† See *The Life of William Blake*, by Alexander Gilchrist (1907), p. 520. The *Descriptive Catalogue* is reprinted verbatim as an appendix to this valuable biography.

‡ *Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson* . . . edited by Thomas Sadler (Third edition, 1872), vol. ii, pp. 8 and 9.

From all my experience, which has now extended over many years, I can declare and solemnly affirm that angels as to their form are in every respect men; that they have a face, eyes, ears, a body, arms, hands and feet; that they see, hear and converse with one another, and, in a word, that they are deficient in nothing that belongs to a man except that they are not clothed with a material body. I have seen them in their own light which exceeds by many degrees the noonday light of the world; and in that light all their features could be seen more distinctly and clearly than the faces of men on earth.*

Now hear Blake :—

The Prophets describe what they saw in Vision as real and existing men whom they saw with their imaginative and immortal organs; the Apostles the same; the clearer the organ the more distinct the object. A Spirit and a Vision are not, as the modern philosophy supposes, a cloudy vapour or a nothing: they are organized and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce. He who does not imagine in stronger and better lineaments, and in stronger and better light, than his perishing mortal eye can see, does not imagine at all. The painter of this work asserts that all his imaginations appear to him infinitely more perfect and more minutely organized than anything seen by his mortal eye. Spirits are organized men. †

Swedenborg's concept of spirit as essentially substantial and organized is logically connected with his teaching that "God is Very Man." "It is because God is a Man," he says, "that all angels and spirits are men in perfect form." ‡ Again, he writes :—

Every one who believes that God is a Man can confirm in himself the truth that there are infinite things in Him. For since he is a Man, He has a body and everything belonging thereto; thus He has a face, breast, abdomen, loins and feet; for without these He would not be a Man. And having these, He has also eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth and tongue; and further the internal organs, as the heart and the lungs, and the parts connected with these; all of which, taken together, are what constitute a man. In created man these things are numerous, and in their structural details innumerable; but in God-Man they are infinite and complete, and therefore to Him belongs infinite perfection. A comparison is made between uncreate Man, who is God, and created man, because God is a Man, and it is said by Him that the man of this world was created after His image and in his likeness (Gen. i. 26, 27). §

This doctrine of Swedenborg's has been criticized as excessively anthropomorphic. But the Swedish philosopher realized that only a God who is Very Man can satisfy the heart's desire and call

* "Everyman" edition, translated by Bayley, § 75.

† From the Descriptive Catalogue ("the Bard, from Gray"). See *The Life of William Blake*, by Alexander Gilchrist, pp. 513 and 514.

‡ Emanuel Swedenborg: *The Divine Love and Wisdom* ("Everyman" edition, translated by Bayley), § 11.

§ *Ibid.*, § 18.

forth adoration and worship. It is in the Glorified Saviour that he saw the perfect manifestation of God, and that manifestation is as perfect man. Moreover, it may be urged that only a God who is Very Man can satisfy the reason in its demand for a final explanation of the phenomenal world, for the only true cause known to reason is the human will, and it is the will (or love) which, so teaches Swedenborg, essentially constitutes the man.* The organs of the material body are only the symbols of states of will and intelligence. The true organs it may be said, therefore, are spiritual—what we observe are merely their material shadows,—and it is in this sense that the passage I have already quoted from Swedenborg is intended to be understood.

Blake annotated § 11 (quoted above) of his copy of Swedenborg's *Divine Love and Wisdom* as follows:—

Man can have no idea of anything greater than Man, as a cup cannot contain more than its capaciousness. But God is a man, not because he is so perceived by man, but because he is the creator of man. Think of a white cloud as being holy, you cannot love it; but think of a holy man within the cloud, love springs up in your thought. For to think of holiness distinct from man is impossible to the affections. Thought alone can make monsters, but the affections cannot.

He had thoroughly assimilated Swedenborg's views concerning the nature of God. In his "Auguries of Innocence" we read that:—

God appears, and God is Light,
To those poor souls who dwell in Night;
But does a Human Form Display
To those who dwell in realms of Day. †

The meaning is evidently that, whilst the perception of God as a pantheistic light-giving principle enlightens those who sit in darkness, clearer vision perceives him, not as a Principle, but as a Personality. One has only to turn to the illustrations of *Job*, to that wonderful picture in which the Ancient of Days measures out infinite space by the span of his hand (1794), or to that grand invention "Elohim creating Adam" (1795), to see how deeply imbued Blake's mind was with the concept of the Humanity of God. As Mr. Chesterton remarks:—

God was to him [Blake] the magnificent old man depicted in his dark

* See, for example, *The Divine Love and Wisdom*, § 1, where he writes, "Man is entirely ignorant that love is his very life, not only the general life of his whole body and of all his thoughts, but also the life of their minutest details," etc.

† Oxford Edition of Blake's *Poetical Works*, p. 175.

and extraordinary illustrations of *Job*, the old man with the monstrous muscles, the mild stern eyebrows, the long smooth silver hair and beard. In the dialogues between Jehovah and Job there is little difference between the two ponderous and palpable old men, except that the vision of Deity is a little more solid than the human being. But then Blake held that Deity is more solid than humanity. He held that what we call the ideal is not only more beautiful but more actual than the real. The ordinary educated modern person staring at these *Job* designs can only say that God is a mere elderly twin brother of Job. Blake would have at once retorted that Job was an image of God.*

Solidity and strength are essential elements in Blake's concept of Deity : God to him is the Superman. He thus repeats Swedenborg to the letter ; and if anyone thinks that Blake was wrong in this, let him attempt a picture that will better convey the concepts of omnipotence and omnipresence than the wonderful creations of Blake's I have already mentioned, without employing the human (*i.e.* the truly divine) form.

Blake was a fervent Christian, with an ardent faith in and love for his Saviour. In this he resembles Swedenborg, and, as I have already indicated, his early initiation into Christianity was most probably into Christianity as Swedenborg conceived it. In a lecture I delivered to the Blake Society on August 12, 1914, it was pointed out, I believe for the first time, that in "The Lamb" † Blake clearly identifies the Saviour with the Creator. "The Lamb"—an exquisite, child-like poem—is as follows :—

Little Lamb, who made thee ?
Dost thou know who made thee ?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
By the stream, and o'er the mead ;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright ;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice ?
Little Lamb, who made thee ?
Dost thou know who made thee ?
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
He is callèd by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb,
He is meek, and He is mild ;
He became a little child.

* G. K. Chesterton : *William Blake* ("The Popular Library of Art"), p. 149.

† The fact has since been called attention to by Mr. H. N. Morris, in his *Flaxman, Blake, Coleridge and other men of Genius influenced by Swedenborg* (1915). Blake makes the same identification in "A Cradle Song."

I a child, and thou a lamb,
 We are called by His Name.
 Little Lamb, God bless thee !
 Little Lamb, God bless thee ! *

He who made the Lamb is he who, becoming a child, is called by the lamb's name. Such words could not be uttered by one who accepted the orthodox trinitarian doctrine of Three Persons in the Godhead, and clearly reflects Swedenborgian teaching. The astute Swedish theologian denied the ordinary trinitarian doctrine on the grounds that it involves a contradiction in terms, and throws men's minds into intellectual confusion and darkness. He teaches that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three aspects or functions of one Divine Person—who is revealed to us in the Glorified Saviour—corresponding to the will, understanding and consequent action in finite man. †

In his later works, however, Blake seems to separate Jesus, the forgiving Saviour, and Jehovah, the supposedly-revengeful Law-giver, and to set these two in opposition to one another. This view of Blake's is associated with an antinomian doctrine of forgiveness to which at times he seems strongly to incline. But Swedenborg asserted that this was not the true sense, and sought a deeper mystical import.

