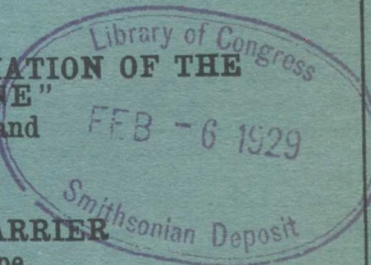


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VOL. XLIX

FEBRUARY 1929

No. 2

NOTES OF THE MONTH

GHOSTLY fare apparently still continues to form a large proportion of the literary diet consumed by the reading public during the period of the winter months. It is as though the primal instincts inherited from the unsophisticated dweller in the wild open spaces refused to be smothered by the veneer of modern civilization, and, gathering strength from the suggestion of death and darkness visible on every hand in the gaunt countryside, rose irresistibly from the depths of the subconscious, where they had long lain hidden, to turn the imagination, in spite of common-sense, to spectres and hauntings, wraiths, obsessions, were-wolves, vampires, and the whole dread company of nightmare horrors.

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modern type, the vampire may be traced in a direct line of descent right back to the dim ages before history began to be systematically recorded. The vampire tradition is confined to no one race or climate, but is as wide as the habitable globe. Wherever humanity is to be found, there, in some shape, is to be found the legend of the vampire. The universality and persistence of the belief seems to point to the existence of a certain amount of scientific fact underlying the extravagant stories which are common to the five continents, and which form the basis of some of the most successful romances of our time.

The notable place occupied by the vampire in fiction is startlingly revealed by the section devoted to
 THE VAMPIRE
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 the subject in a learned and comprehensive study by the Rev. Montague Summers, recently issued from the house of Kegan Paul.* The present is apparently the first extensive survey of this particular field which has been attempted. The task, however, is hedged about with considerable difficulty, not, as Mr. Summers points out, through any dearth of material, "for there is a far vaster field than might generally be supposed"; but on account of the necessarily vague and indeterminate interpretation of the term "vampire" as considered from the purely literary point of view.

No appreciation of the part played by the vampire in fiction could do other than give first place to the perennially fascinating story of *Dracula*, by Bram Stoker, which, since it was first published in 1897, has become a veritable household word. "It is hardly an exaggeration," writes Mr. Summers, "to affirm that of recent years there have been few books which have been more popular than Bram Stoker's *Dracula: a Tale*, and certainly there is no sensational romance which in modern days has achieved so universal a reputation. . . ."

"It will prove interesting to inquire into the immediate causes which have brought this book such wide and enduring fame. It is well-nigh impossible for a story which deals with the supernatural or horrible to be sustained to any great length. Elements which at first are almost unendurable will lose their effect if they are continued, for the reader's mind insensibly becomes inured to fresh emotions of awe and horror, and *Dracula* is by no means briefly told. In the ordinary reprints it runs to more than four hundred pages, nor does it escape the penalty of its prolixity."

* *The Vampire, His Kith and Kin*. By Montague Summers. London: Kegan Paul. Price 15s. net.

Nevertheless, Mr. Summers points out that the various incidents are so adroitly arranged in the order of their succession, that the cumulative effect of the chain of mysterious happenings at last compels the conviction in the mind of the matter-of-fact young solicitor, who is the subject of the adventure, that he is a helpless prisoner in the power of a terrible and relentless being. "The contrasts," Mr. Summers continues, "between the business conversations, the most ordinary events of the dull, listless days, and all the while the mantling of dark shadows in the background and the onrushing of some monstrous doom . . . are most excellently managed."

"If we review *Dracula* from a purely literary point of approach, "DRACULA" it must be acknowledged that there is much that could have been compressed, and something revised with considerable profit. . . . However, when we have—quite fairly, I hope—criticised *Dracula*, the fact remains that it is a book of unwonted interest and fascination."

Some four or more pages are devoted to a consideration of this remarkable novel, but beyond the mention of the fact that a dramatic version of the story is now touring the British Isles, and drawing full houses, it only remains here to express the hope that some day the wonderful possibilities of the subject from the point of view of the film may be adequately exploited.

Readers whose memories are able to go back far enough may call to mind the publications of Edward Lloyd, the frank "shockers" which thrilled the youthful imaginations of our grandfathers during the years from the late 'thirties to the early 'fifties. A prolific novelist of this period, Thomas Prest, is credited with something like a couple of hundred titles, of which the most famous (or notorious) was *Sweeney Todd*. Closely following in order of popularity was *Varney the Vampire*, a tale consisting of no less than 220 chapters and running into 868 pages. The copious output of this author is, indeed, a matter of amazement. The penny parts in which this, and the story of the "demon barber" were issued, met with "unprecedented success."

In connection with his appraisal of this notable predecessor of *Dracula*, Mr. Summers remarks that the very length of the work makes adequate analysis extremely difficult. Incident follows incident in bewildering succession and with a breathless rapidity which leaves the reader gasping. Yet, in spite of

its former vogue, *Varney the Vampire* to-day "is unprocurable, and considerable sums have been for many years in vain offered to secure a copy."

Coming to more recent times, we have the novel by Reginald Hodder, *The Vampire*, which has for its theme the efforts of a leader of an occult society to maintain her ebbing vitality by the exercise of her powers as a vampire. Her ravages, however, are less physical than psychic.

Among the authors of short stories dealing with this macabre subject may be found such well-known names as those of Algernon Blackwood, who, in his story, *The Transfer*, pits vampire against vampire. F. Marion Crawford, in *For the Blood is the Life*, tells of a young man who is vampirised by a dead girl. His friends find him one day upon her grave, with a thin stream of blood trickling from his throat. Having fathomed the dread secret, they put an end to his trouble by dispatching the "undead" in the time-honoured fashion, by driving a stake through the heart. *The Parasite*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, depicts a frail little creature in the person of Miss Penelozza, a psychic sponge who saps the physical and moral vitality of a prominent professor until the day of her death. Her activity apparently ceases just when that of the usual vampire begins.

From the scores of titles and authors in English, French and German, collected by Mr. Summers, in the Bibliography to this section of his work, it is not possible to quote further. Of greater interest will it be to see whether any avenues of approach to the obscure problem of vampirism are offered by the investigations of modern science, more especially psychical research. The easy course of dismissing the whole subject as a mere fable, a matter of interest only to the student of folk-lore, would not seem to be a counsel of wisdom.

Despite the fact that Mr. Summers is loth to admit any view which is not consonant with the beliefs of a good churchman, his endeavours to formulate some sort of hypothesis to account for the phenomena of vampirism have resulted in a contribution to the literature of the subject of a work of pre-eminent value. In the chapter dealing with the generation of the vampire, he cites with apparent approval the belief that the vampire is "one who has devoted himself during life to the practice of Black Magic, and it is hardly to be supposed that such persons would rest undisturbed, while it is easy to believe that their malevolence had set in action forces

which might prove powerful for terror and destruction even when they were in their graves."

The supposition that this might indeed be the case is brought home to the mind with a force amounting almost to conviction when it is remembered that the thorough-paced follower of the Left-hand Path has, according to the occult tradition, been setting his will, probably for several lives, in active opposition to everything spiritual. By the very nature of the case, the time arrives when the erring soul is forcibly wrenched from the "Light that lighteth every man," and the Black Magician is compelled to fight a losing fight against the Powers of the Outer Darkness which are destined ultimately to engulf him—a contingency, fortunately, as rare as it is terrible. After passing out of the physical body he maintains a precarious foothold in the abode of shades, earth-bound, ceaselessly troubled, and striving at all costs to retain his connection with the body of flesh. Not blood, but that mysterious substance which the investigations of modern psychical research are bringing to light—ectoplasm, the apparent basis of the structure of the human organism—is the object of the depredations of the vampire. His object is achieved by the extrusion of the etheric double which, in normal cases, is disintegrated step by step with the dissolution of the corpse. The hypothesis that the phenomena of vampirism are of etheric origin gains force from a consideration of the fact that cremation is universally regarded as the safest of all means of guarding against the activities of the vampire. And there is no quicker method than that of incineration for dispersing the etheric particles of the physical body.

Mr. Summers comes very closely into line with the occult tradition when he says, "We may, if we will, adopt the ectoplasmic theory to explain the mode whereby the vampire issues from his grave, but although it is very probably true (in some instances at all events) it is not necessarily the only solution of the problem." One is hardly prepared, however, to accept as readily as does our author the statements of Catholic theologians which are not to any appreciable extent borne out by the observations of occult researchers. "According to Catholic theologians," he says, "evil spirits, if permitted to materialise their invisible presence, to build up a tangible and active body, do not absolutely require the ectoplasm of some medium." Upon this point it seems wiser to keep an open mind.

While making all due acknowledgment of the scholarship

and erudition which characterise this learned work, it really seems that our author's efforts to establish a connecting link between the atrocities of necrosadistic degenerates such as the notorious youths, Leopold and Loeb, and the phenomena of vampirism are beside the mark. Nor have the gruesome activities of Jack the Ripper, or the "vampirisme" of French sexual perverts any other than an indirect bearing on the subject.

The case of Fritz Haarman, "the Hanover Vampire," is cited as "probably one of the most extraordinary cases of vampirism known"; though this, again, appears to be an instance rather of sexual perversion. Strange and terrible the case undoubtedly is, but one feels reluctant to make more than a passing allusion to the ghastly details of homosexuality and murder with which it abounds. For those who would sup their fill of horrors there is in this story of Continental sexual vice material in abundance. One point in connection with this gruesome business stands out prominently. It is a significant fact that the accused, while repudiating all imputations of insanity, steadfastly maintained that all the murders of which he was proved guilty were committed while he was in a state of trance, and unaware of what he was doing. Naturally enough the authorities refused to accept such a statement. From the point of view of the occultist, however, it is of interest as indicating the possibility of demoniac possession. That most significant of the physical characteristics of the vampire was present, the fatal bite in the throat, but the distinguishing feature of the true vampire, the sustaining of life in the "corpse" by means of vitality stolen from others, was, of course, absent.

Yet it looks as though a vampire entity was obsessing this degraded creature. The case presents many puzzling features, but hardly seems to fit in with the general conception of the vampire. Our author is not unmindful of this, since he writes: "It must always be remembered that the word 'vampire' is used so loosely that there are traditions and legends which . . . refer to phantoms of the vampire family rather than to the vampire proper."

The conclusions of Mr. Summers coincide almost entirely with current occult teaching on pp. 195-6 of his book, when he quotes with approval the views of the founder of the well-known French *Revue Spiritualiste*, who writes as follows:

"As long as the astral form is not entirely liberated from the body there is a liability that it may be forced by magnetic attraction to re-enter it. Sometimes it will be only half-way out when the corpse, which presents the appearance of death, is buried. In such cases the terrified astral soul re-enters its casket, and then one of two things happens: the person buried either writhes in agony of suffocation, or, if he has been grossly material, becomes a vampire. The bi-corporeal life then begins. The ethereal form can go where it pleases, and as long as it does not break the link connecting it with the body, can wander visible or invisible and feed on its victims. It even transmits the results of the suction by some mysterious invisible cord of connexion to the body, thus aiding it to perpetuate the state of catalepsy."

In commenting upon the views of the French spiritualist, Mr. Summers concludes that they "seem to point towards a possible and correct explanation."

But the fact, which our author himself admits, that the vampire was often a person who during life practised black magic, must not be overlooked. The baneful activities of the true vampire imply the exercise of occult power of no small order. The accidental vampire, if it may so be termed, must surely be rare, if such a possibility exists at all. The unfortunate victim of premature burial would in all probability quickly succumb to suffocation. The description of the vampire which seems to be nearest the truth is that to be found on p. 133, where it is described as "a corpse reanimated by his own spirit, seeking to continue his own life in death by preying upon others and feeding himself upon their vitality; that is to say, by absorbing their blood, since blood is the principle of life." Is it likely that any but a trained occultist or practitioner of magic would be in a position to do this?

And again, it would once more seem to be not actual blood, but the more subtle ectoplasm which is sought after, and which is the basis of organic life. In this connection it is interesting to note that it yet remains to be proved whether the loss of weight which psychical experimenters have noticed in the case of physical mediums whose phenomena are accompanied by an extrusion of ectoplasm, is due rather to a loss of blood than to loss of actual flesh. In other words, although a small percentage of the actual physical form might be partly dematerialised to manifest as ectoplasm,

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is it not rather that particles of blood are used to build up the now well-known ectoplasmic masks of the séance room? The point seems to be worthy of serious investigation, although, frankly, it seems, on the face of it, difficult to imagine a means whereby the difference may be determined.

Once the intimate connection between the blood and ectoplasm is definitely established, the loss of blood experienced by the victim of the vampire is explained. Instead of the blood being directly drawn off by the vampire, it is drawn off indirectly in the form of ectoplasm. Such an idea, at any rate, is worth considering as a working hypothesis.

It should be borne in mind that blood plays a prominent part in the ceremonies of Black Magic, in order to provide the necessary basis of corporeality in the shape of ectoplasm for the manifestation of the semi-material denizens of the nether regions; and the dividing line between the phenomena of the materializing medium and necromancy would seem to be thinner than is generally realised. Given a circle the members of which were sufficiently unscrupulous or daring, and willing to assist the medium by the introduction of newly-spilt animal blood into the proceedings, it is safe to predict that the results would prove startling! Already some of the phenomena of the materializing séance approach too closely to Black Magic to be comfortable. Mr. Summers voices a danger in this respect which might well be heeded. In fact, it would be far better, instead of forming promiscuous circles, if the investigation of the physical phenomena of spiritualism were to be made the subject of research conducted on rigidly scientific lines, a tendency in which direction is now fortunately observable, as scientists themselves are beginning to awaken to the importance of such experimentation. "It certainly seems a possibility," writes our author, "and something more than a possibility, that vampire entities may be on the watch and active to avail themselves of the chances to use the ectoplasmic emanations of mediums at séances, and this certainly constitutes a very formidable danger. It is even a fact that if a person who, consciously or unconsciously possesses the natural qualities of a materializing medium, is placed in certain noxious circumstances, for example if he visits a house which is powerfully haunted by malefic influences, especially if he be fatigued and languid so as to offer little or no resistance, a vampirish entity may temporarily utilise his vitality to attempt a partial materialization."

Apart from the vampire proper, there are various well-known types of phenomena of the vampire class which do not, strictly speaking, fall within this category. From the point of view of vampirism in its strict connotation, the class of phenomena which is so familiar, where one person of low vitality will unconsciously prey upon the vitality of a highly vitalised person, may be regarded as a sort of pseudo-vampirism, although many occultists regard any absorption of vitality or magnetism from other people, as vampirism. Vampirism proper is vampirism of the grave. Perhaps a more accurate term would be necro-vampirism, if distinction is to be made. That which is popularly considered to be vampirism, however, is concerned only with the living, and is a fact admitted even in orthodox medical circles. It is considered inadvisable by any doctor for the young to sleep with the extremely aged. The drain upon the youthful vitality from which the one derives benefit, is frequently sufficient to impair the health of the younger person. It is not a matter of conscious volition, but the result of a type of osmosis acting through the physical propinquity of two physical organisms. Nor does the question of sex enter into the matter, notwithstanding the case of old King David, and Abisag, the Sunamite maid, which is quoted by Mr. Summers. The magnetic healer is able to impart vitality as surely and equally well to members of either sex ; and in a similar manner the drain upon the vitality of his or her victims operates just as disastrously in the case of either male or female victims of the pseudo-vampire.

