

THE OCCULT REVIEW

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

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

A FRIEND of mine tells me that when something has gone out of his head which he wishes to recall, he returns to the identical place where the thought first occurred to his mind and there he finds it again. I have not practised this method and cannot say if it would answer with me, my own habit being mentally to retrace the sequence of ideas as they passed through my mind until I get back to the one which was suggested by the thought in question, and this gives me the clue. For it will, with certain exceptions which I shall refer to later, generally be found that one thinks in some sort of sequence, however capricious at times that sequence may appear.

The notion, however, that the thought leaves its trace behind

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at the exact spot where it first impinged upon the brain, is one in support of which a good deal of evidence could be brought forward. Take for instance the occurrence which is related of the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury. It was an accident, so the story runs, which first turned his thoughts to the cause to which he subsequently devoted himself. Walking as a boy down Harrow Hill he met a number of men carrying a dead pauper to his grave. All drunk, they howled a ditty as they went. In turning a corner their burden became too much for their unsteady legs, and down it fell with a crash. Nearly seventy years afterwards Lord Shaftesbury was walking again down Harrow Hill with Dr. Butler, son of his old master, and was asked if he remembered any special circumstances which induced him to dedicate his life as he had done to the poor and wretched.

"It is a most extraordinary coincidence that you should ask me that question here," was the reply, "for it was within ten yards of this spot that I first resolved to make the cause of the poor my own."

And he told the story of the pauper's funeral, and how it had shaped his whole career.

It is the following out of this idea, I take it, that led Mr. Andrew Lang in his recent article in this magazine to suggest the existence of "local centres of permanent possibilities of hallucination" quite apart from the presence therein of any actual spirit consciousness or the survival of any human entity.

OBSSESSED BY
HIS OWN
THOUGHT
FORM.

The idea is further supported by such stories as that told of the madman who, having recovered his sanity, heard rumours that his room in the asylum was still haunted by his own astral counterpart, that continued to rave and gesticulate in the manner he had himself done during his period of mental aberration. The somewhat ghastly sequel that he insisted on going back to his asylum to verify the phenomenon, and through doing so became again obsessed by the spirit of his past insanity, while serving incidentally to point out one of the dangers of psychical investigation, may perhaps throw some light on the nature of such psychic conditions in relation to the probable vitality and permanence of the effects of intense emotion.

A medical correspondent has kindly sent me a narrative drawn from his own personal experience which seems evidently to bear on the point in question. He writes :

"In the year 1888 I went to Philadelphia for the purpose of examining the claims of Mr. Keeley concerning his invention for applying etheric force, and I stayed at the house of a friend, Mr. H. B. F—— in C—— Street. My room was on the second floor. About a week after my arrival I felt the presence of some entity in my room, and there were noises as if some one were walking in it. Night after night such phenomena occurred and increased in strength; raps were heard on my bedstead and my bed-cover was pulled away. Finally one night I saw a woman with red hair and of (as I thought) by no means attractive appearance standing at my bedside. She looked at me in a furious manner, lifted her arm and slapped me in the face; that is to say, I saw her slapping my face but did not feel it.

"Next morning at breakfast I told Mr. F—— my experience, and he brought me his photographic album, requesting me to see whether I could find a portrait resembling the woman. I had no difficulty in finding it, and pointed it out to him.

"That is my sister,' said Mr. F——. 'She used to occupy that room.'

"How long is it since she died?' I asked.

"Oh, she is not dead at all, and has no wish to die,' replied Mr. F——. 'She used to live with us, but she was of so excitable a temper that we could not get along with her. She now lives in W—— Street, N.'

"His statement was corroborated by the rest of the company. Now it has often happened to me that on entering a room I have seen the images of persons who have previously occupied it, but they were like images in the astral light, showing neither life nor intelligence; but in the above-mentioned instance the spook evidently had the power to perceive and to act, and moreover it was the spook of a living person, whom I consider incapable of having acted consciously in this matter as she probably did not even know of my presence in the house of her brother. I forbear to venture an explanation, preferring to receive one from those who are more versed in such matters than I."

Paracelsus would not have hesitated to declare that in such cases the thought form was, in something more than a figurative sense, the child of the thinker, and had been endowed by him with some portion of his own vitality. And in support of this

position it may be argued that if such appearances are mere pictures—even pictures of a kinetoscopic order—how can it be possible to lay the spooks of them, as has been frequently done if we are to accept as true the various accounts of many ghost stories, such, for instance, as that so often related of Bishop Wilberforce of Winchester and the spectre monk. To burn the written confession was here to lay the spectre. All such records bear a strange family likeness to one another in this single particular: that the spook has one idea and one only by which he is attached to the spot in question. Satisfy him on this point and he goes out like an extinguished candle. Is he then, one may well ask oneself, anything more than the ghost of that particular idea?

The man who successfully lays a ghost does so because he destroys his *raison d'être*. Apart from that one thought the ghost does not exist. He is no more the living man than the ghost of the madman in the story I have just related. But perhaps he has had imparted to him some faint residue of his creator's vitality. For, as I have before queried, how can one lay a picture—even a moving picture? Moreover, these phenomena do not present themselves always as moving pictures. They are speaking pictures as well at times; speaking, that is, if you get them on their one idea, their only hobby, as one may say. Though I have had many experiences which some people might call uncanny, I must confess to never having seen a ghost, not even when on more than one occasion there was apparently a ghost to be seen. So that I suppose I must take it that my eyes are less subject to hallucination than my ears.

On one such occasion I was disturbed by the visit of what at
 A DRUNKEN least conveyed to my ears and mind the
 GHOST. impression of being the phantom survival of
 some drunken habitué of a public-house, who
 staggered across my bedroom shouting loudly and incoherently to himself and passed out at the closed window into the inclement Christmas night. The room had the reputation of being haunted, and doubtless was one of those "local centres of hallucination" before referred to. The house in question was at this time used as the dower-house in connection with an English country seat, but according to report had in earlier days been a wayside hostelry.

A frequenter of the hostelry had, let us suppose, got drunk on

the premises, and in his state of intoxication had staggered down the passage, and falling through a wide open window at the end had been precipitated on the ground below. His injuries proved fatal, and the coroner's jury brought in a verdict of "Accidental death." Add to this that the victim of the accident had something on his mind at the time, some message which he wanted to give to some one, but never recovered consciousness to deliver, and you have all the elements of the common or garden ghost-story.

My explanation of the phenomenon is possibly quite a wrong one. But that is neither here nor there. It is just as good a one as has brought into existence, if one may credit such narratives, half the local centres of permanent hallucination of which we wot.

From semi-material Thought-forms to telepathy is not a very far cry. Telepathic experiences may be conveniently divided into (a) those in which the form of the person communicating takes visible shape, and (b) those others in which the communication takes the form of an intuition, an impression, or voice.

The former heading, visible forms, will embrace two classes: (1) those in which the apparition appears in a vivid dream, and (2) those in which it is seen in the form of a waking "hallucination."

The former class, as the least abnormal of the two, is that with which I shall begin to deal, and several of my correspondents have kindly given me their personal experiences in the matter. The first case which I shall cite is that of Mr. E. G. Nicewaner, Superintendent of the Bureau of Highways and Sewers, Pittsburgh, U.S.A. He writes:

"Much of my early engineering work was done subordinate to, and under the direction of, one man, a civil engineer of note in his country, and whose surname initial is D. I felt a strong attachment to this man on account of his various aids to my progress, and I now suspect that our horoscopes were in harmony because he 'got along' with but few of his associates and assistants. I had been working with Mr. D—— in one of the Western States for a year or more, and upon the completion of the railroad I was discharged and came East to my home. Mr. D—— remained in the West. I soon found other employment at my old home, and was so engaged for several years; and in these

years I seldom heard of Mr. D——, and when I did hear of him it was through some mutual friend who had seen him in the West or who had received a direct communication from him. I finally completed my work at my old home, and was looking for another engagement. This not coming as speedily as I could wish, I 'worried' a good deal, and my thoughts often went out to my friend. I also tried to locate him so that I could apply to him for an engagement, but in this I was not successful. These were the conditions

A DREAM-

MEETING.

when one night I had a vivid dream about Mr. D——. I dreamed that in front of a certain store on the principal street of my city I had met and had had a long talk with my old employer, whom I had not seen or heard directly from for several years. It was so realistic that at the breakfast table I related the dream to my mother; she (being a 'believer in dreams') said, 'Well, son, you will see him or get favourable news from him soon.' With this, the incident was for the moment dismissed from my mind. Later that morning I took a street-car for down town, and when I arrived at the street where I dreamed I had met Mr. D——. I alighted. Hardly a dozen steps were taken when I came face to face with my friend, carrying a grip-sack in his hand. My first question was, 'How long since you returned to the city?' His reply was, 'I have just arrived from the West' Question: Why did I dream of Mr. D—— that particular night, and why did I meet him just at the place indicated in the dream, the next morning?

"Incident number two. The same *dramatis personæ*, and the date but ten days ago at the time I write:

"I was sitting in my office, had just opened my mail, which was on my desk (being the early morning delivery). My thoughts reverted to this same Mr. D——. There is a difference of twelve years in our ages, and I was foolishly (?) thinking that years ago when I used to work for him he was just about my present age, but that time had set more lightly on my shoulders than on his at the same age. While my thoughts were still dwelling upon him my messenger brought in to me the mail from the second morning delivery, and the first letter was one from Mr. D——, whom I had not seen in ten months, nor heard directly from in this time."

The second instance does not bear directly on the subject in question, and is merely interesting as showing that there was a

tendency towards telepathic *rapport* between the two persons concerned, which was liable to become active given fitting conditions. A noteworthy point about the first instance appears to be that the dreamer not only dreamed of the person he met on the succeeding day but also the actual spot at which the meeting took place.

The sender of the next communication, Mr. W. J. Lawrence, an Ulster man, has been possessed of a lifelong enthusiasm for the theatre. His main vocation was mercantile up to three years ago; since that he has followed the bent of his inclination and (at some pecuniary sacrifice) become a journalist. In 1892 he wrote the "Life of G. V. Brooke," a celebrated actor formerly associated with Mr. J. F. Warden, who figures in the undernoted dream experience.

Some time in or about the year 1896, while Mr. Lawrence was residing in Belfast, he had occasion to go on a Monday to a small bustling town about twenty miles away—Banbridge. Business affairs occupied his mind all day, and for once he had given no thought to his hobby—the drama. Tired out he went to bed in the Imperial Hotel at (for him) a somewhat early hour. Next morning in waking he had a distinct recollection of Mr. J. F. Warden (the lessee of the Belfast Opera House) coming to his bedside with a grave troubled face and saying: "If this sort of thing goes on I shall be ruined." Dreams as a rule do not worry him but this one lingered.