Many other points of contact between the thought of Blake and that of Swedenborg, no less important than those I have already indicated, might be dealt with did space allow. Possibly I may have something more to say on this subject on another occasion. But in closing the present contribution to the subject I wish to add one word lest the significance of "influence" should be misunderstood. Blake, as we have seen, was certainly influenced by Swedenborg; in all probability he had assimilated from the works of the Swedish seer more than he was himself aware. But he was the very antithesis of a slavish disciple. Sometimes he misunderstood Swedenborg; but at others he reinterpreted him. What he accepted from Swedenborg he accepted because it was in agreement with his own genius and squared with his own experiences; and when the two men spoke with one voice, they spoke thus because the realm of spiritual truth presented itself similarly to both of them.

* From *Songs of Innocence*, Oxford Edition of Blake's *Poetical Works*, p. 67.

† See, e.g., his masterly analysis of the Athanasian Creed in *The Apocalypse Explained*, §§ 1091-1116, reprinted in *God, Providence, Creation*, §§ 1-21.

LINKS WITH THE PLANETARY CONTROL

By P. H. FAWCETT

THERE is no disguising the fact that the whole civilized world is uneasy. The late war was the beginning. Social problems are becoming more grave; races hitherto content with white domination are impatient for freedom; international relations do not grow less delicate; crime everywhere is on the increase; the poor are discontented, the rich anxious; clairvoyants predict trouble, astrologers calculate it; in the East it is preached far and wide. Portents encourage the fears of the superstitious; the Press publishes articles on the decline of civilization! There are rumours of wars, and talk of another great war is not absent from the guarded words of statesmen. The earth itself is uneasy!

An oppressive atmosphere usually precedes a great storm.

Disease is so prevalent to-day that at a moderate estimate 50 per cent. of the populations of all Western nations are physically unsound. We are told by experts that within a comparatively short period one in every seven of us will die of cancer, if a remedy be not found.

The grave weaknesses of national health have drawn attention to diet. Authorities are not lacking who believe that the existing systems of preserving food poison the people. Others see disease in the impurities in the air, in the reckless treatment of milk, and in the disgusting exposure of meat for sale. Yet others attribute health failure to the intensity of modern life, or to the disturbance of the atmosphere by the development of wireless waves.

In previous articles I have endeavoured to show that during cycles such as we are now passing through, when populations are congested and the average nature of the Human Monad leans strongly to the animal side, we cannot possibly carry a very agreeable "karma," and disagreeable experiences are inevitable. Whether we have reached the bottom of the downward curve is uncertain; probably the crisis is still ahead of us. Yet the world will in the end convalesce, as it has done on many a previous occasion, even if the mark of disease is slowly thrown off.

The extraordinary wave of interest in psychic and occult research which has distinguished this last half-century and has penetrated the most conservative fastnesses of Modern Science is the most favourable sign in these difficult times. It does not matter greatly if the devotees of Spiritualism evolve untenable theories regarding life after death, or recognize the world's notable folk in shadows or their voices from a trumpet—the great point is that an increasing multitude of the world's best draw from spiritualistic phenomena more assurance of a persistence of consciousness beyond the grave than any modern religion can provide. Even religion itself is coming under the influence. Many of these investigators will graduate from the phenomena of the séance room to the pursuit of a more satisfying knowledge of life. Loose talk about the subconscious mind will give place to understanding. Science, for all its study of the atom, cannot yet say what matter is. It is neither aware of nor does it suspect one hundredth part of its properties. Some few know more, but the baleful intolerance of a mediæval ecclesiasticism is not yet dead.

Some months ago I wrote an article for the OCCULT REVIEW entitled "The Planetary Control." It presented an imperfect picture of the organization which, unknown to the world generally, links physical life with the Higher States of Consciousness. Letters which I received lamented a vagueness which to a certain extent was inevitable, but for that reason I am tempted to draw aside the veil a little more and open what for some may be a clearer path.

The important points of the article referred to lay in the actual existence of "The Watchers" and the fact that our world's evolution does not proceed in any sense upon haphazard lines. It may now be said that the six Great Brotherhoods or Councils, with the supreme Council of Fifteen, are not in direct touch with Humanity at all. As I wrote previously, no untrained individual could retain physical consciousness in the presence of one of these very advanced "Adepts." The cloud which always interposed between Moses, himself an Initiate, in the wilderness, when in communion with the High Adepts, is an indication of the gulf which lies between the Orders. The Great Councils are secluded in remote mountainous regions, and veils of mental matter render any unwelcome interference quite impossible.

But even as the Great Councils dwell in more senses than one between Earth and Heaven, so they have more accessible links between themselves and the world of Humanity.

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In touch with the Great Councils are what may be termed Occult Colleges or Communities. They too are difficult of access, but more by reason of natural obstacles. They are composed of men and women, mainly of the racial family which is the particular care of the Council to which the Community is affiliated. The Great Councils themselves are the relics of, and are located in, the lands which once belonged to past great civilizations, including one which is yet in the womb of the future. The Supreme Council presumably becomes one with the six other Great Councils in the open direction of that glorious age of Humanity which completes evolutionary history on this planet, when Man will "walk with God" once more. The men and women of these Communities are in different stages of advancement, from the accepted aspirant to an Initiate of the Third Degree. They dwell in mountain valleys. There is no desire to preserve isolation, except from the unfit. They welcome recruits, if they are suitable. For the world requires wise men and women in abundance, not merely to meet the grave racial crisis which is certainly threatened, but to bring in their turn more erring sheep into the fold of true knowledge. These Communities are to be found in Asia, Africa, Central and South America. Possibly they are elsewhere. Europe possessed them at one time, but they withdrew early in the century owing to the anticipated troubles. Not that physical danger necessarily threatened them, but the psychic environment of a European centre would necessarily present certain difficulties. Sensitives know the effect of war in the battle areas of 1914-18!

Members of these Communities mix freely with the world when they are so disposed, but not, one must infer, with any personal satisfaction. British, Germans, and Americans are to be found in them. Probably all nationalities have provided men and women at one time or another. Eastern races are well represented, but I believe the negro is absent as racially too degenerate to furnish aspirants. I do not suppose for a moment that there is any colour line, which from an intellectual point of view, in the case of Asiatics and Chinese, would be unthinkable.

A curious and interesting feature about these communities is the presence of men and women of a physical type unknown to us outside. They are the survival of vanished races. For in such Communities are to be found those "Adepts" around whose occasional active participation in national crises has grown so much mystery, and those other who were associated with the inception of the Theosophical movement and whose connec-

tion with it has been a matter of persistent controversy. There were more than one of these Supermen in London and Paris during the late war!

The Communities live under conditions difficult perhaps to accept as a mere statement. Some it would be rash to tell to an incredulous public. They may be said, in short, to have solved in perfection the problems of age, health, food, education, and procreation. As I have written elsewhere, Initiates who have reached the Third Stage are not subject to any reincarnation. When the time comes for the Highest Initiates to sever connection with the physical world, the physical body has long been etherealized and transmutation is completed. Initiates of the First and Second Orders are not independent of death. Their lives may be prolonged to an incredible age, but if they are, for some reason, unwilling to undergo the ordeal which precedes the Third Stage, they abandon the body at a chosen moment and are immediately reincarnated under carefully controlled conditions favourable for their object. But the First and Second Stages must be repeated.

