

# THE OCCULT REVIEW

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

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## NOTES OF THE MONTH

AMONG the translations of foreign works which have recently been published in this country, few are calculated to arouse more interest among readers of the OCCULT REVIEW than a work by Herr J. A. Sauter,\* a German who for fifteen years made his home in India, and, unlike the ordinary European, associated extensively with the native populations and acquired an intimate knowledge of their modes of life and thought. It is not indeed that the book would fall under the specific designation of occult, but rather that for anyone who led the author's life and had

“AMONG THE BRAHMINS AND THE PARIAS.” the author's experiences in native India the occult element must necessarily play a large part, especially in the case of one who was obviously of a philosophic and inquiring bent of mind. Herr Sauter, whose vocation, as far as he followed it, appears from the narrative to have been that of a teacher, † would never have acquired the knowledge which makes the present volume so singularly interesting had he not by good fortune, or, as he seems to have considered it, in virtue of his

\* *Among the Brahmins and Pariahs*. By J. A. Sauter. Translated from the German by Bernard Miall. London: T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., Adelphi Terrace. 10s. 6d. net.

† It is clear that in addition to this he had some medical skill.

destiny, made the acquaintance of a certain Indian Rajah who in the narrative in question is made familiar to readers by the name of Arun. As to the real appellation of the Rajah and the province over which he rules, the reader is, evidently deliberately, kept in the dark, but the author's description of him and his admiration for his character and personality cannot fail to set his readers wondering as to the identity of the original.

In my own country [says Herr Sauter], and during my many wanderings East and West, I have seen many a noble countenance, but the face of my friend Arun outshone them all. As he sat there in his national costume, with his bright green silken turban embroidered with threads of gold, he was the very image of one of the divine heroes, as the ancient

Hindu poets have described them. His features were THE RAJAH, pale and delicately chiselled: every least fractional line or contour displayed such absolute harmony with the whole that it might have been carved from some precious gem by the hand of a master. The nose was slightly aquiline. As for the sensitive nostrils, I have never seen their like. Large luminous black eyes that seemed to reflect every movement of the mind were fringed by magnificent lashes. He sat erect, yet with the leisured dignity of a king. Once he laughed and his laugh rang through the room as clearly as though one had smitten a silver bell with a tiny rod, and as he laughed I saw that all who were present in that room felt their hearts invaded by the warmth of his joy.

Herr Sauter felt an impelling force which irresistibly drew him towards the Rajah. It seemed to him that it was for his sake that he had crossed the ocean to India, and that he was ordained by the law of Karma to be his friend. Fortunately for him his companion on the occasion was acquainted with the Rajah and there was no obstacle to a formal introduction. "This," says Herr Sauter, "was the beginning of that wonderful friendship that to me has been a tower of strength and a guiding light throughout the years of my life in India, and that even to-day, when the ugliness of life encompasses me about until I seem on the verge of sinking into some bottomless morass, hovers always before me like a beloved star whose quivering brilliance speaks of hope and courage."

We have doubtless to thank Arun for the fact that the present book was written. Fate, in the shape of the European War, called the author back to his native land, but not before he had had many strange and terrible experiences among the natives in the country of his adoption. Among the gurus whom our author met during his fifteen years in India was the Swami Shri Devanand. From him he learned the life story of the Rajah who had become his friend and counsellor. Arun, despite his aristocratic bearing, was no prince by birth. "Like David," says our

author, "he tended his father's kine in his native village." One evening as he was driving home a herd of black buffalo he was met by a native lady magnificently attired. This was the Queen (or Ranee) Haikpara. She was childless, but as is the custom in India, her husband, the Rajah, had given her full powers to nominate a successor to the throne and to adopt a son. The Ranee noticed and took a fancy to the ten-year-old boy, and went with him to his father's house. The next morning the boy and his father left their native village in her company *en route* for Calcutta. Haikpara had divined intuitively the possibilities within the child. Her astrologer was called in and the boy, who clung nervously to his father's hand, was greeted with the words, "Long live the king!" This, however, had not been the first intimation of his high destiny. Two years before, Arun accompanied by his father had made a pilgrimage to Benares. The Swami Shri Devanand had met them there, and as they made obeisance before him the holy man opened his eyes, laid his hand upon the boy's head, and exclaimed, "Namaschkar kumar bahadur" ("Hail to thee, son of a king"). The words were meaningless to the boy, but the father treasured them in his heart, and was therefore not unprepared for his son's eventual destiny.

This Swami, between whom and Herr Sauter a warm friendship sprang up, had, like other holy men of India, been buried and brought again to life. Herr Sauter saw the tomb in which only a month previously he had been immured for sixteen days. Accompanied by two sanyassin they climbed together a hill on which stood a small temple. Here was the tomb in which the Swami had been buried. A thick wooden trap-door led down ten steps to a cellar some six or seven feet in height and about ten feet square. "In the cellar another trap-door and ten more steps led to a second cellar of like dimensions. In one of the walls was a recess just large enough to receive a human body. Before it lay a slab of stone the edges of which bore traces of the mortar with which the joints had been sealed. "I had often heard," says our author, "of such living burials, but had never yet seen such a tomb." "It is a mistake," he continues, "to suppose that the yogi allows himself to be buried merely as a pious exercise. This miracle, like many others which we regard with astonishment, is a sort of test in order to discover how far he has succeeded in establishing the mastery of spirit over flesh."

A LIVING  
BURIAL.

Once on his travels Herr Sauter, garbed as a native, was attracted by the sound of a *vina* or Indian guitar. The player was a sunyassi, or wandering nun. "The yellow sari reached from the crown of her head to her feet. Round her neck hung a necklace of brilliant topazes, but the most conspicuous thing about her was the beauty of her face. Its complexion was a soft olive, and as yet it showed only a few faint lines that gave it the expression of a sublime and wonderful motherhood and a spiritual peace attained by suffering. Her eyes were bright and clear and framed by thick black lashes. She might perhaps have been forty years of age, yet both face and figure showed the freshness of youth." Finding that they were both bound for the same town, they decided to share each other's company, and on the way Sita Bhai told her companion the story of her life. Her home was near Secunderabad, in the Great Deccan, her father a Brahman of the Shiva sect, who enjoyed a considerable local reputation as a learned pundit. When she attained her twelfth year, her father found her a husband, but shortly after he died of fever, and Sita Bhai was left a widow. "In my parents' house," she says, "I learnt nothing of the freedom

which widows enjoyed elsewhere. I found myself compelled to observe the old customs; to have the hair of my head cropped close; to sling the yellow cord of the penitent across my bosom, and to put away from me all the finery of the married woman." So things went on until she was seventeen. Then the scourge of famine fell upon the land, and continued, as is sometimes the case in India, for no less than two years. Poverty followed to the entire neighbourhood. Even her rich uncle, who had helped them hitherto, had no longer the means or will to do so, and destitution was at their own door. "First," she says, "my father sold our field, then one garment after another, and all his gold and silver in the adjacent city, so that he might purchase food." The end came at last. The father died from lack of proper nourishment, and with her stepmother (for the father had in the meantime married again) she sang the funeral hymns over his body. The whole family (there were two brothers as well as Sita Bhai) then started on a pilgrimage, not knowing whither they went. They lived on the way on the sour fruits of the jungle and the half-ripe figs of the banyan tree. One after

another collapsed, and Sita Bhai herself sank down on the road unconscious through hunger and fatigue.

When she came to, she found herself in her uncle's house. A

THE  
ROMANCE  
OF SITA  
BHAU.

THE SAHIB.

white sahib had found her as she lay unconscious and had driven her into the city. The letters in her sari had told him where her uncle lived, and there he had left her. The uncle was unprepared to give further assistance to the family, and wished to be rid of the burden of his niece. The sahib came to the house. He was young and handsome, and the uncle was only too ready to part with his niece for a consideration. The attraction which Sita Bhai had felt for the sahib now turned to hatred, but she had no option but to consent to be taken to his home. The sequel may be told in her own words :

When the first pain and bewilderment were assuaged, I began once more to hope. The sahib, whom I had loved at first, would surely come to my room, and then I would throw myself down at his feet and beg him for mercy. But I felt ashamed to ask for him. However, one night he came of his own accord. The terrible thing that I feared did not take place ; he only stood before me for a long, long time, and then stroked my cheek with his hand, and said : " You know how I got you ; but now I feel ashamed of what I did. If you wish it, I will let you go. Yes ; I will make it possible for you to avoid returning to the hateful house from which I took you. Only if you feel in your heart that you can forgive me, only if you feel that you can love me, shall I gratefully receive you into my house. Now lie down and sleep, my beloved, and be assured that I shall never lay a hand upon you as long as I do not feel that you return my love." When he spoke to me thus my love for him became more powerful than ever, and I longed then and there to throw myself into his arms, so that he might do with me what he thought good, but I was still silent, and he left the room, and I laid myself on my bed, weeping for shame and love. But on the following night I became his.

After a year she became the mother of a boy, and happier times followed. The father honoured Sita Bhai as his wife, and the boy grew up till he was fourteen, showing unusual intelligence and abilities, but curiously fond of solitude for a child. One day a strange sadhu arrived and took to preaching in the bazaar. The boy attended his discourses and appeared fascinated. " I myself," said his mother, " left the house two or three times in order to fetch him home when he failed to put in an appearance at the daily meal, and it was a wonderful picture that met my eyes. A venerable grey-haired old man, sitting on his bamboo mat, and before him our son with glistening eyes and folded hands, asking him questions or listening to his words as though every syllable had been a grain of gold." One day the boy failed to return. Sita Bhai sent their oldest servant to look for him in the bazaar, but the old man returned with the news that the sadhu was no longer there. Later the mother learned

THE CALL  
OF SIVA.

that, accompanied by her son, he had been seen to board a train. Further inquiry proved fruitless. Sita Bhai consulted a holy man, and begged him to ask help of the gods that her child should be given back to her. The sanyassi, however, rebuked her, saying that it was God's will that her son was lost to her in this life. Siva had ordained that he should renounce the world in his early youth and devote his life to prayer and meditation.

Two years passed, then cholera came to the town, the sahib was stricken down, and a few days later found Sita Bhai a widow once more. In her anguish she betook herself again to the Serpent's Grove, and to the priest whom she had sought out when her child was lost. "Leave this city," he said. "Give all that you possess to the poor, and pass through the land from village to village as a poor nun, and you will find your child again on the open road while you still wear the livery in which you go hence." So Sita Bhai collected together all the wealth that the sahib had left her, and gave it to the head of the Hindu community, requesting that daily sacrifices to the goddess Kali and prayers for the return of her child should be offered up.

And it was thus on these wanderings that Herr Sauter met her. When she had finished her story the European traveller bowed humbly before her and begged her to bless him. "She laid her hand upon my head," says our author, "and made several predictions, some of which have been fulfilled in the passage of the years, while others still await fulfilment." "You, too," she said, "will be forced to eat of karma's bitter fruit. For you, too, the hour will strike when you will be forced to leave this country in which you yourself were born in an earlier existence only to wander to and fro in cold and alien climes. But it is your karma that you will not die on alien soil. When the period of your suffering is over you will return again to this country in order to die in this your home." "War and human folly," exclaims our author,

"WAR AND HUMAN FOLLY." "drove me out of that beloved land into the cold North, where I wander to and fro like a stranger, unknown and misunderstood, always full of longing for that country which alone, in the fullest sense of the word, is my home." "Years have passed," he continues, "since that curious encounter. Here I sit in my room in a Northern city. In the street without streams of motor-cars and lorries are rushing past the houses until the very walls quiver. But my thoughts are wandering thousands of miles away, far across

the ocean and across my beloved India, and in my ears sounds the song of the mother who, full of silent confidence, is searching the highways of the world for her lost child."

Into what an entirely different atmosphere are we drawn by this narrative to that of the bustling workaday conditions of the Western world! I have chosen to epitomize a story which has a charm and beauty of its own. But those who read the book which is the subject of these notes should be warned that the experiences recorded in it have frequently more of the fascination of horror than of romance, and portray in certain cases a truly terrible and repulsive side in the life of the India of to-day. The native girls who are sold by their so-called guardians do not by any means always fall into such good hands as did Sita Bhai. One terrible case of the kind is recorded where the beautiful Malka was purchased by an old and hideous Armenian Jew. "I have honestly tried," says our author, "both in Hindu and European circles, to assist in the abolition of this stain upon our civilization, and always when I have endeavoured to arouse in a young man's heart a feeling of sympathy with women, a

" FIGHT  
FOR US AND  
OUR SEX." sense of the holiness of motherhood, and the sacredness of the function of motherhood, there arises before me the face of Malka gazing at me with pleading eyes and crying, ' Fight for us and our sex.

Strike a blow for the honour and holiness of motherhood.' " The trouble is that such evils are encouraged and assisted by men in authority who profit by the transactions, and there seems no power at present in existence at once able and willing to punish those who so misuse their position. The picture of the Chinese quarter of Calcutta where Malka was found and where the opium dens flourish, as they always do in such places, is a horrible and hideous one. No less ghastly in its own way is the picture of some of the smaller Indian towns and villages where sanitation is practically unknown, and which are as a consequence breeding places for fever and plague in their worst forms. Here is a description of one of these in time of famine.

Destitution, stupefied bewilderment, and the gnawing of hunger were visible in the emaciated faces of the villagers. Adults and children crept about with their eyes resting on the ground. The famine was upon them in company with disease in all its varieties. Their bodies were covered with eruptions, and the suppurating eyelids of the children were covered with mango flies.

This place was made the more unpleasant by the innumerable snakes that thrived there. "One day," says Herr Sauter, "I

found one on my *pallam* (bed) under the blanket. I could not put on my shoes in the morning without first looking under the bed to make sure that no snake was lurking there. I encountered snakes on my way to the river. I found them crawling about in the ruins of the deserted huts. Snakes of every kind were there, large and small, from the terrible cobra to the pack-

thread snake." Of course caste with its artificial barriers and divisions was met with everywhere. Even the snakes recognized it. A snake-charming fakir told our author that snakes, like men, thought

a good deal of caste. If he had placed a snake of a different kind in the pot along with the others there would have been a fight whose issue would have been fatal to one of the two combatants. One cobra, for reasons which are not quite clear, no one in the village would disturb. It had made its home in a white ants' nest, and the villagers actually brought it milk and other offerings in coco-nut shells in order to propitiate it.

In the neighbourhood of this village, Songir, lived a solitary hermit whose name was Kurumba. The writer made up his mind to pay him a visit, but does not seem to have got much out of him, though eventually he offered Herr Sauter the favourite Hindu beverage, mango bass, which he gladly accepted as a mark of hospitality. The description of him is repulsive, and we are not surprised to find our author observing that he was a man to inspire fear rather than confidence. Eventually he heard from the lips of the head man as much as was known in the village of his story. Five years before, he had suddenly appeared one evening and asked the men who were seated round the Indian equivalent of the village green whether he might take shelter in the hut in which he subsequently made his home. It appeared that he had left his previous dwelling-place under very sinister circumstances. He had acquired a reputation as a miracle-worker there, and was often summoned to the houses of the Brahmins when anyone fell sick, and, as a matter of fact, his ministrations were generally successful. One day, as it happened, he turned out of the bazaar and left the native quarter. Finding an open gate he walked into the garden of the police inspector, who was a Moslem. Here standing at the foot of the steps he held out his alms bowl as was his habit. The inspector's servant was about to descend the steps and give him alms when the inspector himself came round the corner of the house and harshly ordered the servant back. He demanded of the Kurumba how he came to be there, and ordered him off, as otherwise he



would be locked up. The Kurumba looked the inspector up and down with such a terrible expression that the policeman drew back. He then turned about and made his way between the flower-beds into the street. There he stood still and facing the inspector's house uttered a curse. "Cursed be thee and thy house! May the earth swallow thee and thine. Never again shall sleep descend upon them." With that he gathered up a handful of dust from the road and threw it high overhead, so that it was blown away in a little cloud. The inspector laughed at the threat, and going into the house, returned with a stick; but the fakir promptly disappeared. The inspector's servants trembled at the thought of the curse, but he only derided their fears.

The next morning the inspector's ten-year-old son was found lying in bed groaning and writhing in agony. His tongue was paralysed, and he was powerless to answer his parents' questions. Finally the inspector, terrified at the result of his treatment of the Kurumba, sought him out in his solitary hut. In vain, however, he prostrated himself at the fakir's feet and begged for mercy. The heart of the insulted Kurumba could not be softened, and his gaze seemed to pass over the pleading man and fix itself on nothingness. At the end of the week the boy died. Thereafter every night the father went out to the burying ground, sitting there, weeping and lamenting. He could no longer sleep, and came to imagine that he was followed by ravens who fluttered around him and refused to be driven away. Finally he was taken to the asylum, having become totally insane. The authorities thereupon took the matter up, but the Kurumba's hut knew him no more. When, afterwards, the Kurumba lived at Songir, he was not always to be found in his hut. He came and went. No one knew what became of him. But it was believed that his disappearances were connected with the sale and barter of the gifts of mothers grateful for the cure of their children, and in any case he had accumulated some wealth which apparently was stowed away in his hut.