In the coffee-room at breakfast time the writer handed Mr. Lawrence a copy of the *Belfast Newsletter*. As usual with him on a Tuesday morning, he turned to the particular column in which the theatres were on that day noticed, and was not a little surprised to find a paragraph stating that in consequence of the non-arrival of the company engaged (owing to the missing of a railway connection in England) there had been no performance at the Belfast Opera House. In local annals a closure for this reason was quite unprecedented; hence there must have been something more than mere coincidence in the experience.

Mr. Lawrence writes to me in reference to this narrative: "Between Mr. Warden and myself there had been an acquaintance of many years, which, however, had never deepened into the greatest intimacy. We had kindred tastes and sympathies and

mutual respect. No more. Mr. Warden was older than I, and had children almost my own age. He was (racially) a Jew, and had all the pride and aloofness of his people. These things forbade intimacy. But I respected him as an honourable, upright man. Possibly his son Mr. Fred W. Warden, of Belfast, by referring to the theatre books could give the exact date of the *contretemps*. His father died in March 1898 aged sixty-two." Mr. Lawrence states that the above is his sole experience of a telepathic intimation in a dream. This is a noteworthy point when taken in conjunction with the fact that there was no special intimacy between the two people in telepathic association.

I shall resume the thread of these notes in the July issue.

I would again remind my readers that the first six numbers of the OCCULT REVIEW will be bound together in a single volume to be published about the middle of June at the price of 4s. 6d. net, post free. A special effort has been made to secure a tasteful

and artistic binding. This binding can be supplied to subscribers if desired on application to the publishers for 1s. 3d. A Title-Page and Index of Contents for the volume has also been prepared and is published in conjunction with the current issue. I have had several inquiries for second-hand copies of "Myers' Human Personality," the price offered being £1. I mention this in case any of my readers have copies which they wish to dispose of. If so, I would ask them kindly to communicate the fact.

THE OCCULT IN THE NEARER EAST

BY A. GOODRICH-FREER (MRS. SPOER)

A PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

AMONG the many criticisms which are passed upon students of the Occult, one of the most frequent, expressed with varying degrees of frankness, is that "they don't know their own silly business." Our methods, historical, experimental, psychological, are, it seems, all more or less wrong. Here we encroach upon religion, there upon superstition, and our critics take no note of the fact that the terms are interchangeable, according to the point of view. This group of cases are "mere folk-lore." What is most folk-lore but a record of customs which have come into existence more or less in association with the occult? Another group has "no psychical value." They are mere survivals misunderstood, mere expressions of "historical ignorance." It is curious in what unlooked-for connection, ignorance of this kind is frequently found.

Personally, after a lifetime's association with occult phenomena, and half a lifetime's study of its literature, I have not yet discovered what are the limits fairly assignable. Three years' close observation of the phenomena of the East—the East, I grant, in its most elementary character, historically perhaps none the worse for that—has perplexed me still further as to what amount of the unknown, the obscure, the elemental, may be admitted as included among things occult.

One may perhaps fairly divide the study of the Occult into two branches: (1) That of *the utilisation of unknown forces*, for communication with those distant in time or space, for the transmutation of metals, the prolongation of life, the extension of our senses in such directions as are known as clairvoyance, psychometry, clairaudience and the like. (2) That of *the propitiation of unknown Powers*, mainly in the direction of what I have elsewhere described as "dodging the Powers of Evil."*

Further East, where the refinements of the speculative philosophy of Buddhism have carried human thought and experiment

* *Outer Isles*. Constable, 1902.

into directions more subtle, as has been abundantly shown by theosophists and other students, the Occult has developed along the lines which I have roughly indicated as belonging to group (1). Here where, under various names, we are still carrying on much the same philosophy as was bequeathed to us by the Canaanites before the Hebrew immigration, our occult study has developed mainly along the lines indicated as belonging to group (2); and I imagine that there is probably no spot in the universe where this group of phenomena may be observed to greater advantage and in greater variety. Not—I would say in passing—that the other is by any means lacking, but rather that it belongs to a stage of culture which we have not yet reached, and I am inclined to believe that the stagnation has not been wholly accidental, seeing that a good deal has been imposed upon us, in Jerusalem at least, in the name of religion.

The Canaanites worshipped upon every high hill and under every green tree; the stones remain there unto this day, and are still objects of worship to Moslems and Christians—in their degree, and with certain variations, to Jews. They passed their children through the fire to Moloch. Every year thousands of Christians flock to light their candles at the sacred fire lighted within the Sepulchre of Christ; while, a few weeks later, thousands of Jews throng to *their* holy place at Safed, where they dance round fires maintained by the sacrifice of valuable possessions, throwing in carpets, silks, velvets, furs! The Moslem, on the other hand, may not even say a prayer while the sun is rising, lest he should be supposed to refer to the source of light that which belongs to Allah and to the powers of darkness. The cult of pillars, with its obvious esoteric significance, of the great Rock with which Jahweh is so often compared, borrowed from the Canaanites and kept up by Solomon with his Jachin and Boaz at the Temple doors, and still active, was not a more anthropomorphic sentiment than that we find exhibited in every church and synagogue all over the country; whether it be in the pictures of the Sacred Heart of the Catholic, the erotic and often sanguinary hymns of the Protestant, or the wailing of the Jews over their Temple destroyed, where they may no longer offer bread and wine and roast meat to an exacting deity. Naaman the Canaanite, healed of his leprosy by the local and territorial God, carried off a load of earth that he might continue His cult upon the soil belonging to Him. Here, in the twentieth century, the soil of the Holy Land is still an article of export—

as a matter of Christian sentiment, which I refer to with no lack of respect—of American relic-hunting, and still more, of Jewish utilitarianism; for those buried in sacred soil, even to the extent of a few grains laid upon the eyelids, will not, like others, have to work their way hither underground to receive judgment on the Last Day.

The Canaanite Balak led Balaam from one hill to another that peradventure the Deity might be tempted to curse better on this spot than on that. The competition for entrance of Christians of all sects into the tiny chapel of the Holy Sepulchre is ceaseless by day, and at times by night, for there are all prayers sure of access to the Almighty. Similarly the Jews address to God petitions in writing, which they post in spots of particular sanctity—a pile of these is before me as I write.

The Canaanites, followed by the Jews, erected stones as witnesses of special events. The Jews of to-day drive nails into the walls of sacred places, Moslems and Christians tie fragments of their clothing to trees and stones—other Christians deposit coin and buy candles, which they light, to be extinguished when their backs are turned and melted and sold *de novo*. Christian women, in search of husbands, to whom a London season and the *Matrimonial Gazette* are inaccessible, extract a tooth and drop it into a certain hollow stone in a spot so hallowed by association that I forbear to name it, and would-be mothers eat cakes made of the dust of the Milk-Grotto at Bethlehem—all relics of the Astarte worship of the Canaanites. Hysterical patients, and those suffering from obscure diseases, are sent to pass the night in shrines, Christian or Moslem, dedicated to St. George—often, as I am convinced from first-hand evidence, and as a highly esteemed English physician, Dr. Chaplin, long resident here, testified, with the very best results.

It would be easy to multiply examples. The child, whether nation or individual, is father of the man. The inhabitant of Palestine is in much the same relation with the occult in the twentieth century after Christ as in the fifteenth century before, and possibly long before that. We use different terms, religious and scientific, but the honest thinker can hardly close his eyes to the fact that the thought processes are the same. Self-suggestion, hypnotic suggestion, are forces not new, nor are superstition, charlatanism and greed of money or of power. Let him among us, the heirs of all the ages, who is without fault first cast a stone!

Apart from religion and superstition, apart from the occult, the little Canaanite town of Jebus would never have developed into Jerusalem. Mount Sion may be beautiful for situation, but it has always been remote from the great commercial highways of Palestine ; it has probably always been three miles, at least, from the [nearest permanent spring ; a day's journey from the nearest river ; a longer day's journey from the nearest port, and that so dangerous, so difficult of access, that one cannot wonder that the Jewish heaven should be a place where there was "no more sea."

Solomon reigned over a country smaller than Wales, and though silver was nothing accounted of in his days, he had to pawn his coast towns to pay his carpenter's bill, and the mortgagee gave them a name which means "disgusting." Jerusalem, full of interest, endeared by association as it is, much as it grows upon one's affections, is inferior in natural beauty, fertility, climate, soil, to most other towns in Syria ; but the mystery, the tragedy, the psychology, in short the occult forces, which have governed its history for three thousand years, and which have left their traces in every element of its individuality, are of unique and endless interest. I wish to emphasise once for all my desire to avoid all possible charge of irreverence, all allusion to the Great Tragedy of which it was the scene ; and, so far as one may, to regard the land "over whose acres walked those blessed feet" only from the point of view which is psychological and human.

Friendly acquaintances, aware of my interest in occult phenomena of all kinds, warned me upon arrival in the Turkish dominion that I should find little of interest, probably because they had not realised that the study included elements other than those commonly enumerated, by the uninformed, as "spiritualistic." However, even in regard to second sight, hauntings, physical and psychical phenomena, and premonitions, the cases which have reached me here are sufficiently abundant, although, for various reasons, mainly racial, not of what the S. P. R. would regard as of evidential value ; they are, in many cases, of a kind which may perhaps more fitly be studied (again for reasons racial and perhaps religious) among the phenomena of unknown powers to propitiate, rather than of unknown forces to develop.

It is interesting, from this point of view, to watch, for a few moments, the passers-by, for convenience let us say in Jerusalem,

though there are many other places in Syria of equal, though perhaps of less varied, interest. The element which we may neglect is that of the tourists, not in many cases from any lack of ignorance or superstition, for they are the prey of the most fanatical of Jews, the most cynical of Moslems, the most avaricious of Christians, the most ignorant of personal conductors. We will let them pass, to the "Mosque of Omar," which is not a mosque, and has nothing to do with Omar; to the "Tombs of the Kings," where queens of the Christian era have their burial-place; to "Gordon's Tomb of Christ," with which Gordon had no connection whatever, and which is a crusading donkey stable.