Marriage within these Communities, or at any rate physical union, is recognized. It is no bar to the earlier Initiations, which are open to both men and women. The women may, and do, bear children. Here, however, enters a distinction from the customs of the outer world. The mere indulgence of an animal instinct has no place in the relation of the sexes. Such unions take place solely for the purpose of providing suitable physical bodies for the reincarnation of already prepared individuals. The circumstances of conception and the period of gestation are governed by a complete knowledge. The children are trained from the first for Initiation in due course, and differ in a remarkable degree from those who are born in the outer world in so haphazard a manner.

The Communities dwell in very agreeable surroundings, completely free from the evils which curse ordinary Humanity. Their environment is beautiful, their occupations of unending interest. They know the secret of perfect health. They have no need to search for or to plant food. Many spiritualists are familiar with the phenomena of "apports." Under the same laws which permit the materialization of "apports" within a closed séance room, but procuring their material from a completely distinct source, these Communities *create* their food supply. In fact, the secrets of Matter and its reduction to appropriate forms is fully understood and applied. Moses provided

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food in the wilderness ; Christ *created* food for the multitude ; Elijah *created* meal and oil for the widow. It is a scientific attainment of the future for the world in general.

Some inkling of what life on this planet may be like, when the Knowledge at present in possession of these Communities can be communicated, without fear of individual greed and adaptation to the furtherance of international advantages or animosities, may be imagined. When clothing, food, and any material substance in any form can be *created* without the agency of clumsy machinery and manual labour—when language difficulties disappear before an instinctive understanding and use of any tongue—when the “ music of the spheres ” is there for the asking—when beauty is everywhere—the world will be a good place to live in. Such benefits, as well as the conquest of gravity and fire, are enjoyed at this moment by Communities, of whose existence the world in general has no suspicion ! For this is no dream, but a concrete fact.

Those who are willing to accept these statements at their face value should not permit themselves to be misled by the erroneous deductions of modern psychical research. Spiritualism and the whole of the phenomena of the séance room have their use, but they have nothing whatever to do with the unfoldment of the latent faculties of Man. They concern the circumstances of the contact point of a normally invisible world state which is but a cul-de-sac. For the Astral World is but the creation of the Physical World. It is a World of Effects only, whose sensual existence is merely a keener reproduction of our own here, a waiting-room for the Individual between successive births. Of the true Astral World we are already a part. It leads to nowhere. I have written about it in previous articles. During the last phase of a glorious Humanity, such of it as survives to the close of physical evolutionary development, there is no longer an Astral World experience for it. Humanity by that time will have learnt the Great Secret, and have long cut the dismal alternation of the physical-astral out of its path. The Astral World only retains an importance so long as we are automatically of it between death and birth. That part of our conscious existence at present confined to it can be translated to a Higher World State altogether, direct from incarnated experience. The latter, indeed, is the only road.

Nor be deluded by the supposititious delight of recalling the incidents of past incarnations. Self-deception is only too easy. The faculty can certainly be acquired, but we must walk before

we can run. Can we accurately recall all the events of yesterday? Can we recollect all the vicissitudes of childhood? Can we register our experiences during the trance called sleep? Yet these are easy by comparison. Some few have a vague memory, an apprehension or terror of some thing, some place, or some person, which may be the echo of a great emotional stress in a past life; but these things are not under control, and details are lacking.

The way of attainment of Knowledge and all that it implies is perfectly clear. The Communities exist. They are not inaccessible to determined people of the kind they want; but it must be remembered that no man or woman can conceal their true character from an "Adept." They may not be the only way to Occult Training, but they are the best, and in a sense the easiest. They represent the nuclei of Human Society as it will be in the yet distant future. They are what the late Mr. A. P. Sinnett referred to, wittingly or unwittingly, as the "Fifth Rounders."

FOUR ROADS

By EVA MARTIN

THE golden road leads o'er the hill
 To lands of beauty far away;
 Sun-swept and wind-swept, it shall fill
 The traveller's heart with joy all day.

The silver road winds thro' the vale,
 By moonlit tree and crystal stream,
 To waveless waters, vast and pale,
 Whereon the boats of faery dream.

The green road wanders thro' the wood
 'Mid swaying bough and scented fern,
 To where dark gods in silence brood,
 And sacred fires unclouded burn.

The white road lies among the stars
 That float in space like rainbow foam:
 It leads to soundless harbour-bars
 Where pilgrim spirits enter home.

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.*]

AN OCCULT LANGUAGE.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. T. Besterman's review of my *Dictionary of the Sacred Language* rather puzzles me. My critic appears to doubt it, but my effort has been to trace the underlying symbology right through all utterances recognized as genuinely inspired, that is, those directly connected in origin with the religions of the world. I have dealt in no case with folk-lore and common myths. As a matter of fact, the Sacred Myths occupy very little space in my book, while the genuine Sacred Scriptures furnish all the symbols, or terms of the Sacred Language, in the rest of the book. In giving the meanings of about 3,000 symbols, I endeavour to teach others the occult language as understood by me. But as I hate to dogmatize, I have done all in my power to show that the proof of the truth of the Sacred Language lies in its perfect consistency through all Scriptures, and in its high intelligibility when applied. The language has taken me many years to learn, and it cannot be learnt in a few weeks or months. The cross references, which perplex my critic so much, have a very important purpose to fulfil. They are there to show the learner that everywhere throughout the book the same meanings are attached to the same symbols, and that there is nothing arbitrary or discordant about them. I know no other way of showing the reader that my personal opinion goes for nothing, and that the proof of the verity of the book lies in itself.

Yours, etc.,

8 PARKMORE TERRACE,
DYKE ROAD DRIVE, BRIGHTON.

G. A. GASKELL.

FATALISTIC COINCIDENCES.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—A short time ago I read that "the Reverend Robert Crockett, of Southgate Baptist Chapel, died suddenly on Sunday, at Windsor. His text at the morning service was '*It is expedient for you that I go away.*'"

Tragic coincidences of this kind are of frequent occurrence. Recently a young factory girl was late for her work. In her haste before alighting, she told the conductor of the tramcar: "I have only a minute to live!" As she jumped off, she was run over by another vehicle and her trivial jest became a tragic prophecy.

One cannot help wondering if it was thus ordained by fate. What is coincidence? What are vibration and thought? Is it possible that one is betimes the medium and mouthpiece of destiny?

I am continually struck by the chain of coincidental thoughts in my own life. One of the quaintest incidents happened when I was a little girl of twelve. I wished to fetch a book from the library and when I got there, found that on the way I had totally forgotten the name and author I wanted. After many vain efforts at coaxing my errant memory, I took another volume and retraced my footsteps, puzzling my brain for the lost title. As I went, I paused on the kerb before crossing the street, to let a laundry van pass. Suddenly my attention was riveted by the name on the cart. It was "Alan Quatermain's Laundry." The book I was trying to remember was "Alan Quatermain," by Rider Haggard! I hurried back and got it.

I have had many queer experiences of this kind. A short time ago, I mentally decided upon the title of a collection of poems and fantasies on which I was at work. I am a little superstitious about titles and always write them when the book is finished, nor do I divulge them to others until it is published. Nobody had heard it except my father. Soon after I had settled on the name, a friend wrote to me from Yorkshire: "I am sending you a little mascot to wear for luck." In due course, one gold and one silver charm arrived which absolutely emblemized the title of my manuscript! As it is an unusual one, I deemed the matter uncanny enough to tell her about it. "You cannot think how curious it is," she replied, "for the jeweller placed a whole tray of charms before me and I chose these two out of the entire collection."

No doubt many of your readers could tell of similar instances.