On the very day appointed for my departure [says our author], there came to pass a prodigious event that brought sore calamity upon Songir. I can still see, as though it were yesterday, the Kurumba running like a madman from his hut, crossing the river-bed without waiting to pick his way, tearing across the stubble fields and into the village, his hair in a wild tangle, his eyes blazing with hatred, greed, and despair, mumbling to himself, loudly uttering curses, making straight for the head-man's house. In a moment the Hindu inhabitants of the Brahmin village had gathered

round him, and I heard one telling another, as the old hermit seated himself on the ground, loudly wailing, or staring before him, or tearing his beard and hair with both hands.

It appeared that, during the night, while he was absent from his hut, his property, with all his money, had been stolen. Attempts were made to discover the thief, but in vain. Our author, who was present, proposed that the kutwal should be sent to Bandwa for the police.

While I was still speaking [he tells us], the Kurumba slowly rose from the ground, and gazed at all those present with a look so terrible that even I shuddered when his eyes met mine. He went up to the head-man's house, and climbed the steps to the veranda, just as a preacher ascends his pulpit. We all followed him as though under a spell. He lifted his brown and withered arms towards the heavens, and laid his terrible curse upon the village, that curse to which the people of Songir afterwards attributed all the misfortunes that came upon them: "Cursed be this village! May the black death fall upon all, and as for him who is not choked by the pest, may he become a snake or a wild beast of the jungle! Pleading for release, let him pass from one existence to another, and may his soul find no rest! Dust thou art, to dust returnest!" . . . And again, with both hands, he gathered up the dust underfoot, and threw it into the air, by this gesture giving his curse a terrible emphasis.

The Kurumba was never seen again, but (says Herr Sauter) "three weeks later I passed through Songir on my return journey. The head-man was no longer among the living, the kutwal, too, was dead, and the chowkadar with his wife and children, whom the Kurumba had healed before, were also dead. The first to fall victims to the plague were the wretched people of the pariah village where the plague had appeared in devastating strength and was still raging. What could I do, save to give battle to the enemy as far as my poor strength allowed, but the medicines from the Badwar dispensary were of no avail. Songir, when I first set eyes upon it, contained perhaps four hundred souls.

THE FATE OF SONGIR. Between the time when the plague broke out and the tenth day, which I spent there on my return journey in order to help the poor creatures, a hundred and ninety-eight persons had fallen victims to the plague." Songir had, in short, become a village of the dead. Then came the opportunity of the jackals and the vultures. The jackals dug deep holes beside the graves and bored tunnels until they reached the corpses and dragged them out piecemeal. "The burying places were thick with vultures squealing there in their hundreds with naked necks, while the crows, restlessly flying hither and thither, waited until the vultures should be

sated." "Where once the singing of women was heard, and the laughing children drove the cattle to the pastures in the morning, there is now nothing to be seen but the pitiful remains of human habitations in which the beasts of the jungle have made their lairs. The Hindu traveller who sees such places gives them a wide berth."

Thus, observes our author, the unholy prophecy of the Kurumba was fulfilled. He leaves us to form our own opinion as to whether the disease was due to this curse, for, as he remarks, the plague was already raging in the chief town of the district. "But," he adds, "he who travels through that countryside to-day will hear at night, under the pipul tree beside the village square, the strange history of the wizard of Songir."

Assuredly this record is gruesome enough, but the story of Hiralal and his wife is certainly equally horrible in its own way. Hiralal was a weaver, a native friend of Herr Sauter. He had received a message to come to his aid as he was lying sick, as it was thought that his medical attention might be of service. Unfortunately he arrived too late. Hiralal, he was informed, had died early that morning, and even before sunset they had carried his body to the hill that rises behind the village, a hill covered with loose boulders and bare of trees or bushes. The still youthful widow sat lamenting before the hut. When Herr

A  
PREMATURE  
BURIAL. Sauter arrived, he was unable to find any sleeping accommodation. He therefore left his cart in the hands of the villagers and set forth, meaning to camp out for the night. It happened, however,

that an old man whom he met told him of an unoccupied hut on the summit of the hill in the middle of the burial ground. This was where Hiralal lay buried. Needless to say, no native would accompany him, and Herr Sauter started on his solitary way. "As always when a corpse is buried, the jackals had gathered round the village in hundreds and were filling the air with their hoarse howls." Our author found his way to the hut, lit a fire, and listened to their ghastly cries. When these faded in the distance he detected another sound, a terrible yet plaintive outcry in the immediate neighbourhood of the hut. "As I listened, rigid with terror," he continues, "I distinguished the cry of two different creatures, one undoubtedly the howl of a jackal, but now and again I heard a faint whimpering that seemed to come from one of the graves, as from a man who no longer had the strength to call for help." Hiralal had, in short, been buried alive. Herr Sauter found a spade in the hut,

proceeded to the grave, and dug desperately. "All of a sudden," he writes, "after the removal of several blocks of stone, my spade struck upon some yielding substance, and a shriek rose into the night so penetrating that the spade all but fell from my hand. The light of the lantern showed me the body of a jackal. Greedier than the rest, he had scratched a tunnel through the earth through which he had forced his way until he had reached the corpse." Having reached it, he bit the scalp of Hiralal, and brought back the apparently dead man to life. But the jackal's activities caused the fall of a heavy stone that blocked the entrance to the tunnel, and the beast was pinned between the floor of the tunnel and the rock. Herr Sauter rescued Hiralal, whose head

A  
MERCILESS  
EDICT.

was burning with fever, and who was continually laughing the horrible laugh of the insane. Next morning he went over to the village and explained the situation, but the villagers would do nothing. A dead man, they maintained, was dead. Finally he spoke to the Brahmin pundit, who told him that according to the Shastra Hiralal was no longer numbered among the living, and his wife was a widow, and for this reason he must dwell among the dead. The net result was that the "widow" too was expelled from the community of the living. Our author remained with them on the hill-top sharing the hut with them until the husband had recovered his sanity, but Hiralal had lost his old zest for life, and never rallied from the effect of the horrors of that terrible night. Soon leprosy seized him, and in two months he had died in reality. The wife was thus left alone. Herr Sauter resolved to extricate her from her surroundings, and place her in an asylum, but one evening as he was paying a visit to the village, he learned that she had wandered off in the darkness on the previous night, and had not returned. She was never heard of more.

In the above passages I have given some idea of the realistic character of the book with which I have been dealing, but the horror of the narrative is accentuated and heightened by the details for which a brief notice can find no space. What makes Herr Sauter's narrative specially attractive is the sympathy displayed both for the natives and also for the animals—monkeys, dogs, and others—which find a place within its pages. He has moreover much to say on the philosophic side of Indian religious thought, to which he seems especially drawn. Something we hear, also, of theosophy, and something, not of a very complimentary kind, of Madame Blavatsky, of whose wonder-working

he had of course heard many tales. He draws attention in especial to the stupendous difference between East and West in the method of teaching, and in the thing taught. "In the East," he says, "the method is in essentials authoritative and traditional, while in the West, whether complete or in embryo, it is individual in quality and proceeds by means of research. The scholar never questions the statements of his guru, and the guru makes no attempt to prove his thesis to the pupil. He teaches what he himself was taught in his youth, and what he has recognized since then in the light of his own experience to be the truth." The mode in which he hands on what he himself has inherited may be his own, but the accepted facts have come down to him through the centuries. The author tells us little of the wonderful performances of the fakirs, made familiar to Western readers in the stories of the rope and basket tricks, and the illusion of the mango tree, but narrates many experiences hardly less interesting. For example, he records one strange story of a Swami who came and preached to the villagers and answered their numerous questions and finally took up his abode in his hut. The address had been a long one, and the villagers had left their homes to come and hear him. None of those who had been hanging upon his words had eaten for many hours, and finally the Swami, in a princely fashion, as one who has only to command and straightway is obeyed, turned round to his audience with the authoritative request, "Sit here and eat." "The pot which his chela had placed upon the floor contained a couple of handfuls of rice and lentils, scarcely enough to satisfy two. But those present manifested no surprise. They stood there like obedient children, and going up to the trees plucked from them leaves as big as a man's hand, and in a few minutes they had fastened them together, making little plates and dishes. Now the Swami rose to his feet and placed some of the contents of the little pot on the improvised plate of each of his visitors. Three or four helpings should most certainly have emptied the pot, but the Swami continued to distribute the food until he had served the last comer, when he helped himself and his chela and all fell to eating, including myself; and it seemed to me that I was the only one present to be surprised by the miracle." This record is obviously reminiscent of more than one Biblical incident. Our author does not attempt to explain it, but merely observes, "I saw the thing with my own eyes."

EAST AND  
WEST.

A  
MYSTERIOUS  
INCIDENT.

In conclusion I would say, as my readers may have realized, that the modest note on the wrapper of this remarkable book quite understates the singular interest and fascination of its admittedly sometimes very gruesome contents.

Readers of the OCCULT REVIEW will be familiar at least with a fair proportion of the automatic script which appears in *Psychic Messages from Oscar Wilde*,\* just published by Mr. T. Werner Laurie. The part of these communications which has not yet seen the light in print mainly concerns criticisms of modern authors. Of the 179 pages of the book, 71 only are devoted to the automatic script itself, and the remainder to explanatory notes and replies to critics who have called in question the genuineness of the communications. It must be said that these criticisms are treated in a very dispassionate and unbiased way by the Editor of this book, as Mrs. Travers Smith modestly styles herself. What I think would have been desirable is that we should have had more genuine literary criticism, not so much from self-styled critics as from those the value of whose criticism would be recognized and accepted by the literary world. Beyond the criticism of Mr. Drinkwater we have actually

nothing of this kind. The genuineness of the communications, I confess, seems to me, in view of the conditions under which they were produced, to stand or fall according as we are prepared to admit or deny that these are written in the true style and manner of Oscar Wilde. Neither Mrs. Travers Smith nor Mr. V. have either the gratifications or practical experience which would enable them to imitate (at least under such conditions) so great and individual a master of literary style as Oscar Wilde. If either of them could accomplish such a *tour de force* under any circumstances whatever, I should be greatly surprised. It is not nearly such an easy matter as most of the journalistic critics whose comments have appeared in the press seem to imagine. I doubt if there are half a dozen literary men at the present time in this country who could attempt it successfully. Of recent writers I know only one, Andrew Lang, of whom I should be disposed to say that I thought he could have achieved the task in a really effective manner. Mr. Drinkwater's criticism, apparently given rather on the spur of the moment, amounts to very little. He takes exception to

OSCAR  
WILDE  
ONCE MORE.

MR. DRINK-  
WATER'S  
CRITICISM.

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7s. 6d. net.

the phrase in which Wilde describes the modern woman as "a wart on the nose of an inebriate," as not one likely to have been used by that author. There is, however, a world of difference between what a man says in a casual conversation, which is all this communication practically amounts to, and what he would write down if he was penning a book or an essay.

On the other hand, if we are not simply bent on picking holes, and take the script in its entirety, judging it from a wider standpoint, it seems to me to be an astonishing thing that Oscar Wilde, after twenty-three years on the other side, should remain so extraordinarily like himself in the matter of phraseology and mental outlook as this very remarkable script could suggest. I would submit that nothing but its startlingly characteristic style could have led to the great sensation which it made in the press at the time of its first publication. It was, in short, purely and simply because every reader immediately recognized the old Oscar Wilde in the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of this script, that such an extraordinary hubbub was produced in the journalistic world. Numerous communications have come to hand before, alleged to have been transmitted by literary celebrities of the past, but in no one instance have they created such a sensation, the obvious reason in each case being that they were not recognized as bearing unmistakably the imprint of their supposed authors. The fact is, the reluctance of the

critic is not due to his failure to recognize the similarity of the style and matter of the communications to that of their alleged author, but rather to unwillingness to admit the possibility of the receipt of communications of the kind in the manner in question from a deceased writer. The sceptical critic has therefore as a rule enhanced the cleverness and ingenuity of the automatists until they become perfectly miraculous. Mrs. Travers Smith tells a plain tale with regard to the manner in which these communications were received, and the speed at which they were dictated. In the written communications 700 words were written in about an hour and a quarter, all in a handwriting which closely resembled that of Oscar Wilde. In the ouija board messages, "the traveller," says Mrs. Travers Smith, "flew from letter to letter with lightning speed at the rate of sixty or seventy words a minute." It is widely recognized that communications of the kind are liable to take on a certain colour from the medium's own temperament and mental outlook. In the communications published in this volume I cannot help thinking it is not a little

remarkable that so little of this colouring is to be discerned.

As regards Oscar Wilde's criticisms of authors, if, as has been alleged, these were due to the subconsciousness of Mrs. Travers Smith, she well remarks that her submerged self in most cases holds entirely different opinions from her normal consciousness. When there was a question of Sir William Wilde's address in Dublin, total failure was the result. Mrs. Travers Smith knew this, if Mr. V. did not. Wilde was, however, able to give his London address at Chelsea with perfect accuracy, though neither amanuensis knew it. This does not look like information derived from the subconscious.

Mrs. Travers Smith cites a statement that Wilde was not quick at repartee. I cannot help thinking this is not true, though there are many people with whom this gift varies according to their vein or mood, and I suspect this was the case with Oscar Wilde. His repartees on occasion were extraordinarily

OSCAR WILDE IN REPARTEE. brilliant and as a matter of fact his power of witty retort never left him till the end. In his last illness his two doctors, thinking he was in a state of unconsciousness, were discussing with each other from what source they would obtain payment of their fees. Wilde looked up unexpectedly with the ready apology, "I am afraid, gentlemen, I am dying beyond my means." Wilde at his trial was explaining to the cross-examining Counsel that something he was in the habit of doing was contrary to his doctor's orders. "Oh, never mind your doctor!" exclaimed the Counsel in a fit of irritation. "No," retorted Oscar Wilde, "I never do."

The fact is, however we may choose to explain the present series of communications, one thing stands out beyond question: they are absolutely unique of their kind; and Mrs. Travers Smith is right in claiming that, apart from any conclusions arrived at, this is quite sufficient justification for their being published. Outside this, the most notable page in the book of psychical

THE GLASTONBURY SCRIPTS. research Mrs. Travers Smith holds to be the work of Mr. Bligh Bond at Glastonbury. But I think she is right in saying that we cannot take the Glastonbury scripts as a proof of human survival, though they certainly prove the survival of memories and have a most important bearing on the abstruse problem of psychometry. It remains to be said that Sir William Barrett, who read these scripts with the greatest interest, as they were obtained, has written a preface to the book in question in which he says that it seems to him that "given the entire honesty and



trustworthiness of the automatists themselves—and of this there is no reason to doubt—they do afford prima facie evidence of survival after the dissolution of body and brain.”

Professor Richet, as is well known, will not admit the survival of the consciousness as an explanation in any case, and he accordingly rejects the so-called script as anything but evidence of cryptesthesia, and the action of the subconscious. He admits, however, that some exterior energy must in every case “set in motion the latent energies of our human mind.” It is not clear what exterior energy set in motion these alleged communications from Oscar Wilde in the case of automatists neither of whom had made a special study of his works nor had any special thought of him in their minds at the time that he intervened. It seems to me that the subconscious, to which so many people nowadays attribute light-heartedly such extraordinary powers, is, as a matter of fact, receptive and negative by nature. I think when we get genius there is an abnormal capacity on the part of the individual to link up the conscious and the sub-

THE PART  
OF THE  
SUB-  
CONSCIOUS.

conscious, and so to draw from the latent powers of the latter, and I would suggest that these latent powers are frequently stimulated and roused to action by suggestions from another sphere than the physical. Where there is no such linking up we frequently get automatic communications the value of which is dependent upon the source from which the subconscious receives its stimulus. The result generally is very poor stuff. Once, however, and again, some entity from the other side, of a rarer and more gifted type than his fellows, is able to utilize this method of communication and then alone do we get anything remarkable in the way of results. The lack of education of the average medium is an obvious bar to such results, and I think explains why, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, they are quite valueless in character.

Some small portion of Oscar Wilde’s criticisms of modern authors has been regarded as of too personal and intemperate a character to be allowed to see the light. This applies specially to certain observations with regard to G. K. Chesterton and

AN  
INJUSTICE  
TO THE  
DEAD.

George Moore. Even as it is, Wilde is far from complimentary to the modern author. It must be borne in mind in this connection that though according to the laws of this country, one may with impunity libel the dead, the converse is not the case, and the dead may not libel the living without their

printers and publishers accepting the responsibility. This is scarcely to be wondered at in the present democratic age, for, as will be readily recognized, the dead cannot go to the ballot box!

In reference to some Notes I wrote recently on the subject of Cosmic Consciousness, and an allusion contained in them to the late Mr. James Allen, I have the permission of his widow to quote an excerpt from a private letter written to me on this subject which I think will be of considerable interest to my readers in this connection. The first time Mr. Allen had this experience was, I understand, after reading Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*. The following are the words in which he gave a description to Mrs. Allen of his feelings at the time:—

I could not stir from my seat till I had read the last word of that book. When I put the book down and rose to my feet it was as though I had become a new man. A curtain seemed to have rolled back from the face of the universe, and I saw the causes and meanings of things which had before been dark mysteries. There was a revelation which was almost blinding in its brilliance and suddenness, an exaltation which alarmed me, while it transported me into a felicitous insight. The vision quickly faded, but its influence remained, the memory of it saving me in many an hour of darkness and temptation, until that calmer time of meditation and knowledge ten years later, when it returned never again to fade from my brain.