Here is a spectacle more picturesque—a Moslem effendi in spotless turban riding a fine Arab horse, with fringed and embroidered horsecloth, and a plume of feathers, or a fox's brush between the eyes. To brush away flies, think you? Fortunately this handsome stallion, full of life and fire, has so far escaped occidental culture, and has been allowed to keep his tail and mane for the purpose for which Nature intended them; the decoration is an amulet, a charm, to attract the evil eye, human or jinn, from the noble head upon which it might otherwise rest. The Moslem officer, however, does not know that it is referred to in the Talmud. He does not love the Jews, and is at no pains to avoid riding among a group of Jewish school-children, who have been studying to-day in three languages and are talking a fourth, the forbidden "jargon" prohibited in Jewish schools though encouraged by the missionaries. They are, intellectually, in advance of most English children of their age in similar primary schools, but their little hands are scarred, for only yesterday they secretly and voluntarily subjected themselves to the ordeal by fire, to ascertain who was guilty of a fault for which the whole class was under suspicion. Proficiency in vulgar fractions and word-building does not educate the whole man. There goes a missionary on her way to a meeting to pray for their "dear dark souls," though she knows nothing of their language, in which her amulet, the Bible, was written, for the Moslem effendi of whose sacred book she thanks God she has not read one word.

There goes a Protestant Arab, handling a Moslem rosary as he walks. He would not for worlds recite the divine attributes—"Almighty, Compassionate," &c.—as yonder Moslem is doing, telling his beads behind his back, but most native Protestants

carry them—not as a charm, of course, but—? There is a brown-frosted Franciscan talking to a white-robed Dominican, each with his rosary hanging by his side. The beads are endowed with rival advantages, and the religious discuss their respective values which are inherent only in those for which you have paid money, not in those which are gifts or are inherited, though as a charm against the powers of darkness nothing is so potent as a medal of the Benedictines specially designed for the purpose. The happy voices of the little Jews are still audible, and remind us, as our eyes rest on the Dominican, that Albertus Magnus, who was of his Order and took part in the Council in which Innocent IV. condemned the Talmud to be burnt, was yet steeped in Talmudic and Arabic Aristotelian philosophy, though he refused to regard Biblical traditions as psychical phenomena (as did Maimonides), not so much out of respect for the Scripture as because he considered such explanation a frivolous misuse of philosophy.

A string of camels block up the road ; each has round his neck a block of wood upon which is roughly engraved the Jerusalem cross of five crosslets. Camels are essentially Moslem in all their associations, but this, the Franciscan insignia, has been here since the Crusades, and it is as good a charm as any other. A limping dog follows ; he belongs to nobody, and has no occult advantages, few of any kind, but the cat and the lamb sitting side by side on yonder doorway have each a blue necklace, and are sleek and fat in consequence.

Two little boys, a Christian and a Moslem, jeer at each other as they pass, like naughty little boys all the world over. Both cough after the effort, though the one is dressed as a miniature Franciscan friar, and the other has a mutton bone round his neck, as preservative against the effects of damp homes and general ignorance of sanitation. The Jew who follows is more practical, he is taking *his* little boy (girls, of whatever creed, don't much matter here) to the English Hospital. The Jews have magnificent institutions of their own, but in them those who can are expected to pay suitably, and the prayer and sermon he will have to listen to may even do good, who knows ? and in any case they cannot hurt, as both he and the child have a charm against them sewn inside their clothing. A Jewish charm is generally worn, unlike the Christian and Moslem, out of sight.

As we walk along we note over one doorway an egg, over another a cross, over a third a piece of alum ; here a smear of

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blue paint, there the drawing of an open hand, there the certificate of a Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca, testifying to protection from dangers of lions, and railway trains, and deserts, and steamboats. We know that nearly every house has been founded with a bloody sacrifice, that three-fourths of those we meet, human and quadruped, carry some form of occult protection, that at least half can tell us of occult experiences with varying colour, Jewish, Christian, Moslem, European, Asiatic, African as the case may be, and yet nine-tenths of the European population would piously thank God that, owing to Christian culture and influence, the Holy City had been purged of all interest in the Occult.

MIND AS UNKNOWABLE

By C. W. SALEEBY, M.D.

THIRTY years ago, physicists unacquainted with psychological inquiry, and with the subtler physical considerations, believed that they could claim complete knowledge of matter—which they regarded as the only reality other than mind. It is not meant that they claimed to have exhausted all the possibilities of chemistry, or physics, but that they believed they had identified and could describe the ultimate units of matter, the atoms which, as Clerk-Maxwell said, are “the foundation-stones of the material universe, which have existed since the Creation, unbroken and unworn.” But modern physics has cracked the clay feet of materialism by proving that matter is none other than the expression of an Eternal Power which can be known to us only in its appearances or phenomena. Materialism as a dogmatic system has been irremediably destroyed by the continued application of those methods on whose early, uncritical employment it was based. We may leave it now for those whose scientific knowledge is sufficiently imperfect and antiquated.

But though modern physical inquiry has ousted the dogmatists from their fortress of matter, they have, as it would appear, an impregnable citadel in mind. They may freely admit the lessons taught by the phenomena of radio-activity, and may freely assent to the doctrine, truly time-honoured, that our knowledge of the “external world”—of not-mind—is merely an inference, however irresistible, from certain changes in our consciousness. All this the dogmatist may grant, but yet find a stable footing in the doctrine that, though matter is but an inference from mental states, yet mind, on the other hand, is directly known to us—the only thing, indeed, that is so known. It would thus follow that whereas the phenomena of not-mind are demonstrably occult, yet mind and its phenomena are demonstrably patent; for, whereas our knowledge of not-mind is mediate, inferential, at the mercy of sensation, with its few avenues, each of which is known to be imperfect and misleading—our knowledge of mind is immediate, direct, involved in the possibility of any knowing at all, independent of all

external factors, and careless of all sources of fallacy, since mind's knowledge of itself is supra- or extra- or ultra-logical.

But if we really knew mind as it has been argued that we must, there could be no psychology or "metaphysics." For these sciences treat mind objectively, just as physics treats matter; and yet they would appear to have their problems still to solve—which is not conceivable on the theory that mind is known to us as Deity might be conceived as known to Himself. Furthermore, if mind itself be not occult, hidden, unknowable, but, on the contrary, the only entity that is directly and essentially known, there cannot be anything inexplicable in its characters in any circumstances. The phenomena which so many keen thinkers are studying to-day, must be not only fictitious but factitious; indeed the term phenomena cannot be used of mind; for a phenomenon is an *appearance*, which implies a reality of which it is the appearance, whereas the *essentia* or substance of mind is a thing given in all its operations. The Idea is the only reality, and in so far reality is known to us. So they say.

On the contrary it may be shown, by the same analytical methods as have disintegrated dogmatic materialism and with equal facility and certainty, that dogmatic idealism is merely the converse expression of the same error. The materialist thinks, or thought, that matter, as he conceived it, is not phenomenal but veritable reality, and very easily knowable reality at that. The idealist, for his part, thinks that ideas, or various states of his consciousness are not phenomenal but noumenal, real, essential, substantial, in the proper undegraded meaning of those fine terms: and, like the materialist, he thinks that this reality is not only knowable but very easily knowable. Indeed no other knowledge so easy can be conceived. And just as materialism proposed to shut men's eyes to *every attribute and indication and significance of matter* that was worthy of the philosopher's attention; so the idealism which fancies that consciousness—all the mind it knows—is the noumenon, the reality of mind, proposes to shut men's eyes to *every fact of mind* that bears upon the sole and supreme question of philosophy; which is the quest of reality—of things not as they seem but as they are, as Plato would have said, or of essences, not accidents, in the phraseology of the schoolmen.

Hence it is that our academic philosophers, who just now are followers of Hegel,—in accordance with the generalisation that "Good German philosophies, when they die, go to Oxford"—and

who regard their own consciousness as portions of Reality directly and wholly known to them, are to be heard dismissing, for instance, the psychology of Herbert Spencer, on the ground that he speaks of mental facts as phenomena (or appearances), whereas the term should properly be confined,—they say—to material facts. To discuss the “phenomenal Ego,” they aver, is to abuse language and evidence an incapacity for appreciating the conditions of the problems under discussion, for the Ego is that to which the non-Ego appears, *i.e.*, is phenomenal. The one thing known as it is, not as it appears, is the Ego; and from it may therefore be constructed a complete dogmatic system of the Eternal, not as it appears, but as it verily is.

But as we well know to-day, academic idealism involves the identification of *consciousness* with *mind*, an error which is more than verbal, more than relevant to the superstructure of the system, but vitiates it root and branch, and is comparable only to the analogous error which has made materialism a name of perpetual scorn. The classic researches of many students, varying in philosophic standpoint as widely as did Carpenter and Myers, have revealed to us the amazing fact, the full philosophic and ontological significance of which has hitherto been appreciated by few if any, that consciousness, even as known to the conscious subject himself, is precisely the analogue of matter, as known to him. Each is the expression, appearance, or phenomenon, of an underlying reality; and as he can never know not-mind in its essence, so his consciousness can never become identified with the non-conscious entity of which itself is the efflorescence, or phenomenon.

It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the validity and certainty of this conclusion. Let us consider some of the evidence in its favour. In the first place, we have seen that the academic doctrine of the immediate knowableness of mind can be disproved by the *reductio ad absurdum*, directly we contrast its pretensions with the notorious and, as I believe, essentially insoluble difficulties of psychology. On the academic theory, there is only one plain-sailing, self-evident science, which is psychology; whereas the physical sciences, such as astronomy, are necessarily inferential and confined to phenomenal knowledge alone. The facts immediately negative this conclusion: so that if we were compelled to declare either mind or not-mind to be the more unknowable, the palm would have to be awarded to mind, as the present state of our knowledge thereof clearly indicates.

In the second place, the conclusion of the essential unknowableness of mind—again I use the word essential in the great scholastic sense—is forced upon us by the infinitely complex character of its manifestations. (In order to believe that, say, the Idea of the Good, is ultimate noumenal reality, one must be wholly ignorant of its incalculable antiquity and complexity. In other words, one must deny evolution.) Each year brings with it more cogent evidence that, whatever we may know, even phenomenally, of matter, we certainly know hardly anything, *even phenomenally*, of mind. We do not even seem to see our way towards any such generalisations concerning phenomenal mind, as we have framed concerning phenomenal matter—such as the laws of gravitation or conservation. Whilst we are assured that the Reality underlying not-mind is eternal, indestructible, uncreated, we see consciousness daily—and nightly—arrested (destroyed?)—and recreated. We have hardly yet asked whether this implies that the law of conservation is not universal, or whether, as I believe, it must be interpreted as showing that consciousness, the phenomenon consciousness, is impermanent, as the phenomenon radium is now known to be impermanent. And whilst the physicist is assured that the reality of which the radium atom is the fleeting manifestation, is nevertheless permanent and changeless, so I assuredly believe that the unknowable reality of which consciousness is the fleeting manifestation, is also eternal and changeless.