Yet what is their portent? Are we free agents, or is this world but the shadow of the world to come, as the Rabbis said? And is our every action and gesture, consciously or unconsciously a manifestation of that great moral law which dominates the harmony of the spheres and has written the names of all things living adown the stars of the night?

I ask, not because I am a disbeliever, but because one feels so overwhelmed when facing that Eternal Problem and Great Adventure we call Life.

Believe me, Sir,

Yours sincerely,
R. M. BLOCH.

MADAME BLAVATSKY'S HOROSCOPE.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—As a humble student of the Wisdom Religion and of Astrology, may I offer a few remarks?

In the very interesting Horoscope of Madame Blavatsky by Sepharial in this month's issue, there appear to me certain significant facts to which attention may well be drawn.

All points in the several houses which usually help the astrological student to elucidate the *personality* are, in this case, absent. Financial affairs, the state of the objective mind, wills, earthly troubles, etc., all indications are omitted as to these. As a special Messenger of the Masters, entrusted with Their Message to the Western World, this is, of course, to be understood, and points most clearly to her origin.

To quote Sepharial, "the reformer" is clearly shown in the extreme elevation of Uranus and Jupiter in Aquarius; the position of Neptune corroborates this indication of the state of the Higher Mind and of her philosophic powers.

Her great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, is being read more and more, and much of the scientific information in it, though derided at the time, is now adopted by many of our scientists.

"Honour to whom honour is due."

Yours very truly,

A LATE-COME SCRIBE.

A CORRECTION.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—By some unaccountable mistake in figuring, the time of Madame Blavatsky's birth, as stated in the article by me appearing in your issue for October, is misrepresented. The date was August 11, 1831; the place Ekaterinaslav, long. 35° E., lat. 47° 30' N.; and the time was 11 hr. 16 min. 18 secs. p.m. locally. This is equivalent to G.M.T. 8 hr. 26 min. 18 secs. p.m., for which the planets' places should be calculated from an ephemeris set for Greenwich meridian. I trust you will kindly overlook this inadvertence, and publish this note in correction thereof.

Yours etc.,

SEPHARIAL.

PSYCHIC TRICKS AND THE MASTERS OF WISDOM.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—As I happen to have some first-hand knowledge of the "Major Cross" whose story of a Tibetan priest is quoted by "Vincit Veritas" in your September number, page 180, I can fully endorse his remarks. It is unfortunate for Mrs. Besant's reputation as an "occultist" that she should take such a story seriously, but she

evidently makes use of it to bolster up her "Coming Christ" doctrine, which is diametrically opposed to all that H. P. Blavatsky has written on the subject. I happened to be in Ceylon last winter when a Major Cairncross gave a couple of lectures on Tibet with lantern slides. In conversation afterwards I found his knowledge of Tibet, and especially of the Buddhism and Lamaism of that country, was limited and defective; but he has a quick and clever brain, and picked up quite a lot from me about H. P. Blavatsky, her teachings, and her training in Tibet.

Of course; as "Vincit Veritas" points out, the ordinary Shaman, or Lama Magician, has nothing whatever in common with the exalted beings who taught Madame Blavatsky, but she gives some interesting information in *Isis Unveiled* about the Shamans and their powers and training which should be read in conjunction with Dr. Ossendowski's recent remarkable book of experiences with Mongolian Lamas, entitled *Beasts, Men, and Gods*. I might add here that H. P. B.'s statements in *The Secret Doctrine* concerning the antiquity of Central Asia, are receiving remarkable confirmation in the fossil discoveries of the American Expedition in Mongolia, as well as the archæological work of Sir Aurel Stein in the same regions. In her Introductory (S.D., I, xxxii) H. P. B. says: "The traces of an immense civilization, even in Central Asia, are still to be found. This civilization is undeniably *prehistoric*. And how can there be civilization without a literature, in some form, without annals or chronicles? . . . The eastern and central portions of those regions . . . were once upon a time covered with cities that could well vie with Babylon. A whole geological period has swept over the land since those cities breathed their last, as the mounds of shifting sand, and the sterile and now dead soil of the immense central plains of the basin of the Tarim testify." And now the American Expedition is unearthing the fossil remains of the *Baluchitherium*, estimated even by science to be a million years old, and the theory is advanced that all huge antediluvian animals found in other parts of the world must have had their origin in Central Asia and migrated to Europe, America, and Africa.

I am, yours faithfully,

BASIL CRUMP.

KUMAON HIMĀLAYAS.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

THE new issue of *THE QUEST* opens a new volume and the fifteenth year of publication. We offer our congratulations to the most interesting of all the quarterlies, and perhaps especially on the actual number itself, which seems of even more than usual consequence in practically all its contents. If we take one of the slightest, there is a debt owing to Miss Tyra de Kleen—whom we know as an ardent folk-lore student—for her brief account of Bali—in the East Indian Archipelago—considered as an “Island of Magic and Mystery.” Very curious also is the story of Milarepo, a Tibetan poet and saint, born in the eleventh century and, according to Mr. W. L. Campbell, a memorable example of one who “obtained enlightenment or salvation” in a single life-time. We can mention only in passing a note on “the Œcumenic Type of Religion,” translated from the German of Rousselle, because its adequate criticism would run into many pages. Dr. Eisler presents an illuminating study of Professor Grill’s thesis that “the leading ideas of the Fourth Gospel are conceived under the strong influence of the Dionysian mysteries,” and in so doing he offers considerations of his own which extend the field of view. Mr. V. C. McMunn examines two lines of tradition representing “a fundamental difference of attitude” respecting the resurrection of Jesus, being those of Galilee and Jerusalem, the one mystical, a revelation “to the spirit as the glorified Messiah or Divine Son,” the other appealing to the bodily senses, “as Man or Son of David.” Mr. R. L. Eagle’s study of “*Love’s Labour Lost*,” considered as Shakespeare’s first play, is the work of a convinced Baconian, and it must be said that it offers matter to our consideration which makes us waver—for the moment and perhaps otherwise—over the traditional faith.

We come now to the first article in the issue, which is that of Mr. G. R. S. Mead on “the Gnostic John the Baptizer”; it marks an epoch in his strenuous life of research and one from which, as we believe, there is a vast prospect unfolding. It is the beginning of a long series of studies in Mandæan documents. The Mandæans “are the only known surviving community of the ancient Gnosis,” numbering in 1875 about four thousand souls, “in the neighbourhood of Basra and Kût,” and in Mr. Mead’s opinion probably reduced at the present day to a few families. They are said to call themselves Nāzōræans and were once regarded as Christians of St. John, which “they certainly are not,” as their literature gives evidence in full. This is held to supply us “with the richest direct sources of any phase of ancient Gnosticism which we possess.” They are also “purely Oriental without any Hellenistic immixtures.” The chief documents, according to Mr. Mead, are: (1) *The Great Book or Treasury*, contain-

ing sixty-four tractates which are prior to A.D. 851 and far older in their sources; (2) the Book of John, dealing with the life and teachings of John the Baptizer; (3) the Book of Souls, embodying various Liturgies; (4) the *Dīvān*, concerning expiations and an account of "regions" traversed by the soul in its ascent; (5) the Book of the Zodiacal Constellations; and (6) certain inscriptions on cups and pre-Mohammedan tablets. The Mandæan language is exceedingly difficult, and the work on the texts has been exclusively Dutch and German, the most recent studies being those of Prof. Lidzbarski, who has provided versions of the Book of John and the Liturgies and is now engaged on the Treasury. Mr. Mead's article presents a literal translation from the German version of the first text, accompanied by many notes of extraordinary value.