Mrs. Allen continues:—

The day that he entered fully into Cosmic Consciousness is so indelibly stamped upon my mind and heart that I can live it again as if it were but yesterday. He was private secretary to a gentleman in Bath, and during the summer always used to walk across the meadows to his office. It was my custom to go to meet him every evening along by the Avon. He had written *From Poverty to Power* at the time, and *The Light of Reason* was in its first year. The call to leave his position and devote himself absolutely to the magazine, and writing books, was pressing upon him, and I, knowing as I did from the first that his was not to be the ordinary life of what we call worldly achievement, but that he was indeed a man sent from God into the world with a special message, I urged him to give in his resignation on the first of the month as by agreement. He was hesitating, speaking to me often of my needs and the child, but I knew that nothing must stand between him and his divine calling and message, and I was strong and sufficient for all needs.

One evening I walked to meet him across the meadows as usual, deep in thought and searching for guidance and wisdom, when I found myself on the top of some rising ground, and standing immersed in a great light, and I heard, or fancied I heard, a voice telling me that he must resign his position and devote himself entirely to the work he was sent to do. For a moment I was frightened, and looked around me to see if some

one near had spoken, but I was quite alone. Then I saw him coming in the distance and ran to meet him, and as I neared him I shouted aloud the message I had received. Then I saw that something had happened. He was different in some way, and I stood and looked at him in wonder. "How do you know?" he asked, and I, breathless with running, pointed out the spot, saying, "I don't know how I know, but something told me there on the top of that rising ground, and there is something strange there too, I cannot understand it." Then he took my hand in his and said, "Come with me and let me see just where you were told," and I took him to the spot, and there he told me that in the morning, as he crossed the meadow in deep meditation, he came to that very place, and there something had happened. He was lifted in spirit about ten feet above the ground, and surrounded, engulfed, in a white light which so blinded his physical sight and illuminated his spiritual insight, that he stood for some time unable to move, and in that Light he was told what his life must be, and that he had to take the step we had been so long contemplating. After a time he became sufficiently normal to resume his walk, but all the day the sense of being high above the ground and immersed in light had been with him. Then I knew that I had passed through the scene of his morning experience, and had been allowed to catch just a glimpse of what he had realized, so that I might understand the way he had to go, and as far as in me lay, be his helper. I know that I was but a witness and not a partaker in his enlightenment. For some days he told me the sense of height and light clung to him, and then gradually faded, leaving behind the realization that would never again leave him—the Cosmic Consciousness.

The death of Marie Corelli makes one more gap in the ranks of the people of note who have been regular readers of the OCCULT REVIEW. My personal interest in her writings dates back to the time when her first novel, *A Romance of Two Worlds*, saw the light. The sensation which it created among the novel-reading public, in spite of the practically universal unfriendliness of the critics, is still fresh in my mind. Nor even at this distance of time can I feel any surprise at its success. Never since Lytton wrote *Zanoni* had there been such a successful blending of romance and occultism, and Marie Corelli's book was addressed to a public

MARIE  
CORELLI. to which *Zanoni* would have already appeared somewhat out of date. Marie Corelli was always a storm centre, but how throughout her life and from the time her first book was published as quite a young girl, she succeeded so effectually in antagonizing the critics I confess I have never been able fully to understand. Many far worse writers in every way have met in this respect with a far more sympathetic reception. The public, however, always made her ample amends. Her writings, after her half-brother Eric Mackay's death, always seemed to lack something of their original inspiration.

# THE AGE OF MIRACLES

By EMILY HAINS

BECAUSE you cannot understand  
The things that keener eyes can see,  
Nor your restricted mind expand  
To grasp the whole of God's decree ;  
Because your ears are dull to note  
The subtlety of sounds so vast,  
You condescend to smile, and quote  
" The age of miracles is past."

But hold a seed, one moment dwell  
On all the wealth of wonder there,  
And let that miracle dispel  
A creed that only breeds despair.  
Within so small a husk to bind  
Such scent, such form, such colour too ;  
The power to reproduce its kind  
Remaining to its species true.

Is that not miracle enough  
To yield a more enlightened creed ?  
Does not such ordered law rebuff  
Confusion's causeless chance indeed ?  
Then what about the 'planes that fly,  
The 'phone that makes your friend seem near,  
The sounds that wireless waves supply ?—  
The time of miracles is here.

Such things were once, beyond all doubt,  
To growing minds a dream absurd ;  
And blasphemies to the devout  
Who felt that prying sinners erred.  
Now, through much suffering and strife  
We know the truth, all search is good,  
And *see* at last in death, new life :  
A miracle misunderstood.

# OCCULT BRITTANY

By LEWIS SPENCE

IT has always seemed to me most unfortunate that we are without any adequate and trustworthy account either in French or English of the occult side of that remarkable body of belief and custom which through countless generations has grown up in the Breton peninsula. No authority on Breton Folklore—neither Gaidoz, Sébillot, nor Luzel—has made any special endeavour to segregate the occult from the merely traditional material included in their collections. A close examination of Breton lore has enabled me to arrange what I feel may reasonably be regarded as subject-heads for the study of the occult beliefs of Brittany, which, I venture to think, are no less worthy of intensive examination than those of other and better known European areas. These subject-heads appear to me to be: Druidism, Magic, Demonology, and Legendary Tales of the Occult, and on each of these I shall touch briefly, my endeavour being to stimulate interest rather than satisfy it.

The study of Druidism in Brittany can scarcely be approached without raising an even larger question, that of the origin of the Breton race. The ancient Armorica was inhabited by tribes whose names at least were "Celtic." But in the fifth century the peninsula was overrun by large numbers of Britons fleeing from the Saxon invasion of our island. We know that the Druidic religion was by no means confined to Britain and France. It flourished in as distant a sphere as Asia Minor, where it composed the pre-Christian faith of the "foolish Galatians," a Celtic people who had wandered eastwards. It was undoubtedly deep in the debt of Egypt and probably of Babylon as well, and whether it was of Celtic origin at all is doubtful. Rhys and others believed it to be of non-Celtic and even non-Aryan genesis. However this may be, Brittany is rich in Druidic lore and remains, although it is certain that its people, like those of Gaul proper, looked to Britain as the headquarters of the cult.

But the examination of the Druidic antiquities of Brittany presupposes an acquaintance with its archæology. Druidism appears to have died hard in the Breton peninsula. Nantes was, indeed, a classic neighbourhood in its annals. An ancient college

of Druidic priestesses was situated on one of the islands at the mouth of the Loire, and the traditions of its denizens had evidently been cherished by the inhabitants of the city even as late as the middle of the fourteenth century, for we find a bishop of the diocese at that period obtaining a bull of excommunication against the local sorcerers and condemning them to the eternal fires with bell, book, and candle. Heloïse, the unfortunate pupil of Abelard (who was a Breton) is still spoken of in Brittany as a "druidess," and a weird ballad exists in which her powers of sorcery are extolled.

Associated with the memory of the Druids are the standing stones of Brittany, menhirs and dolmens, and the great monolithic circles like Carnac and Kergouen—the temples of the Druid faith. The folk-beliefs attached to these monuments are numerous, and most of them bear a strong resemblance to each other. Many of the monuments are called Grottes aux Fées or Roches aux Fées, in the belief that the fays either built them or used them as dwelling-places, and variants of these names may be found in the Maison des Follets or House of the Goblins at Cancoet in Morbihan, and the Château des Paulpiquets in Questembert in the same district. Ty en Corrigan, "the House of the Korrigan," is also situated in the same department, while near Penmarch in Finistère, at the other end of the province, we find Ty C'harriquet, "the House of the Gorics or Nains." Other mythical personages are also credited with their erection, and chief among these are the devil and Gargantua. But the latter, I shrewdly suspect, is none other than the Korrigan or Korrigant, whose name has been Latinized, and whose sex has undergone a metamorphosis.

The Folk-Sorcery of the modern Bretons is almost certainly a relic of ancient Druidic practice. The old folk can recall the time when the farm, the dairy and the field were ever in peril of the spell, the enchantment, the noxious beam of the evil eye, and many awful tales of witch and wizard were told in hushed voices at the Breton fireside when the winter wind blew cold from the cruel sea and the heaped faggots sent the red glow of fire-warmth athwart the thick shadows of the great farm kitchen. Certain villages, too, appear to have possessed an evil reputation among the country folk as the dwelling-places of magicians, centres of sorcery which it was desirable to shun. Thus we read in Breton proverb of the sorcerers of Fougères, of Trèves, of Concoret, of Lézat. In the town of Rennes, as lately as fifty years ago, dwelt a certain Robert, who investigated cases of sorcery and undertook the dissipation of enchantments. When called to a "case"

he usually wore a skin dyed in two colours, and held in leash a large black dog, evidently his familiar. His work of exorcism completed, he whistled and a great black horse appeared, on the back of which he vaulted and disappeared "like a flash."

Many kinds of amulets or talismans were used by the Breton peasantry to neutralize the power of sorcerers. Thus, if a person carried a snake with him, enchanter would be unable to harm his sight, and all objects would appear to him in their natural forms. Salt placed in various parts of a house guarded it against the entrance of wizards, and rendered their spells void. Many consulted the witch and wizard for their personal advantage, in affairs of the heart, to obtain a number in the casting of lots for conscription which would free them from military service, and so forth. And, as in other countries, there grew up a class of middlemen between the human and the supernatural who acted as fortune-tellers, astrologers and mediciners.

It was said that sorcerers were wont to meet at the many Roches aux Fées in Brittany at fixed periods in order to deliberate as to their actions and hold counsel with one another. If anyone wandered into their circle or was found listening to their secret conclave, he seldom lived long afterwards. Others, terrified at the sight presented by the eyes of the sorcerers, blazing like live coals, fled incontinently from their presence, and found that in the morning the hair of their heads had turned white with the dread experience.

The Demonology of Brittany is, perhaps, the most enthralling among its occult wonders. Perhaps there is no spirit of evil which is so much dreaded by the Breton peasantry as the Ankou, who travels about by night, picking up souls, and seats them in her cart. In the dead of night a creaking axle-tree can be heard passing down the silent lanes. It halts at a door. The summons has been given, a soul quits the doomed house, and the wagon of the Ankou passes on. The Ankou herself—for the dread death-spirit of Brittany would seem to be female—is usually represented as a skeleton. M. Anatole le Braz has elaborated a study of the whole question in his book on the legend of death in Brittany, *Le Légende de la Mort*, and it is probable that the Ankou is a survival of the belief in a death-goddess of the prehistoric dolmen-builders of Brittany. In some Breton churches a little model or statuette of the Ankou is to be seen, and this is nothing more nor less than a cleverly fashioned skeleton in bronze or iron.

The Mourioche is a malicious demon of bestial nature, able,

it would seem, to transform himself into any animal shape he chooses. In general appearance he is like a year-old colt. Unlucky is the person who gets in his way, but doubly so the unfortunate who mounts him in the belief that he is an ordinary steed, for, after a fiery gallop, he will be precipitated into an abyss. In the district of Morlaix the peasants are terribly afraid of beings they call teursts. These are large, black and fearsome, like the Highland ourisk, who haunts desert moors and glens. The teursta poulict appears in the likeness of some domestic animal. In the district of Vannes is encountered a colossal spirit called Teus or Bugelnoz, who appears clothed in white between midnight and two in the morning. His office is to rescue victims from the devil and should he spread his mouth over them, they are secure from the Father of Evil. The Dusii of Gaul are mentioned by St. Augustine, who regarded them as incubi, and in the name we may perhaps discover the origin of our expression, "the deuce."

The Nain is one of the most fearsome of the dread host of Breton demons. He is black and menacing of countenance and has the claws and hoofs of the satyr. His dark elf-locks, small gleaming eyes red as carbuncles, and harsh cracked voice, are all dilated upon with fear by those who have met him on lonely heaths or unfrequented roads. He haunts the ancient dolmens built by a vanished race, dancing round them in the pale starlight to the music of a primitive refrain. The Nains are forgers of false money, which they fabricate in the recesses of caverns, and which turns to leaves or straw some hours after it enters into mortal possession. They are also regarded as the originators of a cabalistic alphabet, the letters of which are engraved on several of the megalithic monuments of Morbihan, and especially those of Gavr'inis. He who is able to decipher this magic script, says tradition, will be able to tell where hidden treasure is to be found in any part of the country. Sorcery hangs about the Nain like a garment. He is a prophet and a diviner as well as an enchanter, and as much of his magical power is employed for ill, small wonder that the Breton peasant shudders and frowns when his name is spoken.

But none of the demoniac beings of Brittany are so racy of the soil as the Crions, Courils and Gorics. Like the Nains, these smaller beings inhabit Druidic monuments or dwell beneath the foundations of ancient castles. Carnac, for example, is their especial home, and is said to have been built by them. They are also the guardians of hidden treasure, and there is a legend that



beneath one of the menhirs of Carnac lies a golden hoard and that all the other stones have been set up the better to conceal it, and so mystify those who would seek to discover its resting-place. A calculation, the key to which is to be found in the Tower of London, will alone indicate the spot where the treasure lies. The Castle of Morlaix is also haunted by Gories, who dwell beneath it, and who possess treasures as great as those of the gnomes of Norway or Germany. Even more abhorred of the peasant than any of these, however, is the Korrigan, a spirit known by her bright hair, her red eyes and laughing lips, who can enmesh the heart of the most constant swain and cause him to perish miserably for love of her.

In the last of our divisions, the Legend, Brittany has preserved a store of occult tales and happenings which might be envied by any land. Chief, perhaps, of these is the awe-inspiring story of Gilles de Retz, the friend of Joan of Arc. The tale of Gilles de Retz is, of course, not wholly legendary, although it has legendary accretions. Little inferior in interest is "The Lay of the Wer-Wolf," that work of consummate genius, wrought in jewel-like prose by Marie de France. "The Magic Rose," "The Bride of Satan," "The Castle of the Sun," and others of occult significance, overbrimming with the true wine of ancient knowledge, are all to be found in one or other of the collections alluded to at the beginning of this article.

Let us hope that in the very near future some enthusiastic worker in the occult vineyard will address himself to this rich and varied field which I have attempted to outline. I need not say that should such a one apply to me I will gladly put at his or her disposal all the sources and material I possess, so that preliminary work may be lightened.

# MYSTICISM IN RELIGION

By MEREDITH STARR

AMONG comparatively recent writers on religious psychology and mysticism, Professor William James, Miss Evelyn Underhill, and Baron Frederich von Hügel have rendered most valuable services, but it is to Baron von Hügel that the special distinction belongs of having put the mystical element in religion upon a sound philosophical and psychological basis. The widespread and increasing recognition of mysticism as a normal and healthy factor in the soul's life is predominantly due to the effect produced by his *Mystical Element in Religion*, a new and revised edition of which has just been issued.\* The absurdity and gross injustice of the doctrine advanced by Jastrow and others, who taught that genius, and particularly religious genius, was a form of pathology, is now generally admitted since the appearance of *The Mystical Element* in 1908. It is mainly with the principles formulated in this remarkable work—a rich harvest of spiritual wisdom, capable of nourishing the profoundest needs and aspirations of the soul—that I wish to deal in this article.

A large part of the work consists in an exceedingly minute and careful study of the life, friends, surroundings and doctrines of St. Catherine of Genoa, with a view to elucidating certain general laws and problems of the religious life from the particular, but representative, phases of the mystical element exemplified in St. Catherine. The ultimate conclusions arrived at contain the very pith and kernel of the religious life at its best and richest, and also show how the various excesses and errors of religion may be avoided. The magnificent synthesis finally reached by Baron von Hügel is the result of the recognition, utilization and harmonization of several conflicting tendencies, thus developing *all* spiritually fruitful powers of the soul and mind.

A principle recognized by Eliphaz Levi as having a profound magical importance is also strongly emphasized by Baron von Hügel—namely, the practice of concentrating *off* the subject with which the soul is directly concerned, the adoption of com-

\* *The Mystical Element of Religion, as studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and her Friends.* London and Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. Two volumes. Price 35s. net.

plementary and parallel studies and activities which mutually enrich each other and produce a generous multiplicity in unity instead of the narrow exclusiveness caused by an undue absorption in any one aspect of life. Science thus becomes a purifying bath for the religious temperament, while religion humanizes and spiritualizes the scientist. Baron von Hügel strongly opposes any tendency to exclusiveness and fanaticism. Indeed, he courageously affirms: "Precisely because there have been and are previous and simultaneous lesser communications of, and correspondencies with, the one 'Light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world'; because men can and do believe, according to various, relatively preliminary, degrees and ways in God and a Providence, in sin and contrition, without a knowledge of the historic Christ . . . therefore can Christ be the very centre and sole supreme manifestation and measure of all this light. Not only can Christ remain supreme, even though Moses and Elijah . . . Plato and Plotinus, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, Gautama Buddha and Rabbi Akkiba be all revered as God-loved and God-loving, as, in various amounts, truly, spiritually great: *but only thus can His central importance be fully realized.*"

Perhaps Baron von Hügel somewhat over-emphasizes the authoritative element in religion when he states: "Not that I think it, but that in addition I feel bound to think it, transforms a thought about God into a religious act." Can we not think such thoughts because we recognize them to be true, and because, being true, we love them? This very largely removes the element of compulsion and makes the act of thinking practically a free act. An action done in the spirit of love is a free act, performed with the full concurrence of the soul and the will; whereas an action instigated only by the sense of duty, authority, fear or passion, or hope of reward, is not free. Meister Eckhart and others have held that a man whose actions proceed from a devotion to moral ideas is free. Eckhart wrote: "The righteous man serveth neither God, nor the creature; for he is free, and the nearer he is to righteousness, the more he is Freedom's very self." In commenting on this passage, Dr. Steiner observes: "To act in conformity with moral ideals implies for the soul which has vision no compulsion, no deprivation . . . It may be said of the illuminated man that he is himself the being which from within itself determines what is good and what is evil." \*

\* *Mystics of the Renaissance.* By Dr. Rudolf Steiner, pp. 77-78.