In the third place, there is the remarkable fact that the most diverse thinkers, whose names would be anathema in each other's ears, save in the few cases where the philosopher has the philosophic temper—converge in this conclusion. The reader well knows that the students of psychic phenomena are persuaded that there is more in mind than "meets the eye" of consciousness. But let us turn from those who may loosely be called spiritualists to those who, with equal impropriety, have been called materialists. John Locke, who was accused of Atheism, and whose perdurable work was proscribed by his university, clearly showed, though he had never heard of "unconscious cerebration," or the "subliminal mind," that our knowledge, even of our own minds, is no more than phenomenal—that we know it only as it appears to us—not as it is in itself. If we turn from Locke to one of his great successors in the associationist school of psychology, to John Stuart Mill, whom none will accuse of mystical tendencies—to Mill, the

disciple of Auguste Comte, than whom dogmatic materialism never had a more persuaded exponent—we find, in an early chapter of his masterpiece, the “System of Logic,” the clearest possible demonstration of the fact that our knowledge of mind is, in reality, as empirical and inferential as our knowledge of not-mind. Then, if we proceed to Mill’s successor, Herbert Spencer, who could be dogmatic enough when he tried, and who was no lover of mysticism or mystification, we find the same truth asserted and demonstrated. It appears to me that serious and impartial students of the more recondite psychic phenomena should not be lacking in appreciation of the fact that the leading thinkers of the school most opposed to their own in its methods and traditions and underlying assumptions, have united in proclaiming that mind, as we know it, is not mind as it is ; just as the idealists—and, later, the physicists—have shown that matter as known to us is not matter as it is.

But it is evidently not enough to establish the sceptical or agnostic conclusion, and to rest content therewith. If mind, as known to us, and matter, as known to us, are only phenomenal expressions of underlying Realities, can we say aught of that which they express ? Are we to believe that one Reality underlies matter, and another consciousness?—that there are two unknowables and not one ? In other words, is there no final synthesis towards a true monism, and must we remain content with a dualism only one whit less unsatisfactory than those of the past ? I believe that Spinoza answered this question in a thought which Goethe declared to be the truest, grandest, and most profound of all the ages. To his answer Kant—at times—and Spencer, reaching it by other roads, lend their assent. Mind and matter, as we “know” them ; or the Spiritual and the non-Spiritual ; or that of which consciousness is the manifestation, and that of which mud or diamonds, or lips or eyes, are the manifestation—are the correlative expressions of One Reality, which has been “nicknamed God” (as a Roman Catholic priest once said), which has been apotheosised as Nature (Spinoza speaks of *Natura sive Deus*) ; which St. Paul calls Unspeakable ; and Spencer named Unknowable ; but the existence of which is, in the last resort, our one indefeasible certainty.

MERIONETHSHIRE MYSTERIES

By BERIAH G. EVANS

III. THEORISTS—SCIENTISTS— SPIRITUALISTS

MY one object in these articles has been to lay the facts, so far as they have been hitherto ascertained, respecting these mysterious occurrences in Merionethshire, in the plainest and baldest manner before the public. I have advanced no theory of my own with reference to them. This, however, does not forbid my examining the theories advanced by others, and endeavouring to see how far, if at all, any of them fit in with the actual facts. And this is the main purpose of the present article.

A great deal of cheap satire has been wasted upon even the prosaic accounts given of these remarkable phenomena. That was of course inevitable, as it is so much easier to laugh at a thing we do not understand than it is to seek for a rational and satisfactory explanation. I dismiss without a word of comment the numerous kindly suggestions that I and others have been the victims of a vulgar hoax, or the subjects of pure hallucination. Hoaxes innumerable have been attempted to be played upon the credulous, and though by the use of chemicals, kites, and swift motors, strange "lights" have been produced under remarkable circumstances in the heavens and upon the earth along the Merionethshire coast since the first of these articles appeared, I am not aware that in a single instance have they succeeded in deceiving any one who had previously seen the Lights of Egryn.

Others have approached the question in a more serious spirit of investigation, but from lack of personal knowledge of the precise conditions under which the Mysterious Lights have appeared, the theories advanced by some reputable scientists appear hardly less ridiculous than do the clumsy attempts of the practical jokers at hoaxing the public.

Among the theories advanced which possess some claim to serious consideration, is the one that the "Lights" now seen are identical in character with mysterious phenomena, which on previous occasions created great excitement in practically the

same district. The first recorded appearance of these dates back over two hundred years, or, to be precise, to the year 1693. An interesting account of them is given in Pennant's "Tours in Wales," and a more detailed description is given in a Welsh work on local antiquities, "Y Gestiana," of an extract from which the following is a free translation :

A strange fire appeared at Morfa Bychan near Portmadoc, in the year 1693, travelling along the coast to Merionethshire. It made its first appearance about Christmas time. On December 24 it burnt down two ricks of hay. . . . Six ricks of hay and a farm outhouse were burnt down on December 27. Its effects upon the grass growing on the fields over which it passed were so poisonous that for three years afterwards every bird and beast partaking of it died: It was a fiery vapour rising from Morfa Bychan Marsh, and travelling along the coast as far as Harlech, ten miles distant. Noise of any kind seemed to affect it, and cause it to rise into the heavens, and though people created a loud noise when it was seen, and so prevented its doing much damage, it continued to make its appearance every Saturday and Sunday night for a considerable time. The people believed it to have been caused by a cotter who had been ejected from his holding and who, out of revenge, had bewitched the place.

A number of other writers give practically similar accounts, among them being Edward Llwyd, and the Rev. Morris Jones, the Rector of Dolgelly at that time (1693).

A little consideration, however, will serve to show that though the district visited—the north part of the Merionethshire coast—and the time of the year—Christmas—of its first appearance, are practically identical, the phenomenon of 1904-5 is essentially different in character from that of 1693. For while the ancient visitation was essentially malignant in character, accompanied by a nauseating smell, and deadly in its effects, the Lights of Egryn have proved to be the reverse of all this.

The next extract—from the old *Mirror* of August 28, 1830—is of a more interesting character, as it approaches more nearly the present conditions. It is as follows :

In a wild and retired district in North Wales, that, namely, which extends from Dolgelly westward to Barmouth and Towyn, where there is certainly as much superstition as in any other district of the same extent, and where there are many individuals who lay claim to the title and capabilities of *seers*, the following occurrence took place to the great astonishment of the mountaineers. We can vouch for the truth of the statement, as many members of our own *teulu*,* or class, were witnesses of the fact. On a dark evening a few winters ago, some persons with whom we are well acquainted, were returning to Barmouth on the south or opposite side of the river; as they approached the ferry house at Penthryn (*sic*) which is directly opposite Barmouth, they observed a light near the house, which they conjectured to

* "*Teulu*" is a Welsh word, meaning literally "family."—B. G. E.

be produced by a bonfire, and greatly puzzled they were to discover the reason why it should have been lighted. As they came nearer, however, it vanished, and when they inquired at the house respecting it, they were surprised to learn that not only had the people there displayed no light, but they had not even seen one, nor could they perceive any signs of it on the sands.

This is interesting, not only because the precise location is within a mile or so of the spot where I first saw the Light,* but because it confirms the theory I had formed as to the district and the probable character of its inhabitants. I went there confident I should find the precise conditions described in the *Mirror*, viz., a population essentially superstitious, with probably some recognised "seers" among them. To my surprise, however, I found nothing of the kind, no trace of superstition, no claim to the power of second sight. Unfortunately the *Mirror* description is so vague, and the phenomenon having been seen on only one occasion, it is impossible to institute any adequate comparison between the "Light" of eighty years ago and those of to-day.

The next recorded instance dates thirty years ago. According to the *Motor Cycle* the Lights were seen at Pwllheli in 1875, the following description being given by an alleged eye-witness :

We saw twelve (lights?) at the same time—two very bright, the one red and the other blue. They did not confine themselves to the marshy ground, although at first they seemed to rise from ground where we knew there were swamps. It was a very dark and foggy night, and we tried to get near them. When we had gone half a mile we observed four or five behind us. One light moved about some farm buildings, and then rose to a great height.

Here again we have only a single occurrence, and the description lacks the precision requisite to a careful comparison with the present phenomena, which, as will be seen from the fuller description given in previous articles, differ in some essential respects from the Pwllheli lights.

Finally, to complete this historical resumé, I give the following interesting account of the personal observations of Mr. R. Bowen, the stationmaster on the Cambrian Railway at Towyn :

Mr. Bowen observed what appeared to be a strange star sometime in December 1904. It was a large luminous body, with three large sparklets emanating from it. When first seen it had a yellowish ring around it, apparently about a foot in diameter, similar to that observed around the moon, and generally accepted as an indication of a coming storm. One night it remained practically in the same position from 6.30 to 7.30. When sought for again, it had travelled in twelve minutes from a point opposite Towyn to the north-west, and stood opposite Bardsey Island. On another

* See THE OCCULT REVIEW, March 1905.

evening the star was kept under observation through a telescope, and it travelled nearer the land at 10.30 P.M. When opposite Harlech it suddenly disappeared, and although watched for for some time it did not reappear. The night was clear, with a frost in the air; no clouds were noticeable anywhere; the star was "snuffed out," as it were, without any visible reason to account for it. The observations here recorded were made on clear, bright, calm nights. The star was not to be seen "on cloudy or wet nights."

The time when Mr. Bowen's star was first seen by him coincides with the earlier period of Mrs. Jones's star, and the district traversed, from opposite Towyn to opposite Harlech, is also practically identical with that in which Mrs. Jones's Lights revel. Mr. Bowen's star, however, appears to have travelled oversea; Mrs. Jones's "Lights," although on at least one occasion seen to cross an arm of the sea on the occasion of her mission to Criccieth, have, as a rule, appeared on land. Still, speaking generally, Mr. Bowen's description is not inconsistent with the appearance of Mrs. Jones's "star" as first seen by me. In size, luminosity, sparklets, at times stationary, at others moving with great rapidity, then suddenly being "snuffed out," Mr. Bowen's description tallies with my own observation. Even so, the reason for the appearance of the "star" still remains to be explained, while, as will have been seen from the two previous articles, the "star" is only one of a number of mysterious manifestations of Lights associated in the popular mind with Mrs. Jones's mission.

Turning to the numerous theories advanced by scientists in explanation of the phenomena, I find they range from phosphorescent emanations from decayed fish to the Aurora Borealis. I will deal briefly with the more important of these suggested explanations.