THE HIBBERT JOURNAL is also entering on a new volume and has now attained its majority, having first appeared in October, 1902. The coming event was foreshadowed in the July issue, our notice of which in these pages offered sincere felicitations and all good wishes for an assured future. We have only to renew these and to welcome the editor, Dr. L. P. Jacks, as a more regular contributor than he has been in the years that have passed. It is said that he "will henceforth contribute an Editorial Article dealing, in each number, with a philosophical problem suggested by the march of events." We have therefore on this first occasion a criticism of "Government by Talk," motived by a hope that its era is drawing to a close, which hope is based on a conviction that "the speech-making interest is a sinister interest in the State." Among other papers which are of moment to ourselves, there is that of Prof. C. C. J. Webb on the late Bernard Bosanquet's "Philosophy of Religion." For those unacquainted therewith it must be held sufficient to say (1) that for him "philosophy depends on the religious consciousness," and (2) that in religion itself he was brought up on Justification by Faith, the Atonement and the Incarnation, remaining true throughout to his early "Evangelical traditions." In a study of the "Larger Self" Sir Oliver Lodge applies "the doctrine of the subliminal self to theology and especially Christology." It is a captivating thesis, which suggests that in some cases this subliminal may be so large "that it contains the potentiality for the incarnation not only of a succession of ordinary individuals but of really great men." In other words, it is a new speculative view on the possibility of successive re-embodiments. It leads on also to the idea of a Self of Divine magnitude—otherwise of God—allowing Itself to become incarnate, and—as there is no need to say—this constitutes Sir Oliver Lodge's contribution to Christology.

THE SHRINE OF WISDOM is a quarterly publication which has been issued at the festivals of Equinox and Solstice for the past four years, though it has reached us for the first time. Chief among its announced objects is to aid the human soul in the quest for Divine

Union, and we welcome it from this point of view. To judge by the current number, its appeal is chiefly to the records of the past, regarded as those of experience, to Hermetic writings, Dionysian theology and the mystics of the Catholic Church. There is, for example, what is described as "an endeavour to systematize and elucidate" the Trismegistic texts, and there is a digest of an important chapter devoted to the Mystical Theology of pseudo-Dionysius in the *Studies of Mystical Religion* by Prof. Rufus M. Jones. A poem by St. John of the Cross is extracted from his *Living Flame of Love* to illustrate its Dionysian analogies, while the same object actuates many short paragraphs drawn from Eckehart, Tauler, Ruysbroeck, Albertus Magnus and others in the golden chain of Christian tradition. We are reminded altogether of *LIGHT AND LIFE*, a suggestive and excellent undertaking of many years past, which made its bid for recognition in the North of England, but failed unfortunately. The time seems riper now, and we hope that *THE SHRINE OF WISDOM* will secure sufficient readers for it to remain among us. It is well printed and conducted with religious reverence. It leans, as we think, towards fantasy in a series entitled *Sacred Mythoi of Heroes*, which interprets Hercules as the soul "dominated by the will of God," and explains the Twelve Labours from this point of view. There are no limits to "exegesis" of this kind, and it is characterized by a fatal facility working in all directions: witness the Abbé Pernety and his explanation of Egyptian and Greek fables as symbolical of physical alchemy: he interprets the same myth along these lines with equal certitude as to the accuracy of results obtained.

The magazines and journals devoted to Spiritism under its various styles and titles have their points of interest as usual. *PSYCHIC SCIENCE* is naturally very glad at the conversion, if it may be so called, of Mr. Harry Price, one of the "master-conjurors," and at his consequent activity in the cause of psychical research. The record of his experiences with Stella C—— is an important contribution to the subject and does credit to the care and foresight of Mr. Price in respect of conditions and safeguards. We have been much impressed by the medium's variations of temperature, which are carefully registered, and by the results of thermometric readings. The verification of a spontaneous prediction, embodying the visualization of an unpublished newspaper, is no doubt an experience which will most interest the reading public, and the natural misinterpretation of what was about to appear is one of the convincing features of a very exceptional case. There are other interesting articles in the current issue, and among them is Mr. F. Barlow's account of experiments in the production of "Psychic Diamonds" by the aid of static electricity. While admitting that there are grave evidential difficulties, centred in the fact that the chief actor is no longer in this life, and while recognizing that the account is likely to be received in most quarters by incredulity and scorn, we confess to our own

feeling, and it is a strong one, that here is one of those cases in which genuine results may have been obtained under circumstances not free from doubt, and we could wish that the experiments might continue. . . . THE INTERNATIONAL PSYCHIC GAZETTE mentions once more the ever-recurring question of Joanna Southcott and her sealed box, explaining—as we remember to have heard previously—that there is another box, now or once at Morecambe, the opening of which exhibited (1) articles belonging to Joanna's personal wardrobe, (2) garments intended for her expected child, and (3) certain sealed prophecies and visions. It is regrettable that accounts like this are so piecemeal and fragmentary. It is said only that according to the MSS. the followers of Joanna are "entitled to inherit the Tree of Life," thus relegating the documents among the common class of rhapsodies. The fact, if such it be, matters nothing, but one would like to know whether these papers are still at Morecambe, whether they have been printed, and if not, why they are withheld by her present followers, who are insistent enough in their way. If there is nothing of value in the memorials of which the seals are broken, the inference is that there is nothing in the other store, which may rest therefore in peace with the remains of Brothers the prophet; but if they happen to be of consequence, notwithstanding the grave doubts created by a prospective title to the Tree of Life, then reverend fathers in God might be justified in asking, without prejudice, to see the rest. . . . In many of their successive issues the Spiritist journals have been concerned with the Congress at Liège. THE TWO WORLDS has published reports of its sittings for something like two months, and furnishes an account of its lessons at full length, confessing that its own conception of spirit manifestation and its vastness has been enlarged by the visit to Belgium. LA REVUE SPIRITE regards it as marking a date in the history of the movement, since "it has seen the virtual foundation of a world-wide spiritistic organism," which will hold its first general assembly at Paris in 1925. LE SPIRITISME publishes what may be called the articles of association, and we learn that Mr. George F. Berry, editor of THE TWO WORLDS, has been elected unanimously President of the Executive Committee.

The THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY of New York offers good reading as usual, and must rank as the best periodical which is issued under this denomination: a study of St. Francis Xavier and another of Ammonius Saccas are examples in the current issue. So also is the interpretation of Mandukya Upanishad, said to be the briefest of all and yet the most inclusive: it is called Eternal and is a proclamation of states and attainments leading to the one state, the goal of all attainment, being "realization of oneness with the Eternal." It is this Upanishad which says that Om is the Divine Self, an affirmation from which all the vistas open and on which their light is poured. There are said to be many commentaries and many explanatory treatises which have arisen out of the slight but pregnant text, and

the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY has added one more, which of course is from its own standpoint: they may be of consequence or not, within their own measures; we do not know, and feel little concern in the choice between alternatives. For us at least the text is sufficient to itself and brings its own message. . . . THE THEOSOPHIST has Notes on Dante which quote Thomas Vaughan as "that most interesting alchemist," and mention that he is "now an adept," the particulars of which are wanting, but we remember an old mendacity, which was in confusion over Eugenius and Eirnæus Philalethes, affirming that Thomas de Vagan, misunderstood as the latter, was the head of Rosicrucians and Invisibles and always presided at their meetings. He was an adept obviously for the maker of this myth. . . . THEOSOPHY IN ENGLAND AND WALES has three articles on brotherhood, one of which affirms that it is not possible to-day, and that we had better not nourish delusion; another—unfortunately the work of a writer who loses the sense of construction in long sentences—seems to think that "at the centre and core of being" the "hearts and selves of humanity beat true"; while the third appears to suggest that, whether we will or not, we are all bound to one another. Perhaps there is something to be said for a good intent on the subject amidst the great cloud of difficulties and the denser cloud of words.