The ramifications of the subject of vampirism are extremely numerous, once departure is made from the strictest connotation of the term, bringing in all kinds of extraneous considerations, such as the question of witchcraft, of incubi and succubi, and many other bypaths which, though fascinating, have only an indirect relation to the main theme. Mr. Summers is to be congratulated in bringing together a vast mass of data and producing a treatise on the subject of vampirism which no serious student can afford to ignore. As previously indicated, he errs in the direction of including much extraneous material. Furthermore, his point of view being apparently that of a Roman Catholic, is alien to the wider outlook of the occultist. Yet notwithstanding his disposition to prefer above anything else the judgment of his Church, and to minimise the value of whatever fails to fit in with that Authority, it may safely be predicted that his learned work will long remain the standard one upon this gruesome subject.

THE EDITOR.

EVIDENTIAL SPIRIT INTERVENTION

By J. ARTHUR HILL

IT was long ago said by Schopenhauer that those who deny the reality of psychical phenomena are merely ignorant ; and this, of course, is true. But even among some of those who are aware of their reality, a certain amount of misapprehension exists, particularly—as is natural—among those who are without much personal experience of the phenomena. It is sometimes alleged, for instance, that the identity-details given are trivial, and, moreover, are such as might be obtained from astral shells or an impersonal cosmic reservoir or what not ; in other words, that they do not prove the agency of the full personality with cognition, emotion, and will. I agree that communications sometimes indicate that the communicator finds himself handicapped by the conditions, and cannot get his message through as fully or as clearly as he would like ; our atmosphere or condition feels thick and dense and foggy as compared with that in which he now habitually exists, and he experiences a certain confusion. But no details are trivial if they are evidential, and there is evidence enough to show that the communicator is really himself, with all his attributes. He knows what he is doing, he still loves those he loved when here, and he still desires to be of service to them. I have quoted cases which bear this out, in my just-published book, *Psychical Science and Religious Belief*,* and I propose to give one or two more cases in this article. The medium, Mr. Aaron Wilkinson, is a man for whom I have the highest regard ; I have had sittings with him at times for nearly twenty years, taking verbatim notes and giving careful study to the records : the evidence has become overwhelming, and it would be illogical as well as ungrateful if I withheld due acknowledgment of the conclusions to which I have been led, and of the gratitude which I feel towards him for exercising his powers on my behalf. I have sat with many of the well-known mediums in London, and I appreciate their efforts and their complete honesty : but, judging by my own experience, I must say that my friend Wilkinson is by far the most remarkable medium now living in England. I will quote from my verbatim accounts of sittings, enclosing in brackets any comments made at the time

* Rider & Co. London, 5s. net.

by the sitter, or any explanatory notes made now for the benefit of the reader.

(August 10th, 1928)

I had arranged for Mr. Allan Smith (pseudonym) to be present at this sitting, but I had not told Wilkinson that I was asking any visitor, and I introduced Mr. Smith without name or any indication of who he was or where he came from. He had lost his wife thirteen months before, and had asked for a sitting. I knew him only slightly, having met him and talked about psychical research on one occasion. He had read a few psychical books, but had had no first-hand experience. He made a good sitter, giving nothing away.

Immediately on beginning to get impressions, Wilkinson said :

“ I have a feeling about a boy, young, very athletic, wears shorts or gymnastic dress. He keeps moving round you. A lad in his teens; someone in the body, living. Arthur. Interested in sport. Have you someone of that name? (Yes.)

“ About a year ago you had some trouble; you were in a very gloomy atmosphere; you had some loss. Not much more than a year ago. There is somebody about who shares your interest in Arthur. He will be clever in some way, particularly so. Can you remember whether something happened on July 19th? (Yes.) It seemed to flash over your head. I don't know whether you would call it a birthday or not. I should think you are a politician; there are faces over your head; politicians. There is a woman with you, passed away rather quick. I don't know what she would ail. She would be over fifty. Nicely built, not very tall. There is a little bit of excitement from her. She has been trying to approach you before; she knows you. She had a very severe pain, but she could not be laid up a long time. One name is Mary, another name is Ellen. She is very anxious to get to you. She says she has changed her politics. Whether she was interested in politics or not I don't know. I should think Mary Ellen is all one word. (Note by J.A.H.: obviously meaning one name.) There is something about a house; you have thought of moving; if I interpret her wishes rightly, you should stay where you are. This lady has met a friend

called Annie, older than her, a lady, rather full, predeceased the other; very well dressed, rather proud. Have you known an Annie? Grey hair. Rather austere. She is older than the other woman, but not so near to you. They have met, and seem to have known each other. Do you know the name of Arnott? (Yes.)

“There is some boy—if this boy is permitted to follow certain lines, he will become very clever. The woman says he is to have his liberty; she is interested in him. She had someone called Jonas belonging to her; old, passed away a long time; someone on her father’s side, I think. (Later note by J.A.H.: Not recognised, but it was remote in time.)

“The woman is receding. She does not look worn in the face; she would not be ill long. She seems to be trying to tell you something. Been gone a year. I am vividly impressed that you should not move.

“Have you known a man named Scott, when you were young? A man is beside you, interested in politics, called Scott. Interested in your shade of politics. That lady is making another effort. There is an elderly woman with her, nicely built, grey hair, Martha Weston. Nice-looking, that woman; she is in connexion with the other woman. I shouldn’t wonder if you don’t change your politics, or leave them off. I don’t know what you are; I don’t know who you are or what you are.

“That woman wants you to know that she is perfectly well. She may entrance someone and speak to you. She has found something out; she is gratified. She is very partial to someone belonging to you, and has great hopes for them.

“That man called Scott was Thomas. I think you will go somewhere with a number of gentlemen, all men. On some business, perhaps. Not like going to the seaside. A number of gentlemen. I do feel prompted to say, ‘You need not be a teetotaller.’ As if some one about you were joking about it. Some one interested in matters like that.

“There is some one with you called William Smith; a little man, less than you; very old; full face, hair on his face but not much about his mouth; interested in being near you. (Note by J.A.H.: Not recognised; but in view of the fact that the sitter’s name was not known to the

medium, the name Smith is more or less significant. Another remote ancestor, perhaps.)

"That woman was an active woman; she had a lot in her mind to do, when she died. Not old, fifty-two, or fifty-three. I feel I have to talk to you, and say that she is still going to do it. I think you will hear of her again. I think she had a little sister who died young; a girl comes, been passed over a long time, too far back to be her child.

"I have seen an auric light over your head. It suggests that you may have a vision yourself—not perhaps regularly but occasionally. I think that woman has made a good effort; I think it is the first time she has got so near. . . . I don't think you are a man who is fond of display. This woman does not care for display; she would like things plain, not ornate."

At a later sitting, when Mr. Smith was not present, the same lady appeared, saying that her name was Mary Ellen, and that she had been only once before. "We do not change much; we change gradually—we change by progress, by growth."

I will now give the facts of the case, in the order in which they were mentioned. The reader can glance back to the record, in order to compare any details that he may have forgotten.

Mr. Smith has a son, very athletic, but aged twenty-one, so the medium got the age too young, saying that he was in his teens. The son's name is Arthur. (I did not know that Mr. Smith had a son; I knew nothing about his family.) He is very specially interested in sport, and plays tennis in important tournaments. Mr. Smith's wife died thirteen months before the sitting, so "not much more than a year ago" is correct. She died on July 19th, 1927. Mr. Smith was thinking of contesting a Parliamentary election, but finally decided against it. Mrs. Smith died with extreme suddenness, aged fifty-two. Her name was Mary Ellen. Mr. Smith had been thinking of moving from the house he lives in. Annie is his deceased sister; description correct. Scott is a man known formerly to Mr. Smith, a prominent man of the same shade of politics. Christian name Thomas. It is worth noting that at tea, before the sitting, the talk ran to some extent on Lord Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George, in such a way that if Wilkinson had made any inferences at all he would have surmised that Mr. Smith was a Liberal. But he is a Conservative. Weston was Mrs.

Smith's maiden name, and she had a sister, Martha. The little girl seems to be a niece of whom the Smiths were very fond; the medium was uncertain about its being a sister, and was wrong.

The main points, then, are :—

(1) The medium did not know the sitter, and had learnt nothing about him from me; indeed, several of the things said were not known and never had been known to me; e.g., that Mr. Smith had a son, Arthur, and a sister, Annie. Normal knowledge on the part of the medium is completely ruled out.

(2) Practically everything that was said, in so far as it is verifiable, was correct. The only incorrect things were that Arthur was said to be in his teens, whereas he was really out of them by a little over a year, and that a little girl was thought to be a sister, whereas she was a niece. Incidentally it may be pointed out that if the whole thing had been a reading of the sitter's mind, the age of the young man would presumably have been given correctly. It was not received clairaudiently from the mother, but was apparently an estimate of a thought-form which she caused to pass before the medium. The William Smith, though not verifiable, is probably correct, for the sitter's name was Smith, though the medium did not know that. These considerations rule out any explanation by chance coincidence. The facts given were too many and too specific and too accurate to be due to chance.

(3) There is evidence not only of identity but also of continued affection; also of willed effort to get two messages through—messages of comfort and help to the husband left on earth.

I may say that the sitter was completely convinced of the presence of his wife and that she was communicating with him. It happens that, though she did not know me personally, she knew of my existence; Mr. Smith had read some of my books and had talked to her about them; he had also told her of the one conversation that he had had with me. It is worth noting that the prediction about his journey with a company of men turned out true. He went on a deputation connected with the City Council, of which he is a member, not long after the sitting. His wife was apparently aware of this coming event.

We may reasonably say, then, that there is evidence for the identity of the communicating spirit, and sufficient indication that she was aware of what was going on in the surroundings

of those left behind ; also proof of her continued affection and solicitude for their welfare ; and there was obviously a conscious will and effort to help them.

The Thomas Scott was not a teetotaller himself, but was not a heavy drinker ; it is, however—for reasons which it is not necessary to go into—conceivable that he might make the remark attributed to him, either by way of a joke or because he thought a moderate amount of stimulant would be good for the sitter, who is practically an abstainer. The remark about Mrs. Smith having changed her politics is, of course, without evidential quality either way. It may be a joke or it may be a semi-serious indication that she sees things rather differently now. It did not seem to have any special significance for the sitter.

This was an exceptionally good case, for the evidential conditions were almost perfect ; the medium did not know that he was going to meet any stranger, he did not know the sitter, and the latter was introduced without name and without any information given. Care was taken that the ordinary conversation before the sitting should give nothing away ; indeed—though quite accidentally—some of it suggested what would have been an incorrect inference as to the sitter's politics.

I have had many similar cases, but perhaps none in which the conditions were quite so good. In this case the most reasonable interpretation is quite clear, and there is little difficulty in deciding about the justified inferences. It is on this account perhaps less interesting than cases in which something happens that is not easily explicable. There is attraction in something that presents a problem. Moreover, it is from the more difficult cases that we are likely to learn most. As Herschell used to say in regard to matters of physical science, when something happens which according to accepted theories ought not to happen, we are near to a discovery. If the new fact is established, accepted theories will have to be abandoned or modified to admit of the incorporation of the fact. Or the new fact may point the way to some understanding of a process. I propose to quote a case containing facts possibly of this kind ; partly on the chance of some reader having experience which may throw light on it. There is an explanation, almost certainly an important one, if only we could find it. But it may be that we are still without necessary links, and that the explanation will have to wait a while,

At a sitting on May 22nd, 1925, the medium said :—

“ I am faintly conscious of some man by the door. Someone is ushering him in. An elderly man. He seemed to follow you (my sister) into the room. Not really fully awake to consciousness or bearings. Not long been passed over ; as if someone was helping him forward. Has someone died next door ? I get an impression ‘ next door ’ (pointing west). Can’t see the man, but feel his presence. Someone with him, pushing him forward. Henry. No relation. Whoever he is, he is not fully detached from his physical environment. Well, there’s a woman in front of him ; shorter than him. She has reared herself up in front of him. Not as old as him, but elderly ; oval features, quite grey, been passed over longer than the man. Not sure if Brooks is not connected with this. Curious ! feel as if I had to say ‘ Next door.’ Brooks. Some purpose in that man being brought here.”

Later, in trance, the control said : “ There’s a Henry, just wakened up ; houses above you.”

This seemed puzzling. A William Brooksbank, well known to me, had died three weeks before the sitting—on April 29th—but he had no connexion with the people next door, and no one had died next door. Brooksbank’s wife had predeceased him, as said, and the descriptions made it fairly certain that William Brooksbank and his wife were intended. At later sittings the full name “ William Brooksbank ” was given. Why, then, in this first sitting was “ Brooks ” given, with “ Henry,” and “ next door ” ?

I found after the first sitting that my next-door neighbour, who is in business, traded under the style of Henry Brooke and Co. But Henry Brooke died some years ago, and I did not know him. There was no reason for his appearance, and indeed he did not appear ; for the description and the recent passing made it clear that the man seen was William Brooksbank. But why the emergence of the “ Henry Brooks ” and “ next door ” ?

There is a story—probably mythical, for he was not musical—that Charles Darwin performed what he called “ fool-experiments ” such as playing the trombone to his plants, in order to see whether their rate of growth was influenced. Perhaps it is legitimate to evolve fool-hypotheses, as for instance ;

My friend William Brooksbank becomes aware that it is possible to communicate with me; he learns this fact from my relatives on the other side, who are in the habit of communicating when opportunity offers. Some of them knew him very well in life. He remarks that he would like to call in and see me some time. Accordingly, next time the medium is here, one or other of my relatives escorts Brooksbank here; he had some difficulty in getting him, for he was not in the same department, and my relative had to telephone to various parts of the supernal realms before he got him. Perhaps celestial page-boys patrolled some of the temples or music-palaces, calling out the name. Anyhow, by some means there was a little confusion, and Henry Brooke, hearing the call, mistook the name—or the page-boy had got it wrong—and said: "Yes, that seems to be for me; I know Claremont, Thornton." He comes along, but finds there is some mistake; it is not the right house, and he does not know me. He indicates that his interests are next door, and that his name is Henry Brooke. He observes William Brooksbank being helped forward, and is told that this is the man—the names are similar and some natural mistake has occurred if Brooke was summoned. Brooke understands, and retires. It happens to be a fact that Brooksbank lived at a house which also was west of ours; its location is correctly indicated by the trance remark: "Houses above you," for they are higher up the hill; though this was said in association with "Henry." Altogether there was almost inextricable confusion, though it was clear enough—afterwards, when I had had time to do some disentangling—that two personalities were concerned, and that the two were the two men I have indicated. Exactly how that confusion came about, is a matter for speculation.