The "Ignis Fatuus" is a favourite explanation, which might suit the Pwllheli lights described above, but which cannot by any stretch of the imagination be made to fit in with the star, the flashlight, and the still more weird bars of light which are the familiar characteristics of the Egryn Lights.

"St. Elmo's Fire" is suggested by Mr. W. S. Child, Port Engineer, Aden, by Mr. Ernest Rhys, and others. The former, however, puts his explanation out of court when he says that "this fire, assuming the form of numerous vertical threads of light like incandescent wires, revolving at a distance of about twelve inches round a telegraph post, could only be seen when heavy thunderclouds were massed, and when the telegraph pole was viewed from such a point as to stand silhouetted against the dark background of electrically charged clouds." The Egryn

Lights are not dependent upon any particular atmospheric conditions whatsoever. Mr. Ernest Rhys fares no better when he says that St. Elmo's Fire, and similar manifestations of atmospheric electricity, are usually seen at the tops of masts, spires, or other pointed objects—conditions altogether absent at Egryn.

"Marsh gas" is the explanation suggested by Mr. Bernard B. Redwood, the special scientific commissioner sent down to investigate the matter on behalf of the *Daily Mail*, but who was not fortunate enough, apparently, to see the actual Lights for himself. He says :

It is an ideal locality for the production of phosphuretted hydrogen, or marsh gas, although I have not detected its presence during my stay. This gas is frequently self-ignited, and flames, although vague and elusive in character when seen through a slight haze of mist, might give rise to many stories of so-called heavenly manifestations.

Possibly ; but it certainly does not fit in with his colleague's description of the lights actually seen by him as described in the April number of the OCCULT REVIEW.

The "Tanwe" of Welsh superstition is suggested by the *Daily Mirror* special correspondent, who says :

It is notable that from the earliest times appearances of this kind have been supposed to accompany great religious events. In Celtic countries popular superstition is full of stories of ghostly lights. All over the Highlands the belief in the "dreag," a light in the sky which stops over the house in which a death is shortly to occur, may still be found. Wales, in particular, has long known various kinds of corpse candles. One of these, the "Tanwe" has a curious resemblance to Mrs. Jones's "Lights." It appears in the lower regions of the air, and is distinguished from a falling star by its slow motion. "It lighteneth all the air and ground where it passeth, lasteth three or four miles or more for aught is known, because no man seeth the rising or beginning of it ; and when it falls to the ground, it sparkleth and lighteth all about."

But though Mrs. Jones's "Light" like the "Tanwe" stops over particular houses, the former is supposed to mark the birth to new life, while the latter foretells a death. In other respects, however, the "Tanwe" bears a striking resemblance to one of the forms assumed by Mrs. Jones's "Lights."

"Chemical matter emitted by decayed fish," deposited on these mountain slopes when the sea receded in a pre-historic era, is the solution suggested by one who is described as "having attained some distinction in scientific studies," but which need not be further considered.

"The Northern Lights" or Aurora Borealis satisfies the mind

of one who signs himself a "Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society," and who dates his communication from Burlington House. Had he come nearer to them than Burlington House he would have been easily convinced to the contrary.

The most serious attempt at scientific explanation is that offered by Mr. J. Castell-Evans, Professor of Chemistry at the City of London Technical College, Finsbury, who is himself a native of Merionethshire, and who says :

When a youth at home near Bala in the Valley of the Dee I saw many lights, the nature of which was firmly believed by all the local people to be supernatural. On three occasions I broke one of these lights into pieces, and greatly horrified those who witnessed what they felt was a sacrilegious act. On one occasion when the ball of light came near enough I picked up a big pebble which I threw through the ball, which broke into a thousand little pieces, which a few moments later joined together again, and the ball of light went dancing down over the course of the stream. It was nothing but a cluster of luminescent insects. Such insects are common in the marshy districts of Wales during the autumn. As you walk over the ground your footprints become luminous. But I hardly think that the Lights which are being spoken of at Llanegryn* are of this character. There are many forms of such "Will o' the Wisps," luminous vapours, and glows caused by strong electrical discharges. I have always regarded the famous "Fata Morgana," the seaborn fairy of our brother Welsh, the Bretons, as the effect of electrical discharges. That terrible fairy always sets her deadly light on the masthead of a ship or at the end of a spar. That is just where the glow would be if due to electricity, and when the discharge was strong it would become visible as a purple glow in the dark.

Professor Castell-Evans admits that the "Luminescent Insects" theory does not fit the case. No conceivable cluster of them would serve to light up an acre of mountain side in a brilliancy like that of the noonday sun. His Fata Morgana explanation is at once ruled out by the very conditions he attaches to it.

Evidently dissatisfied with his own scientific explanation, Professor Castell-Evans offers another, which opens up a new class of suggested solutions. He says in the *Daily News* :

It is quite possible that this strange light is not an objective reality at all, As a young man I went somewhat deeply into what is now known as hypnotism. I only gave it up because I found I had acquired a power such as I thought I ought not to possess. Most of my friends believed that I had got into touch with Satan. One night at Bala I was sitting in the old hotel amid a big company of farmers, who were chaffing me, and talking about the doings of the old-time magician for whom the district was famous. "Why," said one, "he was in this very room one night, and he made the very

* It is somewhat remarkable that a man of Professor Castell-Evans's local knowledge should confuse Egryn in the Vale of Arddwy, with Llanegryn near the Dysynni Valley twenty miles to the south.—B. G. E.

candles turn red, and then blue, and then green, and then go right out, and afterwards come back alight again by themselves without a soul touching them." "Oh!" said I, "that is easily done." And there was only one man in the whole company beside myself who did not see the lights change, go out, and relight. It was an easy trick of mere silent volition. At Llanegryn the people are now highly strung and expectant. Mrs. Jones is highly strung by religious emotion. Even by unconscious volition it would be possible for her to make the greater part of a vast crowd see the light that is spoken of. By unconscious volition I mean that she would be quite unaware of the fact that she was using or even possessed of this influence.

This is a most ingenious theory, but it fatally fails in that it does not fit the case. For there are numberless instances in which the "Lights" have been seen in Mrs. Jones's company by persons who had no knowledge of her presence. The idea of hypnotic suggestion, or, as Professor Castell-Evans calls it, "silent volition," therefore falls as far short of fitting the precise conditions as does the discarded theory of "luminescent insects."

Closely related to Professor Castell-Evans's theory is that suggested by the special commissioner of the *Daily Mirror*, who thought "these lights are mainly hallucinative, or subjective, phenomena, due to the heightened expectation and peculiar nervous tension of the watcher." The same objection applies to this theory as to that of hypnotic suggestion—and the *Daily Mirror* commissioner presumably discarded it after his own personal experience of the Lights as related in the April OCCULT REVIEW.

The theory of "astral projection" is advanced in the *Daily News* by "A Writer on Economics." He says :

The light is the astral projection from Mrs. Jones's consciousness into the sky. She is assisted by beings in the astral of the nature spirits attracted by the conditions which would favour such appearances. These things happen because she is awakening upon higher planes (astral) of her being, which enables the luminous appearance to be apprehended as a signal of the Divine presence. She is vouchsafed certain astral visions which her fervid and intense devotion enable her to contact, and, as it were, radiate, so that others may see them as well. The "Light" does not exist apart from her. The religious revival has fostered the development of the psychic faculty within her and in Mr. Evan Roberts, who is on a somewhat more spiritual plane. When he says he talks with God, he talks with his Higher Self, that is, he is able to receive direct whisperings from within. The channel through which these pass is extraordinarily clear.

I must plead too great an ignorance of the science—or is it art?—of astral projection to be able to offer any opinion upon this theory. But, assuming that the ideas of "The Writer on Economics" as to the possibility and existence of "astral projections"

are accepted, it must be admitted that his conception of the intensely devotional, spiritual character of both Mrs. Jones and Evan Roberts is correct.

Somewhat related to this view is that of Mr. Joseph Taylor of Wright's Bed, Willenhall, Staffs, who writes :

The Welsh are what is termed a psychic race—that is, their senses are very highly strung, which gives them a tendency to second sight, or clairvoyance, also clairaudience and telepathy. Telepathy being an established though unexplained fact, we have here, theoretically, materials for a theory of the Welsh Revival and its phenomena. The explanation may be that the "veil" is becoming more transparent to the evolving senses of humanity. Let those who scout this idea remember the Delphic Oracle, Socrates' "demon voice," also read "Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death" by the late F. W. H. Myers.

Numerous other correspondents make the same suggestion. Mr. William Heald, of Westbourne Grove, W., asks :

Is it not possible, after twenty centuries of Christianity, to realise that the spirit world is a real substantial world, and that it can make itself manifest in what form it pleases? In the present instance Mrs. Jones is a true ecstatic, and thus becomes a means through whom the spirit entities can make themselves manifest, even to outsiders in the form of light and colour. What is seen is not a new thing. I have, many years ago, seen the same things about Spurgeon, and Dr. Parker, and Henry Ward Beecher. One Sunday in St. Margaret's, Westminster, I saw the loveliest of deep blue rays playing about the head of Archdeacon Farrar, as he was treating the subject of "The Transfiguration of Jesus."

On the other hand Count De Hamel de Manin writes :

I know a good deal of the wonders that can be performed with the aid of chemistry. I am well versed in spiritism, and have made strange discoveries in the field of psychology, and others in human electricity, yet I maintain that the phenomena of Mrs. Jones's mystic lights are altogether beyond and above these sciences.

I do not feel myself qualified to offer any opinion upon the foregoing. I may, however, fitly wind up my selection of extracts with the following from Mrs. Oliphant's "Francis of Assisi." Dealing with St. Francis's experiences upon Monte Alverno, and the mystery of the Stigmata, Mrs. Oliphant says :

It is a truism to say that every great religious movement is attended by some demonstration of power, unknown and mysterious, which baffles all the explanations of philosophy. The age of miracles we say is past, but there are a hundred wonders, more surprising than absolute miracles, which spring up about us whenever we endeavour to understand the history of religion in the world and its action upon men. Signs and portents attend every crisis of that history. From Savonarola to Wesley, and from Wesley to our own day every great spiritual awakening has been accompanied by phenomena which

are quite incomprehensible, which none but the vulgar mind can attribute to trickery or imposture, and which we find it difficult enough to ascribe solely to the highly strained feeling and nervous excitement which might be supposed to be working in the hearts of its subjects.

Those who have followed with any degree of closeness the Mission of both Evan Roberts * and Mrs. Jones are bound to admit the appositeness of Mrs. Oliphant's reflections as given in this extract.