Italian Freemasonry has reached another troublous epoch in its chequered history, for particulars of which we are indebted to a recent issue of THE SQUARE and to LE SYMBOLISME. It appears that Mussolini has resolved either on the destruction of the Order or that it shall put a definite term to all political activity. The opposition is at present directed more openly against that branch which incorporates the Giustiniani Lodges—as they are called—under a Grand Master named Domizio Torrigiani, and not against the "Palermi" branch, till recently under Raoul V. Palermi, with headquarters at Rome, as it is said that the latter "excludes anything of a political nature." There is a reference to the position in LA FENICE, s.v. *La Campagna Antimassonica*, in connection with Jesuit activities. Italian Freemasonry seems otherwise a house divided against itself, and the *Bollettino della Serenissima Gran Loggia* seems to offer a continuous record of feuds.

We welcome once more on its arrival THE EASTERN BUDDHIST, and note that in future it will be quarterly instead of bi-monthly. We have pointed out on a previous occasion that it has been faced by difficulties, and we trust that these will be removed under the new arrangement. As regards contents, the present issue is excellent as usual, witness the elaborate study of Zen Buddhism considered as a Chinese interpretation of the "Doctrine of Enlightenment."

REVIEWS

THE WISDOM OF THE WEST. An Authoritative Exposition of Metaphysical or Spiritual Healing. By M. J. Keane. Liverpool: The Liverpool Booksellers Co., Ltd., 70 Lord Street. Price 7s. 6d. (post free, 8s.).

THIS book contains the doctrine of Optimism *par excellence*. The author reasons that as health, happiness, and prosperity are man's essential birthright, to be well is, in theological phraseology, the Will of God, and man has only to claim his inheritance to come into his own. Mr. Keane rightly dwells on the immense amount of harm perpetrated by the popular Press in spreading startling accounts of epidemics and of crime: "Newspapers which published accounts of the ravages and deaths caused by influenza simply intensified the evils in every direction." He drops an ominous hint that the journals have thereby lost many subscribers and advertisers, adding that: "In America, wise editors refuse to publish such news. They have learnt that it does not pay to scatter mental microbes amongst their readers."

À propos imaginary illness, the author tells a good story of a lady who believed that flowers, especially roses, gave her "hay fever," and one day indignantly left the church—to which she was a large subscriber—because it was gaily decorated with the obnoxious blossoms. She of course felt very ill. But the flowers were made of paper!

The most enlightened doctors are themselves realizing the potency of mind versus drugs in the cure of disease, and I know of at least one clergyman who does his "Coué" regularly every day of his life. Mr. Keane does not seem to approve of Monsieur Coué's method; nevertheless, the Light of Truth finds its way through many-coloured windows.

In his concluding chapter Mr. Keane has gathered together a fine collection of "Metaphysical and Philosophical Aids to Reflection," from thinkers, major and minor, of all times in the world's history. The book makes cheerful reading, though, like so many works of its type, it goes somewhat to extremes. Phraseology such as "God does not suffer from nerves; neither can you. . . . God cannot have convulsions, nor croup, neither can your child," etc., etc., . . . is jarring, to say the least.

EDITH K. HARPER.

TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS. By Ludwig Wittgenstein. With an Introduction by Bertrand Russell, F.R.S. 8½ ins. × 5½ ins., pp. 189. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., Broadway House, Carter Lane, E.C.4. Price 10s. 6d. net.

THIS is a remarkable book. "The object of Philosophy," writes the author, "is the logical clarification of thoughts. Philosophy is not a theory but an activity. A philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations. The result of philosophy is not a number of "philosophical propositions," but to make propositions clear. Philosophy should make clear and delimit sharply the thoughts which otherwise are, as it were, opaque and blurred."

These words briefly outline Mr. Wittgenstein's object. He writes with the utmost clarity, but, on the other hand, his style is exceedingly condensed and aphoristic, so that the book is by no means easy reading; and because of this difficulty and that raised by the vocabulary used the rather unusual course has been adopted of printing the original side by side with the translation. Mr. Wittgenstein is largely concerned with the relations which must exist between words and things in any language. In order that a fact may be asserted by a sentence there must be something in common between the structure of the fact and that of the sentence. The author contends that this something cannot be expressed in language. It can only be shown. Within this region of the inexpressible—or "mystical," to use Mr. Wittgenstein's own term—lies the whole of logic and philosophy. This, it may be said, is the final summit of his thesis, and his arguments for holding it to be true must be read to be appreciated. The Hon. Bertrand Russell's highly appreciative Introduction helps much to elucidate many of the difficult questions involved. Yet Mr. Russell is loth to accept this conclusion, for, as he points out, it seems as though Mr. Wittgenstein in his book somehow "manages to say a good deal about what cannot be said." He suggests, albeit hesitatingly, the possibility of a hierarchy of languages, each one incapable of expressing its own structure, but capable of expressing the structure of the language which is, so to speak, below it. One is inevitably reminded of Paul, who was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words, and of other mystics who have claimed to have been vouchsafed similar experiences. Is there a language that transcends language? It is an arresting thought, and Mr. Wittgenstein's book is one of real value and merit, which in Mr. Russell's words, "no serious philosopher can afford to neglect."

H. S. REDGROVE.

WHAT SHALL WE BECOME AFTER DEATH? By the Abbé Moreux.

Translated by J. F. Schofield. London: Sands & Co., 15 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C.; and Edinburgh. Price 5s.

"A MIGHTY riddle faces you and me, and every human soul—the Riddle of what we shall be when the few years of this present life are over. What lies in store for us on the other side of the veil that we call Death?" With this, the greatest of all questions, involving the greatest of all studies, the Abbé Moreux introduces the theme of his brilliant volume. And he concludes his opening chapter by affirming: "As a matter of fact, all the researches of science tend nowadays to show us that what we see of the Universe is as nothing compared to what our bodily senses are unable to discover in it. . . . Yet according to the Apostle's words, we need to study the visible in order to arrive at a belief in the unseen universe and in the Creator Himself."

The author, with admirable candour and sincerity, then proceeds to discuss and analyse modern conceptions of matter according to the latest working hypotheses of Science, questions certain findings in Geometry and Biology, discusses the nature of the Soul, and leads his readers into a fascinating maze of Fourth-Dimensional speculation, yet all the while gently guiding them by a silken thread of orthodox theology, until, in the final chapters they are confronted by the problem of the resurrection of the physical body, a problem answered by the Abbé Moreux in the unequi-

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vocal voice of Authority—"Credo Resurrectionem"—and supported by arguments curiously ingenious and exceedingly interesting. Whether the reader agree or disagree with the learned Abbé in his conclusions, there is material for profound thought in each of his engrossing chapters, and withal there is the constant sense of his fervent desire to make clear to wanderers in this complex earth-life that, beyond its shadows, "the future life has in store for us supreme beatitude," where "we shall be united to our beloved by ties infinitely stronger and more puissant than those of flesh and nature."

EDITH K. HARPER.

CHRISTIANITY AND AUTOSUGGESTION. By C. Harry Brooks, author of "The Practice of Autosuggestion," and the Rev. Ernest Charles. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., Ruskin House, 40 Museum Street, W.C.1. Price 3s. 6d. net.