My hypothesis, as crudely stated above, sounds very absurd, and perhaps it is absurd. But the things happened *as if* something of the sort took place. If we said "telepathy" instead of "telephoning" to the various courts of Heaven it might sound a little more scientific and respectable, but it comes to the same thing. The case does not stand alone, for I have had other incidents of the same kind; and Dr. L. P. Jacks once described a similar incident which occurred at one of his sittings with Mrs. Leonard.* Probably any hypothesis that we can at present evolve is sure to be wrong. These apparently inexplicable things have meaning, and perhaps important meaning;

* *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1919.

but we need a large array of facts before we can hope to arrive at the true interpretation. Speculation is easy and attractive, but we must have facts to guide our guesses. And as to my guess that some sort of confusion occurred in the case quoted, I am not very sure about that. I wonder sometimes whether such things are due, not to confusion or inability, but to some deliberate intention. May they not be brought about purposely, by way of giving us a problem to solve—something to exercise our mental muscles? The subject is tremendously difficult, and we are early pioneers and beginners. No doubt the powers that be are watching our efforts and giving us knowledge as fast as it is possible, but we can only learn as far as our capacity permits. The capacity grows, as well as the knowledge, and the powers increase the difficulty of our sums, so to speak, as capacity develops. If this is so, we are being helped from the other side, as in the first-quoted case, though in a less obvious but deeper way. As I get older, I doubt more and more whether anything happens by chance. Chance is a word which helps us to disguise our ignorance. But I am inclined to think that everything happens by the purposeful direction of some mind or Mind. This, however, is only a sort of large and fundamental Faith-venture. In sectional processes there is always the possibility of cog-slips in the machinery; where human minds are concerned there may be mistakes and lapses. But, even so, the evidence is adequate; there *is* help from the other side.

INCARNATION

By OLIVE LINNELL

All outer form an inner thought makes manifest,
And spirit is the vital breath of thought;
We feel, we think, we choose, and mould an image,
Then view at length the thing that we have wrought.

Christ came—God's thought in human form made manifest—
Divinity embodied, Love in Truth;
And form is pregnant still with love immortal
Where man conceives God's everlasting Youth,

RECENT SCIENTIFIC CONFIRMATION OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"

By WILLIAM KINGSLAND

WE have travelled a very long way in our accepted scientific knowledge of the constitution of matter since H. P. Blavatsky wrote in 1882,* "The men of science have just found out 'a fourth state of matter,' whereas the Occultists have penetrated years ago beyond the sixth, and, therefore, do not infer, but know of the existence of the seventh, the last."

Madame Blavatsky refers here to the discovery by Professor Crooks of "radiant matter"; but this "radiant matter" was very far at that time from being attributed to the disintegration of any atom or molecule of the so-called elementary substances, or chemical elements. Only a few years previously, at the British Association meeting in 1873, Professor Clerk Maxwell had laid it down dogmatically that—

None of the processes of Nature, since the time when Nature began, have produced the slightest difference in the properties of any molecule. We are therefore unable to ascribe either the existence of the molecules or the identity of their properties to any of the causes which we call natural.

But we are surely entitled to ask, how does the Professor *know* what has taken place "since the time when Nature began"? Yet even this amazing statement is outdone in his next paragraph.

Natural causes, as we know, are at work, which tend to modify, if they do not at length destroy, all the arrangements and dimensions of the earth and the whole solar system. But though in the course of ages catastrophes have occurred and may yet occur in the heavens, though ancient systems may be dissolved and new systems evolved out of their ruins, the molecules out of which these systems are built—the foundation-stones of the material universe—remain unbroken and unworn. They continue this day as they were created—perfect in number and measure and weight.

In the light of our present scientific knowledge of the constitution of the chemical atom or molecule, these positive statements are seen to be not merely untrue, but also glaring examples of the limitations of the orthodox scientific mind,

* *The Theosophist*, Sept. 1882.

rashly endeavouring to confine Nature within its own narrow field of experience. We are not free from this by any means even to-day. There are many phenomena known to the occult student which to-day are denied *à priori* by orthodox science, and for which, therefore, no evidence, however cogent, is ever accepted.

This statement of Professor Maxwell was, however, the accepted scientific view up to the very end of last century, and even beyond. In a work on *Matter, Ether and Motion*, by Professor Dolbear, in 1899, we find the following statement in line with that of Professor Maxwell twenty-seven years previously.

There is nothing to indicate that attrition among atoms or molecules ever removes any of their material. It appears as if one might affirm in the strongest way that the atoms of matter never wear out. . . . So one may be led to the conclusion that whatever else may decay, atoms do not, but remain as types of permanency through all imaginable changes—permanent bodies in form and all physical qualities, and permanent in time, capable apparently of enduring through infinite time.

To-day we know that the atom does disintegrate; that it is a congeries of still smaller particles, of "protons" and "electrons," and the scientific imagination has even stretched itself so far as to conceive of it as being a solar system in miniature.

All who are familiar with the writings of H. P. Blavatsky know with what scorn and contempt she treated the dogmatic "scientific" assertions of her time—and the scientists retaliated by writing her down as a charlatan and a fraud. But her statements in *The Secret Doctrine* regarding the nature of matter and force cannot be explained away as fraudulent, nor even as *plagiarisms*—a favourite word with those who still endeavour to disparage her work. The propositions which she advanced were far beyond anything that any accepted scientific or other writer had put forward at that time; and if she "plagiarised" from occult works—well, she states at the commencement of her work—quoting from Montaigne: "Gentlemen, I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them."

Many of her statements respecting the nature of matter and "force" have since been fully confirmed, others partially so, whilst there still remains a region which only future discoveries will confirm—and, indeed, which can only be confirmed by the persevering student of occult science.

Let us take two further statements from *The Secret Doctrine*.*

The Occult Sciences do not regard either electricity or any of the forces supposed to be generated by it, as matter, *in any of the states known to physical science*; to put it more clearly, none of these “forces,” so-called, are either solids, gases, or fluids. If it did not look pedantic, an Occultist would even object to electricity being called a fluid—as it is *an effect and not a cause*.

It is on the doctrine of the illusive nature of matter, and the infinite divisibility of the atom, that the whole science of Occultism is built. It opens limitless horizons to *substance* informed by the divine breath of its soul in every possible state of tenuity, states still undreamt of by the most spiritually disposed chemists and physicists.†

Are these plagiarisms? If so, then everyone who writes a book on scientific teachings other than his own special discoveries, is a plagiarist. Madame Blavatsky wrote in the name of the Occult Science in which she was deeply versed; but she never claimed other than that she was presenting what was already *known*, and indeed was to be found in occult works, both accessible and inaccessible to the general reader. Thus she says :‡

What is contained in this work is to be found scattered throughout thousands of volumes embodying the scriptures of the great Asiatic and early European religions, hidden under glyph and symbol, and hitherto left unnoticed because of this veil. What is now attempted is to gather the oldest tenets together and to make of them one harmonious and unbroken whole. The sole advantage which the writer has over her predecessors is that she need not resort to personal speculations and theories. For this work is a partial statement of what she herself has been taught by more advanced students, supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation.

But now let us see how near modern science has come, or is coming, into line with the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine* respecting the infinite divisibility of matter, and the nature of “force.” In the Annual Kelvin Lecture delivered in 1926 by Professor Sir J. J. Thomson, F.R.S., before the Institution of Electrical Engineers, we find him advancing the proposition that electro-dynamic forces as classically conceived and expressed in mathematical equations, do not represent any ultimate reality, but are only, so to speak, representations of average values, just as the pressure of a gas in a closed vessel is the average result of an innumerable number of impacts of the molecules of the gas moving at very varying velocities. This carries him

* Vol. I, p. 517, first ed.

† *Ibid.*, p. 520.

‡ S.D., Vol. I, Preface.

to the view that the electron itself—the ultimate particle which science has at present reached—is a compound body; that there are in fact still further and finer states of matter (or *substance*) to investigate. Here are the concluding words of his lecture.

On the view that the force is intermittent the electric field must have a structure, and as electrons and positive particles are the centres of intense electric fields, they are probably much more complex than the usual conception of them, and must be regarded as centres of complex systems associated with an electron or a positive particle. If we compare the atom with its electrons to a solar system, we may compare an electron or a positive particle to the centre of a nebula, and regard the electron as surrounded by an atmosphere of small particles. . . . These considerations suggest that just as matter is made up of molecules, and molecules are made up of electrons and positive particles, this is not the end of the story; there are still other worlds to conquer, the worlds which build up the electrons and positive particles.

So, then, it would appear that our modern physicists have actually arrived by experimental and inductive methods at the point indicated by Madame Blavatsky forty-four years ago, and familiar to every occult student since then and long before then: the point where matter (or *substance*) is seen to have, in an *inner* direction, the same infinite vista that exists for us when we look *outwards* to the infinite extension of the starry universe.

So much for the material fact; but every material fact pushed to its limit brings us to a metaphysical problem. What is, anyway, this thing which we call space? Einstein has not disposed of this problem for us, even with his "finite and yet unbounded universe." Speaking of Einstein's theory, Professor Eddington says, in his work, *Space, Time, and Gravitation* (p. 200):

The theory of relativity has passed in review the whole subject-matter of physics. It has unified the great laws which by the precision of their formulation and the exactness of their application have won the proud place in human knowledge which physical science holds to-day. And yet, in regard to the nature of things, this knowledge is only an empty shell—a form of symbols. It is knowledge of structural form, and not knowledge of content, which must surely be the stuff of our consciousness.

This is precisely what the *Secret Doctrine* teaches. Beyond "the knowledge of structural form" lies the knowledge of what lies at the root of these; or, as H. P. Blavatsky says,* "Its (Electricity) *noumenon*, he (the Occultist) would say, *is a conscious*

* S.D., I, 517.

cause.” At the one pole *matter*, apparently, yet not actually, dead. At the other pole *spirit*; the all-pervading conscious cause—and the two are One. Phenomenally, and to the individual subject, that One Absolute Noumenon appears as an infinite multiplicity, and must so appear so long as the subject is limited by the categories of time, space, and causation. To get beyond these limitations, to know oneself as the birthless and deathless SELF, and thereby to know the whole universe: such is, and has been from the most ancient times, the aim of the man who has “entered the Path” indicated by the Ancient Wisdom Religion of which Madame Blavatsky wrote.

Professor Eddington continues the statement which I have given above with the following words:

Here is a limit of aspects deep within the world of physics, and yet unattainable by the methods of physics. And, moreover, we have found that where science has progressed the farthest, the mind has but regained from Nature that which the mind has put into Nature. We have found a strange foot-print on the shore of the unknown. We have devised profound theories, one after another, to account for its origin. At last we have succeeded in reconstructing the creature that made the foot-print. And lo! it is our own.

In his latest work, *The Nature of the Physical World*, Professor Eddington now even suggests that the ultimate substance of the world may be what he calls “mind stuff.”

Verily Occult Science and *The Secret Doctrine* appear to be coming to their own at the hands of modern science: in physics at least, if not in other directions also. But the modern scientist is still loth to acknowledge that there exists to-day, and has always existed, a science superior to his own; that there are those who really *know* where he is still groping in the dark. He does not as yet realise that there is a method superior to that which only employs the physical senses, aided only by such physical apparatus as he is able to invent. He does not realise that the way to the inner adytum of Nature is through the inner senses of man himself.

Well, the further knowledge is only for those who diligently seek; it can never in the nature of the case be found by those who deny its existence *à priori*, or who only find in *The Secret Doctrine* of H. P. Blavatsky “an inane effusion.”

The pure gold of man’s inner spiritual nature, the “philosopher’s stone,” the “inmost centre in us all, where truth abides in fulness,” is only to be attained by an arduous “alchemical” process; and—

" TO KNOW

Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,
Than in effecting entry for the light
Supposed to be without."*

Man is both the seeker and the thing sought. Seeking for TRUTH he finds *Himself*, for in his root and source he is ONE with the Root and Source of ALL—which some call GOD.

"Verily he who has seen, heard, comprehended and known the Self, by him is this entire Universe known."†

* Browning, *Paracelsus*.

† *Brihad-âranyaka Upanishad*, II, 4. 5.

THE ANGEL'S TASK

By VIOLET PUZEY

I SAW a Vision.

A great Angel swept through Space. And as the grey cloud of His presence drew nearer, I felt His irresistible force, His might, and His infinite tenderness. With Him surged the sound of rushing waters, and yet the stillness of the tideless Deep.

Ever and anon as He came, His arms spread wide, and from the cupping palms flew globes of crystal, which, as they streamed through Space, changed to white flame. Each flame, a thought of God, found intended sanctuary in the inmost depths of a living spirit.

And the great Angel drifted purposefully nearer Earth; the dim green star, the globe of Sacrifice.

And I saw a white flame light the heart of a man, who then gave up wealth and place and name, and went to live with and among the poor.

Some said he was "converted," others that he was crazed, but he thought only of the Sermon on the Mount, and of living to hold the white flame.

But the dim green of Brotherhood gleamed yet a little brighter thenceforward, and another jewel-point glowed on the Cross of Sacrifice.

And the name of the great Angel was Death.

For in the mind of God Inspiration, Death and Immortality are the inseparable Trinity of Being. And Sowing and Reaping the two halves of a circle.

THE IMPASSABLE BARRIER

By CAPTAIN G. A. HOPE (Grahame Houblon)

[NOTE. I had this story from Mary Conley—whose name is not Mary Conley—and I have told it as far as possible as she did.]

“ I WONDER if I might ask you a favour, Mary,” said Charlotte Banks.

When one’s hostess takes one aside, before one has had even time to unbutton one’s gloves, with a rather diffident appeal for a favour, one expects the worst. Charlotte was my oldest friend, not long married, and this was my first visit to her in her new home—a house past its three-hundredth birthday—so I drew the only possible conclusion.

“ Don’t tell me what it is,” I said, “ let me guess. Do I mind sleeping in the haunted room? Not in the least, so long as I don’t know that it is haunted.”

She stared for a moment, and then laughed.

“ Don’t be frightened,” she said. “ I don’t want to put you into a haunted room. But the fact is that we are short of rooms for servants, and I wanted to know if you would mind my putting Josephine into what we call the haunted room. It’s next to yours, as it happens, and opens into it.”

I did mind, a great deal. Josephine is my maid, a Breton girl. She had been with me over ten years, and I was very fond of her.