I should add that while writing the closing portion of the present article I find in a Welsh newspaper an account of Mrs. Jones's Mission to the neighbourhood of Ruabon at the other extremity of North Wales from her home, in which, after detailing the unmistakable spiritual effects of her mission, it is stated that the "Lights" have been visible during her visit, playing above the chapel where her services were held, and following the carriage in which she drove away after the meeting, while her hostess has heard in the small hours of the morning angel choirs singing above the house—Mrs. Jones herself saying that this was a by no means unusual occurrence in connection with her missions. †

I am conscious that I have not elucidated the Merionethshire Mystery. As a matter of fact I have not attempted to do so. I have simply furnished the materials which may assist in the elucidation, and pointed out the cases in which certain theories advanced to explain the mystery do not fit the case, and must consequently be discarded. Mrs. Jones's Lights were Merionethshire Mysteries to me when I first saw them. Now, after three months careful collection of facts, and consideration of theories bearing upon them, Merionethshire Mysteries they still remain.

* My conception of this Revivalist will be found in "Evan Roberts, the Primitive Christian," in *The Quiver* for May 1905.—B. G. E.

† I do not, of course, vouch for these statements, but simply give them as they appear in a Welsh paper, dated April 18, 1905. Since this article was written reports have appeared in the Liverpool and Manchester daily papers more than confirming what the Welsh papers recorded of these manifestations in the Wrexham-Ruabon district. I have, too, a letter from a well-known minister of Wrexham giving particulars, authenticated by the names and addresses of reputable witnesses, of the appearance of the Lights in the form of (a) a circle of light around Mrs. Jones's head at an afternoon Women's Prayer Meeting; (b) three distinct bars, beams, or flashes of light running through the chapel at the Evening Revival Service; and (c) a star at the end of a beam of light playing around the roof of the house in Wrexham where she had been staying. It only remains to add that Wrexham stands near the English border, at the extreme point of North Wales, away from Mrs. Jones's home where I first saw the Lights.—B. G. E.

ASTROLOGY IN SHAKESPEARE—III

By ROBERT CALIGNOC

WHAT I have ventured to call the "critical" allusions to astrology in Shakespeare need not detain us long. They consist of four lines put into the mouth of Helen at the end of that scene in the first act of *All's Well That Ends Well*, from which I have already quoted; of Cassius' famous excursion into astral matters in that pathetic pair of lines which begin: "The fault, dear Brutus"; and, lastly, of those (from a literary point of view) still more divinely turned reflections for which Edmund is made responsible in the second scene of the first act of *King Lear*; those, I mean, which lead off with that trenchant exclamation: "This is the excellent foppery of the world"; a monologue almost comparable in lettered majesty to anything done by Hamlet at his best; stored with half a dozen or more immortal phrases of the kind that has made the name of Shakespeare what it is; priceless treasures for all time.

Helen's criticism of astrology bears a strange family likeness to that of Cassius. While the latter finds that the fault is not in our stars but in ourselves, Helen thinks that

Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie
Which we ascribe to heaven; the fated sky
Gives us free scope; only doth backward pull
Our slow designs when we ourselves are dull.

Edmund's criticism is in something very much the same style. "When we are sick in fortune, often the surfeit of our own behaviour, we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars."

It must be obvious, I think, to any one who will take the trouble to set off against these three quotations the almost countless array producible on the other side, that it was not so much the bare idea of astrology itself at which Shakespeare revolted, as at that abuse which consists in transforming it from a serious hypothesis into an "admirable evasion." We might be at pains, were it worth the while, to insist on the fact at which a writer to whom we shall presently refer hinted, that Edmund is not exactly the sort of character into whose mouth Shakespeare would have put his own beliefs. We might even add that two

other characters in the same play, Gloucester and Kent, certainly believed in astrology, the former rather superstitiously, the latter by a sort of conviction; that Cassius became half converted to "things which do presage" before the battle of Philippi; and that Helen was always a little futile. But we are not ambitious to prove that Shakespeare *believed in* astrology, though, as a matter of cold fact, he probably did. Our ambition has rather been to show that he was considerably fascinated by it. This being the case, the adverse comments are as useful for our purpose as the rest. For opposition is a sure sign that interest is alive. It is, in fact, only a kind of inverted interest.

It is only fair to add that Edmund closes the speech already referred to with a flat, uncompromising denial of the fundamental principle of astrology.* Cassius and Helen, on the other hand, do not appear to go so far. Helen's speech is, perhaps, capable of more than one interpretation, and the meaning of that of Cassius, when one really comes to investigate it, seems also a little vague. But, in so far as they are standing out for some sort of freewill for mankind (and this seems to be Shakespeare's point all through) they are perfectly within their rights. The stars have never told man that he is their absolute puppet. All they seem to say to him is this: "You have arrived, somehow or other, at a certain stage in your evolution. We have got your account-book up here. Your progress will necessarily be slow, and will take place on fairly definite and very interesting lines. Although there is no danger of your falling back into the beasts,† know by these presents that you cannot immediately become a god."

If this is "excellent foppery" and "admirable evasion," then in heaven's name, let us be excellent fops and admirable evaders.

* However, even Edmund, the most avowedly anti-astrological of all Shakespeare's characters, practically recants as soon as fortune turns against him. For do we not owe to him a line replete with astrological significance?

The wheel is come full circle; I am here.

† This remark applies, of course, only to the individual, not to the race. But it may be added that, under the astrological hypothesis, the so-called deterioration of a race is the most illusive of all illusions. Nothing really deteriorates at all. What happens is that more individuals than formerly manage to get born with "decadent" horoscopes. There is no evidence, however, to show that the most "decadent" of individuals is not evolving *quâ* individual. That he is incidentally assisting at the seeming downfall of his race may be true, but this fact is by no means incompatible with a step forward in his own private evolution.

Into the manifold points of interest touched upon by Shakespeare regarding the real or supposed influence over human things, of comets, meteors, solar and lunar eclipses, sympathetic storms, &c., as well as other less common celestial and atmospheric phenomena, considerations of relevance as well as of space must forbid us to enter on this occasion. Although there is a sense in which some, if not all, of these topics are connected with our subject, they do not seem to belong to the main body of (more or less) organised astrology; but rather, like omens and "portentous things" generally, to some subsidiary department of it not yet clearly defined. However, there is a passage which occurs at the beginning of the second act of the third part of *Henry VI.*, which is not only of great distinction from a poetical point of view, but, at the same time, not so generally well known that we need apologise for calling attention to it. It describes the interesting phenomenon of "mock-suns," seen by young Edward and Richard, of the York faction, before the battle of Mortimer's Cross; a phenomenon, by the way, which was reported in the newspapers as having been seen in England yet again at the beginning of the recent Boer War :

EDW. Dazzle mine eyes, or do I see three suns ?

RICH. Three glorious suns, each one a perfect sun :

Not separated with the racking clouds,

But sever'd in a pale, clear-shining sky.

See, see ! they join, embrace, and seem to kiss,

As if they vow'd some league inviolable :

Now are they but one lamp, one light, one sun.

In this the heaven figures some event.

EDW. 'Tis wondrous strange, the like yet never heard of.

I think it cites us, brother, to the field,

That we, the sons of brave Plantagenet,

Each one already blazing by our meeds,

Should notwithstanding join our lights together,

And overshine the earth, as this the world.

Similarly, Hubert reports the appearance of "mock-moons" to King John :

My lord, they say five moons were seen to-night ;

Four fix'd, and the fifth did whirl about

The other four in wondrous motion.

The answer to the question as to what sort of knowledge Shakespeare may have had of astrology has already been partially attempted. It has been pointed out that he was almost certainly acquainted, to a superficial degree at any rate, with some of its

most characteristic doctrines. The writer to whom we have already referred goes much further than this, however. He roundly asserts, for example, that "the power of planetary directions or transits, with respect to the zodiacal positions in a nativity, are frequently alluded to."

We regret to find ourselves almost entirely unable to follow this opinion. To the best of our belief, there is no evidence, from beginning to end of the works usually published under the name of Shakespeare, to bear it out. Only one out of the half-dozen passages quoted in proof of it (which are, in fact, nothing more than vague and general affirmations of the bare astrological principle) can be said to lend it a shadow of support. And this one is the interesting passage in *The Tempest*, which runs as follows :

By my prescience
I find my zenith doth depend upon
A most auspicious star, whose influence
If now I court not, but omit, my fortune
Will ever after droop.

The interest of this passage, however (which might very well have been written, after ten minutes' interview with a "hedging" fortune-teller, by a person who had practically no knowledge of astrology), lies elsewhere ; and that, not even in the somewhat auctioneer-like philosophy of worldly success which characters as far dissimilar as those of Prospero and Brutus seem to have shared between them. It lies rather in the simple fact that Prospero's remark may possibly have been a little piece of Shakespearean autobiography. Such a notion is, of course, nothing more than a harmless fancy which we are at liberty to toy with if we please. But, as such, it is surely interesting.

The truth is that, as far as the evidence goes, Shakespeare's knowledge of astrology seems to have been confined to a vague idea of the importance of planets "predominating" (*v. Works passim*) ; an almost equally vague notion of the nature of the "ascendant" and the "ruling planet" (*v. passages in Twelfth Night, All's Well That Ends Well, The Winter's Tale, Richard III., &c.*), together with a, perhaps, less vague one of "aspects" (*v. the amusing passage in Troilus and Cressida, Act. i. sc. 3*) ; of which, however, he only mentions the "conjunction" and the "opposition" (*v. a passage in Henry IV., Part II., quoted below ; and another in Richard III., quoted above*). On the other hand, although we may well pardon a poet for saying that "nineteen

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zodiacs have gone round," when he certainly means that nineteen years have elapsed, not nineteen days; and although we may forgive a humourist for pretending not to know what part of the body Taurus is supposed to govern; it is much more difficult to get over the passage which occurs in the second part of *Henry IV*. Falstaff is "carrying on" in a room in the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap, when Prince Henry, who has conveniently disguised himself as a waiter, makes the following remark:

Saturn and Venus *this year* in conjunction! What says the almanac to that?

The italics are our own. And we should think that the almanac would reply that a conjunction of Saturn and Venus is rather a hackneyed phenomenon, and not such a "black swan" that special attention need be called to it. Conjunctions of Venus and Saturn do not, of course, take place every year; but they occur so frequently that the expression "this year" looks as if Shakespeare was unaware of the fact of their frequency; which he could not possibly have been if he had studied astrology for a single week.