"THE faith required in prayer and the confidence required in autosuggestion are so close to each other as to be almost identical." These words contain the essence of the thought that is elaborated throughout this helpful and interesting book. The aim of the authors is to compare and contrast the doctrine and teaching of Monsieur Emile Coué with the teaching of Our Lord on lines of healing. I quote from the Preface: "Finding between them an essential harmony, we attempt to place autosuggestion in its true position in Christian life and thought, and to utilize the Christian dynamic for extending and deepening its power. The secular practice of autosuggestion continues unaltered, but side by side with it we attempt to erect, in essential outlines, a Christian practice of autosuggestion." In other words, one might simply say, the suggestion of the psychologist appeals to the sense mind, the suggestion of Christ, "Be ye therefore perfect," appeals to the spiritual consciousness, within which all else is enfolded. This line of thought tends to open the mind to the beneficent influence of the spiritual forces, or "cloud of witnesses," which are ever around us, seeking to comfort, heal, and bless.

In the second part of the volume, which treats the subject specifically from the Christian aspect, the chapter, "Why Prayer Fails," may help to resolve the doubts of many who have with aching hearts wondered greatly why sometimes the heavens seem as brass. The chapter which follows this, the "Scope of Christian Autosuggestion," is also greatly to be commended. In it the authors indicate the twenty-third Psalm as a beautiful example of *affirmation* rather than petition. . . . "Prayer and its answer are bound firmly together by faith." The Lord is my Shepherd . . . He *restoreth* my soul!

EDITH K. HARPER.

THE CABBALISTS AND OTHER ESSAYS. By S. A. Hirsch, Ph.D. Crown 8vo, pp. x + 228. London: William Heinemann. Price 7s. 6d. net.

DR. HIRSCH presents the Secret Tradition in Israel as embodying a congeries of thoughts and feelings which, in one or another form, have prevailed always in Judaism. He affirms further that the fact of its existence is good, even necessary, and that in the shelter afforded thereby the Jewish intellect attained its admittedly high order. For Dr. Hirsch, the Tradition connotes a mystical system, and his claim that it is entitled to a place in the life and thought of Israel signifies a similar recognition of the title

of all Mysticism in all times and places. If the Kabbalah as now extant is referable to no earlier period than the twelfth or thirteenth century A.D., the Jewish Mysticism at the root of it is lost "in the fogs of ages." The study as a whole is of keen interest, firstly as an *apologia* for its subject on the part of a born Jew, and secondly as an *apologia* for Mysticism, however denominated, at the hands of one who himself is not a mystic and makes the fact prominent. Other essays in the volume are (1) on prolegomena to a philosophy of the Jewish Religion; (2) on Universal Religion, a sane and illuminating consideration from a broad standpoint, and ruling—as might have been expected—against the idea of universality in worship; (3) on the possibility or otherwise of Divine Revelation, an affirmative essay, which maintains that it is not *a priori* impossible for God to have communicated with Moses in audible words. For myself I am more concerned with the question whether God can and does continually speak in the heart of humanity. The last paper which there is call to notice in this place is explanatory of the Mishnah, what it is and how it came into being, as "a body of precise enunciations, ranging over the whole field of written and traditional lore." The Mishniot of antiquity were numerous, but only one of them has come down in its entirety, being that of Rabbi Jehuda, the Prince, and his associates. It seems to me, as regards the Kabbalah, that for Christian students it is like Matthew Arnold's "heap of letters" put into the hand of man, to make of them what he wills and can. In so far as we can find therein any meanings intelligible to ourselves and alive for us it has a message, the nature of which will be quite distinct, however, from that—if any—which it may have for Jewry at large in these days.

A. E. WAITE.

NOTES FROM THE UNSTRUCK MUSIC. From the Gāyan of Inayat Khan. 6 ins. × 4½ ins., pp. 104. Southampton: Book Depot for Sufi Literature, 54 Above Bar.

THIS little book contains in aphoristic form the quintessence of Sufi philosophy. The word "gāyan" can best be translated "singing," and, although no doubt a good deal has been lost by translation (which, by the way, is the author's own work), there is a rhythmical quality about many of these utterances which is distinctly musical. But the word "gāyan" is used in a double sense; there is reference not only to the rhythmic form of the aphorisms, but also to the harmony of the divine thought which it is their author's object they shall express. Inayat Khan is a mystic for whom "God is the answer to every question," and for whom "the external life is but the shadow of the inner Reality." His book contains very many wise and illuminating thoughts, and perhaps I can best give the reader an idea of its quality by quoting at random a few of the thoughts which most impressed me.

"The God which is intelligible to man is made by man himself, but what is beyond his intelligence is the Reality."

"A word can be more precious than all the treasures of the earth."

"A tender-hearted sinner is better than a saint hardened by piety."

"Man makes his reasons to suit himself."

"The pain of life is the price paid for the quickening of the heart."

"Possibility is the Nature of God, and impossibility is the limitation of Man."

"Indifference is the key to the whole secret of life."

"The service of God means that we each work for all."

"The Sufi's tendency is to look at everything from two points of view, from his own and that of another."

"The true religion to the Sufi is the sea of Truth, and all different faiths are as its waves."

"Beauty is the object which every soul pursues."

"All that lives is spirit; and all that dies is matter."

"Belief in God is the fuel, love of God is the glow, and the realization of God is the flame of divine light."

The aphorism: "Divinity is human perfection and humanity is Divine limitation," is reminiscent of Swedenborg, whilst "If a desire is not fulfilled it means that the person did not know how to desire; failure is caused by indistinctness of motive," recalls one of Blake's *Proverbs of Hell*,—resemblances that serve to exemplify the unity of mystical thought.

"The wise man," writes Inayat Khan, "says in one word what the foolish cannot explain in a thousand words." The sentence forms a not inadequate review of his book. H. S. REDGROVE.

THE DARK DOMINION. By Guy Thorne. London: Ward, Lock & Co. Pp. 304. Price 7s. net.

THE cleverness shown in the shaping of this novel offers a lesson which meandering novelists might profitably con. The lamented author has for his theme the demoralizing influence of a Satanist on a typical provincial community. Sacrilege, murder, suicide, inebriacy, dishonesty threaten to turn "simple annals" into a "Newgate calendar"; and though the reader easily guesses the originator of the evil force which masters for a time even Guy Thorne's brilliantly endowed hero, the novel is thoroughly interesting. The contrast between the fox-hunt in Chapter I and the spiritual stagnancy discussed in Chapter II is admirably arranged, and the difference between knowledge and a talent for applying it is excellently illustrated by the rector who talks like an encyclopædia about Satanism, while unable to recognize a Satanist when he comes into contact with one. Guy Thorne's expertness deserves to be remembered in the long-delayed new supplement of the D.N.B. . . . W. H. CHESSON.

THE GHOSTS OF PARLIAMENT. By an M.P. London: Erskine Macdonald, Ltd. Pp. 72. Price 5s. net.

THE late Cecil Chesterton once remarked that there was not the slightest reason why Joseph Chamberlain should not write excellent sonnets, and being in agreement with him I will not try to fasten this work upon the only poet M.P. with whom I have exchanged friendly words—Mr. Arthur Lynch.

"I count dream, reverie and ecstasy
More than a woman does her jewelry,"

sings our M.P., so how are we to recognize him among the patient gang who in meshes of legal prose strive to confine the pushful carnivorousness and wriggling roguery of civilized beings while, with other verbal potencies, they legalize the State's impoverishing clutch on their compatriots' incomes and savings?