“ I can’t have my Josephine scared to death, not even for you, Charlotte dear,” I replied. “ Is this ghost of yours very terrible? ”

“ I don’t know. The room has not been used for years, but Tom has never heard any tradition about it. All he knows is that twice, when he was a small boy, guests were put in it and left in a hurry next morning. But he never knew why. Come and have a look at it.”

It was certainly a very nice room, cheerfully furnished, with two windows looking out on the garden, and without any sign that I could notice—and I generally can notice such things—of the unpleasant atmosphere of a normal haunted room. The only drawback to it was that one of the windows was shadowed

by a large acacia, the twigs of which must have whipped the glass in a wind.

Charlotte asked me if I felt anything, and heaved a sigh of relief when I said I did not.

"I don't suppose there is anything really wrong with it," she said, "and if you don't mention it to Josephine, she won't be scared."

So I gave in, and, to my lasting regret, agreed not to tell Josephine anything. She is an excellent maid, and as regards looks and dress can hold her own anywhere. But all the same, she is a Breton peasant, and there are few folk in the world in closer touch with the extra-human side of Nature than the Bretons. Knowing this, I thought that if told she was in a haunted room, she would imagine all sorts of things and scare herself ill. What I did not then realise was that, being in close touch with such things does not necessarily induce a person to frighten herself by imagining horrors. But, on the other hand, folk like the Bretons know quite well how to deal effectively with unpleasant visitors from another plane of Nature.

There remained to be considered only the gossip of the housekeeper's room, but Charlotte reassured me about that. Only the butler and housekeeper knew anything about the vague reputation of the room, and there was not the slightest chance of their saying anything about it.

I must confess that I lay awake till late that night, listening for a call from Josephine. But I heard nothing, and next morning she told me that she had had a most comfortable night. I was greatly relieved, and so was Charlotte, and we decided that the ghost, if there had ever been one, had worn out in course of time, as they usually do.

Next night, I went to sleep without any apprehensions, but at half-past two, as I later discovered, well in the dead hours, I awoke with a vague sense of being called. I listened, but heard nothing. Presently, however, as my faculties revived, I heard a sound of bumping in Josephine's room, as if she was falling out of bed, and then I heard myself called unmistakably, "Mamzelle Marie!" but in a choked voice, as if by someone who was being strangled.

I was out of bed in a moment, the bumping going on till I opened her door, and when I switched on the light I found her lying on the floor unconscious, covered with blood, and with

her nightgown torn to rags. I wasted no time over investigations, but carried her into my own room. Before I could call for help, Charlotte and Tom Banks arrived, having heard the riot, and with them an elderly doctor, who by great good luck happened to be staying in the house.

Poor Josephine was in a dreadful state, literally mangled, and bleeding from a number of wounds, all on her neck and shoulders. Most of the wounds looked like claw marks, but the worst of them were on her throat and gave me a horrible shock; for they were unmistakably made by human teeth, very large and sharp, but unquestionably human. We also noticed that she was holding the crucifix of her rosary in her right hand.

While the doctor and I administered first aid, Tom and Charlotte examined the room. There was no one in it, and, what is more, no one could have entered the room, except from mine, as she had locked the outer door, and both the windows were closed and latched. Nevertheless, there were all the signs of a savage fight. Her bed-clothes were all over the place, covered with blood, and a small table and chair by her bed had been knocked over. Apparently the struggle had begun on the bed, and she had fallen on the floor. Her assailant had left her just as I opened the door and came in.

Ugly though her wounds looked, they were not deep, and she was soon on the mend. Her first remark to me when she was conscious again, was about her ill-fortune in having been unprepared for her assailant.

"Had I only known, Mamzelle Marie," she said, "I would have sprinkled holy-water, and the thing would not have dared come near me. I might have put my rosary round my neck, but it was lying as usual on the table beside me. I fear no evil thing when I am prepared for it: we are used to them in my country. But to be taken unawares by such a thing! Ah, one is helpless. What was it, Mamzelle Marie? *Mon Dieu, je n'en sais trop!* I awoke to find something holding me with nails like claws, and with its teeth in my neck—a human being it seemed, but strong beyond human strength. I am no weakling, but I could do nothing with it. I could but call to Mamzelle and reach for my rosary, and just as the thing was pulling me off the bed, my fingers found the cross, and the thing snarled, in a woman's voice, and after that I remember no more."

The old doctor was there too, and as we went away, I asked him what he made of Josephine's story. As he was a doctor

I should not have been surprised at his pooh-poohing the whole tale as hysteria, though how he proposed to explain the vicious claw and tooth wounds as hysteria I did not know. To my surprise, he did nothing of the kind.

"You're rather fond of that girl, Miss Conley?" he said.

"Very fond of her," I replied.

"Well, I'm afraid you'll have to part with her, while you stay in England at all events. As soon as ever she is well enough to travel, she must go back to France, across the water."

"Across the water?" I echoed, as he laid strong emphasis on the words.

"Just so. I knew there'd be trouble when I heard that some one was sleeping in that room. I know what's the matter with the place, though Tom and his wife don't: but Tom's father told me, and I shall have to tell them now. It is something in the nature of a vampire, and from what old Banks told me, once it has tasted a person's blood, it's apt to follow them up, though that room is its headquarters. But like most evil things, it can't cross moving water: I don't know why, but so it is, and she is safe here for the moment." By his advice, we had taken Josephine to a cottage hospital, which happened to be on the other side of a large brook. "Sooner or later the thing will find its way round. However, the Channel will be an impassable barrier."

So it proved to be. Josephine was not again molested, but she would never again come to England, and I did not ask her to do so. Myself, I suspect the acacia tree more than the room, and so did Tom Banks, and the tree came down. But I have never heard if anything resulted from its being removed.

AN ALCHEMICAL BANQUET

By H. STANLEY REDGROVE, B.Sc., A.I.C.

IN the days before the War, it was usual for me to dine with the late Professor Ferguson on the occasion of his visits to London, and, after dinner, we would sit up into the early hours of the morning talking on numerous subjects, especially alchemy and alchemical books, concerning which Ferguson had a vast store of knowledge. He was a delightful conversationalist, a broad-minded, tolerant thinker of the very best type. He told me how for years he had endeavoured to arouse interest in the early history of chemistry in Glasgow without success, and expressed a pleasurable amazement that I had been able to find sufficient folk interested in the subject in London to make possible the running of the Alchemical Society, of which he was Honorary President throughout its three or four years of existence.

Looking over some reviews of the Society's *Journal*, I notice one* in which the reviewer—who ought to have known better, since his profession was that of imparting knowledge to others—writes, *apropos* of a paper by Mr. A. E. Waite, in which the desirability is urged of distinguishing the alchemical texts which are contributions to the mystical side, from those whose concern is purely with material things. “Even Browning's Grammarian might well ask, ‘Is it worth it?’”

These words are worth preserving as the final utterance of an age of obscurantism. To-day we live in a clearer mental atmosphere.

It is, indeed, a remarkable sign of the times—the very real interest now taken in the many problems which alchemy presents, and the realisation that the solution of these problems is vitally necessary to the understanding of the evolution, not only of chemical science, but, indeed, of human thought itself.

Dr. E. J. Holmyard has just written an excellent little book,† intended both for the general reader and for college students, in which the story of chemistry is woven round the lives of some of its greatest exponents. Nearly a quarter of its pages are devoted to alchemists, the men specially selected as the

* Published in *The Technical Journal*, May, 1913.

† *The Great Chemists*. By Eric John Holmyard, M.A., M.Sc., D.Litt., F.I.C. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd. Price 3s. 6d. net.

greatest adepts in the science in alchemical days being Geber (Jabir ibn Hayyan), Rhazes (Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakariyya), Roger Bacon, and Paracelsus, truly a quaternary of alchemical giants.

Geber is a man of quite exceptional interest, since it is possible that he was the originator of the famous sulphur-mercury theory of the metals—a theory in the genesis of which it seems certain that the mystical concept of man as a being of body and spirit, and ideas connected with sex, played a large part. Towards the close of the fifteenth century, certain Latin works appeared claiming to be translations from Arabic MSS. of Geber. They were many times reprinted and were translated into English by Richard Russell, "a Lover of Chymistry," and published in London in 1678, under the title of the "Works of Geber," the works in question being *Of the Investigation or Search of Perfection*, *Of the Sum of Perfection* (two books), *Of the Invention of Verity, or Perfection*, and *Of Furnaces*.

These works have now been re-issued, with the addition of illustrations taken from the Latin edition published at Berne in 1545, in a delightful volume edited by Dr. Holmyard.*

In the whole history of alchemy, few works are more important than these. Not only do they contain a very clear exposition of the sulphur-mercury theory and of the concept of the Philosopher's Stone as the perfect medicine for metals; but, in addition, a wealth of knowledge is displayed concerning chemical substances and the technology of chemical operations.

Nowadays, of course, it is easy to scoff at the sulphur-mercury theory as absurd; but the theory provided a real impetus to research, as did also the hope of confecting the Stone of the Wise. Dr. Holmyard, in the book previously referred to, having used the word "unfortunately" in connection with the lure of transmutation, immediately adds a correction: "Yet perhaps we should not say 'unfortunately'; a vivid inspiration of some kind was essential if men were to labour at such a difficult, exacting and—in those days—unhealthy occupation."†

The authenticity of the works ascribed to Geber was seriously called in question by Professor Berthelot, who brought forward weighty evidence for regarding them as having been written

* *The Works of Geber. Englished by Richard Russell, 1678.* A new edition with Introduction. By E. J. Holmyard, M.A., D.Litt. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd; (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc.) Price 6s. net.

† *The Great Chemists*, p. 28.

not earlier than the fourteenth century. Further facts, however, brought to light by Dr. Holmyard and others, have shaken Berthelot's conclusions; and for reasons stated in his introduction to the new edition, Dr. Holmyard is inclined to regard them as translations of the genuine works of the great Arabian experimentalist and thinker.

Whoever wrote them, they provide an insuperable answer to the two opinions concerning alchemy current previous to the publication of my *Alchemy: Ancient and Modern*. These were: (1) the commonly accepted view that the alchemists were a set of knaves and fools; and (2) the view held by a small school of thought, that the alchemists treated purely of mystical matters—the transmutation of man's soul—under the veil of chemistry.

In point of fact, whilst under the term "alchemist" are gathered knaves and fools and also certain mystics who used a chemical symbology, the main body of alchemists were searchers into natural secrets—secrets of minerals and metals—in a word, the secrets of chemistry. But, as made plain in *Alchemy: Ancient and Modern*, their philosophy had its roots in mysticism. Alchemy was the product of mysticism applied to metallurgy. I am glad to find Dr. Holmyard, although less sympathetic to the mysticism of the alchemists, perhaps, than myself, concurs. "Alchemy," he writes, "defined as the art and philosophy of making gold by occult methods, dates from the beginnings of the Christian era, and its twofold origin—metallurgical facts and mystical speculation—cannot be doubted."*

The question of alchemy's historical roots remains. Egypt is usually assigned as its birthplace; but from time to time there have been intimations of a quest and a doctrine like that of Western alchemy far back in the history of China.

A very interesting contribution on this subject by Mr. F. Hadland Davis was published in *The Academy* in 1913, and an equally interesting paper, written in China itself, by Professor Herbert Chatley, B.Sc., appeared in *The Journal of the Alchemical Society* in the same year.† A more complete study of the subject, by Dr. O. S. Johnson,‡ has recently been published, containing

* *The Great Chemists*, pp. 9 and 10.

† *The Journal of the Alchemical Society*. Vol. ii. pp. 33-38 (Part 8, Dec. 1913).

‡ *A Study of Chinese Alchemy*. By Obed Simon Johnson, Ph.D., 8 ins. x 5½ ins., pp. xiv+156. Shanghai, China: The Commercial Press, Ltd. London: Luzac & Co., 16, Great Russell Street, W.C. Price 12s. net.

a mass of relevant information and raising many points of the greatest interest.

Chinese alchemy had its roots in Taoism; and Tao, the eternal principle of Perfection, closely resembles that Hermetic "One Thing" which "is the cause of all perfection throughout the whole world," and by means of which "were all things created."*

The Taoists of China seem to have sought perfection in exactly the same two directions as that in which the quest was pursued by the alchemists of the West. They sought gold, the perfect metal; they sought the perfection of life in a medicine which would endow man with immortality.

The lofty philosophy of Lao Tzū soon became sullied with superstitious notions, and Taoism degenerated into a species of magic of the most absurd type. But as Dr. Johnson indicates, the influence in other directions of the alchemical quest or quests was of a salutary character. It encouraged metallurgical and medical research; and, although the Chinese have failed to evolve any coherent body of science concerning drugs and metals, in the manufacture of certain articles they early achieved a degree of technological perfection which, in some respects, has not been surpassed. "Their skill in metallurgy," Dr. Johnson writes, "their brilliant dyestuffs and manifold pigments, their early knowledge of gunpowder and pyrotechnics, their asphyxiating and anæsthetic compounds—all bear eloquent testimony to this fact."† The mystical philosophy of Taoism, it would seem, has borne some very practical fruit.

The doctrine of Yang and Yin, the eternal male and female principles of the Universe, played a large part in the development of Chinese alchemy. These principles closely correspond to the sulphur and mercury of the alchemy of the West. Moreover, it is interesting to note, "Mercury was . . . regarded by the Chinese as the soul of metals,"‡ and cinnabar, a compound of sulphur and mercury, was the chief agent used by them in their endeavours to perform transmutation.

These are significant facts and Dr. Johnson thinks that Western alchemy may have had its origin in the infiltration of ideas derived from China.

*A translation of "The Smaragdine Table," from which these words are quoted, will be found in *Alchemy: Ancient and Modern*, pp. 40-41.

† *A Study of Chinese Alchemy*, p. 104.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

This is possible, but has not been demonstrated; and the independent genesis of similar ideas concerning the nature of metals and the possibility of transmutation seems, when the true character of these ideas are taken into consideration, not unlikely—a matter to which I shall again refer.

The part England has played in the evolution of alchemy is of interest. The first alchemical book to be translated from Arabic into Latin was a treatise ascribed to Morenius, and the translation was the work of an Englishman, Robert of Chester, who completed the task in 1144. Roger Bacon, one of the really great figures in the history of alchemy, was also a native of these isles.

Thomas Norton, who lived in the fifteenth century, was an English alchemist of a somewhat different type. In a previous book, Dr. Holmyard described him as "in all probability a charlatan."* This judgment is too harsh. Certainly, however, Norton was no great chemist, and he does not appear to have enriched science by a single observation of importance. Nevertheless, his book, *The Ordinall of Alchimy*† very readable on account of its sprightly style and atmosphere of romance, is of considerable interest for the light it sheds on alchemy in England of the fifteenth century. The attractive facsimile reproduction of the book from Elias Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, and of Vaughan's curious and beautifully executed engravings, which has just been published, is, therefore, very welcome indeed.