It must, however, be admitted that Shakespeare's insight into life seems to have enabled him to recognise the astrological effects of the planet Uranus at a time when, if its astronomical existence was known at all, that knowledge must have been closely confined within the inviolable precincts of occult circles. Yet he who runs may read those lines which occur shortly before the middle of the second scene of the first act of *The Winter's Tale*, where three important features of the astrological influence of this remarkable planet seem to be recognised—its extreme power, perhaps also the suddenness of its action (but malefic planets always "strike" in Shakespeare), and certainly the disposition to errancy with which it instils those who come permanently or temporarily under its influence.

But this point only testifies to Shakespeare's psychological gift, not to his astrological knowledge. Had he been closely acquainted with the details of horoscopy itself, it is extremely probable that he would have given us some definite information, imaginary or other, respecting the natal figures of at least one or two of his characters. As it is, we merely get the vague and unsatisfactory statement that Benedick was "not born under a rhyming planet," or that Beatrice was "born in a merry hour." Indeed, the most scientific pronouncements upon this head

which we possess are those which inform us that Conrade was born under Saturn, and Posthumus, Imogen's husband, under Jupiter; though, of course, we must not forget Falstaff, who, to be sure, was born "about three of the clock in the afternoon, with a white head, and something a round belly." And would we could be as sure of the "ascendant" in the case of other Shakespearean characters, as we are in that of Falstaff I For whether Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Sir Toby Belch were natives of Taurus or not, there can be no reasonable doubt whatever about Falstaff. Taurus, as a rising sign, has a way of coming out most strongly, in a physical sense, when the native's back is, metaphorically speaking, against the wall. And so Falstaff, in that little "affair" on the road by Gadshill, "roared for mercy, and still ran and roared, as ever I heard bull-calf," the Prince tells us. Not such, nor all unlike him, was that graver native of the zodiac's second sign, the sage of old time in Plato's story, who, as he raised the cup of fatal hemlock to his lips, glared round him like a bull.

But even if Shakspeare's acquaintance with the elements of astrology was as strictly limited as we have supposed, it must nevertheless be of considerable interest for us to hear what he has to say regarding that profound doctrine which has been thought by some persons to lie at the root and basis of all astrology; animating it, and rationalising it, and transforming it from a seeming relic of barbarism, destined only for the "everlasting bonfire," into something of an *a priori* probability, fit and meet and worthy to be entertained by "all the learned and authentic fellows." The once popular doctrine of Planetary Spirits—a doctrine which was recently honoured by a kindly smile from a really great man of science—conceals, it need hardly be explained, the metaphysical theory that the so-called celestial bodies (including, of course, our own planet), are nothing more than the material forms by which vast, unimaginable systems of specialised spiritual quality and force express themselves to sense.

This doctrine, stated in its more or less popular shape, is at once affirmed and denied by Shakspeare. But the casual, almost irresponsible tenour of the denial, when compared with the simplicity, strength, and grandeur of the affirmation, makes it evident that his dramatic imagination was deeply stirred by this spiritual conception of the cosmic order. Here is the denial:

Thus Indian-like,
Religious in mine error, I adore,
The sun that looks upon his worshipper
But knows of him no more.

The other passage—the affirmation—has been placed at the head of this essay. If, for a single moment, we could picture to ourselves the philosophical theory which underlies the popular doctrine as being fundamentally true (and all the developments of modern inquiry seem to be directing our attention towards the possibility of its truth), then would not astrology itself already begin to look a little less like foolishness? Indeed, to many thoughtful minds at the present day it seems not inconceivable that whatever may prove to be the exact terms which we shall finally employ—and these, of course, will depend in each case upon the particular constitutional bias of the thinker—we shall most of us ere long be able to discover some scientific truth, as well as much poetic beauty, in Lorenzo's inspired and inspiring words :

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins.

THE PRESENT ASPECT OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

By W. L. WILMSHURST

IV. THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

TO the sensitive religious mind there may seem a touch of profanity in the manner in which the cold hand and searching eyes of modern scientific thought are analysing, on the lines I have indicated, matters connected with our deepest and most sacred associations. Yet, Reason being as beneficent and divine a gift to man as Faith, we need not, I think, be ashamed to approach matters that hitherto have been apprehended only by the eye of Faith, with the other great faculty imparted to us. It seems providential or, if you please to use more scientific phraseology, it seems to be in accord with the law of cosmic development, that when one means of apprehending divine truth becomes wholly or in part weakened, another should be forthcoming to assist the failing faculty. But if any apology be needed for the action of modern science towards the deepest sanctities of religion let it be made in the beautiful words of one of the most reverent of sceptics :

What a fearful time is this into which we poor sensitive and timid creatures are born! I suppose the life of every century has more or less special resemblance to that of some particular Apostle. I cannot help thinking this century has Thomas for its model. How do you suppose the other Apostles felt when that experimental philosopher explored the wounds of the Being who to them was divine with that inquisitive forefinger? In our time that finger has multiplied itself into ten thousand thousand implements of research, challenging all mysteries, weighing the world as in a balance, and sifting through its prisms and spectroscopes the light that comes from the throne of the Eternal. Pity us, dear Lord, pity us! The peace in believing which belonged to other ages is not for us. Again thy wounds are opened that we may know whether it is the blood of one like ourselves which flows from them or whether it is a Divinity that is bleeding for his creatures. Wilt Thou not take the doubt of thy children whom the time commands to try all things, in place of the unquestioning faith of earlier and simpler-hearted generations? We too have need of Thee. The martyrs in other ages were cast into the flames, but no fire could touch their immortal and indestructible

faith. We sit in safety and in peace so far as these poor bodies are concerned, but our cherished beliefs, the hopes, the trust that stayed the hearts of those we loved who have gone before us, are cast into the fiery furnace of an age which is fast turning to dross the certainties and the sanctities once prized as our most precious inheritance.*

But the century of the Apostle of doubt in which these words were penned has given way already to a century which the signs of the times seem to indicate may, before it closes, bear a resemblance rather to the Apostle to whom, rightly or wrongly, is traditionally attributed the authorship of the fourth Gospel, who more than any of his fellows proclaimed the underlying and essential spirituality of God and humanity. For, despite the tenacity to their cause of a few belated Materialists and the half-way-house position of a large number of Agnostics, the undoubted present trend of thought consequent upon recent discoveries of science and criticism is towards an intellectual conception of a spiritual Universe; a Universe of which the visible objective world is but a relatively unimportant part, its material side being but a temporary manifestation to our limited sense-faculties of the Spirit which underlies and informs it; a Universe which is permeated and saturated through and through by an intelligent, beneficent Power which we call God, who rules His creation by Law and nurtures it with Love.

What Science has done for Religion, then, is to have presented her with an intelligible sketch of the system and method by and through which the God of Religion works. As F. W. H. Myers well put it, "the intellectual virtues, curiosity, candour, care, have now become necessary to salvation. These virtues have grown up outside the ecclesiastical pale; Science, not Religion, has fostered them; nay, Religion has held them scarcely consistent with that pious spirit which hopes to learn by humility and obedience the secrets of an unknown world."

In the rationalistic times through which at present we are passing it is the custom of orthodoxy to disparage rationalism unduly. The religionist, secure in the folds of his own faith, generally fails to see the advantage that must ultimately accrue from submitting that faith to the most rigorous tests of reason. The rationalist in his eager quest of truth may come to wrong conclusions; he may have accumulated (and I think this is where most rationalists are at fault) insufficient premisses of knowledge and experience to enable him to speak with authority upon mat-

* O. W. Holmes, "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," ch. vii.

ters of which religionists are assured ; in his shortsightedness he may deduce erroneous results, but the very fact that he is searching for truth precludes him from indulging in conscious and wilful falsehood. If a man have sufficient sincerity of purpose his very scepticism may ultimately lead him to faith. In the earliest infancy of the Christian faith, its exponents in trying, in the teeth of immense obstacles, to nurse their charge into vigour begged that its critics would apply to it the very tests of reason which too often nowadays its professors regard with reprobation. When we consider modern attainments of natural science and compare them with the rudimentary and childish acquaintance with it possessed in the second century, surely one feels a world of pathos on coming across the words of Clement of Alexandria, pleading for the examination of Christianity in the light of reason and science : "Some who think themselves naturally gifted (*i.e.*, by the possession of faith) do not wish to touch either philosophy or logic : nay more, they do not wish to learn natural science. They demand bare faith alone. . . . I call him truly learned who brings everything to bear on the truth, so that from geometry, and music, and grammar and philosophy itself, culling what is useful he guards the faith against assault. How necessary is it for him who desires to be partaker of the Power of God, to treat of intellectual subjects by philosophising." And how the pathos is increased a hundredfold, how much more impressive those simple and ingenuous words appear when eighteen centuries later and after an advance in natural science that has brought into use methods of critical thought which have bidden fair to strangle the life out of Christianity, we find one of our leading scientific thinkers declaring to-day : "Science is accused of stealing the Christ from religion ; but science may yet give back to the Churches a greater and a more wonderful Christ than they have yet apprehended."*

It seems then, despite the welter of agnosticism and the flood of rationalist literature that encompasses us, that there is setting in from scientific circles a strong current of thought in a direction that will lead to the surer recognition not only of the Deity, but to the re-establishment of belief, deeper perhaps than ever before, in the truth revealed by Christianity. Where the leaders of scientific thought were five and twenty years ago, a great mass of the public are to-day ; where the bellwethers are now pointing the flock will shortly follow. I have referred to the deeply inter-

* Sir O. Lodge, *Pail Mall Magazine*, January 1904, p. 101.

esting confession of emergence from agnosticism by Sir Oliver Lodge. Equally significant are the conclusions of the late Professor George Romanes, who worked his way out of the depths of atheism into the full daylight of belief, and expanding Bacon's well-known aphorism declared that "if a little knowledge of physiology and a little knowledge of psychology dispose men to atheism, a deeper knowledge of both, and, still more, a deeper thought upon their relations to one another, will lead men back to some form of religion, which if it be more vague, may also be more worthy than that of earlier days."* And further: "It is generally assumed that when a man has clearly perceived agnosticism to be the only legitimate attribute of reason to rest in with regard to religion he has thereby finished with the matter; he can go no further. Such is by no means the case. He has then only begun his inquiry into the grounds and justification of religious belief. For reason is not the only attribute of man nor is it the only faculty which he habitually employs for the ascertainment of truth. Moral and spiritual faculties are of no less importance in their respective spheres even of everyday life; faith, trust, and taste are as needful in ascertaining truth as to character and beauty as is reason. Indeed, we may take it that reason is concerned in ascertaining truth only where *causation* is concerned; the appropriate organs for its ascertainment where anything else is concerned belong to the moral and spiritual region." . . . So also the late Frederic Myers who, through contact with science and her methods, lapsed like so many others from the faith of his birth, and after sounding the perilous deeps of psychology was forced irresistibly back to hold it in far greater fulness than ever before. "I venture now," he says in the epilogue to his last great work,† "on a bold saying; for I predict that in consequence of the new evidence all reasonable men a century hence will believe in the Resurrection of Christ, whereas in default of the new evidence, no reasonable men, a century hence, would have believed it"; and he proceeds to give his reasons for affirming that the phenomena manifested in the life and death of Christ hitherto supposed to be miraculous and supernatural, were not derived from ethical or emotional sources alone, but were representative instances of the working of natural law upon a plane that human faculties have not hitherto become sensible of; that they must

* "Thoughts on Religion," G. J. Romanes, pp. 100-1.