A high degree of imperturbability and steadfastness of will, combined with an exalted emotional susceptibility, is common to most mystics, and we find these qualities strikingly exhibited in St. Catherine's life. She was frequently found "with her face in her hands, prostrate on the ground" . . . "These ecstasies lasted three or four hours . . . And if called during one of these trances, she would not hear, even though they did so loudly." On other occasions "she would remain as though dead for six hours; but on being called to the doing of any duty, however trifling it might be, she would instantly arise and respond and go about the doing of this her obligation." And "on arising from those trances, she seemed to feel stronger both in body and in soul." \*

One of the most extraordinary instances of religious imperturbability is the case of Blanche Gamond (persecuted as a Huguenot under Louis XIV), quoted by William James †:—

They shut all the doors [Blanche Gamond writes], and I saw six women, each with a bunch of willow rods as thick as the hand could hold, and a yard long. He gave me the order, "Undress yourself," which I did. He said, "You are leaving on your shift; you must take it off." They had so little patience that they took it off themselves, and I was naked from the waist up. They brought a cord with which they tied me to a beam in the kitchen. They drew the cord tight with all their strength and asked me, "Does it hurt you?" and then they discharged their fury upon me, exclaiming as they struck me, "Pray now to your God" . . . But at that moment I received the greatest consolation that I can ever receive in my life, since I had the honour of being whipped for the name of Christ, and in addition of being crowned with His mercy and His consolations. Why can I not write down the inconceivable influences, consolations, and peace which I felt interiorly? To understand them one must have passed by the same trial; they were so great, that I was ravished, for there where afflictions abound grace is given superabundantly. In vain the women cried, "We must double our blows; she does not feel them, for she neither speaks nor cries." And how should I have cried, since I was swooning with happiness within?

Even when faced with so remarkable an exception to the conduct of average humanity in similar circumstances, we must not fall into the error of thinking that mysticism is an exclusive faculty, limited to a chosen few who exhibit it at its zenith. The true dignity of mysticism, contends Baron von Hügel, "consists precisely in being, not everything in any one soul, but something in every soul of man." Mysticism is thus, like

\* *Vita*, p. 17b, quoted by Baron v. Hügel, p. 140.

† *Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 288-9, quoted from *Claparède et Goty: Deux Heroïnes de la Foi*, Paris, 1880, p. 112.

the capacity for heroism or goodness, an integral factor of the human soul, and is revealed by the great mystics in its most concentrated and luminous form. As Evelyn Underhill well says in the preface to her valuable *Practical Mysticism: A Little Book for Normal People*: "The spiritual life is not a special career . . . It is a part of every man's life; and until he has realized it he is not a complete human being, has not entered into possession of all his powers. It is therefore the function of a practical mysticism to increase, not diminish, the total efficiency, the wisdom and steadfastness, of those who try to practise it."

The Historic and Institutional Element (the Church and Society), the analytic and speculative element (Science and Philosophy), and finally the specifically religious or ethico-mystical element, are regarded by Baron von Hügel as elaborations of the three chief forces of the soul—namely, sensation, reason or intelligence, and the intuitive-volitional faculty—and are proven to be mutually helpful and corrective in the religious life. "A soul cannot attain to its fullest possible development," he urges, "without the vigorous specific action and differentiation of forces and functions of a not directly religious character." And again: "An all-important double law or twin fact . . . is, to some extent, present throughout all characteristically human life . . . viz., that not only there exist certain objects, acts, and affections that are simply wrong, and others that are simply right or perfect, either for all men or for some men: but that there exist simply no acts and affections which, however right, however obligatory . . . do not require, on our own part, a certain alternation of interior reserve and detachment away from, and of familiarity and attachment to, them and their objects. This general law applies as truly to Contemplation as it does to Marriage." Neither of the three elements referred to can be ignored; all three must co-operate and will then produce a rich synthesis far superior to any partial attainment. But I think it may be doubted whether the Institutional element (the Church) is strictly necessary for certain types of soul. At bottom the Institutional element is an adaptation of Society; hence it can be replaced in some individuals by the social element, together with some occupation with practical matters. The Church may be as much of a hindrance to some as it is necessary to many.

In a significant passage Baron von Hügel declares that "Spiritual Reality has now, for those who have become thoroughly awake to the great changes operated, for good and all,

in man's conception of the Physical Universe during now three centuries) to be found under, behind, across the Physical Phenomena and Laws, which both check and beckon on the mind and soul of man." Striking testimony to this affirmation is found in the works of Dr. Rudolf Steiner, who, indeed, shows how the change may be accomplished. The illumination or state of grace, hitherto associated chiefly with religious or artistic inspiration, can, when the powers of the soul are sufficiently strengthened, also reveal in the Universe some of the deeper aspects of the Supreme Reality which transcends and pervades both man and nature. But in proportion as this ideal is realized, so will the existing features of the Institutional element be found inadequate for the spiritual requirements of mankind, but in compensation the Universe itself will become a mirror of Divine Wisdom, and the soul, in contemplating this Wisdom, will experience the mystical union with the Living God.

# HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION

BY REGINALD B. SPAN

THERE is no doubt that Thought is the greatest power in the universe, since all things in all worlds—seen and unseen—were, and are, created by the power of Thought. In the spiritual world Thought constructs everything *directly*, by moulding the etheric substance to any form or pattern desired. In this world thought acts *indirectly* through the mediumship of the physical senses, and bodily muscles and organs. Thought, with Imagination as the visualizing power, and Will as the directing and controlling force, creates in this world slowly and laboriously. In the spiritual spheres the process is instantaneous, and the power of the Imagination and Will is sufficient to produce anything one may desire as soon as thought of. It is by this means that spirits construct their clothes, their houses, furniture and surroundings, which are quite as real and substantial on the etheric plane as such things are to us on this material plane. The power of Thought, especially as regards hypnotic suggestion, is not realized by the vast majority of human beings, or life on this planet would be very different to what it is. There is no greater factor for good or evil, health and disease, success or failure, than hypnotic suggestion. In every branch of life and business we may see suggestion playing a prominent part, though very few are aware of it. An eminent psychologist wrote: "*We are hypnotized by our surroundings,*" and this statement bears a profound truth, which is very evident to any thinking and observing person in great cities like London, Paris and New York. It is really extraordinary how our moods and very personality are affected by our surroundings, even in an hour's time, and shows what a wonderful and complicated thing is the human mind. Places and localities retain the thought forces or mental, moral and spiritual atmosphere of the majority of persons who frequent them. A church has its particular atmosphere which affects every one who enters, and for the time being alters their mood and personality; a music hall, bank, stock exchange, hospital, racecourse, each has its special mental and moral influence. All houses when long dwelt in by the same tenants, or owners, retain the mental, moral and spiritual atmosphere of those persons. The phenomena of many so-called haunted houses are simply due

to the akasic records of crime and any violent emotion having become materialized, and operating quite automatically, and this accounts for apparitions nearly always appearing at certain hours on certain nights and going through the same scenes to the smallest detail. If you give a subject a post-hypnotic suggestion to act in a certain way at certain times, he will continue to do this automatically, and faithful to the smallest detail, until the spell is broken by removing the influence.

Thus in a lesser degree some houses and places have a hypnotic influence on those who enter or dwell in them. It is a well-known fact that certain houses, in which people have committed suicide, or murder, prompt every new tenant to similar deeds. There is a house in St. Heliers, Jersey, where six successive tenants committed suicide, though none of them had previously had suicidal tendencies. Other houses have been noted for the number of murders and other crimes committed in them. All this is due entirely to hypnotic suggestion, which, like all other strong thought forces, is retained in the atmosphere of the place. Occultists know as a matter of fact that Thought is an actual substance. Materialized thought has been frequently photographed. We can make whatever we please of ourselves by the nature of our thoughts, and we also influence others and unconsciously help to mould the characters and natures of those we come much in contact with, for good or for evil—especially is this the case with children, whose natures are plastic and in an impressionable condition.

Every day and in every walk of life we see the effects of hypnotic suggestion, and it is generally the person with the strongest will and largest amount of magnetism who dominates his surroundings. Napoleon Bonaparte was a natural hypnotist of the highest order. Great preachers, statesmen, soldiers, and all those who sway and control their fellow men, are possessed of magnetic powers in a high degree, and are unconsciously exercising hypnotic suggestion. Those who have made a study of hypnotism and mental psychology realize to what an immense extent human beings can become the victims of illusion. An expert hypnotist can make his subjects believe anything he pleases. He may for instance suggest that a person in the room, and in close proximity to the subject, shall become invisible. The voice will be audible to the subject and he will be greatly puzzled to know from whence this voice is proceeding, as he cannot see the speaker. This person may touch or take hold of him with hands which are invisible and he will become alarmed and



think a spirit or ghost is in the room. Then with a few magnetic passes the person is rendered visible to the subject. The extraordinary power of mind over mind, and mind over matter, has been exhibited in numerous and varied ways. In a few minutes hypnotic suggestion will render a patient perfectly free from the most intense pain, and surgical operations may be performed without any unpleasant sensation. Some hypnotists are able to change a subject's personality into entirely different characters successively in quite a short time. For instance, a man of forty-five was told he was a boy of thirteen, and he at once began to talk and behave as a small boy, his voice and the expression of his face becoming entirely puerile—in fact he acted exactly as he did when he was that age. He was next told that he was a celebrated physician, and his whole nature and mien underwent another rapid transformation, and he assumed a rather pompous air, insisted on feeling the hypnotist's pulse, and after applying an imaginary stethoscope to his back, told him to say ninety-nine. The next character suggested was that of his sister, and immediately the voice became feminine and the face changed to that of a woman, and the imitation of his sister was so perfect that those in the room were convulsed with merriment.

A remarkable case was that of a lady who under hypnotic control impersonated various well-known persons such as Queen Victoria, Sir Robert Peel, and some private individuals known only to those present; and having done this in the most realistic manner, the name of a lady, who lived some miles distant, and whom the subject had never seen or heard of, was written down on a piece of paper and handed to the operator, without mentioning the name to the subject, who at once began to impersonate this lady, though the subject in her normal condition had not the slightest idea what she was like. She even gave the lady's name correctly, and the name of the house she lived in, and stated what she was doing at that time (which later was proved to be correct). In this experiment the names of the characters she had to impersonate were not told to the subject, but were written down on slips of paper and silently handed to the hypnotist.

Dr. Braid, the eminent Scotch surgeon and hypnotist, experimented largely in Phreno-hypnotism with wonderful success. His method was to press on any organ of the brain with his fingers and thus excite in his subject that faculty to action. For instance, he would place his fingers on the top of the subject's head, where lies the organ of veneration, and at

once the subject became devotional and started to pray, or otherwise exhibited religious fervour. He then pressed the organ of acquisitiveness (situated on the side of the head) and the subject displayed anxiety to annex any property she could lay her hands on, and in quite an expert fashion stole a silver matchbox from one of those present. To set this right Dr. Braid then touched the organ of "conscientiousness" (which lies next to "veneration" on the crown of the head), and the subject was all contrition, and at once returned the article to its owner with a humble apology. Braid's experiments were tried on persons who knew nothing of phrenology and therefore did not know the position on the head of the various mental organs.

Some subjects are able by a kind of clairvoyance to read passages in closed books, tell what is happening at a distance, read the thoughts of others and tell correctly the colours and numbers in a pack of playing cards. Dr. Fouquier on one occasion mesmerized a subject named Paul in two minutes by "passes." A pack of cards was then shuffled and placed before him, and whilst Dr. Fouquier kept Paul's eyes firmly closed by pressing his fingers on the eyelids, Paul turned over the cards and told correctly the colour and number of each in succession. Other subjects told the contents of sealed envelopes and closed boxes. Mr. Alfred Binet (another French psychologist) on one occasion told a lady *before* hypnotizing her that he was going to suggest an hallucination to her during the hypnosis, and that when she "awoke" she should make every effort to dispel the illusion. She was then put "under the influence" and the suggestion was given that a ten franc piece lay on the table before her. After coming to her normal state of mind she still saw the gold coin on the table (though no longer hypnotized), and persisted that it was there, though Dr. Binet assured her that it was an hallucination and no coin was, or ever had been, there. "But I can see it—I can feel it!" she exclaimed indignantly. "Surely I may believe the evidence of my senses—you are only laughing at me."

Nothing that Binet or anyone else could say, would convince her to the contrary, so at last the hypnotist said: "Well, if it *is* there, you had better pick it up and go and spend the money," and that at last showed her that it was merely an illusion.

We talk glibly about "the evidence of our senses," but is such evidence ever really reliable? Some of the most remarkable "magical feats" of the Hindoo fakirs, and wonder workers, are due entirely to illusion caused by hypnotic suggestion. Large

crowds of people, European and native, have simultaneously come under the "influence" and become victims of hallucination, though every person in those gatherings would have vowed that what he saw and heard was absolutely real.

Take for instance cases where all sorts of wild animals (some never known in India) have been produced on a bare grassy plain before a large assemblage of British soldiers and natives who saw and heard these creatures as plainly (so they imagined) as they had ever seen or heard anything before, and were filled with amazement and awe. As a matter of fact there was nothing there at all, and this was conclusively proved by the photographic camera, as no wild animals appeared on the developed plates. The famous rope climbing trick and basket trick are due to the same hypnotic illusion. There are, however, other feats performed by the Oriental adepts which cannot be placed in this category, and are certainly due to "magic" (i.e. Nature's occult forces).

Hypnotized subjects (like dreamers and somnambulists) have no idea of the passage of time. They may be under the influence a few seconds and imagine that hours have elapsed. The hypnotic sleep is always produced with difficulty in new subjects, and the oftener hypnotic experiments are made the quicker does hypnosis occur, until a single gesture is sufficient to send a subject off. At first it generally takes ten minutes or more to induce sleep, but this period of time is later reduced to a few seconds. There are various ways of producing hypnosis, and each hypnotist has his favourite method. Dr. Braid used some bright gleaming object on which to focus the attention of his subjects, holding it at such a height and angle above the eyes so as to cause considerable strain on the optic nerves. Professor Richet's method was to exert a strong pressure on the subject's thumbs for two or three minutes and then make a few passes over the head and shoulders in a downward direction. Mesmer fixed his gaze on the patient's eyes and made passes over the forehead. Heidenhaim would leave his subject seated by himself, telling him that if he closed his eyes, relaxed his muscles, and as far as possible thought of vacancy, he would pass into hypnosis and on returning in a few minutes would generally find that this had occurred. Heidenhaim declared (contrary to the general opinion) that people can be hypnotized against their will, and stated that as an experiment he hypnotized soldiers in the presence of their officers who had forbidden them to "sleep." It is impossible to hypnotize idiots or those mentally defective, as there is no brain to work on, and the attention cannot be held or focussed on any-

thing. The popular idea that persons who are easily mesmerized are weak willed is quite erroneous. Excitable people are generally the worst subjects for hypnosis as the brain cannot be rendered sufficiently quiescent and passive. Calm impressionable imaginative people are the most susceptible. Professor Richet considers that the large majority of people are amenable to hypnotic suggestion and that no one is absolutely insensible to magnetism.

Colonel de Rochas (the eminent French savant), in a series of experiments extending over several years, succeeded in so deepening the hypnotic sleep in his subjects, from one stage of insensibility to another, that he sent them back through various periods of their lives to their infancy, *and even* (as he claimed) *beyond that!* An old man of sixty-five went back to middle age, then by degrees to young manhood, then to youth, boyhood and infancy; and told Colonel de Rochas perfectly correctly the whole course of his life. He saw and described his birth and gave names of those present, which in his normal condition he was ignorant of. Then after a long pause he spoke in a different voice and gave another name and described his death in a former life, and by degrees he described his surroundings and the principal events of that life. Colonel de Rochas took notes of all that was told him, and later made exhaustive inquiries, and discovered that a man of the name given had lived and died at the village which was named (in another part of France), and that the particulars of his life, as far as was known, were correct. What are we to think of such cases as this? If true, they conclusively prove the truth and reality of the theory of previous existence, or re-incarnation. But so marvellous are the workings and complexities of the human mind, especially as regards the sub-consciousness, that it is difficult to arrive at a definite opinion. Colonel de Rochas always made certain that the hypnotic sleep was perfectly genuine in his subjects, so that trickery and an inventive imagination were out of the question.