In this book Norton tells us that the great secret of transmutation can only be learnt orally from an adept. He gives an account of his own initiation (his Master in Alchemy is supposed to have been Sir George Ripley) and how his labours were twice brought to nought by the cupidity of dishonest persons who stole the completed Magistry from him. In the course of his book he indulges in many curious speculations, one of his peculiar notions being that metals were produced in the earth, not, as was generally supposed, by a process analogous to sexual procreation, but as the result of astrological influences. The *Ordinall*, however, contains little or nothing of a practical character and is very unlike *The Works of Geber*.

* *Chemistry in the Time of Dalton* (London, 1925), p. 45.

† *The Ordinall of Alchimy*. By Thomas Norton of Bristol. Being a facsimile reproduction from *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, with annotations by Elias Ashmole. With Introduction by E. J. Holmyard, M.A., D.Litt., F.I.C., 8½ ins. x 5½ ins., pp. viii+125. London: Edward Arnold & Co., 41 and 43, Maddox Street, W.1. Price 10s. 6d. net.

Indeed, by the fifteenth century the concept of the Philosopher's Stone had served its purpose and reached, or rather passed, the term of its utility. A new impetus to research was required—an alchemical revolution was called for.

Paracelsus supplied the impetus and made possible the revolution. Without in any way denying the possibility of metallic transmutation, he turned the minds of alchemists in a new direction—the perfecting of medicines. Moreover, Paracelsus, more than anyone else, was responsible for the gradual supersession of the sulphur-mercury theory. He lent his authority to the newer hypothesis—some say he initiated the idea—that the metals were threefold in constitution. This, the sulphur-mercury-salt theory, may be envisaged as not very different from Geber's notion, and in some ways an improvement on it; but the new theory had a much shorter life than the older one.

Was this because it lacked the universality of the latter?

The origin of error, perhaps, is more mysterious than that of truth. At any rate, if the sulphur-mercury theory were true, the fact that different schools, separated by time and space, have adopted it would occasion no surprise.

And, after all has been said, does not the theory contain a real heart of truth? Turn where we will, we are confronted with duality. In the moral sphere we meet with the duality of good and evil. Life manifests duality in its sexual dichotomy. There is the duality of force and inertia without which motion is impossible, and the duality of electron and proton without which matter could not exist.

What are these seemingly opposed though really complementary pairs but sulphur and mercury?

It may be said that the duality of Nature is but seeming, being a creation of the mind which can think only of a thing in so far as it is contradistinguished from its opposite, light being inconceivable apart from darkness, darkness inconceivable apart from light.

And it may be said that this duality *is* the duality of Nature, for Nature is the manifestation of Mind.

THE WIDER ASPECT

By FRANK LIND

DEATH'S scythe makes no distinctions. Remorselessly it cuts through the worm and the wings of the butterfly alike. In its wide and mighty sweep it encompasses the whole earth. But much of the grim harshness of Death is surely of our own making, as the following revelation proves. It came, in sleep, one night to a man who had spent the best part of his life haunted by the fear of death following close at his heels.

He dreamed he was in a small boat, which floated along smoothly and silently to the muffled splash of oars. Darkness was all around him; not a star twinkled in the sable sky, no silver thread wrinkled the surface of the water. He sensed, rather than saw, that the tall figure of the boatman, who sat facing him, was shrouded in a black robe; that a peaked cowl shadowed his face. Also that strings of poppies were twined about the shafts of his heavy oars. The sultry air was laden with the musky scent of the flowers. Now and again something flapped against the voyager's cheek, with a soft touch as from the velvety wing of a bat. From time to time a sigh was whispered in his ear, he caught the trill of a soft and happy laugh, or a groan of terror chilled him; such sounds as might have issued from the lips of those drifting in, or sinking down into, the waters of sleep. Was this, he asked himself, seized with an awful apprehension, for him the last journey—the voyage of the dead? If so, why had he not, according to the ancient and mystic rites, the coin (his passage money) pursed under his tongue; in his hand, the golden bough presented to those who were fresh-comers to the realms of the departed?

Suddenly on all sides of him voices rose in a swelling chorus: "*For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again . . . !*" After which for a while was silence. It was broken by a voice uttering in sweet and soothing tones: "*Death is but as the shadow in a tiny shell, about which beat the waves of Eternity!*"

At the last word the darkness was swept away, swiftly as one may open one's hand. The sky was now as serenely clear as the blue eyes of a new-born babe. The water was like running crystal. In place of the poppies, the oars of the boatman were

twined about with fragrant white blossoms. Above all, though sunshine flooded the air, myriads of dazzling stars shone in the azure dome of heaven. And all around pulsated song, music and joyous laughter. Then the black shroud slipped from about the rounded shoulders of the boatman, revealing an erect and radiant angel form, clothed in snowy raiment. From the angel's lips there again rang out, in firm and echoing tones: "*Death is naught save a fairer and wider aspect of Life!*"

With these words resounding in his ears, the sleeper woke. He woke a changed man. From that night onward he could mark without a tremor, and with no regret, the fast trickling of the sand through the hour-glass. More, he awaited impatiently for the sinking of the last grains; as one who, with parched lips in a sandy desert, has tasted some drops of clear, cool water, yet is condemned to wander on for a while his thirst unsatisfied.

"NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE"

By E. M.

May I never be found unready or unwilling to respond to whatever call Thou choosest to make upon my life, O Lord; this is my prayer.

That I never may become so absorbed in the pursuit of my own paltry ideals that the sound of Thy Voice, calling me to Thine Own Purposes, may be lost to mine ears.

For though the music of Thine Own Voice when speaking directly to me, would be unmistakable in Its compelling beauty, yet Thou choosest more often to use the voice of lowly things with which to work Thy Purpose and I fear that mine ears might miss the music through contempt for the instrument.

May I be ever awake, therefore, to Thy Voice, in whomsoever Thou speakest, recognising that the instrument is hallowed by Thy Touch, and that failure to hear is but mine own uncleanness.

LEFT HAND PATH

By DION FORTUNE

PART II

THE charges against another class of occultists who have strayed upon or elected to tread the Left-hand Path concern the practice of the unnatural vice of homosexuality, the offence for which Oscar Wilde received a sentence of imprisonment. It is a very cruel form of vice, as the victims are usually boys and youths on the threshold of life. It is also very infectious, spreading in an ever-widening circle, as those who have become habituated to it in their turn proselytise for victims.

Those against whom the charges are brought have never answered them, but leave the country each time there is a fresh outcry, returning when it has blown over.

As it is the policy of the English police not to press these charges if the persons concerned are willing to leave the country, many people believe the rumours to be groundless, but the action of the Dutch police in securing a conviction proves that they are not.

The many supporters of these people defend them by asking how it can be that men of such dedicated lives, who give such lofty and beautiful teaching, can be addicted to such foul practices. For those who have made a serious study of occultism the explanation is self-evident. It was this particular vice which was one of the chief causes of the decadence of the Greek Mysteries.

As explained on a previous page, one of the objects of the occultist of the Left-hand Path is to render available and conserve on the Inner Planes the energy generated by sex force without having to practise self-control and sublimation. Normally, the life force is brought down from its Divine Source through the positive male vehicle, and returned back to the Source of all Life through the negative female vehicle, thus completing the circuit. If, however, there be no vehicle of the opposite magnetism to form the returning arc, that force is either "earthed" and diffused, or, if there be the necessary occult knowledge, it is conserved for magical purposes. It is the latter end which is pursued by the individuals we have referred to, who inculcate unnatural vice as a means of producing psychic development, which it unquestionably does. With that

psychic development, however, goes an irritability of the nervous system which shows itself in excessive sensitiveness and violent outbursts of temper, thus clearly showing the pathological nature of such development, and what poles asunder it is from the trained psychism of the true initiate, who, above all else, shows by his health and serenity the soundness of the system on which he works.

We may finally notice that form of black occultism, less common in England than the others already considered, in which cruelty and blood-sacrifice play a part. Any strong emotion is a source of astral energy, and fear and pain are no exceptions to the rule. Moreover, blood, being a vital fluid, contains a large proportion of ectoplasm, or etheric substance. When shed, this ectoplasm rapidly separates from the congealing fluid and thus becomes available for materialisations; it is for this reason that blood-sacrifices are offered to deities of a certain type by primitive peoples. Only the lowest types of entities will use the etheric emanations of blood for their manifestations; higher types use the ethers which are set free when certain volatile substances are burnt; hence the use of incense in magical work.

The evocation of these lower forms of life is a very dangerous undertaking, and can only be performed by a very advanced occultist. To evoke such beings for experimental purposes is not legitimate, for in order to materialise, they draw a proportion of etheric substance from each person taking part in the ceremonial. Even when the magic circle be used for protection, some etheric emanations at least have to be extruded across it if full manifestation with function is to take place; and although the entity may be forced to disgorge before being given the license to depart, the ectoplasm it has used comes back to its owners horribly contaminated.

The only circumstances, in my opinion, under which such an evocation is justifiable, is when an exorcism is being performed in order to free a person from the domination of such an entity, and magic has to be called in to undo what magic has already done. "Evil is wrought by want of thought as well as by want of heart."

Let us now consider the occult troubles which arise from ignorance and inexperience. These may be divided into three broad divisions: firstly, the troubles which come from hypersensitiveness induced by improper methods of training, or training under unsuitable conditions; secondly, the forming

of *rappports* without the knowledge of the methods of breaking them and re-sealing the aura ; and thirdly, dissociation of the personality through the use of improper methods of psychism, a common trouble with the untrained psychic.

A psychic is always a sensitive. He is sensitive not only to impressions from the inner planes, but to every change of feeling in those about him. He is like a person who goes abroad on a treacherous spring day clad in the thinnest of garments, and feeling every change of temperature ; now chilled by the wind, now scorched by the sun. Such a one experiences constant changes of mood and is torn to pieces by his own emotions. Moreover, he is constantly quarrelling with people, for he is acutely aware of the ups and downs of their feelings towards himself, and a single thought of irritation is to him as a blow in the face. Unless sheltered and cared for with wise and understanding sympathy, the psychic is very apt to become neurotic and end in social disgrace.

Spontaneous natural psychism is the fruit of training undergone in past lives. This training is of two types : it may have been designed to produce the sybil, or the watcher of the magical mirror ; or it may be the result of initiation and adepthood. The former type gives the passive, negative psychism, and is usually found in psychics of little mentality ; the latter type invariably has associated with it qualities of mind and character which show the lineage of the soul.

When one who has previously been an initiate has reached the point in this incarnation when he is ready to take the Path again, he is gathered back into his old Order and re-initiated. From that moment no more is heard publicly of his psychism. There are cases, however, in which this does not occur, and one who has obviously been in the Mysteries wanders un-shepherded. It will usually be found in such cases that trouble has occurred in the past, and that that soul was expelled from his Order for some offence against its ethics. Such souls are often quite well aware of this, and know that occult studies are forbidden to them in this incarnation.

A degree of psychism can be produced in most people by the methods of training which are fairly widely in vogue at present. If the system be sound and the conditions under which it be followed are suitable, a reliable, even if not very extensive, psychism can be developed. Psychism is like singing ; though a large number of people can, with application, learn to be

adequate performers for choral work, natural gifts are necessary for its highest achievements.

Whatever system teaches the opening of the higher consciousness should also teach the methods of its closing, for to keep the higher centres open all the time, racks the brain-consciousness to pieces. The method of closing is quite simple for anyone who has learned concentration and who has trained the subconscious time-faculty. A time-limit is fixed when consciousness is opened, and just as many people can cause themselves to wake from sleep at a given hour, so the psychic teaches himself to return to normal consciousness at the appointed time. He then concentrates his attention on some mundane occupation and the psychic centres close automatically. This is the reason why craftwork is insisted upon in many forms of occult training. The hour for the use of the hands comes round, and the chakras have a rest.

It is for this reason that the Western occultist, and especially such as concentrate the forces with ritual, deprecate vegetarianism when training, especially if the student has to remain out in the world, going about his ordinary business. When the centres are opened with the help of a refining diet, they cannot be closed at will, and unless the neophyte can lead a sheltered life, nervous disturbances ensue. Especially is this the case when, through the injudicious management of the diet or inability to assimilate vegetable proteins, which are much more indigestible than animal proteins, there is malnutrition with all its debilitating effects. Under such circumstances, vegetarianism may be persisted in for humanitarian reasons; the decision is one for each individual conscience, and all respect is due to the person who elects to suffer for conscience sake, but it will not be advisable to go on with the occult training, as nervous over-tension will ensue.

Although certain Eastern systems cannot be pursued without the sensitising effect of a vegetarian diet, the Western systems for the most part not only do not depend on diet for their results, but are actually unsuitable for the use of a person who has been so sensitised. The issues between humanitarianism and occultism have been much confused of recent years by modern Theosophical teaching. As a matter of fact, they have no correlation. People may be humanitarians who are not occultists, and occultists who are not humanitarians.

There is a very great difference between the expanded consciousness of the trained occultist and the sensitiveness of the

psychic. The former functions positively on the plane of the mind ; the latter is receptive and negative on the astral plane, which is the plane of the emotions. He is swept backwards and forwards by every astral wind that blows. He is blamed for his treachery, his changeability, his sudden malice ; but, as a matter of fact, he is the victim of circumstances, as little to be blamed as a school-child who catches measles, mumps, scarlet-fever and whooping-cough one after the other ; the germs were going about, and he was not immune.

The psychic and mystic frequently ask why any training is necessary. They declare that they have got their contacts and their vision ; they know that all knowledge and power are within the heart ; what more can be added unto them ? To this the occultist answers that a knowledge of the technique and psychology of the higher consciousness will enable them to keep that vision unimpaired, and protect them from many dangers of which they are unaware and concerning which they may at any moment be rudely enlightened by experience. Occult discipline is to the psychic what the training of his voice is to the singer. Untrained voices, however beautiful, do not last long, and the higher ranges of their art are not available to them.

His sensitiveness renders the psychic suspicious and quarrelsome, and because he is keenly alive to the unseen forces, he is terribly afraid of black magic. To him any force which he does not understand and which seems to him to be stronger than himself, is evil. He knows only too well his own extreme suggestibility, and he defends himself from undue influence by a ready suspiciousness and fiery resentment like that of a thoroughbred horse rendered vicious by ill-treatment. With such a suggestible subject, the suspicion of fraud held in the minds of a circle of sitters is enough to make him doubt his own integrity and either totally prevent all manifestation, or cause him to become that which they believe him to be, just as the hypnotised patient, when the doctor says to him, " You are getting better," in very truth gets better. This hypersuggestibility of the psychic is the cause of many of the falls from grace on the part of hitherto genuine mediums which the Press exposes with such gusto.