One values this book for the sake of a critical discontent that eloquently reminds the reader of the reality of beauty. Occasionally the verse is

slipshod, imperfectly articulate, discordant. Gentlemen who "serve King Caucus with a servile tongue" might perchance take a "rise" out of an "M.P." for his crudities; and yet he is sometimes extraordinarily felicitous in his phraseology.

W. H. CHESSON.

UNCANNY STORIES. By May Sinclair. Illustrated by Jean de Bosschère. London: Hutchinson & Co. Pp. 247 + 8 unpaginated drawings. Price 7s. 6d. net.

WHEN I was a child I thought that the easiest story to write would be one contrary to "the laws of nature" as formulated by materialists. Later I learned that the art of exciting others by fiction depends so much on the approval of reason that the occult may fail in the hands of a recognized master through simple lack of artistic justification. Realism, in the common meaning of this lugubriously ambiguous word, is an easier thing to attain than the illusion of occult reality, and where the touch of Marion Crawford was not always successful, one must not expect Miss May Sinclair, fine artist though she be, to register seven consecutive triumphs. But one merit is obvious in each of her occult tales, to wit, an intellectual interest. Thus though, despite a certain "Jack-in-the-box"-like humour, her first story is rather tedious, it does offer a solution to the question: Has passion a tyranny apart from the wills and wishes of those who feel it? Again, though her last story fails to convince one's fancy, it is at least a valiant attempt to comprehend the incomprehensible.

Between these imperfect efforts of imagination and intellect are two stories at once rarely artistic and brilliantly invented: "The Flaw in the Crystal" and "If the Dead Knew." The former of these concerns a certain healing power to which a woman of uncommon charity has access. In her operations for others she has to hold them as "bodiless essences," and an insane or "possessed" patient exposes her to a horrible danger. In "If the Dead Knew" we look intently at a disgusting trait of human egoism, its grudge against inconvenience even if loving and loved, but we also view the divinity of motherhood.

The Chevalier M. Jean de Bosschère's curious drawings cunningly harmonize with the eerie quality of the book, which will enlarge the circle of Miss Sinclair's admirers.

W. H. CHESSON.

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY? With Sections treating of Suggestion and Auto-suggestion. By Charles W. Hayward, M.D., C.M., etc. 7½ ins. × 4¾ ins., pp. 254. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., Ruskin House, 40 Museum Street, W.C.I. Price 7s. 6d. net.

THE title of this book is a misnomer, and the criticism almost is invited that an author who sets out to explain the meaning of a word should have no doubts as to this himself. On page 35 we read: "Psychology literally means the knowledge or science of those immaterial characteristics and powers which direct the activities physical and mental of each individual." So far, so good: this is more or less the etymological meaning of the term and that in which it is currently employed. At the bottom of the page, however, Dr. Hayward writes: "Psychology consists of each and every one of those powers and subtle influences which go to make up the real character, the true 'ego' of each individual," and practically

throughout the book the word "psychology" is misused as a synonym for "character."

Apart, however, from this very annoying habit of persistently misusing the word he sets out to explain, Dr. Hayward has many interesting things to say concerning the growth and formation of character and the utility of suggestion and auto-suggestion. As concerns the first, he points out that the influence of heredity has not infrequently been greatly over-estimated. Environment is the all-important factor in the formation of character, and especially environment during the early years of childhood. As he himself expresses it, the "psychology" of the individual is "the sum total of each and every impression made upon his receptive senses from the instant of birth onwards." In the chapter dealing with suggestion and auto-suggestion, the teachings of M. Coué are followed, and emphasis is laid upon the point that suggestion can only be of effect when it is "accepted"; though whether this fact justifies Dr. Hayward in his assertion that suggestion, unless it becomes transformed into auto-suggestion, is non-operative, is, to my mind, open to doubt. The book closes with a very trenchant criticism of present-day society, whose manifold shortcomings are laid by the author at the door of "false psychologies." To a large extent his criticism, it must be sadly admitted, is justified, although Dr. Hayward weakens it, I think, by the virulence of his tone and the abundance of his adjectives, and one feels that perhaps in certain respects he is somewhat out of sympathy with the trend of present day thought.

H. S. REDGROVE.

VEDIC HYMNS: Translated from the Rigveda, with Introduction and Notes by Edward J. Thomas, M.A., D.Litt. Published by John Murray. Price 3s. 6d. net.

WE live in a fortunate age wherein the pearls of Oriental literature are made accessible to those of moderate income. The Oxford Press publishes The Heritage of India series, Oriental classics come from Mr. Werner Laurie, whilst in Paris the *Editions Bossard* at 43 Rue Madame, issues delightful treasures of the East illustrated with quaintly archaic woodcuts. One of the best of these specialized libraries is the rapidly increasing *Wisdom of the East* set produced by Mr. John Murray, to which these "Vedic Hymns" form the latest addition.

The Rigveda wherefrom the hymns or *mantra* are taken, is the oldest of the four Vedas which are to the Indian as the truths of the Talmud to the Jew, the chants of Isis to the Egyptian, the Elder Edda to the ancient Norse. I first read some of these abstruse pæans of praise in the renderings of Sir Monier-Monier Williams. Mr. Thomas has translated them with fluency and lucid ease of expression, and has been sage enough not to mar the majesty of the original in any way. Thus one can feel the immense age of the Hymns and sense the grandeur of their Vedic Sanskrit, that "classical language of India which is properly known as Sanskrit, i.e. 'polished, adorned.'" The sonorous songs to Agni and Indra, Vishnu, Varuna, Mitra and Rudra; these invocations to the rain-god from a drought-stricken land, and the address "To the Frogs" which concludes the book on a note akin to the famous chorus of Aristophanes, can but find echoes in the hearts of all those who see the same forces shine forth beneath the varied names and vestments of races and religions.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

MAGNETIC FLUIDS AND PLANETARY INFLUENCES. By Annie Pitt.
London: L. N. Fowler & Co. Pp. 176. Price 3s. 6d. net.

STUDENTS of Astrology who open this volume with anticipatory interest will be disappointed, for the subject of "planetary influences" is scarcely touched upon until the last chapter, and then only in the vaguest possible manner. Indeed, the whole book suffers from a vagueness and prolixity of style that makes it difficult reading—though this is a confession of weakness, for we are told in the preface that, though "abstrusely written," "those imbued with spiritual understanding will at once readily assimilate it." Be that as it may, the book purports to have been "communicated" to the author by the spirit of Franz Anton Mesmer, who "died" in 1815, at the age of 81—"a disappointed, disillusioned, soured old man"—and consists of seven chapters on the seven magnetic fluids which surround man, and the earth, and every visible creation. The Natural and Primary Fluids belong, he says, to the sense plane alone; the Mental and Magnetic Fluids are the link between the sense plane and the spiritual; the Spiritual, Esoteric, and Astral Fluids are "links to the eternal purpose of creation"; and when we have learnt how to use and control these fluids we can attain all our desires on every plane. It will be seen that his teaching, though

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E. M. M.

MAKING YOURSELF. By Orison Swett Marden. London: Wm. Rider & Son, Ltd. Pp. 320. Price 5s. net.

THIS excellent exposition of the means to self-culture and self-mastery, and of the rich rewards that wait on the persistent practice of inward discipline, deserves to be widely read and seriously pondered. There are few, even among the best and wisest of men and women, who are unfailingly mindful of the duty which they owe to themselves and to the world, and who do not need from time to time a helpful reminder such as Mr. Marden's book will give them. But it is not mere forgetfulness that stunts the mental and spiritual growth of most men and women. They do not know what it is in them to become, because the tendency of all

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