It is an undoubted fact that a person in the hypnotic sleep can be induced to reveal every secret of his past life, as well as all the principal events. A cousin of the writer's once hypnotized a lady (a stranger to him) on board a P. & O. steamer, and when in a state of hypnosis she became very talkative and communicative (without any suggestion from the hypnotist), and the result was a hurried exit from the saloon of the feminine portion of the community, followed later by the gentlemen, whilst my cousin (who was quite an amateur in the art of hypnotism) was making frantic efforts to bring her to, and stop her in-

discreet confidences and surprising revelations. Eventually he succeeded, and the lady was somewhat surprised to find a deserted saloon, and still more astonished at her reception the next day.

This is an instance of unpleasant results following the practice of hypnotism by amateurs. The expert hypnotist can bring a subject out of the "sleep" in a few seconds at any time. The usual methods for inducing hypnosis are :

(1) Downward passes over the face and body, but without contact.

(2) Staring into the eyes of the subject till the eyelids drop and close.

(3) Stroking the face and hands with the finger tips, especially the forehead and around the eyes.

(4) Holding a watch near his head and telling him to listen to the ticking.

(5) Inducing the subject to fix his eyes on a bright or gleaming object held slightly above the eyes, till they close.

(6) Giving the subject an article to hold which he has been told has been magnetized, and the drinking of magnetized water.

The hypnotic state is dispelled (1) by saying in a commanding voice : " All right ! Wake up ! "

(2) By blowing on the eyelids.

(3) By sprinkling cold water on the face, and

(4) By telling the subject to " Awake in ten minutes," or any duration of time you please.

By an expert operator the hypnotic condition can be produced and ended in a minute or two, during which short period a post-hypnotic suggestion may be given, which will be carried into effect at any time by the subject after returning to the normal condition. The power of suggestion really lies more in the subject than in the hypnotist. This is shown by the fact that an operator may tell a " sensitive " that at a certain time he will hypnotize him, though miles away. At the fixed time the subject falls into the hypnotic sleep though the operator is not even thinking of him. The whole power in hypnotism lies in the art of suggestion—*of working on the imagination of the subject*. The writer has in a few minutes rendered a person's hand and arm stiff and immovable by simply asking the sensitive to hold a folded piece of paper in the hand on which he had written a few words. There is indeed no end to the power of hypnotic suggestion and the uses which may be made of it for good or for evil, but woe to those who abuse this power for evil purposes or the injury of others.

## TWO INDIAN GHOST STORIES

By GRAHAME HOUBLON \*

“WELL, I’ve seen a ghost panther, if that’s any use.’

We had been talking about ghosts, in which, as usual, very few of the party owned to believing, which somehow had not prevented them from telling some very eerie tales, and some screamingly funny “rational” explanations.

“Huh!” said the man who suffered most from “common” sense. “You saw a real one. They can vanish like a shadow.”

“Tell me something I don’t know. But this one stayed long enough for me to shoot at it.”

“You missed it, you duffer, and of course it had bolted by the time you were able to look.”

“Shut up, Chose,” said the medicine man, who had told no story. “Let’s hear about your ghost panther, H——. You should know something about live ones, anyway.”

“All right, and if Chose utters the dreary old chesnut about what I had had to drink, make him stand drinks all round, except to me. He knows quite well that I am a teetotaller. I don’t think any of you know Paratwada. It’s a jungly little place in Central India, and infested with panthers. One moonlight night I went out after one, a well known nuisance, close to the station, to sit over his latest kill, a big calf, which he had left a little way out in an open field: the beggar was as bold as brass. There was a big nullah, overgrown with jungle at the edge of the field with some big trees, up one of which I sat on a machan, about 9 or 10 feet from the ground, and possibly 10 yards from the kill. The moon was full, so I could see perfectly well, and with night sights could make certain of anything standing still within fair night range, that is up to a score of yards. I made myself comfortable with rugs and cushions, and settled down for the night, or till the panther turned up.

“Did I doze? certainly: I always do, but the slightest sound always rouses me to complete wakefulness on the spot. I was roused thus twice: once by a hare, lolloping along the edge of the field; and once by a hyena, who seemed to want the reversion of

\* This record, apart from the names given, is vouched for as *bona fide*, and seems sufficiently unique to merit insertion.—ED.

the panther's dinner. What he actually got was a stone in his ribs.

"Presently I was aroused a third time. I looked round without moving, but could see nothing, except the remains of the calf. Then it occurred to me to look straight down, and I saw what had roused me, a big panther crouching on a slope exactly under me, which led up from the nullah to the field. He was more or less in shadow, but there were patches of moonlight on his hide, and his head and the end of his tail were just out of the shadow. Evidently he was reconnoitring before going out to dine. I remember specially noticing the tip of his tail twitching sideways in the moonlight. Cats can't keep their tails still any more than dogs.

"Of course I did not shoot at once: even very old hands are apt to shake a bit with excitement when their quarry first appears: so, while letting myself quiet down, I watched him, getting my rifle slowly forward, till I got on to his withers, straight down, the muzzle a bare two yards from his back, a shot that meant certain and instantaneous death. Then, just as I knew I was perfectly steady, I saw him look back, as they always do before moving, and I fired.

"A miss at that range was impossible, and a hit meant certain death. Congratulating myself on having rid the neighbouring villagers of their pest, as I slipped a fresh cartridge in, I looked down and saw—nothing. There was nothing at all where I had seen the panther as plainly as I see all of you, and what is more, on examining the ground carefully with a lantern, I found no track of a panther anywhere in the dust and sand. If that was not a ghost panther, I give it up."

"You were dreaming," suggested the irrepressible Chose.

"Shut up, Chose, you ass," said the medicine man, repeating himself. "An old hunter like H—— doesn't shoot at dreams, and he couldn't have missed; even you couldn't have. Well, I've not told one yet; perhaps you will say it was a dream too. You know Fatehpur, about 50 miles from Lahore, most of you, and I expect you know the blue bungalow opposite the cricket ground."

"You mean the one said to be haunted?" queried another man.

"Yes, only it isn't haunted now. Did any of you know Webster of the Canal Department?"

"The man who died of cholera on the Sirhind Canal about two years ago?"

"That's the man. He had come into Fatehpur near the end of the cold weather, and thought himself rather lucky, as the

station was still full, to get the blue bungalow cheap. As a matter of fact, the owner was glad to get a tenant at any price. But on the day after his arrival, his bearer asked him for two rupees, and on being asked why, said it was for food for the devil in the peepul tree, the only tree of any size in the compound, which stood close to the house, its branches actually touching the veranda roof. Of course Webster said he wasn't going to grub-stake any devil, but asked for details, and was told that if food was not placed at the roots of the tree at dark, the devil who lived in it would throw stones at the house.

“ ‘Then why didn't it throw stones last night?’ he asked.

“ ‘Your honour was tired,’ replied his servant, ‘so I provided the food myself.’

“ ‘Oh, rubbish!’ said Webster. ‘It must be a Hindu ghost, and a good Mussulman like you can't be afraid of that.’

“ ‘I am not afraid, Sahib, at least, not very much. But most of your honour's servants are Hindus. Also, the trouble is in the bungalow, where it will disturb your honour, not the servant folk.’

“ ‘I'll take my chance of that. It's only a lazy devil, I expect, who finds devilling an easy way of getting a living.’

“ So it went at that, and Webster did not think of it again till after dinner, when he was busy on some belated correspondence. Then suddenly, without warning, something, which proved to be a large brickbat, landed with a bang on his table, knocking over the inkpot, among other things. He ran out in a tearing rage, but there was not a soul about. Then, as he paused for a moment in the veranda, there was a regular avalanche of stones all round him, apparently from the tree, none of them, however, hitting him. I may say that from first to last he never was hit.

“ He ran to the tree, looked up it and round it, but saw no one, and while he was looking, another fusilade of stones fell on the house and in the veranda. He called Shaik Nubbee, and, with some violence, asked him who was throwing stones. Shaik Nubbee looked uneasily at the tree, muttering that he did not know, and Webster sent him for the sweeper to clear up the litter. But the sweeper was not going near the haunted tree by night at any price, and sent back word that he had gone to the bazaar, and Shaik Nubbee mildly suggested that it was not too late to put down some food, getting a ferocious snubbing for his pains. Then Webster went back, as he hoped, to his work, but did none that night, and got very little sleep either. The bombardment went on at frequent intervals all night, a considerable



proportion of the stones finding their way in through the windows, some even landing on his bed. I call them stones, but of course, this being the Punjab, there were no stones much, and they were mostly brickbats and chunks of hard mud.

‘Next day he went to the policeman, and began to tell his tale.

“‘Oh, you’ve got the blue bungalow opposite the cricket ground,’ replied the D.S.P. ‘You’re the fifth chap who’s been to me about that devil tamasha. It’s no go: you’d better stump up the two dibs. You’ll find it cheap at the price.’

“‘But hang it all!’ said Webster, ‘there’s nothing about devils in the Penal Code. It’s some blighter buzzing rocks from some compound close by, and it’s your job to pinch him.’

“‘Yes, if he’s pinchable. I don’t know what it is, but I do know that I have had that compound surrounded, not only by my men, but by a lot of chaps from the club as well, and we searched every compound all round, and made sure there was no one who could chuck rocks about, and we absolutely lined the wall of yours. But the stone throwing went on merrily all the time.’

“‘Couldn’t you see where they came from?’

“‘The tree. We saw them plain enough flying between the tree and the house, but not a sign of one on the side of the tree away from the house, or on the other side of the house itself, unless one came over by accident. No, there was no one up the tree, except myself, and my being up it made no difference.’

“The stone throwing went on, almost as much by day, in the heat of the afternoon, as at night, and Webster stood it for three days. Then he gave in, as his servants were showing signs of panic, paid up, and had peace. The food was put in place, he saw to that personally, and by daylight it was always gone. He watched several times to see it go, but never saw anything, not even when he remained awake in the veranda all through the night. Whatever it was took the food, managed to get away with it somehow, right under his nose, without his seeing it. However, the stone throwing nuisance ceased, which was the important point, and he was able to sleep and get his work done. As the policeman had said, it was cheap at the price.

“Webster was a decent chap, and sound at his job, but in ordinary affairs he was rather one of those chaps who let themselves be led by anyone who makes noise enough. Some idiots at the club started chaffing him and badgered him so, jeering at him for believing in such rot, as they called it, and telling him to cut the tree down and not chuck his hard-earned dibs about, that at last he was idiot enough himself to stop the payments,

and tell Shaik Nubbee to get a wood-cutter from the bazaar to cut the tree down. The result was that the tree devil let him have it in the neck, and the wood-cutter, on hearing what was required of him, refused point blank to touch the tree, and not another wood-cutter would come near the place, now they knew what he wanted. Meanwhile, the stone throwing went on, worse than ever, and soon there was trouble among his servants.

"A few days later, when coming home in the evening from a ride, he overtook three men, obviously travelling wood-cutters, with all the paraphernalia of their trade. On an inspiration he asked them if they knew Fatehpur, and on their saying that they had never been there before, asked them if they wanted a job. They said they did, so he took them there and then to his bungalow, and within an hour the devil tree was down. There was no stone throwing that night, nor has there been any there since."

"That settled your old devil, any way," said Chose.

"I wonder if it did. Two things happened next morning. One was that Webster got orders to go at once and see to some damage on the Sirhind Canal at the place where he eventually died. The other was that the two elder wood-cutters, it seems that they were brothers, went to the police and gave themselves up for killing the youngest brother in his sleep that night, for which they were eventually hanged. They said at their trial that they had no motive for doing so, that they were devoted to their brother—it was proved that they were an unusually united family—and that they were horror-struck at what they had done, which they said, they had been forced to do by the tree devil. They stuck to this story, too, right up to the end."

"And then, I suppose, the tree devil gave Webster cholera?"

"There are more things, etc., Chose, old man, especially in India. It was called cholera, but he had been in his grave a day and a half before the nearest doctor was able to get to him. When the doctor did arrive, Shaik Nubbee and his other servants told him positively that it was not cholera or fever, or any disease they had ever seen or heard of, but they told him that Webster had died raving mad, and gave a lot of quite unrepeatable details, adding that they were quite sure that the tree devil had killed him for cutting down the tree. The details they gave, if they were telling the truth, and the doctor was convinced that they were, were quite unlike anything he had ever heard of."

"They must have been pretty bad, then. How do you know?"

"Because I happen to be the doctor in question."

## 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.]

### THE OSCAR WILDE SCRIPT.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to Mr. C. W. Soal's letter, may I say that my proofs had gone to press before I read his interesting and able article in *Psychic Science*. As he has called my attention to this article, I feel sure that he will be glad to know that there is a misquotation in it. In the "(T.S. 5b) script" he gives us to understand that there appeared the phrase "'beautiful water' near Glencree." This phrase did not appear in that particular script, the original of which happens to be in Mrs. Travers Smith's possession. This shows (if I may quote Mr. Soal) "how fatally easy it is in psychic research to draw far-reaching and unsound conclusions" when, as in Mr. Soal's case, the investigator has obviously trusted to his memory of the script and produced this phrase from his own subconscious mind.

In his letter he states that he has not been able to verify the incident of "The Pensive Salmon." The description of this incident was obtained by Mr. V. when writing in conjunction with Mrs. L. I will quote from the article by Mr. C. W. Soal published in *Psychic Science*: "We asked 'Wilde' to try to recall other incidents connected with his stay at Glencree. He wrote: 'I remember we fished near there in a lake where there were lordly, pensive-looking salmon.'" There is one small lake called Lough Bray near Glencree, and it is fed by a mountain stream. The incident related in the script could not have occurred, as there is no salmon fishing in the neighbourhood. In any case it is scarcely conceivable that 'lordly, pensive-looking salmon' would inhabit an inland tarn which has no approach from the sea.

Mr. Soal informs me that it was not necessary "to go to Ireland or indeed any further than the appendix of Thurston Hopkins' *Oscar Wilde*, or to Stuart Mason's *Bibliography of Oscar Wilde*," in order to discover the details relating to Father Fox which were communicated at a sitting. It is true that when my article was published I had no verification of the Glencree incident excepting the one received from the Reformatory School, and none of the story of Walter Pater. The reason was that Mrs. Travers Smith, not having any particular interest in Wilde, had never read a life of him, nor had I, previous to the reception of this script. The only book she read on the subject before writing the analysis of the scripts (which is just published) was

Sherard's *Real Oscar Wilde*. She asked me also to keep my mind free from any information on the subject as I acted as recorder for her ouija sittings. The question that arises is, Had Mr. V. this information in his mind before the sittings? Certainly Mrs. Travers Smith was not cognisant of it. Mr. V. gave me to understand that these facts were unknown to him. If his mind was clear of this information the subconscious theory could not account entirely for these scripts, which contained, in that case, information outside the knowledge of either medium. This being so, the case must obviously be attributed to cryptesthesia or the spiritist explanation.

Mr. C. W. Soal states that he can reproduce, "blindfold, memorized but previously unpractised passages in imitation of Wilde's handwriting" at the rate of 1,000 words in an hour. Unfortunately, no specimen of these "imitations" has been reproduced in conjunction with his letter in the OCCULT REVIEW. Neither the public nor I are therefore in a position to judge as to whether these "imitations" do, in any way, resemble Oscar Wilde's writing. It is very difficult for any individual, however able, to criticize the appearance and character of any particular writing produced by himself.

In his letter Mr. C. W. Soal deals with the question of the value of style considered as evidence of survival. He suggests that the sceptic may retort "that the supposed mediums memorize their effusions and come ready primed to the sitting." This objection can be overcome in at least one particular instance in which automatic script in the Wilde style was produced with abnormal rapidity, when Mrs. Travers Smith was sitting alone at the ouija board. The circumstances were as follows.

We went together to see a performance of Wilde's play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, at the Haymarket Theatre. The following morning a long criticism of the production was spelt out at the ouija board through Mrs. Travers Smith's hand. It purported to come from Oscar Wilde, who stated he had used the eyes of the medium to see his play. The communication came at a more rapid rate than that mentioned by Mr. C. W. Soal, i.e. 1,020 words in an hour. It was published in the *Sunday Express*, and people who had known Oscar Wilde stated that it was in his characteristic style. Could the average writer successfully parody Wilde's style, write a long and comprehensive criticism of the acting and production of a play at the rate of between sixty and seventy words a minute? It may be suggested that Mrs. Travers Smith laboriously composed and memorized this parody during the night. But this was impossible unless she had done so in her sleep.

In Mr. C. W. Soal's article in *Psychic Science* he seems rather inclined to believe that "Oscar Wilde" may have been communicating a series of messages through these mediums. For he exhausts every other possible explanation. He does not of course allude to the ouija board script. He writes:—

One thing becomes increasingly clear after a study of facts like the ones we have just given. It becomes less and less possible to explain the case by supposing that Mr. V. has, at some time or other, casually dipped into some Life of Oscar Wilde, garnered a few facts into the storehouse of his subconscious mind and then, after an interval of years, reproduced them by automatism. The thing is too systematic for such an explanation; its ramifications run too deep and are spread over too wide an area. To make such a theory tenable we should have to assume that Mr. V. had, "by accident," opened all sorts of out-of-the-way memoirs and reminiscences at just those pages where Oscar Wilde is mentioned.