The untrained psychic, having no general knowledge of esoteric science, or of the history of supernatural phenomena, has no standards of comparison by which to judge his own work. To him it is unique, sacred, a divine revelation ; whosoever lays

a critical finger upon it is guilty of blasphemy. The astral psychic always believes his visions to be spiritual, and has a horror of the very word astral. As a matter of fact, all vision is astral; spiritual experiences have no form, but are pure idea and intuition. The mistake is made of believing that a change of sub-plane is really a change of plane. There is a wide difference between the lower and higher astral sub-planes; on the higher levels of the astral are the greatest beauty and purity, nevertheless, they are still astral. The Spiritual Plane is made of sterner stuff, and it is only accessible to those who can first rise through the concrete and abstract mental planes, and having utilised the mind to the full, transcend it. Any form of visual or auditory consciousness belongs to the planes of form; the higher planes are contacted through pure idea and realisation. It is this philosophical concept of esoteric science which it is so necessary to stress at the present time, as a counterbalance against the phenomenal, anthropomorphic concept which has been so widely spread about by much propaganda literature on the subject; a state of affairs which is deplored by all serious-minded students of the Ancient Wisdom.

The phenomena connected with *rappport* are also a fruitful cause of pathology. *Rappport* is like blood-transfusion, there is an exchange of vitality between the persons concerned. If there be mutual sympathy and good health, *rappport* is a most valuable and useful thing, for there is reciprocity. The strength of each supplements the weaknesses of the other. The real value of marriage lies in the establishment of *rappport* on all the planes.

The position is very different, however, when it is a case of all give and no take, or where there is a pathology in one of the partners to a *rappport*. Vitality is like any other mobile substance, it tends to flow from a centre of high pressure to a centre of low pressure until the pressure is equalised. Most of us only establish a *rappport* with those with whom we are in close emotional touch, but in the psychic the ectoplasm often projects long processes beyond the edge of the aura, and *rappport* is easily established. Where there is a need, the sympathy flows, and where the sympathy flows the ectoplasm flows too, and along its tenuous threads goes the vitality. The leaking aura is not at all uncommon, and accounts for much ill-health in psychics.

The condition needs careful and prolonged treatment. The *rappport* must first be broken by a complete severance of all relations for a time if this be possible, and also by a certain

occult means which cannot be entered upon here. To break the *rapport*, however, is not enough. Unless the rents in the aura be closed, the vitality will continue to leak and *rapports* be formed with any who are in need of vitality. This is not a deliberate vampirism, but simply an acute form of the normal interchange of vitality and polarisation which goes on all the time between all forms of life.

In order to cause the aura to heal and strengthen, the physical and mental health must be built up in circumstances of emotional quiet. A return to Nature is the best medicine, for Nature is a powerful healer for all psychic troubles. The re-establishment of physical health must always go hand in hand with the solution of occult problems. A lowered vitality leaves an open gate to invasion.

Lastly, we come to the point where lies the root of so much occult trouble, the point where psychism and psychopathology meet. The sensitiveness of the psychic may easily turn into mental instability under adverse circumstances. For its proper understanding a knowledge of psychology is necessary. Whoever wants to understand this subject cannot do better than study *Dream Psychology* by Maurice Nicoll. *The Psychology of Insanity*, by Bernard Hart, is also very illuminating, and my own little book, *Machinery of the Mind* (V. M. Firth) is a general introduction to the subject.

An adequate knowledge of the elements of both normal and abnormal psychology would help more than anything else towards preventing false concepts of occultism. When all is said and done, occultism is simply the science which deals with extended consciousness, and the experiences which that extended consciousness opens up; and unless we have a proper concept of the nature of consciousness we can never hope to understand occultism. It is so much easier, however, to acquire a rule-of-thumb knowledge of occult phenomena, or alleged phenomena, and human nature is so fond of short-cuts that save effort and application, that it is not easy to get would-be students to realise that profound philosophical concepts must be clearly grasped before the occult doctrines can be understood. Apart from these, we get naïve and anthropomorphic concepts of a universe cut out of cardboard, a child's toy theatre of a cosmos; and we are lucky if we get it plain, without the addition of gaudy colourings.

THE THEORY OF IDEOPLASTICITY

By G. C. BARNARD

THE phenomena of telekinesis, and especially those of materialisation, form a problem for the biologist, as well as for the student of psychopathology. Rare and abnormal though they may be, they nevertheless possess the greatest significance for the biological student, for just as in medicine or psychology the interpretation of the normal is often only possible after a survey of the abnormal in which the operation of more or less isolated factors may be followed, so it may well be that these phenomena will enable us to discover some important truths relating to life in its more familiar manifestations. It would not be at all strange if a study of these very abnormal processes were to enable us to discard false biological theories just as, in the domain of physics and chemistry a study of radium, which element has the pathological property of spontaneously disintegrating, has cast more light upon the ultimate nature of matter than has been shed by all the normal, non-radioactive elements put together.

Dr. Geley, in his remarkable book, *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, has endeavoured to show the importance of psychic science to biology and philosophy, and, since his point of view seems of capital interest, we will review a portion of the argument here, leaving the reader to study the book itself afterwards.

Dr. Geley commences by pointing out (much as has already been done by Edward Carpenter and by Henri Bergson) the limitations of the usual scientific mechanist philosophy, which proceeds by isolating certain features of the phenomena which it studies, than by interpreting these as simply as possible, and finally applying the ideas thus gained to complex phenomena, with the tacit assumption that these latter can be analysed into known simpler constituents. He points out that a theory, to be valid, must explain the most complex cases in its domain, and that we may easily arrive at theories which are competent to explain the simpler phenomena without thereby getting any nearer an explanation of the complex ones. That is to say, by studying the parts we do not necessarily arrive at any explanation of the whole, whereas if we can interpret the whole we can always work downwards to explain the parts.

Geley, therefore, proposes to review the main big problems

of biology and psychology, to show how inadequate is any mechanist theory of life, and to put forward his own vitalistic theory. According to current materialist and mechanist conceptions the life of an individual is a result of the interplay of physical and chemical forces, and is conditioned by the organism, which, in its turn, is conditioned by the environment. To this Geley opposes the Vitalistic conception of a life-force (which he calls a psycho-dynamism), which is immanent in the individual, which directs the organism and, through it, achieves its purpose. There is, he says, an inherent *Directive Idea* in every living thing, which is its dynamic vital principle.

In support of this contention Geley subjects current evolutionary theories to some criticism. There are two naturalistic theories of evolution: the Lamarckian, which emphasises the factor of adaptation to environment by use or disuse of functions, and the Darwinian, which lays stress on natural selection by survival of the fittest. It is incontestible that each of these theories represents part of the truth, and is competent to explain numerous biological facts; yet they are incompetent to explain the *major* facts, the important facts, such as the origin of species, the acquirement of instincts, or the metamorphoses of insects. In other words, they are essentially secondary factors, and only act after the species has already arisen with its main characteristics, which they then modify and stabilise round the norm. Both the Lamarckian and the Darwinian theories necessitate the idea of an exceedingly gradual development of organs by the cumulative effect of small modifications. This is a fatal objection to their application as an explanation of the origin of species, for rudimentary organs are useless, and indeed may be a positive hindrance, until a very considerable degree of development has been reached. A gradual modification of fin to leg, or leg to wing, would involve long periods during which the creature would neither swim nor walk, neither run nor fly!

Again, the origin of instincts of such a complex, certain and important nature as those of the hunting wasp, which paralyses a caterpillar by stinging certain nerve ganglia, and then deposits her eggs in the live but helpless body, are inexplicable on these theories. To be of the least use the instinct must be precise and perfect, and it could never have grown so by trial and error,* nor be transmitted by education, since the mother dies before the eggs hatch.

* See, for more discussion on this point, Bergson's *Creative Evolution*.

Perhaps Geley's most illuminating example is that of the Histolysis (cell-solution) of insects, for it is here that we see most clearly the need for a directive idea. The metamorphoses of an insect form an insoluble riddle for those who would interpret life solely in terms of mechanism. As an example, let us take the caterpillar which changes into a butterfly. Some biologists would say that at one period the insect lived entirely as a grub, and that it at some epoch adapted itself, when adult, to a new environment, in consequence of which it now is a butterfly when mature, but has to recapitulate its former evolutionary phases and so lives as a grub for a certain period of its youth. But the transition from caterpillar to butterfly is not a mere evolution of organs such as that by which the fin of a fish might be imagined to change into the leg of an animal or the wing of a bird. It involves an almost complete dissolution of the organised body of the larva, which is specially adapted for the environment, we will say, of a cabbage plant, and a new creation of another, vastly dissimilar organism, adapted to a totally different way of life. No theory of physico-chemical forces, no theory of survival of the fittest, nor of progressive adaptation, can explain why a caterpillar should leave its cabbage, seek some protected spot, envelop itself in a hard sheath which effectively cuts off almost all external influences, and, thus interred, should proceed to dissolve into an amorphous, unorganised pulp! It is as near dying as can be, this process of histolysis, for the organisation which characterises the larva simply ceases to exist. But life exists, almost without organs, and proceeds to reorganise the living tissue into a different structure, a totally new kind of creature, a butterfly. We have here a clear indication that there is some dynamic, vital force, some directing idea, which urges the caterpillar to seek out some quiet spot, to let his too-solid flesh thaw and resolve itself into a pulp, and which then creates another form adapted, marvellously, to another environment and destined for another mode of life.

In short, a study of the great problems of normal biology at once leads us to look for an explanation of vital facts, not to the external conditions, nor to the mechanical interplay of physical forces, but to some *elan vital*, some dynamic subconscious psychic entity, resident in the organism, superior to it, and capable of directing and modifying it. And this conception is fairly shouted at us by the facts of materialisation; for here we see an amorphous living substance, emanating from the medium, grow and organise itself visibly until it takes some form—whether a simple lever,

a hand, a face, or clothed phantom figure matters little—under which form it acts in a purposive, intelligent manner. It will not escape the reader that there is an obvious analogy both between the organisation of a phantom from ectoplasm and the development of a butterfly from the pulp in the chrysalis, and between the “dematerialisation” of a phantom back into ectoplasm and the disintegration of the caterpillar during his histolysis.

The various facts of the séance room, such as the intelligent rappings, the mask-like phantom forms, the curious flat “portrait” materialisations of Eva C., and so forth, reveal to us the operation of a directive dynamic Psyche, which moulds the ectoplasm and thereby enacts some part, satisfies some desire, or fulfils some wish. And we are justified in saying that the same conception must be applied in normal biology; as, indeed, had already been urged by Edward Carpenter, who, forty years ago, stood out against the mechanistic science of the schools. Take, for example, this passage in *The Art of Creation*: “What is it that before all convinces us that there is an intelligent self in our fellow-man? It is that he has a will and purpose, a *character*, which, do what you will, tends to push outwards towards Expression. You put George Fox in prison, you flog and persecute him, but the moment he has the chance he goes and preaches just as before. And so with all of us. Our lives, despite all the blows of fortune and misfortune, spring again and again from a mental root which we recognise as our real selves: which we want to express, which we must express, and to express which is our real life.

But take a Tree, and you notice exactly the same thing. A dominant Idea informs the life of the tree; persisting, it *forms* the tree. You may snip the leaves as much as you like to a certain pattern, but they will only grow in their own shape.”

It would take us too far to go here into some of the further illustrations of this theme, that the essential feature of living organisms is not any synthesis of parts, but a central directing psycho-dynamism (to use Geley's term, which is rather more general than the word *Idea*). But it is very germane to our subject to mention the more numerous cases where an idea (involving probably volition, emotional feeling, and intellectual representation) has a notable effect on the body, actually modifying its structure and functions. Of course, we all are familiar with some simple cases, as, for example, the temporary flow of blood to the

cheeks, or of tears which accompany the feelings of shame or sorrow ; or the obvious physical symptoms of anger, fear, etc. Much more striking are the examples drawn from psychiatric literature—for instance, the mechanism of symptom formation in hysteria, and the almost magical curative power of hypnotic suggestion. The physical action of an idea is neatly illustrated in a famous experiment by Delbœuf (*see* M. Bramwell, *Hypnotism*, p. 84). He hypnotised a subject, suggested to her that her right arm was insensible to pain, and then burnt each arm with a red-hot iron, making identical burns. She felt the pain in her left arm only. Both burns were dressed similarly, and during the ensuing twenty-four hours the burn on the left arm was painful, and developed a large blister ; in the right arm there was no pain, and no inflammation, but only the plain scar the exact size of the iron as applied. Clearly, then, the pain, inflammation and blistering in the one arm, were secondary results of the initial burning process, produced through the mediate operation of the subconscious mind of the patient ; being unaware of any initial pain in the right arm, however, the mind did not interfere with the normal routine of cell-life on that side. It is, of course, this power which the subconscious mind has of directing cell-action in the body that makes hypnotic suggestion a curative agent at all.

More striking still, perhaps, though almost more complicated, are the cases of stigmatisation. A devout nun, practising austerities and meditating intensely on the Passion of Christ, will now and then experience a trance, almost always accompanied by visual hallucinations in which Jesus is seen, which results in the appearance of the crucifixion marks in their appropriate places. As a rule these wounds seem to bleed every Friday, for some time, and to heal up in the week. Such cases are fairly numerous,* and indubitably illustrate the power of a strongly visualised idea to realise itself by modification of the living tissue. In all these cases we find, according to H. Thurston, a bad medical history, together with a strong concentration on the wounds of the Passion, often continued over a long period before the actual vision with stigmatisation occurs.

These few examples show us that even a highly developed stable organism like the physical body is yet, in spite of the inertia of its heredity and its habits, amenable under somewhat

* *See* a paper by Rev. H. Thurston (*P.S.P.R.*, part 83), who says he has studied the accounts of sixty cases.

THE THEORY OF IDEOPLASTICITY 121

exceptional circumstances to quite drastic modifications at the instance of a pure idea ; it is, in fact, essentially *ideoplastic*. And when we come to the semi-material etheric body, or to the amorphous living ectoplasm, it is obvious that this ideoplasticity is far more complete. The ectoplasm may be said to have an inherent tendency to organisation, but it is of no mechanical kind ; its propensity is to take any form which may be dictated or imagined by the medium. Probably, in fact, the extrusion of ectoplasm and its "materialisation" into phantom forms, such as Bien Boa, or Katie King, represent a physical realisation of desires, fantasies, day-dreams which are in the medium's subconscious mind. The analogy with psychological dissociation and with wish-fulfilment day-dreams, and the accompanying pseudo-personalities and spirit-controls, enable us to interpret the whole in terms of Life rather than in terms of Death. That the fantasy which finds temporary physical expression, the wish which is dramatically or symbolically fulfilled with all the reality of a dream, is usually not specifically the medium's, but more often is primarily the sitter's, does not in the least invalidate the interpretation. There is reason to believe that the sitter often contributes not only much of the psychological material of the drama, but also some of the ectoplasmic material which builds up the actors.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

SCIENCE, SEX AND "SUBLIMATION"

To the Editor of THE OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me sufficient space concisely to reply to the gentlemen who have commented upon your very helpful notes concerning my autobiography, *My Perilous Life in Palestine*?

May I say to Mr. W. Wilson Leisenring that his letter is somewhat too erudite for me clearly to grasp its full meaning. Therefore, I can only state my own convictions: The greatest privilege which can be vouchsafed to a mortal is to see God face to face. This privilege is accorded to the "Pure in Heart." Purity is an essential in a refined bridal love and hence this is the love to be cleansed most earnestly, in order to find our God.

Mr. Leisenring may be quite right in enumerating the four factors which furnish us with a new vitality. I am not sufficiently learned to judge whether he is right or wrong. Hence here also must I fall back on my own daily experience.

I am eighty-two on December 13th. I was born with a weak body. Hence I often wake in the morning with the weight of my eighty-two years heavily upon me. I take no stimulants nor narcotics of any kind. Therefore, I have one means of gaining strength: I repeat the words—"For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory" until I am able to rise and to work, often until ten, eleven or even twelve o'clock at night, as I have many duties.

That the tranquil poise which sustains me, is vouchsafed through the energies enumerated by Mr. Leisenring, may be true; for I believe that Christ is a Supreme Scientist and uses scientific resources; I cannot say whether He uses these four resources. I only know that without Him I should fail and that with Him I succeed in meeting my many obligations.

With regard to the criticism offered by Mr. Ronald A. L. Mumtaz Armstrong, may I say that as I have gone cold and hungry in order to share my resources with a Behai family, it can scarcely be thought that I feel any antagonism to the Behai religion. On the contrary I fully appreciate the gentleness, good breeding, and innocence of life to be found among the best of them. Nevertheless it remains true, not because my feeble voice declares it, but because Christ our King, Himself declares it, that all we are we owe to Him and that without Him we can do nothing.

If we love Him and desire to obey Him, with all our souls, this pronouncement concerning His own Position does not permit us to believe that it is immaterial whether we accept the head of the Behais as our King, or Jesus Christ as our King.

I do not think that I may quite claim to be an orthodox Christian, so far as a mental creed is concerned, but I may sincerely declare that with all my strength do I seek to serve Him, and that it would be an immense loss to put another Master in His Place, sympathetically and reverently as I may regard these lesser prophets, each in his own appointed mission.

Yours sincerely,
ROSAMOND OLIPHANT
(Mrs. Laurence Oliphant).

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW

SIR,—In the last issue of your magazine you publish a letter from Mrs. Leisenring in which she criticizes on scientific grounds my statement that sex force can be sublimated above its natural plane of expression, and says that "The persistence of such old and erroneous theories gives support to the contention of men of science that 'education' should include a knowledge of the elementary principles of physics and biology."

My theory of the sublimation of sex force is based firstly on the work of Dr. Freud of Vienna, and secondly on the researches of Professor Spearman, head of the University College Psychology Laboratory, into the nature of General Energy. The work of both of these authorities has found general acceptance and has passed beyond the region of speculation. I think, therefore, that I may claim that I was not without adequate scientific grounds in making the statement to which Mrs. Liesenring takes exception.

I cannot ask for as much space as would be necessary adequately to discuss my theory of sex sublimation. It is already published in my book, *The Problem of Purity* (Rider).

I have read carefully the statements under six headings by which Mrs. Leisenring supports her contention, but do not feel it would serve any useful purpose for me to deal with them. Apparently she has not realised that in discussing sex energy we are in the realm of psychology, not of physics; and that arguments based on physics have no bearing on the subject. Common sense, in the absence of technical knowledge, is an insufficient criterion of judgment in any science, and no dogmatic statement, however strongly worded, carries any weight of itself; it needs to be supported by argument, data, and the citation of authorities.

Yours faithfully,
DION FORTUNE.

NUMBER AND FORM.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—I am trusting to the courtesy of the Editor of this journal to enable me to ask Mr. W. G. Raffé two questions concerning a reference made in his article entitled "Number and Form" in the December issue of the OCCULT REVIEW. In the article it is stated:

"Hence the Hebrew letter-system *has a direct esoteric equivalent in numbers*, as well as a phonetic system in names and words, and another in chant; each letter-form symbolising a basic *sound*, a root idea, and a *mass-number*."

I have given the complete sentence and italicised the subjects of my questions. The statement is a definite reference to Numerical Divination as practised by the Hebrews and usually referred to as a branch of the Cabala. Questions:—

(1) Can Mr. Raffé supply any evidence which tends to prove that the numerical values assigned to the sounds of the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet are the true values by means of which reliable data can be obtained for the purpose of Numerical Divination?

(2) Has Mr. Raffé any evidence as to the truth of the Hebrew numerical valuations which could not be advanced by the adherents of the Greek, Arabic, Egyptian, Indian, English or any other system of valuation which has been used in the past or is being used at the present time for divinatory purposes?

It will be agreed that the above two questions go to the basis of Numerical Divination. They are asked for the purpose of directing the attention of Mr. Raffé to the fact, that unless the sounds of the Hebrew letters have been assigned their correct values it would be a waste of time to use them for the purpose of Numerical Divination.

It is a self-evident proposition that it is impossible to obtain correct numerical results from incorrect numerical data.

It therefore logically follows that there is one true code (or set of values), and that any code, other than the true code, is a snare and useless.

Yours sincerely,

W. R. LAWSON.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

THE Eastern Buddhist Society, of Otani University, Kyoto, Japan, has completed the fourth volume of its official organ, THE EASTERN BUDDHIST, by the issue of a double number which is memorable in all respects. We have pointed out on previous occasions that the undertaking marks an epoch in the study of Mahayana Buddhism in the Western world. Mr. Suzuki, who is editor-in-chief, presents for our consideration an exhaustive monograph on the Lankavatara Sutra, regarded "as a Mahayana text in especial relation to the teaching of Zen Buddhism." It is one of the nine principal Sutras in what perhaps may be termed the Nepalese Mahayana Canon. The Mahayana is described as standing on two legs, of which one is transcendental idealism, seeing into the unity of things, while the other is "embracing affection for all kinds of beings, animate as well as inanimate," and this contemplates diversity. The central theme of the Sutra is "the inmost perception" to be gained by Bodhisattvas, and is said to disclose "the inner mind of the Buddha." It lays special emphasis on the importance of self-realisation, "without which the Buddhist life remains a mere philosophical exercise." The consideration of this text occupies nearly one hundred pages of the present issue. The second contribution is on Chinese Tendai Teaching and is the report of a lecture delivered by Mr. Bruno Petzold at the German Embassy in Tokio before the Asiatic Society, under the presidency of the German Ambassador. There is no indication of date. As the study fails to provide us with a definition of the word Tendai, we must be content to say that the school arose in the sixth century of the Christian era and that its real founder died in 597, "when Pope Gregory the Great was sending Christian Evangelists to the Anglo-Saxons in England." It is said to be acknowledged "by all real scholars of Chinese and Japanese Buddhism" that "the metaphysics of Buddhism have their solid foundation in Tendai Teaching," which is "a religion as well as a philosophy." It is based on "the unity of the whole universe and of all living beings," and although derived from Buddhism "is in its essence an original creation." The human mind and the universe are in a state of identity, or in another manner of expression, "Buddha, the mind and all living beings are one and the same absolute reality." It is said further that "there is nothing but truth." As will be understood, the final developments of such postulates lead us into strange fields of thought, *e.g.*, that there is no pain and no passion, nothing is worldly, nothing is superworldly; "there is only the One True Reality." So it is beyond question in the last state; that we must act as though it were not in order to reach that state.

So far as activities are concerned, theosophical reviews and magazines have been somewhat colourless for at least a few months

past. There is a proposal to open a vegetarian restaurant in London ; a conference of Northern Lodges has been held at Dundee, and it is on record in NEWS AND NOTES that the General Secretary "kept things cheerful and lively"; the Theosophical Society in Wales is petitioning against capital punishment; while Ireland appears to be thinking furiously on "prosaic financial facts." Bombay, however, has erected a "handsome new building" as headquarters of the Blavatsky Lodge, and photographs of the Hall at Adyar convey a palatial impression in THE THEOSOPHIST. But perhaps the most interesting feature of that official organ is an unpublished portrait of H.P.B. in the last issue to hand: it is referred to the year 1879 or thereabouts. An article on the background of Buddhist Thought arises out of a book published recently somewhere in India and is a suggestive study in an obscure field of the past. . . . Theosophy practises what it preaches, according to THEOSOPHY IN INDIA, and this apparently is religious tolerance. The last issue is concerned more especially with an approaching Convention at Benares, though it is now an event accomplished. We learn also that a World Congress is to be held in Chicago during the summer of 1929. It appears finally that the Indian Section has terminated the year 1928 with a certain financial deficit, and it is acknowledged that work has been handicapped for a considerable period by want of funds. The Society was founded on November 17th, 1875, in the City of New York, and this is commemorated annually in several publications, but above all in the THEOSOPHICAL MESSENGER, which is the American organ. The TORONTO THEOSOPHICAL NEWS is near to the heart of things when it affirms that "Christ is not a person but a state of being in which personality is lost in union with the Divine." Here is obviously no new dictum, but it is good for such *Theosophia* to be voiced continually, that those who have ears may hear and so hearing may realise also, behind our external personalities, the reality of a Divine Selfhood, which Self is Christ. The CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST has decided to reproduce in its pages a book called *Modern Theosophy*, which was published so far back as 1894 by C. F. Wright, with a foreword by W. Q. Judge. A revised copy was found among the author's effects after his death by drowning in or about 1893, and it is being reprinted in this form. We note with some interest, on the faith of a preface, that Wright received "personal instructions from Madame Blavatsky" during a period of several years. His name seems new to ourselves, but the claim can be verified doubtless from other sources. The number before us is full otherwise of controversial matter, including a long communication from some protagonists of the Back-to-Blavatsky Movement, and a comparison between the Theosophy of earlier days under the Blavatsky ægis with that which is now current in the Adyar School.

LE VOILE D'ISIS illustrates the extraordinary interest taken just now in the Tarot by French occult circles, for there is presented not

only a way of laying out the cards according to a new method but the announcement of yet another work, to appear shortly, on the Wonders of the Divinatory Tarot. The scheme is astrological in character and set out in correspondence with the Twelve Houses of Heaven. We note also at its value—whatever this may prove in practice—that there is an increasing tendency to dwell on the importance of a suitable psychic state in consultant and operator. Questions must be formulated with sufficient “intensity” to establish a magnetic link, but not so much between the two persons concerned as with the cards themselves. There should be recollection also on the part of the querent before any shuffling and dealing, while the subject-matter should be kept vividly in mind. The last caution is probably old enough and almost suggests itself. So much for divinatory methods, but whether or not their signs and tokens are embroidered on the Veil of Isis, there are better things in the issue, and in particular a short contemplation on Hermetic Science, regarded as a secret tradition which is at once a *Theosophia* or spiritual science and an occult science of Nature. Some apt quotations are offered from alchemical books, as, for example, that the Secret of the Stone is a Secret of God and that he who attains it has been taught divinely and not by man. As such, Alchemy is of chemistry only on one of its sides, while on the other it is “the supernatural science of God and the world.” Here obviously is the sketch only of a great subject, a suggestive outline apart from any demonstration, and one line of criticism would show how it fails to distinguish between two Hermetic Schools, the one working in physics by laboratory methods of the past and the other in the oratory.

LA REVUE SPIRITE gives the first place to a study of the Suffering Christ, represented as the Son of God in a superlative sense and also the Divine Word. Whether this summarises the Christology of Kardec Spiritism we do not know. The intent of the article is to lay stress on the reality of the Incarnation as against the opinion of certain other spiritists, for whom the Christ of Nazareth came in an astral body. It is contended, on the other hand, that the Resurrection was in astral form, as made evident by the caution to Mary Magdalen: “Touch me not.” Had she done this, the thesis is that her hand would have passed through the psychic body then “insufficiently condensed,” because she only was present to contribute that vital fluid on which manifestation depended. There were others on later occasions, and the Master, fully materialised, could call upon Doubting Thomas to thrust a hand in His side. . . . LE SYMBOLISME offers to those who can receive it a consideration of its own titular subject, embodied, so to speak, in that planetary chain which constitutes our solar system. It is said that planetary symbolism is a pivot of astrological symbolism at large, and that Astrology is the queen of sciences. The explanation is that it embraces Cosmogony, Philosophy, Theosophy, and in this manner reflects the character of Religion

itself. How all this comes about is no doubt another question, and it may well be that an Astrology of this kind is so utterly catholic that it would look better under another name, and would be liberated more easily from those mendacities of horoscope and fortune-telling which the essayist condemns loudly. As to the planets and the things for which they stand, the Sun represents the Unmanifest Eternal Unity and all its connotations; Saturn, gravitation and resistance; Jupiter, voluntary association; Mars, the principle of separation; Venus, that of polarisation; Neptune, the principle of fusion; and Mercury that of amalgamation. The Moon signifies extension in time, and so forth; for the meanings tabulated are many in all places. We have omitted Uranus, which stands for chaos and explosion. . . .

L'ÈRE SPIRITUELLE presents for our meditation its views on the Guides of Humanity—whether evoked from its own well of vision or that of Max Heindel and his Oceanside Rosy Cross we do not pretend to know. In any case we are to be dissuaded, if possible, from believing in tutelary spirits, guardian angels and the kind of guides who are familiars of spiritistic circles. To believe and to lean on such is a sign of weakness. The actual Guides of Humanity are: (1) Race Spirits, otherwise Archangels; (2) Initiates; and (3) Messengers of the Gods; but since the Atlantean period the first have given place to the second and these are “the sole mediators between Divinity and man.” This again is for those who can receive it, like the Astrology which M. Oswald Wirth has found it worth while to print in his *Organe d'Initiation*. For our own part, if without serious concern we prefer the guides of spiritism, who—by the hypothesis—can be brought to book because they entrance mediums and spell out messages, whereas the mediators of Max Heindel and the French echo of Oceanside are much too “far in the unapparent” to explain their kind of job. . . .

Among French periodicals—occult, psychic and what not—there is none to compare with PSYCHICA as a budget of marvels; but perhaps the last issue to hand eclipses all its predecessors of some eight years past. There are columns on talking animals, on doings of fakirs at the Club du Faubourg, on a new psychic healer, on the direct voice in Italy, above all, on phenomena of materialisation at Mantes sur-Seine with a medium named Blaise. The witness in this case is the editor of REVISTA SPIRITISTA published at Bucarest. There are notes of several séances, at the last of which the materialised form took the medium by both hands and brought him out of the cabinet.

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REVIEWS

PSYCHICAL SCIENCE AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF. By J. Arthur Hill.
London: Rider & Co. Price 5s.