Again, I would deny that any person could produce such imitations of Oscar Wilde's literary style merely as a result of reading the two prose works *De Profundis* and *Dorian Gray*. No one could have written the second half of T.S. 4 who had not steeped himself in *Intentions*, for some passages of this script breathe the atmosphere of the "Critic as an Artist." They are redolent of its languid moods.

Again, I do not think the hypothesis of unconscious fraud is tenable in Mr. V.'s case. In ordinary life he does not show any of the idiosyncrasies of the mediumistic temperament. Apart from his production of the O.W. script, he has never had a psychic experience in his life. He has never had a premonitory vision. He has never received a telepathic impression. He has no fits of abstraction. He has no periods of nervous instability. He could not afford to have them. His profession is too exacting. He is far too busy. That he could have prowled about libraries in a state of semi-trance is inconceivable to me.

As Mr. V. does "not show any of the idiosyncrasies of the mediumistic temperament," and apart from the "Oscar Wilde" productions "has never had a psychic experience in his life," it would appear from this and from the general trend of Mr. C. W. Soal's article that he does not believe even in the latest hypothesis, that cryptesthetic power on the part of Mr. V. explains this curious script. Mrs. Travers Smith is, however, more sceptical than either Mr. C. W. Soal or myself, for she feels that this case may possibly be covered by Professor Richet's theory of Cryptesthesia. The opinion of a highly-experienced medium is valuable—perhaps quite as valuable as that of as able an investigator as Mr. C. W. Soal, because the latter has not had the advantage of being present at any of the numerous sittings held at Mrs. Travers Smith's house for this automatic script.

Possibly Mrs. Travers Smith is right in conjecturing that cryptesthesia may explain the production of all the published automatic script. But I now feel that what is most evidential has not yet been published. The three-act play, which is being communicated through the ouija board, from what purports to be Oscar Wilde, is to my mind more convincing as evidence of the survival of a very remarkable personality than any of the previous automatic script received.

A number of years ago I wrote plays in collaboration with a friend which were produced at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. So I have some little knowledge of the difficulties of such composition. It must be remembered that in this particular case the medium has not the

written page before her, and I have not let her read any of the script recorded by me for fear her subconscious mind might affect the next sitting held for it. So she has only a vague impression of this play.

I am not so much impressed by the epigrammatic quality of "The Extraordinary Play" as by the fact that "Wilde" cannot get away from his period or the fashions of his period and seems quite unable to introduce the modern technique of the stage into this production. The old defects in his dramas reappear in the new script. I am also greatly impressed by the third act, in which a picture of the future state is presented. It is to me a completely novel view of "the other side" (if there is another side?). So far as I know, it does not resemble any of the numerous conceptions of a future state, which have in the past been formulated by man either normally or inspirationally.

Mr. Soal may very rightly retort that he cannot criticize this new automatic production as he has not read it. But I hope that at some future date he will be in a position to examine it. For his exhaustive analysis of the smaller portion of this curious case in *Psychic Science* is extremely interesting and instructive.

Yours truly,

G. D. CUMMINS.

### THE TRAGEDY OF ROSE HALL, JAMAICA.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—In the OCCULT REVIEW for April, I read an interesting communication entitled "Haunted House in Jamaica." The writer, Miss G. G. de Montmorency, asked for further particulars, should any be available, and as I happen to be in possession of some details concerning Rose Hall, St. James, the house in question, I have pleasure in supplying these. My information, however, does not touch upon the alleged "hauntings" of the mansion in question; it concerns the previous history of the occupants, particularly of Mrs. Ann Palmer, the notorious lady whose lurid life and frightful death at the hands of one of her evil associates no doubt gave rise to the eerie tales alluded to by Miss de Montmorency.

What I have to tell is derived from a book of Parish Chronicles which came direct to me from a friend in Jamaica. It is entitled *In Old St. James*, and is compiled by Mr. Joseph Shore, and revised by the late Mr. John Stewart, former editor of the *Kingston Daily Telegraph* (Jamaica). Mr. Shore had a passion for rummaging among old letters and documents and collecting facts about the history of the district and the lives of persons formerly connected with it. In parenthesis, referring to the Arawaks, the aboriginal inhabitants, he says :

The tradition was accepted in Jamaica that the Arawaks, like the American Indians, believed in a future state, and it has been said, their heaven was the happier hunting grounds to which their spirits travelled.

Their dead were not buried in the ground, but placed in caves with the openings uncovered, so that there might be no obstruction to the spirits sallying forth, and a supply of food and water was always placed beside the body for sustenance on the journey to the happy hunting grounds. The food and water were placed in vessels of pottery, usually finely ornamented, called "Yabbas."

To turn from this digression, which suggests ancient Egypt and possibly Atlantis, to the mystery of Rose Hall, there can be no doubt there is confusion of identity between the first and last *châtelaines* who lived there: its first mistress, Mrs. Rosa Palmer, who died in 1790, as her mural tablet testifies, was conspicuous for her many virtues and her four successive husbands; and the last, a certain Mrs. Ann Palmer, who died a violent death in 1833, conspicuous only for odious cruelties, and was regarded by her negroes as an "obeah" woman, an adept in the "Black Art."

Near the high-altar of the parish church of St. James, Montego Bay, there is a fine mural memorial, by Bacon, to "Mrs. Rosa Palmer," to which I have just alluded, whom posterity has persistently confounded with Ann. This wretched woman's body was buried by neighbouring planters in the grounds of Rose Hall, for the terrified negroes refused to go near her remains. It was after the death of Ann Palmer in 1833 that this ill-fated mansion, which had been for long falling into decay, became almost uninhabitable. Mr. Shore thoroughly disentangles the confusion of identity regarding Rosa and Ann Palmer and their respective monuments and burial places, and devotes two chapters of his book to "The Legend of Rose Hall," and "The True Tale of Rose Hall." It is curious that anyone should have taken the trouble to belaud Mrs. Ann Palmer after her death, but the tablet speaks of her excellences in all the relations of life and the "long illness" she bore with "Christian fortitude"! Possibly it was with a view to propitiate the spirit of the dreaded "obeah woman," whose curse after death would be feared even more than before it. Only this can explain the grotesque inscription in regard to her on the effigy or bust of which Miss de Montmorency relates the curious superstition concerning supposed "bluish marks on the throat" recurrent on each anniversary of Ann Palmer's murder. Long before this event she had been shunned by every white person in her neighbourhood for many miles round, and no one seems to know what became of her husband. It was said that he fled: "only just in time," and that the deserted Ann used to walk up and down the long corridors of Rose Hall heaping maledictions upon him, to the horror of the trembling negroes who overheard her.

A few words about the beginnings of Rose Hall. In January, 1746, one Henry Fanning, of St. Catherine, bought the 290 acres of caneland, bounded on the north by the sea, for the sum of three thousand pounds. Shortly afterwards he married Rosa Kelly, "a sweet and attractive Irish girl," daughter of the Rev. John Kelly, rector of St. Elizabeth's,

Jamaica. Henry Fanning had intended to build and found a home, but fate decreed otherwise. He died in a few months, and his young widow soon married a planter by name George Ash, who carried out the idea of his predecessor and built the "palatial mansion of Rose Hall." It cost the sum of thirty thousand pounds, in those days a vast fortune. Its floors and stairs, wainscoting and ceilings, doors and windows, were of mahogany, cedar, rosewood, ebony, orange, and other native hardwoods of various colours. Spacious piazzas and corridors ran round the house above and below, and the front door was reached by "a very elegant double flight of stone steps." But George Ash too was early gathered to his fathers, and two gentlemen in succession, the Hon. Norwood Witter and the Hon. John Palmer, married the attractive and virtuous Rosa. "With this last husband," says Mr. Shore, "she took the name by which she is known to posterity, and by which her character, cleared of the unkindly blots of tradition, should yet be known to fame."

In time Rosa too died, and her devoted husband John Palmer raised to her memory the beautiful monument by Bacon. Unable, however, to bear the solitude of his home, he married again, and soon afterwards he himself died, and Rose Hall eventually passed into the possession of his grand-nephew, John Rose Palmer. In 1820 the marriage is recorded at St. James of this John Rose Palmer and a lady of unknown antecedents named Annie Mary Paterson. "In the wife of John Rose Palmer," says Mr. Shore, "we find the Mrs. Ann Palmer, the principal in the mystery of Rose Hall and the last victim in its ghastly tragedy."

Writing as recently as 1911 Mr. Joseph Shore states that Rose Hall and other properties "have been acquired by the Northern Estates Company, Limited, a company formed to establish a central sugar factory in the district. . . . The factory buildings are being erected at Palmer Gate—the old entrance to the avenue leading to the mansion of Rose Hall—the old mansion is being restored, and though it cannot be expected to regain its original splendour, it will not be allowed to go to ruins, but will look down on the new factory embodying the improvements that have evolved in the century and a half since the building of the house."

I possess a small water-colour painting of Rose Hall, done specially by an artist on the spot, which helps to reveal some of the bygone splendour of that house of mystery and terror.

Yours faithfully,

EDITH K. HARPER.

### THE CAUSES OF EARTHQUAKE PHENOMENA.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—I notice some remarks of much interest in your Notes of the Month about the geological evidence of the sea-floor having



been at one time dry land exposed to the air, and in the nature of vitreous and friable lava preserved from decomposition by submersion. The existence of lava on the sea-floor would appear to argue that the material belonged originally to a volcanic area. Of such nature was the island of Krakatoa, a volcanic island in the Strait of Sunda, which went down with "all on board" on the 26th August, 1883, no fewer than thirty-five thousand persons perishing by this incident. I think there can be little doubt that when the earth was in an alluvial stage, or possibly earlier still in the igneous stage, there must have been a deposit of various elements according to their specific gravities, and consequently we should expect to find uranium (from which we derive radium) in the centre of the earth, and this would probably account for the internal fires which are continually causing earthquakes. The mythology of Neptune, on the other hand, would appear to support the idea that it has much to do with earthquakes, while it is a fact that some of the more recent great earthquakes have happened at, or immediately after, the conjunctions and oppositions of the planets Mars and Neptune, remarkable examples being the disastrous convulsion in Kwan-su (N.W. China) and that at Tokyo, both of which show Mars and Neptune in conjunction. When the solidarity of the solar system is established as a fact instead of being held as a convenient theory, we may learn something of the real cause of seismic phenomena. One would have thought that the discovery of Neptune by perturbations of Uranus, and of Uranus by perturbations of Saturn, would have opened the eyes of astronomers to the fact of interplanetary action.

Yours faithfully,  
W. GORNOLD.

## PERIODICAL LITERATURE

PROF. S. RADHAKRISHNAN, writing in the new issue of *THE QUEST*, applies to the Vedic seers the great lines of Coleridge which speak of those who were "the first that ever burst into that silent sea." But the *personæ* of the poet were mariners and their sea encompassed the pole, not the *vastissimum divinitatis pelagus*, the waters of understanding, the silent sea of the "Supreme Beyond." The essay under notice is on the Hindu Idea of God, and though divided into several sections it may be regarded for our purpose as falling into two parts, that which belongs to deep inward realization and that which is external, of theology and its doctrine. The character of the one is that it is universal, being common to mystical experience, but the other is particular, the official formulæ of a great religion in the eastern world, and all of logic and metaphysics which lies behind it. It is an essay of value, as is anything that offers the matter of a better, clearer understanding between East and West, whether in relation or distinction. There is distinction enough in doctrine, as in religious practice; but as to the inward relation there is communion between East and West, and no essay, within the same limits as to length and presentation, has brought out this truth more certainly than that of Prof. Radhakrishnan. At times it is like the voice of him who assumed the name of Dionysius, and to expound the deep intimations of Vedic saints the saints of Christ and western mystical philosophers are drawn in and bear their witness naturally, though all unknowing, to the findings of Upanishads and Puranas. It follows that as there is one truth in one Divine Experience, so in its records there is one testimony which no one can miss, though the draperies of language differ: those in Cathay and beyond it need not come to us, and we are not called to travel: it is all at our doors and theirs.

The Rev. R. J. Brown speaks also, in another manner and on a very different theme, of that note which is "deepest and most persistent" in the thought of our own as in that of every time: it tells of experiences beginning in the soul of man and leading it on to Knowledge, the Knowledge that it is not alone. It is the soul's own testimony to the Eternal Presence; and the fact that it is so casual, so uncertain and intermittent arises from another fact, which is our inattention. Perhaps, each in our own manner, and far or not removed from its doctrinal environment, we have only to remember the practice of the Presence of God according to Brother Laurence, and we shall begin to know something more concerning this deep and persistent note. . . . Most readers will be surprised at first sight by Prof. Caldecott's suggestion of a "mystical element" in Bishop Butler, of the immortal ANALOGY; but Mr. Brown's note of the Presence

is not removed from the "Intuitional or Transcendental Reason" of Prof. Caldecott's captivating study, which commands our whole agreement. It recognizes in Butler a "dependence upon inner light," upon "a higher Rationalism," a "Transcendentalism as opposed to Empiricism," as a Voice speaking within. The evidence is in Butler's sermons, rather than in the more famous work; and there is no need to say that the Voice is that of the Presence, of the great Companion, whereunto Mr. Brown refers; it is part of that witness to truth in unity which brings forth the same testimony of deep inward experience in East and West, and enables our eastern writer to express the findings of Vedic seers in the terms of St. Hilary. Again it is our good friend William Kingsland's witness—elsewhere in *THE QUEST*—to "the Deeper Life," a contribution in metrical form, which says that Life is neither this nor that, but All, and that "ALL IS ONE LIFE." And what is his realization of "a self that lies deeper than sense" but a practice of the presence of that God Who dwells within us "in a fathomless ocean of Love"?

Mr. G. R. S. Mead completes in this issue the first series of his Mandæan studies with some "specimen extracts" from the *JOHN-BOOK* concerning the Good Shepherd and the Treasury of Life, the beginning of things and the Exaltation of the Poor. He has gone so far as "the documents made accessible in German" by Professor Lidzbarski have enabled him to do. We learn with regret that financial conditions in Germany make further printing impossible at the present time; but Mr. Mead has not reached the end of all possible resources and he promises in the next issue "a study of some recently discovered material," being an account of the Baptist and Jesus by the "Slavonic Josephus." . . . We should like to express in conclusion our complete agreement with the editor of *THE QUEST* as to the extraordinary, though at present inextricable, significance of the Taoist Alchemical Legends translated by Pfizmaier into German from Chinese and here rendered into English. It is a second and final series of selections. As it is said in a prefatory note, "the whole subject will have to be critically and methodically studied . . . before we are in a position to form a reasonable opinion . . . with regard to so fantastic a tradition."

Dr. A. J. Brock explains in *THE HIBBERT JOURNAL* his theory of Dreams and Folklore, in connection with "our present spiritual distress," dwelling on the fact that people are prone to speak of life "becoming a nightmare" and of "an evil fate" which seems to pursue them. These sayings in his view are by no means mere metaphor, and if this is the kind of thing which we take with us into sleep it is easy to explain our nightmares. On the other hand, when daily tasks bring satisfaction in the doing, when we are filling with a certain success a willing and perhaps self-assumed part in life's activities, Dr. Brock considers that here is "the best condition for inducing that sleep of the just," in which "angel faces smile." The primitive man

had experiences of both kinds, and for him they took visible shapes, not only in dreams but also in daily reveries. Here is a ready and fairly plausible way of accounting all the wide world over for the multitudinous hierarchies of elves, fairies, goblins, demons and nature spirits, including those dwellers in the elements which Paracelsus derived from primitive Teutonic beliefs and which were destined, under his auspices, to play a curious part in occult and magical dreams throughout the seventeenth century. Dr. Brock, however, is concerned more especially with a kind of *philosophia sagax*, as Paracelsus would have termed it, a primitive shrewdness which everywhere taught by experience the primitive peoples that their content, success, welfare depended on the spirit in which things were done, the housewife's work in the homestead, that of the shepherd and ploughman, wood-cutter, miner, sea-folk. It is this essential spirit which came to be "symbolized" or rather personified in Lares and Penates, Brownies and Robin Goodfellows, all the household sprites, but also in Dryads, and Undines, Gnome and Glaistic. They were favourable to those who worked well and loyally, to the clean and thrifty, who—in a word—behaved themselves, whatever they did; but they were enemies of the careless and slovenly, of dirt and idleness. Dr. Brock endeavours to draw a morality out of his pleasant speculation, recommending us to face our problems in the right spirit, that we may have done with our "modern nightmares" and thus earn the goodwill of the *Genius Loci*, on which the primitive mind allegorized and which is not for us less real because it is not personified.