IN this well-written book, which covers a very wide field, Mr. Hill shows us how psychical science provides a basis for rational religion. Starting with some obvious reasons for the falling off of Bible reading, and the breaking away of many from orthodox Christianity, the writer shows us how present knowledge attained by purely scientific methods confirms the vision of saint and seer. For a blind belief which never questions he has no use whatever. The only thing we are told about Jesus as a boy, he reminds us, is that He was found in the temple . . . cross-examining the theologians, and obviously using His mind. None the less, the intellectual is not the only avenue. Intuition, inspiration, is a real thing, and along with many others the writer recognises the all-important fact that human minds have a common source and we are all connected in the subliminal levels.

The chapters which deal with telepathy are particularly sane and comprehensive, and many most interesting examples are given, which appear to us to prove beyond dispute that communion between mind and mind is certainly super-physical, and if messages can reach us from incarnate beings why not from discarnate also? Speaking of religions past and present, we are told: "Catholicism is the religion of external authority centred in a person at Rome. Protestantism is a religion of external authority centred in a book . . . the next authority will be fundamentally internal as relying on the Self but proximately external as relying on Science. There is a certain amount of private judgment in Catholicism though Catholicism condemns it. Catholics place their reliance in their Church but the decision to do so is their own. We are coming back to the teaching of Jesus on a higher round of the spiral as regards material knowledge. . . . He is not superseded if the theologians are. Faith is not now attached to incomprehensible doctrines, but is a projection of belief in directions justified by science." The book should have a wide appeal, for Mr. Hill has treated the subject under discussion from a sympathetic and most broadminded point of view.

ETHEL ARCHER.

THE PULSE OF DARKNESS. A Novel by Edward Noble. London:
Jarrolds. Price 7s. 6d.

THIS thrilling story of the sea takes us to the far-off straits near Sumatra, where the ship, in which the entire action occurs, passes by a volcano in full blast. Full of imaginative power, the descriptive quality of the book has the balance of realism. Suggestion is rounded with the defining lines of detail born of experience and long observation. The story is simple, and is one of human character in relation to concrete circumstance rather than one of inner things, but there is not lacking here and there a hint that the author has a deeper understanding of human mentality than the ordinary run of novelists.

W. G. R.

SYBILS AND SEERS. By Edwyn Bevan. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. Pp. 182. Price 7s. 6d. net.

THIS volume, based upon six lectures given in 1927 at Oxford on the Speaker's Foundation for Biblical Studies contains a deeply interesting survey of some ancient theories of Revelation and Inspiration. It is a work of mature scholarship and keen critical insight, describing acutely and authoritatively the evolution of the belief in a spirit-world and in the several means of human contact with it. Proceeding from a close analysis of the idea that the spiritual causation of which mankind is conscious implies the existence of a spirit-world far transcending the world we see, Mr. Bevan deals first with the belief that living men may visit the spirit-world and return, and then with the belief that inhabitants of that world may visit this one. Thereafter he discusses revelation from heaven, and also inspiration in its two forms of Sybilline ecstasy and dream-vision.

Little more can be done in a brief review than to cite this summary of Mr. Bevan's thesis and to give to the work as a whole a high measure of commendation for its sustained and persuasive lucidity. But special mention may be made of his very effective criticism of the views of the modern Liberal Protestant, who on this question of the spirit-world stands on precarious ground half-way between Rationalism and Catholic-Christianity. Mr. Bevan's comments here are closely-reasoned and incisive (pp. 29-34). Mention may also be made of his description of the sort of effect which is produced upon the mind by a visit to the spirit-world, and of its value for the person who believes himself to have undergone that experience; for on this point Mr. Bevan shows a vivid imaginative understanding (p. 65).

Outside the ranks of the serious students of these matters there are undoubtedly to-day many professed adherents to the belief in spirit communications who have no knowledge whatever of the purely historical aspect of the subject; and to these Mr. Bevan's book will be an invaluable and unrivalled mine of information, showing them clearly the origin and development of this belief and the attitude towards it of the various schools of Greek philosophers—Platonists, Stoics, Peripatetics, Sceptics and Epicureans.

COLIN STILL.

WINTER WORDS: IN VARIOUS MOODS AND METRES. By Thomas HARDY. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd. Price 7s. 6d. net.

It is no longer the fashion, save perhaps in a few stiffly sectarian circles, to think or speak of Hardy as an irreligious man. Most of us are now aware that, however far from formulated and formal faith in the supernatural his mind was, and remained, to the last, his genius walked on supernatural ground, breathed supernatural air, and received, if not positively *revelations*, at any rate, *thrillings*, from the Unseen.

For the occult student, his work (which we can now view as a whole) will always possess a peculiar interest and fascination. In this last volume of his—this last sheaf gathered and bound just before the night fell—the touch of the supernatural again makes itself felt; and felt, too, in some of the finest and most forceful of the poems,

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There is "Reluctant Confession" (page 27), with its accusing wraith, glimpsed, night by night, through the narrator's "hell-dark dreams"; and "Yuletide in a Younger World" (page 57) with its breath-catching picture of the phantoms crossing the bridge and stile, and its pervading haunted atmosphere. Those who demand a more robust uncanniness will find it in "No Bell-Ringing" (page 165); a ballad which tells a traditional country ghost-story in accents that compel belief.

As for "Standing by the Mantel-piece" (page 115), with its significant first line, "This candle-wax is shaping to a shroud," and its exquisite use of "vulgar" superstition to express all the despair and sense of doom in an educated mind, it is, perhaps, from a purely literary point of view, the most distinguished poem in the book.

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G. M. H.

HEBREW ASTROLOGY. By Sepharial. London: W. Foulsham & Co., Ltd. Pp. 140. Price 5s. net.

THE name of Sepharial on an astrological book is always a guarantee of value, and in the present instance he gives us, as usual, considerable matter for thought and study. He holds that in ancient times there were men who enjoyed direct communion with God, who studied the plan of Divine unfoldment, and who "saw a world created for a purpose, a great racial selection made for a purpose, and a plan which provided against all contingencies forever working out to its fulfilment." One of their chief means of reading and understanding this Divine Plan was the study of the heavenly spheres, for these wise men knew that Nature is a composite whole, and man an integral part of the great universe of life about him.

In more recent times this science of the stars has fallen into disrepute, but Sepharial holds the opinion that no single person has ever essayed its dispassionate study without being wholly persuaded of its truth, and that its revival among men to-day would bring us appreciably nearer to the realisation of God's Kingdom upon earth. His chapters on "Chaldean Astronomy" and "Time and Its Measures" are extremely interesting, as are the statements that the year 1928 was the Year of the Great Awakening, and that the year 1933 will see the end of the kings of the earth, with one exception.

That the British Empire has a great mission to fulfil in future world-history is one of the writer's main conclusions, but at the same time he seems to think catastrophe inevitable "for the world is overcoming gravity, not by ascension of spirit, but by acceleration of pace," grave words which deserve to be pondered over.

EVA MARTIN.

SONNETS AND SOME OTHERS. By Clarence Winchester. Taunton :
The Wessex Press. Pp. 32. Price, 2s. 6d. net.

It is surprising that so few aviators have been inspired to write about their profession. One would expect flight and poetry to have much in common. In Mr. Winchester, however, we have a flying-man who is a poet, too, and it is interesting to find that his best work is decidedly that which deals with the airy realms, and those who soar above the earth. "Youth and Flight," "Pioneer Airship," "Balloons" and "The Joy of Flight" all show a fine play of imagination, and here are the last lines of a poem called "The Aerial Quest":—

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To count me with the dead,
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An outstretched hand unmerited,
And safely to his pinnacles high-hung
His aerial guest has led.

EVA MARTIN.

THE GENERAL BOOK OF THE TAROT. By A. E. Thierens, Ph.D.
London : Rider & Co. Pp. 158. Price 6s. net.

THIS book is described as "containing the Astrological Key to the Tarot-system, published for the first time," and is consequently of especial interest to astrologers, though not by any means to them only. Dr. Thierens writes so enthusiastically and traces so deftly the undoubted correspondences that exist between the Tarot-cards and the signs, planets and houses, that even expert astrologers may learn a great deal from a careful perusal of his book. But those who know nothing of Astrology will find it equally fascinating, and it is safe to say that few who come across it will be content until they have a pack of Tarot-cards with which to experiment. The cards here described are those drawn on the authority of Mr. A. E. Waite, and published by Messrs. Rider & Co. Full directions for laying them out are given, and with this book at hand the would-be "diviner" should, after some practice, find little difficulty in succeeding in this, one of the oldest and most mysterious of all the "occult arts."

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SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, in his Preface, describes this book as being "of a very unusual type—direct, modest, honest and full of mellow experience and wisdom."

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A. C.

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reading the Alabama poets. Someone has said that it is the work of the poet to build a bridge between the world of objective reality that lies about us and the great cosmos of abstract truth . . . a spiritual bridge by which the souls of his fellow mortals escape for a time to that Land of Heart's Desire, where "the wind blows out of the gates of day" and "the fairies dance in a place apart."

It is not easy to choose from a bouquet of such sweet flowers, but the mystical and ethical are paramount. From "The Wilderness," a beautiful poem by Emily Campbell Adams, I quote three verses:

"The weary Christ lay sleeping in a haunt
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The shy eyes of the beasts His slumbers watched
From midnight till the dawn.

"Upon a bed of naked stones He lay
Beside the serpent's lair;
A tiger, stealthy, crouching, licked His feet,
A bird clung to His hair. . . .

"The earth, hushed, silent, heard a whisper breathed
From the rapt heaven above;
'Soft rests He on the Universal Heart—
The sleeping Son of Love!'"

I hope indeed that this Anthology will find its way to many English readers, who will most surely give it welcome. It abounds in names of poets less familiar to us on this side the Atlantic, which reveal Alabama as "A nest of singing birds." A striking symbolical illustration by John Funk forms the frontispiece to the book.

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Delightful also are G. K. Chesterton's rapier thrusts! "Many people seem to be wondering," he says, "what will become of the human soul in another world," and he adds, "I am wondering what has become of the human mind in this world. I am especially wondering what has become of the human power of reason in this age. Hume or Huxley, or any of the rationalists who were really rational, could never have kept a straight face in the presence of the preposterous confusions of thought that are now called arguments by Sir Arthur Keith or the Bishop of Birmingham. It is as if the brain itself had broken down." One recalls the saying of

Saint Francis of Assisi : " The man who depends on book-learning, in the day of sorrow and battle will find his hands empty." There is a perhaps unconscious echo of this in Robert Blatchford's heart-stirring confession as " another man in the street who has turned from materialism to spiritualism," and therein found an answer.

In this short space it is impossible to say all one would in respect of every name, which represents practically " every attitude of the human mind." The sum total of the answer is an unswerving, instinctive belief in the *For Ever* of the human soul.

EDITH K. HARPER.

AN A B C OF THE OLD SCIENCE OF ASTROLOGY. By Sidney Randall, B.A. London : Foulsham. Price 2s. 6d. net.

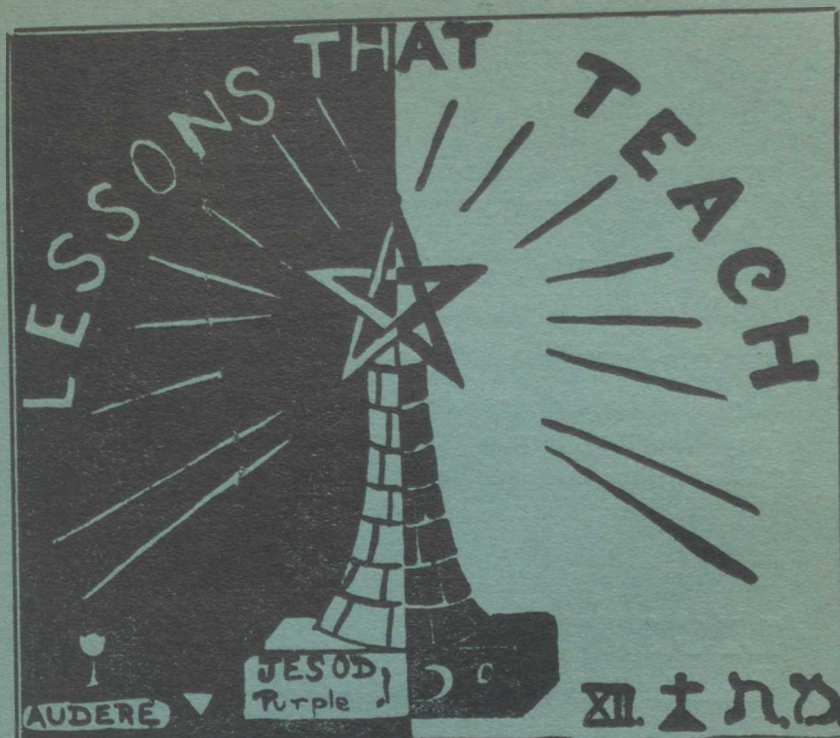
INCREDIBLE though it may seem to the uninitiated, there is an occult correlation between the movements of the heavenly bodies and the events of our individual lives ; even the innermost secrets of character and temperament may be read from a map of the stars as disposed at the moment of birth. The truth and utility of astrological science have been gaining more widespread acceptance in recent years, and to students of the occult, who desire comprehension of the " how " and " why " of things, Mr. Randall's lucid and painstaking little volume should prove invaluable. The author writes with a background of many years' practical experience in the making of horoscopes, and he leads his readers from the earliest and simplest to the final stages of astrology, elucidating the whole alphabet of this most marvellous of sciences from A to Z. Mr. Randall tells us that he first came to astrology through theosophy and as a believer in reincarnation. He believes that we make our own horoscopes through our past existences and that " each life in the present is making the horoscope for the next reincarnation." Otherwise, one must regard a horoscope as the result of chance, and it becomes impossible to explain how the Almighty, with apparent caprice, " gives out lucky and unlucky horoscopes to children whose souls He is supposed to have just created." It would be difficult to name a more serviceable volume for anyone wishing to investigate astrology for himself.

G. B.

ESSAYS ON LIFE AND DEATH. By Jacques Heugel. Translated by Fred Rothwell. London : Rider & Co. Price 7s. 6d. net.

WITHIN the compass of this volume of delightful essays is to be found a wealth of suggestion on an immense variety of topics. The author ranges in his choice through the whole field of occultism. One of the most valuable of his contributions is that dealing with the vexed question of Karma and heredity. Another arresting fragment is concerned with the symbolism of Wagner's Nibelungen Ring. The Kabala and numerology ; reincarnation ; spiritual training ; jazz in relation to music—to catalogue but a few subject-headings—will serve to indicate the scope of the work. It is, in fact, the sort of book which, having read, one likes to keep at hand to dip into as the mood dictates. The predominant note is idealistic and theosophical. The gratitude of the reader is due to Mr. Rothwell for making known in its English dress this interesting collection of occult *pensées* ; while the author is fortunate in having found so able a translator to present his work to the public on this side of the channel.

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