Mr. W. R. Bousfield, F.R.S., calls back to our remembrance an article on Telepathy in THE HIBBERT JOURNAL, which turned the tables neatly on Freud and his followers, who have "demonstrated that the reception or rejection of evidence . . . on any disputable theme depends chiefly" on what is termed "mental constellation," otherwise "a mental complex" which "touches the theme on the emotional side and upsets (1) a man's judgment on matters of belief; (2) his intellectual balance; and (3) his power of correct deduction from facts. The article proved that the Freudian school is precisely in this position, suffering from a "materialistic complex," blinded thereby and their findings thus invalidated. On the same basis Mr. Bousfield proceeds to consider the position of Charles Richet in his epoch-making *Traité de Métapsychique*. "His conclusion is that the chief classes of psychic phenomena are firmly established on an experimental basis"; that as regards some of the phenomena everything happens as if the spirit of a deceased person did indeed intervene; and that it is difficult to "see any way in which the evidence for survival could be made stronger." But there is something in Richet's mentality which makes the doctrine of survival for him impossible, while "that of an intensive crypthesia" is relatively simple; and this something must be sought in the assumption that the human mind cannot exist without a material brain. Mr. Bousfield points out that this is

defective logic and "the clearest evidence of that impassable mental obstacle—the materialistic complex." He regards "the simple hypothesis of survival" as rejected thus on a merely "question-begging ground," while "the facts are accounted for by an extension of the faculty of clairvoyance for which there is no real evidence." From the spiritistic point of view, Mr. Bousfield himself is evidently on the side of the angels. He affirms that "the whole question of human survival rests upon the hypothesis that the surviving mind "has an ethereal envelope, a spirit body, as its vehicle"; that many communications accepted as genuine by Richet connote the fact of this vehicle; and that "so far from negating this conception, the latest advances in our knowledge of the structure of matter positively invite it." In this case, Professor Richet may take comfort, for spiritism does not ask him to accept the persistence of mind apart from an organism. Now, this is clear and admirable, and Mr. Bousfield recites in conclusion some evidences from Richet's book that his complex is falling to pieces, for he admits that, e.g., "non-human minds may possibly exist without a material substratum." Is it allowable to suggest in conclusion on our part that the Freudian complex is a rope which has been stretched too far and shows signs of giving, like the scepticism of the French savant? What kind of complex afflicts those who are dedicated in all their being to the search after truth? What of those who are in search of God? The shibboleth seems to stand sometimes for dedication of mind, at others for obstinate prejudgment, and again for mere mental attitude. But we happen to be of those who for our sins—or perchance otherwise—regard the findings of the Geneva school as true only when they express in their new terminology the commonplaces of psychic processes and as not true at all when they exceed those measures. But the quest of God goes on, as Dr. W. B. Selbie says, elsewhere in *THE HIBBERT JOURNAL*: it is the proper study of the soul, and were there need in pursuing it to accept orthodoxies, old or new, we should prefer Thomist psychology to the thing called psycho-analysis.

The *REVUE MÉTAPHYSIQUE* opens its new volume with a reply on the part of Prof. Charles Richet to Dr. Achille Delmas, who has offered his hostile views on the evidences for Metapsychism in general and on Richet's book more especially in *LA REVUE DE FRANCE*. It is extraordinarily good and even diverting, the opponent being one who has apparently attempted no investigation on his own part, who quotes an anonymous witness and regards two or three séances at which nothing happened as conclusive against metapsychical claims. One is disposed to speculate why such a critic should be thought to deserve an answer, but we infer that he is an alienist and may be eminent in his profession. About this we do not know, but he should be an object of no common interest from the standpoint of psycho-analysis, on account of a very obvious complex. A study of metapsychical phenomena from a biological standpoint, by Prof.

Hans Driesch, of Leipzig University, is translated from the German, and leads Dr. Gustave Geley to summarize and reaffirm his own position in respect of vitalism and metapsychics. Both articles are highly technical, and the writer of these pages would question whether his acquaintance with scientific biology could justify him in attempting their analysis were space at his disposal, which it is certainly not. The views of Dr. Geley are known by his work entitled *DE L'INCONSCIENT AU CONSCIENT*, which has been translated into English, and as regards Prof. Driesch his thesis opens by affirming that metapsychical phenomena are now contested only by "dogmatic impenitents." Dr. Geley is about to publish a volume on *L'ECTOPLASMIE ET LA CLAIRVOYANCE*, the introduction to which appears as the last article in *LA REVUE MÉTAPSYCHIQUE*. It deals with: (1) the general character of the experiences; (2) the medium; (3) the conditions requisite for the successful exercise of his powers; (4) the conditions requisite in experimenters; (5) the control of phenomena; (6) the limits of control; (7) the question of fraud.

There are two articles in *PSYCHE* which will be of marked interest to students of the human hand and its delineations. Dr. F. G. Crookshank has studied the hands of "Mongolian" imbeciles at the Belgrave Hospital for Children, of out-patients requiring to be distinguished as feeble rather than imbecile, and of older individuals who betray "Mongolian" characteristics after the age of puberty. The palmar markings "differ notably from the normal," and after careful examination of the variants Dr. Crookshank concludes that the subject is of "great anthropological and psychological interest," and that it suggests an "empirical basis for the study of palmistry." Prof. Mahajot Sahai, of the Mohindra College, Patiala, glances at palmar psychology from the standpoint of the claims advanced by well-known practitioners of the art, like Cheiro, and concludes: (1) that Palmistry undertakes to do nothing miraculous; (2) that it follows the principle of self-determination; (3) that it deals with "the real present"; and (4) that in so far as it forecasts the future it is in the sense that a scientist "predicts the effect from its cause." He concludes that it can be useful to psychology: (1) by furnishing an insight into inherited and acquired dispositions, their growth, development and disappearance; (2) by pointing out the direction in which strenuous and patient work is sure to be repaid. . . . Dr. I. D. Suthie criticizes the physiological basis of "eyeless sight," and enumerates the grounds of his conclusion that M. Jules Romain "is utterly out of touch with the scientific point of view," for which reason his "results" are regarded "with the most sceptical interest." The attitude thus stated seems to us neither just nor logical. If "eyeless sight" is a fact, it matters nothing to the point of fact whether its discoverer is in touch with scientific opinion or not. The question of the moment is not about this or that hypothesis and that or this inference: do the alleged phenomena actually occur?

## REVIEWS

**THE BOOK OF THE BELOVED.** By J. C. Johnston. London: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co., Ltd. Pp. 474. Price £1 11s. 6d.

MR. JOHNSTON calls his work a "modern epic poem," a sub-title which does not give any very definite idea of its nature and scope. But a mere glance at the outer cover shows that its physical dimensions are beyond the ordinary, while a study of the table of contents soon reveals the fact that on the mental plane also it embraces unusually wide territory. The book is divided into three parts, each having a deeply mystical significance—"The Book of the Garden," "The Book of Images," and "The Book of God"—while the "Beloved," we are told, may signify the human soul, Christ, or God, these three being "the One Beloved." The first part is written in free verse, and—as is almost inevitable when this medium is used—the reader sometimes feels that the work would have gained in force by being more closely knit; but some of these reminiscences of past lives are very beautiful, while the intervening lyrics are full of colour and music. In the end, the two lovers whose experiences are described, reach the sacred city of Shamballa, the City of God, where—

There are birds that sing in the bushes, there are fruits and flowers, there  
is greenness of leaf and grass.

There is perpetual music, perpetual peace, and over all  
The quiet, the hum, the rapture of Being,  
The movement, the will, the presence,  
Of the innocent, dancing, wise, pure, ever-running water!

The second book consists of a striking series of sonnets named after the stars and planets, and the great philosophers, mystics, and creative artists of all ages.

These first two parts—the author explains in his Preface—describe the human soul in its relations with the world of sense and the world of soul, respectively. "The Book of God" describes the soul in its relations with the Divine World, and it is impossible to attempt to convey in a few words any adequate idea of the poet's meaning and message. Suffice it to say, that this is a book which no student of occult and mystical literature should miss. It is a truly noteworthy achievement, worthy of being read and re-read by all who believe, with the author, that there are many roads leading to the Light—

Graded and cambered in kind and degree,  
One of the ways, O my brother, for me,  
One of them planned out and smoothed for thee,  
Each of them bringing us straight to Heaven!

E. M. M.

**THE QUEER SIDE OF THINGS.** By Mary L. Lewes. Crown 8vo. cloth. London: Selwyn & Blount, Ltd., 21 York Buildings, W.C.2. Price 7s. 6d. net.

THE title of this book is a sufficiently accurate description of its contents. It deals not only with ghosts, some of them of the most eerie character,

but also with dreams, fairy traditions, witchcraft, magical cures, local superstitions of giants, dragons, devils, second sight, etc. The scene of most of the incidents lies in Wales, with which the author is exceptionally well familiar, and where she has taken the trouble to collect much curious local information.

The introduction of Christianity into Wales, "did little," she thinks, "to disperse the deep sense of the marvellous phenomena inherent in the Celtic mind." And this sense of the uncanny, judging by Miss Lewes's book, is still as prevalent in the Principality as it ever was in the past, where belief in the fairies in especial lingers on, as it does still in Ireland. Among other strange stories is that of a girl with red hair, employed by a local barber, who still continued to shampoo customers after her suicide!

Some interesting recipes and old-wives, cures for various complaints are recorded, one which I have reason to believe is very well founded, being that of the eating of snails as a cure for consumption. I heard a very interesting instance of this not long ago. A gipsy gave the recipe to some parents whose daughter was in an advanced stage of this malady, and she subsequently entirely recovered. A long friendship between the two families was the result.

For those interested in ghostly phenomena this book gives a unique diversity of records and is a veritable variety entertainment in its own line.

R. S.

**THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED.** By Arthur Burgess. Published by Simpkin Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co. Price 2s. 6d. net.

MR. ARTHUR BURGESS' love is for the Supreme Beloved One of Whom all other loves are but a symbol. Consciously or unconsciously, his Beloved is the same as the lover of Hafiz, al Rumi and others of the Persian mystics.

His little reflections are cast in the length favoured by Tagore in the *Gitanjali* and, though not distinguished by originality, are mystically introspective, if one may use such a reiterative term, and have that music of the quiet places whereof David dreamt when he sang, "I lift up mine eyes unto the hills." Our author's "Introit" and "The Glimpse" are caressingly simple and brief.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

**ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.** Short Stories by the "Rainbow-Maker" (Katharine Parr). To be obtained only from Mrs. Parr, Venton House, Widecombe-in-the-Moor, nr. Ashburton, Devonshire. Price 3s. 6d.

MRS. KATHARINE PARR is not only a metaphorical maker of rainbows, she possesses also the subtle art of the alchemist which transmutes common metal into pure gold. She "touches the toil about our doors with the air of Heaven," and she even surrounds with the glamour of romance that most prosaic of all objects, the domestic dishcloth! Better still, in her erstwhile capacity of Home Office Visitor to our Prisons, in her spiritual kinship with Elizabeth Fry, she found that in many a human wreck and derelict on the "iron-bound coast of life" the Divine spark, which circumstances had almost extinguished, needed but gentleness and love to fan it into brightness. Her dear trustworthy burglar reminds me very much of the "dear clever little pickpocket" of whom Father Stanton once affectionately discoursed to me. Yet while full of sentiment the Rainbow-Maker is never



*sentimental*, for her clear psychic insight enables her to know the false from the true. In the half-dozen sketches which make up this volume she has again drawn upon her own rich store of reminiscences and, like her two previous works, the proceeds of its sale will be devoted to the object so near to her heart: her little "Holiday Home" for poor Gentlewomen whom adversity has forced to become toilers in the smoke-laden cities of our land. A charming picture of the little Dartmoor cottage, thatched and rose-embowered, known as St. Michael's Home of Rest, enhances the appeal of this delightful book. It is almost superfluous to add that our little brethren of fur and feather also receive their due meed of loving appreciation at the hands—or, as she herself would say, the "paws," of the Little Rainbow-Maker. I cordially commend her work to all readers of the OCCULT REVIEW.

EDITH K. HARPER.

**SPIRITUAL HEALING.** By the Rev. Harold Anson, Chairman of the Guild of Health, 212 pages. Published by the University of London Press, 17 Warwick Square. Price 3s. 6d.

UNLIKE so many books whose subject is the cure, without any known physical cause, of illness, this helpful and stimulating little volume emphasizes the value of skilled medical aid; but it also emphasizes the need for such skill being founded on constructive thought, the consciously dwelling on the mind of Christ, on His purposes for the individual and for the world. The writer points out how all material progress, improvement in social conditions, peace between neighbouring nations, freedom from mental or bodily fear, has been brought about by one or two people at first—then more and more, believing that such peace, such improvement was desirable, then seeing that it was possible, then, through this faith, using means to bring about the changed conditions.

Before progress is possible, there must be the vision of better things, and this truth applies to the individual as well as to collective evils. Without adequate physical reason, health may be suddenly brought about in certain cases, simply by the belief that wholeness is possible, and by the patient or the healer discovering and utilizing the hidden sources of strength that lie in the sub-conscious or subliminal self. Fear, depression, bad temper, all tend to lower bodily vitality—may, indeed, in extreme cases, even cause death. If this mental state is banished by calling on the supplies of strength, and courage, and fortitude, which spring from habitual dwelling in God, the bodily condition may be completely and suddenly changed. Here comes in the value of such teaching as that of faith-healing, psycho-analysis, auto-suggestion, hetero-suggestion and Christian Science—whose strong point is the insistence on the love of God and consequent hopefulness.

Mr. Anson points out that the desire for God is a deep and instinctive though often unrecognized, instinct of the human mind. Physicians and psycho-analysts are only capable of their most effective work when they recognize this, and so help their patients spiritually as well as physically. This (possibly long repressed) God-complex, this passion for God, is so strong that when it is recognized, it is able to bring about instantaneous healing of mind and body.

The whole book is full of suggestive thought, expressed in a most lucid, wholly sensible, yet uplifting way; it is the very antithesis of

bigotry, nor does it evade difficulties, or extol any one system at the expense of other systems of healing, but recognizing the good—and the danger and weakness—of each, points out clearly the one way by which, through right thinking, the highest and best life may be attained, alike by the individual and by the community. ROSA M. BARRETT.

SOUS LES MANGUIERS, LEGENDES DU BENGAL. Traduction d'Andrée Karpeles. Prix fr. 6.60. HYMNES A LA DÉESSE. Traduits du Sanscrit avec Introduction et Notes par Arthur et Ellen Avalon. Prix 4 fr. 80. Both published by Editions Bossard, 43 Rue Madame, Paris.

THESE folk-tales of Bengal exhale a rich redolence of the East. The student of comparative religion and mysticism owes much to the illumination of legend, and this collection is no exception to the rule. Krishna with his flute appears as the Divine Shepherd, even as Orpheus with his ravishing lute of silver enchanted Greece in its pastoral age. And the Shepherd symbol also persists, for earliest man, from Cromagnon man onward, was a keeper of herds and flocks and drew his parables accordingly. Thus Mercury bore the ram at Tanagra and Buddha carried the sheep with the broken limb into the court of the Indian Raj, thousands of years ago. Here too, we find the occult story of the King-Serpent with the burning jewel in its crest, and the subterranean kingdom of Assyrian Al-Lat and her blind spouse, of Egyptian Nephtys, of Pluto and Proserpina. Again we roam through dream-groves of enchantment in "*jardins pleins de fleurs inconnues, aux couleurs étranges.*"

The authors of *Hymnes à la Déesse* require no introduction to a scholarly public. Their renderings of Sanskrit works which are available in English, have filled me with admiration for their patience, detailed notes and rare erudition. I have read their Tantric texts, which revealed much assumed to be black magic as an old and pure form of Brahmanism in the light of their learning. Thus, although I had seen these "Hymns to the Goddess" before, I welcomed them in their beautiful new attire. The Goddess is the Divine Mother, the Inspiration of Brahm, the benevolent Creatrix of Life, the Isis of Egypt, the Demeter and Pallas Athena of Greece, the Eternal and Supernal Mystery. Her utterances are full of majesty, her attributes of vast infinities:

"Je suis la Régente de l'Univers, la Dispensatrice des richesses spirituelles. Le Brahman m'apparaît comme mon propre Moi. Je suis la première des entités auxquelles sont dûes les offrandes. . . . Je revêts maintes formes et je fais rentrer dans le grand Moi toutes les créatures. . . . Qui mange un aliment le mange par Moi. Qui respire voit ou entend le fait par Moi. . . . Homme éclairé ! écoute mes paroles. . . ."

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

EVERYMAN AND THE INFINITE. By L. C. Becket. London: Fowler & Co., 7 Imperial Arcade, Ludgate Circus, E.C. Price 2s. 6d. net.

THE writer of this book narrates a curious adventure that once befell him. He was sitting alone on a mountain-side watching twilight creep over the hills. It was a still evening with no sound to distract the attention save the trickling of a brook and the wind in the aspens. Suddenly he lost consciousness of the separateness of the things before him. There had

come to him the startling realization that all these things—trees and sky and water—are one, "part of something that is high above the small things at its feet . . . and at the same time as pure and calm, as vast and unmoved, as the blue vault above." Such a realization of the unity underlying all diversity of form is common to all mystics. Reference to it is to be found in the writings of Jacob Boehme, W. H. Hudson, Edward Carpenter and many others.

Mr. Becket relates how his life insensibly changed from that moment. It was a turning-point in his life, a turning-point which led him to an abiding vision of the Unseen and a deeper interpretation of the seeming realities of life.

Subsequently Mr. Becket's studies led him to an investigation of the ancient wisdom of China, to the writings of Lao-Tse and the Taoist teachers. From a consideration of these he passes to the Vedas and Upanishads of the Hindus. In these he finds confirmation of the ancient teachings of China and of the inward experience of all spiritual seekers.

The book is written in an engaging style—simple, natural and without any effort at pose or preaching.

R. B. INCE.

THE GHOSTS OF PARLIAMENT. By Carlyon Bellairs. New, revised and augmented edition. London: Erskine Macdonald, Ltd. Pp. 79. Price 5s. net.

I REVIEWED the first edition of this collection of poems in the OCCULT REVIEW for November, 1923. The author was then vaguely described as "an M.P.," but now Commander Bellairs owns up to the authorship of this eloquent volume of satire, reflection, passionate thought. "Too long," exclaims our seaman-poet,

"I've played the Dutchman's weather-clock,  
Sung songs in dreams and, waking, drudged with prose";

and now that he's not far from his present critic's age, he revises verse without sufficient consideration of the object in view, for oddly enough he has marred one of his most admirable stanzas to gain an unessential smoothness. It was the eccentricity of a reviser which stung Swinburne into applying the epithet "ass of genius" to Edward Fitzgerald. Needless to say my respect for an earnest poet precludes me from wishing the foregoing sentence to convey more to him than kindly raillery.

W. H. CHESSON.

PRIESTCRAFT. By Hugh E. M. Stutfield. London: *The National Review* Office, 43 Duke Street, St. James's, S.W.1. Price 7s. 6d. net.

Books of a polemical nature are not, as a rule, of very much interest to the general reader. The churches have, from the earliest ages, spent much of their force in fighting one another. Mr. Stutfield would, no doubt, feel inclined to praise God that it has been so, since if they had not fought each other they might have found more time and opportunity to inculcate the narrow doctrines for which they stand.

Mr. Stutfield makes vigorous war on the Roman Church. He proves, quoting chapter and verse, that the pontifical claims of Rome are ridiculous and fraudulent; that her teaching is pernicious; her ministers strife-fomenters and her followers knaves and dupes. There is certainly no lack of enthusiasm in Mr. Stutfield's book; its style serves

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to show that the author enjoyed writing it and that he takes warlike delight in demolishing his foes.

No doubt many sins of commission are to be laid at the doors of Roman Catholicism, but there is danger in insistence. Mr. Stutfield does not advance his case by the almost hysterical violence with which he presents it. Mr. Stutfield is very angry with the Roman Church from the Pope at the top to the youngest little curé at the bottom. Neither does he gather hope from "the mystical tide now flowing strongly." He does not want to be taught either "by the pundits of the East or of Rome." His chief delight appears to be to fight priestcraft wherever it is found. Good work, no doubt, so far as it goes. But surely there is no more thankless task than beating a dead donkey!

R. B. INCE.

INTROSPECTIONS. By Charlotte C. Morrison. London: Arthur H. Stockwell. Pp. 31.

THIS little collection of poems, chiefly on religious subjects, is characterized by a sincerity and a sensitiveness that lift it above the usual mediocre level of most religious verse. In "The Descent" an interesting idea is well worked out, from the first verse, beginning—

"I, John of Shadows, I will live to God,  
Not seeking gain, what gain more sweet than grace?"—

through the second, with its suggestion of compromise and doubt, on to the grim finality of the last—

"I, John of Shadows, I will leave God out  
Of all my reckoning. He may be God,  
But rumour runs abroad  
That He is not, and there's the doubt.  
I will pay Him regard in public place  
With sanctimonious face;  
'Twill surely profit me  
If He be God. But lest He be not God  
I will let inclination move abroad  
And love iniquity."

"Judas," "The Fields," and "The Threshold" may also be mentioned. The last has a ring of truth, and there is real feeling in it.

E. M. M.

AFTER ALL. By Amus d'Aquita. A Play in Three Acts.

TWENTY AND FOUR VERSES. By Ivan Alan Seymour.

The Merton Press, Abbey House, Westminster, S.W.1.

THE critic approaching the play by M. Amus d'Aquita is hampered at the outset of his office by the fact that one realizes from the very unreal atmosphere of the acts that the author is not English and unacquainted with European psychology. It is rather like an Irish attempt at Ibsen, or, as if Lafcadio Hearn tried to write like Zola. It is intended to be heartless and heart-breaking. A "Bella Donna" enchantress ruins a whole circle of heroic males, the poison lying in her mentality rather than in cups of coffee. There are Ernest, who has "a sort of darting menace," and Christopher, the proud owner of "a sarcastic shrug." Ernest fires at Christopher in the *grande finale* with "rattling teeth," whereupon the latter lovelorn knight is "taken aback and immediately measures his full length on the floor.

Ernest unconsciously lays his left hand on his forehead, and fixes his maniacal gaze on Christopher's rigid form." The very stage-directions betray the foreign imperfections of "Amus d'Aquita." It is kindest to say little and to state that this Penny Dreadful Drama fully achieves the significance of its sub-title "A Mighty Maze."

The "Twenty and Four Verses" of Mr. Alan Seymour are unequal but contain a few blossoms. The poet, like so many young literary aspirants to the lyre of Apollo and the lute of Orpheus, has not yet developed that sense of stern self-censorship which is one of the chief factors of true literary success.

His humorous fragments are daintiest, and I enjoyed 'Poetry':

"You say 'Rain,' and I say 'Fairy globules';  
 You say 'Wind,' and I say 'Goblin-sighs';  
 You say 'Wet,' and I say 'Dew-cleansed meadows';  
 You say 'Clouds,' and I say 'Leaden skies.'  
 You say 'String,' and I say 'Twining Tendrils';  
 You say 'Bundle,' I say 'Precious load';  
 This being so, *you* live within a castle,  
 And I—an attic in the Fulham Road!"

I suppose a vernacular form of address had something to do with the capitalist's good fortune.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

THE UNUTTERABLE MESSAGE. By One Who *Can* Attempt to Utter the Message because He *Must*. 8½ ins. × 5½ ins., pp. viii + 258. London: Messrs. George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., Broadway House, 68-74 Carter Lane, E.C.4. Price 8s. 6d. net.

THE anonymous author of this book would appear to be a Christian Scientist, or, at any rate, one whose views closely approximate to those of Mary Baker Eddy. The "Unutterable Message" to which he endeavours to give utterance in the course of his two hundred or so pages is that "within One-point is all reflex-ness and within all reflex-ness is the One-point again." All disease, all suffering, all unhappiness is the product of misunderstanding, for the mortal mind and its mundane experiences are illusory—they do not really exist, for God alone is. His special point I take to be that the realization of this fact is to be achieved by means of auto-suggestion, the mastery of whose technique he says is imperative. "Metaphysic without psychology," he writes in a Postscript, "tends to be merely an academic theory. Psychology without Metaphysic may be a will-o'-the-wisp beguiling into the morass. Blend a sound Metaphysic with a sound Psychology, add to these Faith, and the Gospel Message in all its primitive simplicity, with all its invincible efficacy, is attained!" But is the Metaphysic he utters sound! Are his conclusions those of the Gospel Message in all its primitive simplicity? No doubt one can auto-suggest oneself into believing black is white. But is it wise? It may be comforting when things go wrong to believe that all this life is an illusion. But if this is true for us, surely it must be also true for others. The fount of human sympathy, it seems to me, is effectively destroyed by such teaching as this, progress in human affairs and the organization of human society is put an end to, and a deadly policy of *laissez-faire* must supervene. Nor is it clear to me to whom exactly this book is addressed. In his

Foreword the author speaks of what he has written as "gag and patter," adding that its "inaccuracy . . . arises through an attempt to translate into popular phraseology that which can be accurately expressed only in a highly technical jargon." The appeal, therefore, would appear to be to the man in the street. But in the Introduction we are warned that there are chapters and passages dealing with "metaphysical subtleties," which for a reader unacquainted with the works of Schopenhauer and other metaphysicians "can mean no more than cryptic hieroglyphs." I fear that the type of reader conversant with the works of philosophers like Schopenhauer will be offended with the author's "gag and patter," and will demand a more accurate and closely reasoned exposition of his ideas before giving them very serious attention. H. S. REDGROVE.

**HYPNOTISM AND TREATMENT BY SUGGESTION.** By Albert E. Davis, F.R.C.S.Ed., L.R.C.P. London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. Price 5s. net.

DR. DAVIS is honorary physician to the Liverpool Psycho-Therapeutic Clinic and has practised treatment by suggestion and hypnotism for many years. In the first part of his book he deals mainly with theory, and in the second part with the experience he has gained in his practice.

In most cases Dr. Davis does not advocate the induction of deep hypnosis. He is more in favour of suggestion. "Auto-suggestion," he writes, "is the purest and best form of suggestive treatment when stripped of meretricious trappings. Its cures are permanent, for the reason that the patient carries the physician with him always in himself."

Many people object to the method of saying "I have no pain," when consciousness tells them they have pain. Dr. Davis points out the triviality of this objection. The suggestion "I have no pain" is not to be translated literally into a statement of fact, but as a conscious attempt on the part of the patient to use those powers he possesses to impress the idea on the subconscious part of his mind that pain has ceased."

Dr. Davis's book is interesting and stimulating, but surely in advocating that the practice of therapeutic suggestion should be limited to persons who "have had a full medical training" he shows a narrow professional bias? None of the medical schools provide adequate training in applied psychology, and a mere medical training is of little assistance to the practitioner of hypnotic healing. To such an argument M. Coué and many other non-medically trained psychic healers provide the best answer.

R. B. INCE.

**OLD CREEDS AND NEW NEEDS.** By C. A. F. Rhys Davids, D.Litt., M.A. Pp. 193. London: T. Fisher Unwin. Price 5s. net.

ON the paper cover of this book are the following words: "The author tries to show that the world is now a new world, not since the Great War, but as compared with the world of the old scripture-creeds." That is an excellent summary of the theme expounded so clearly and vividly in this most interesting volume. Dr. Rhys Davids maintains that each of the great world-teachers had a message for his own world and his own time. Those worlds and times have passed away: men have become citizens of the whole world, nationalism in the narrower sense is opening out into internationalism, and a new teacher is needed who shall speak the things

of God to the world as it is to-day. Dr. Davids thinks the world is not yet ready for the new message; that it is still enfolded in the narrower limits of the old-time teachers. It is our task to prepare the world for the new revelation of God.

He surveys with all the knowledge of an oriental scholar and with the outlook of a modernist the creeds of Zarathustra, Gotama, Jesus and Mohammed. He reviews briefly some of the newer creeds (Bahaism, Brahmo-samaj, Christian Science, Positivism) and sets them side by side with the newer needs of men. His book is most refreshing and stimulating, whether or no one agrees with his assumptions or his conclusions. It is certainly a book to read and study, and after that to digest by the process of sitting in an armchair and indulging in an hour of quiet thought.

H. L. HUBBARD.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF TUT-ANKH-AMEN. By Bishara Nahas. The American Library Service, New York City.

The literature which will ensue upon the Luxor excavations is bound to be legion, but even amid its hosts, the work of this distinguished Egyptian, himself an excavator and a highly cultured lover of Egyptology, is bound to attract attention by reason of its charm and sympathetic simplicity. One cannot write unless one loves one's subject and though Bishara Nahas' attractively produced work is more for the student than the scholar, his *tendresse* in the interpretation and visualization of ancient Egypt make the book more valuable and poetic than any dryly pedantic tome. It reminds me of Sir E. Wallis Budge's *Ancient Egyptian Fairy-tales*, and Miss Mary Murray's book of Egyptian legends.

The author speaks of Akhen-Aton (that remarkable dreamer who, as Sir John Cockburn finely put it, " strove to live the life of Christ, and paid the penalty long ere Christ's advent ") with great understanding and, though he does not definitely say so, he seems to admit the possibility that Lord Carnarvon's untimely death might perhaps have been due to deeper causes than the mind can fathom.

His quotations from the old marriage and funeral chants are most attractive. Could a dirge express a higher love and loyalty than this: " Come to thy temple, come to thy temple, oh beautiful youth, immediately, immediately . . . Oh Osiris . . . Oh King, our Lord. . . . Destroy the sorrow which is in our hearts. . . . Our faces live in seeing thy face, our hearts will rejoice at the sight of thee, Oh Beautiful King . . . . Oh King of the two Lands. . . .

Yet I have one critical grumble: the phonetic spelling is disagreeable to many readers, and it would have been well if some clever editor had altered the occasional foreign phrases which trip up the English of this gifted author.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

KINGDOMS OF THE SPIRIT. By Claude Houghton. Published by the C. W. Daniel Company. Price 6s. net.

THIS is a work that will surely make a wide appeal by force of its simple sincerity and clearly stated truth.

Mr. Houghton has given us in *Kingdoms of the Spirit* a rarely beautiful book, one which should be read carefully and thoughtfully in some quiet corner of the library, or aloud in the family circle after the

toil of daily work is done. It is not a work to be hurried over, but, rather, a delightful volume to enjoy when the mind is at rest, for every page reveals delicate beauty of thought, and a peculiar loftiness of aspiration that compels an earnest desire to enter within one or more of the "Kingdoms" most invitingly described. With all its poetic beauty, this book is evidently not written only for the cultured few; all who yearn to know something more of the Realms of the Spirit will find comfort and help therein; indeed, in the *Kingdoms of the Spirit* we have something much more than a dainty gift-book. Here is revealed a work of genius and a wealth of inspired thought.

There is intrinsic beauty in every page, delicate poetic thought throughout the whole, while the theme is uplifting from beginning to end of an unusually delightful volume.

Mr. Houghton believes in the possibility of being in perfect harmony with the Infinite mind while yet the Spirit of man dwells in the world. It is ours to attain even when stress and storm without would battle with the mind and soul. His counsels ring true and clear, and in "The Kingdom of Love," the last of the Series, we are taught how to tune our harps to keep in finer touch with the Perfect Harmony that dwells everywhere in Time and in Eternity and is, could we but perceive, in every human heart.

A book to read and keep, and to open again whenever comes the temptation to doubt. Hope is the outstanding note in this melody of poetic thought.

CHRISTIE T. YOUNG.

"JE VEUX RÉUSSIR!" By Henri Durville. Henri Durville, imprimeur-éditeur, 23 Rue Saint Merri, Paris (IV).

IN this short, but vitally interesting book, Monsieur H. Durville endeavours to show us how to gain success by training the emotions and educating them into safe channels or tributaries of thought rather than allowing a wayward imagination to drift us whither it will into the realms of the subconscious. Here is defined a doctrine of conscious will working for our immediate good, though indeed auto-suggestion is permitted to play its own part—perhaps even a principal part—in the construction of the highway to success. He makes it clear that he is not able to agree with Monsieur Coué that passive imagination may *permanently* be made subject to the beneficial action of the higher will.

Monsieur Durville makes it clear that it is the *Will* that must be strengthened and guided safely into tranquil pools of thought, and in his interesting little book he manages to persuade us of much of the truth underlying his opinion and leads us on to hope that, after all, he may be perfectly right. At any rate it is surely something worth striving for, this complete success he writes so convincingly about, and though he may not have told us very much that is strikingly new, he has certainly done his best to awaken interest in a desire for greater perfection of living, as well as to kindle a legitimate longing for a fuller measure of success.

*Je veux réussir* is a book to be read and treasured, if only for the fine spirit of courage that it may haply bring to many a doubting or wavering heart. It is not too much to hope that many readers will benefit by carefully perusing this clever writer's book. The pity of it is that, as far as we know, there is as yet no English translation of this work.

CHRISTIE T. YOUNG.



**MYSTICAL INITIATION.** By Dom Savinien Louismet, O.S.B. Author of "The Mystical Knowledge of God," etc., etc. With an Appendix. London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., 28 Orchard Street, 1 and 8-10 Paternoster Row, E.C.4. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 44 Barclay Street. Price 5s. 6d.

THE atmosphere of the literary treasure is as fragrant as the south wind that blows across the garden of the devout soul. The reader who has perused Dom Louismet's previous works on Catholic Traditional Mysticism will find in this new volume a sequence of the same peculiarly inimitable, original, allusive simplicity in the treatment of his sublime subject which must rivet the attention of all who are attuned to his way of thinking, even though all may not see literally eye to eye with him on every point that arises—such as the declaration that the state of the soul is "fixed" finally at the death of the physical body. . . . To many an earnest thinker this idea is repugnant and difficult, even impossible, to reconcile with the very humblest estimate of a God of Love and Infinite Understanding.

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However, a book like this is in effect so fine, so exhilarating, that one shrinks from cavilling over theological points of difference, for, after all, theological language has its own particular significance.

Dom Louismet himself defines the subject of these pages as "Mystical Initiation—By means of the first five chapters of the Canticle of Canticles, abridged, paraphrased, and commented on for the Little Ones of the Flock of Christ."

A very interesting Appendix, reprinted from *Chimes*, contrasts and compares the views of Dom Savinien Louismet with those of another contemporary writer on Mysticism, Dom Cuthbert Butler, former Abbot of Downside.

There is also an especially beautiful Frontispiece, *The Dream of S. Cecilia*: "I sleep and my heart Watcheth."

In the words of Dom Louismet, "Mystical Life" means simply that "all men, without exception, are called to the fullness of the life of love."

EDITH K. HARPER.

TALKS ON PSYCHOTHERAPY. By William Brown, M.A., M.D. (Oxon.), D.Sc., M.R.C.P. (Lond.), etc., etc. London: University of London Press, Ltd., 17 Warwick Square, E.C.4. Price 2s. 6d. net.

THIS volume contains three lectures, which were given extempore, by Dr. William Brown, at King's College, University of London, early last

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