† "Human Personality," vol. ii. p. 288.

needs be representative of great structural facts of the Universe involving laws at ~~least~~ as persistent, as identical from age to age, as our known laws of energy or of motion. The central claims of Christianity are now confirmed, he asserts, as never before ; and as to the deep disquiet of our time upon religious matters, he contends that our age's restlessness is the restlessness not of senility but of adolescence ; it resembles the approach of puberty rather than of death, and he foresees the universal acceptance of a belief in the facts of Christianity as full and complete as is our universal acceptance of the law of gravitation. Lord Kelvin himself has also recently proclaimed that the necessary deduction the physicist and biologist are bound to make from their researches is that "a creative and directive purpose" governs and underlies the whole material universe. Is there anything more pathetic than the words with which Herbert Spencer closes his Autobiography after feeding for seventy years on the husks of agnosticism ? "Thus religious creeds which in one way or another occupy the sphere which rational interpretation *seeks to occupy and fails, and fails the more it seeks*, I have come to regard with a sympathy based on community of need, feeling the dissent from them results from inability to accept the solutions offered, joined with the wish that solutions could be found." It is like a faint echo of the Prodigal's cry, "I will arise and go to my Father !"

Modern Science then is contributing to the rehabilitation of faith. It tends to justify, not only natural religion, but also that particular "revelation" of the intimacy between man and his Maker, between the visible and the invisible world, which was made manifest by the life and death of the Founder of Christianity. It is teaching us to hold as positive facts demonstrable by the working of natural law, things which hitherto could only be apprehended by faith. It points out that the material universe is but the gross and tangible side of an invisible but, if rightly apprehended, a no less objective universe from which the former draws its chief significance and which may be better understood and negotiated with by the adequate development of even human faculties. It justifies the anticipation already expressed that a century is coming to the birth that may be associated with the Evangelist who insisted upon the essential importance of spirit as opposed to matter. "God is a Spirit," or as the Hindu scriptures (which in the light of modern knowledge can be read with almost as much interest as our own) have it, "the ether in

the heart" of men and things ; a Spirit to be apprehended not so much, if at all, by the reason as by that spiritual faculty which is immanent in each of His creatures, which may smoulder or can be fanned into a flame at the will of the individual, and which in any case must sooner or later fulfil the law of its being by progressive stages like the grosser matter that temporarily encases it. Psychology is showing that union or harmonious relation with the higher universe around us is our true end, and that inner communion, by prayer or otherwise, with the spirit thereof is a process wherein work is capable of being done and is done, and its energy can be induced, nay, even compelled, to flow in and produce effects in the world of phenomena.

In every great religion, including the Christian, the ultimate Deity, whatever attributes may be accorded to Him by its followers, is agreed to be inscrutable to and incomprehensible by finite faculties. The highest possible attempt to conceive Him has been and can only be made through the medium of some great personality invested with the greatness of the Divine and the limitations of humanity. For some a Buddha or a Krishna has constituted that medium and pointed the road from the finite to the infinite ; for us, the Incomprehensible has been manifested by Him who proclaimed "No man cometh to the Father save through *Me* . . . I am the Way" ; the demonstrator of the connection between, and the interpreter of, the visible and the invisible sections of the Universe.

The other day I was examining the phenomena of radium under the guidance of a distinguished scientist, who has been actively concerned in investigating the properties of that remarkable substance. In the daylight all that was apparent was a few grains of white powder, but on looking at the radium salts in the dark they shone through the glass tube that held them with a steady, luminous glow. As I watched this spectacle and saw the marvellous production of heat and light without any apparent source of energy, this spontaneous radiation of its particles without any appreciable loss to the bulk, this apparent contradiction of the laws of the conservation of energy and the conservation of matter, my scientific mentor said to me : "You are looking at the most wonderful sight in the world !" Exemplified by the radiation of those sparks of matter was what we are led now to believe is the secret of the material universe. That radium had been exhibiting its properties for untold ages in the pitchblende ore of Bavaria ; it was transforming itself before my eyes into

another form of invisible matter of absolutely different properties ; it would continue so to do for apparently interminable time. It indicated that all matter is reducible ultimately to one element, and that that element is in its last resort the product of the invisible and eternal Energy from which the whole visible universe is derived and of which it is a temporary manifestation. Here was the latest triumph, the most recent message of physical science ; and I came away with my thoughts. Afterwards I passed into the new Roman Catholic Cathedral at Westminster. Worship was being offered with all the sumptuous ritual of the Roman Church and the aid of majestic music that welled from a great choir concealed in some recess of the vast building, while hung in mid-air above the chancel steps was the great golden crucifix that spread its arms over a devout assembly comprising men and women of every grade of society and several nationalities. And as I watched the scene with, I fear, some critical detachment of thought from the sacred service, involuntarily the words came again into my mind, "You are looking at the most wonderful sight in the world." For here was the spiritual counterpart of the physical phenomenon I had previously witnessed ; the radio-activity of infinitesimal minds towards the central and master-Intelligence that abides in and energises the material creation.

Natural science knows nothing of spiritual processes ; it really gives a final explanation of nothing whatever. All it can do is to bring a little coherency and constancy into the midst of that which is constantly flowing, to explore a little into the enlarging region of the Unknown. And when its last word has been said, whatever be its dicta or conclusions, there still remains *the individual human consciousness* which feels itself even in its utter littleness to be the microcosm of the whole universe. Science, or rather Rationalism the daughter of Science, has been bidding us to submerge our individual personalities, to consider ourselves ephemeral atoms of the material cosmos. She has asked us to believe we are born into life and consciousness by a complex process of mechanical development and doomed after an hour or two to annihilation, and to live again only so far as the material part of us is concerned in the particles of other material objects moulded out of our dust, and as regards our moral part to live in the morality of our posterity. She has utterly repudiated the personal point of view ; and religion she has reproached as being a monumental chapter in the history of human egotism. But she is coming round to the recognition of the irrepressible claims of

individuality and is beginning to see that "so long as we deal with the cosmic and the general, we deal only with the *symbols* of reality, but as soon as we deal with private and personal phenomena as such, we deal with realities in the completest sense of the term."* In other words, the axis of reality runs solely through the egotistic places, and our greatest, most responsible concern is our private, personal destiny after all.

The process of complete reconciliation may be slow and painful. The world having tasted the cup of agnosticism will have to drink it to the dregs before it rises to a clearer vision of realities. Sir Oliver Lodge has said,† "the next century will indeed be fruitful and will be a terrific touchstone of the peoples. . . . Presently something calm and majestic will emerge and the eyes of the man of that day will look on the world with comprehending eyes and will rejoice in such a contemplation of a scheme of law and order and beauty as is at present possible only to a few." Before that day comes many changes must needs be wrought in almost every department of human life and thought. If Rationalism abandons some of her unjustifiable pretensions, dogmatic Theology also will have to do the same. The dogmatic framework with which the simple facts of Christianity have been surrounded must undergo no little modification in order to let the picture stand out in its original freshness. Is there not justification for the jibe of a modern satirist that "we change our Parish Councillors every three years, our Articles of Religion we have not overhauled for three hundred"? An official restatement of the significance of the manifestation of Christ in the light of modern cosmological knowledge is an urgent need, and would immensely help both the Churches and those who cannot accept the current principles of interpretation formulated in times of cosmological misconception. Probably no Œcumenical Conference of the Churches could be got together to effect such a restatement or, if got together, would agree upon one. The new outlook will doubtless come into effect by gradual, silent transformation of thought.

There will be changes, too, in the social conditions of the world. The present system of irresponsible wealth tending to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, the inordinate lust for material things, the race for money and the degrading desire for social superiority will all have to be paid for and purged away

* James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 498.

† "The Future of Science," *Daily Mail*, December 15, 1903.

probably by some terrible upheaval before the light of a revived and purer Christianity can shine out. Roman civilisation became submerged by the ignorant but more virile barbarians of Northern Europe. Let us not be too sure that a similar cataclysm will not overwhelm ours. It has been sometimes suggested that the hosts of the great yellow races from the East may some day take their revenge upon the West for the contumely and imperiousness meted out to them. It is a contingency unlikely for many reasons, and please God there will be no more Dark Ages. What seems a much greater probability is a social revolution on the part of the great labour classes of Europe and America that will utterly transform our modern social system, of which selfishness is one of the main features. Such a revolution would destroy many of our modern methods and ideals, but it would overwhelm also much of our present selfishness and materialism. It would be apparently a set-back to the world's progress, but it would be a set back only *pour mieux sauter*. And out of it would emerge a new people educated in and disciplined to a practical Christian altruism which in their mundane affairs would be, as the Founder of Christianity intended His system to be, the counterpart of the larger faith in the spiritual aspect of the universe that they would hold. Such a people helped by a Bible construed in the light of modern knowledge and by a faith which natural science and their own religious instinct have converted into a practical knowledge of God ; inspired by the presence of the living Christ ; conscious of their close contact with the invisible and the reserves of power that can be drawn upon from the intelligence that fills it ; such a people would seem worthy to hold pride of place in this world of ours. To such a development, in my view, the long process of human education is leading.

In the meantime for ourselves. Each must work out his own life according to the light shining within him or that may be given him with increasing experience. Let him for whom current religious ideals suffice, continue, through the clash and conflict of views, to hold, in the words of Bishop Westcott, "a firm faith in Christianity and a firm faith in criticism," knowing that they must both ultimately terminate in a common centre. And for him who by temperament or for other honest and sufficient reason cannot for the present go beyond the agnostic position—what is required of him, but that he do justice and love mercy and walk humbly with the best concept of the Highest that he

can fashion for himself? Religious thought, whether it be individual or national or universal is not exempt any more than other institutions from the laws of evolution and natural selection. The fittest will survive and by its survival justify its fitness. The process is always painful and strenuous, and through the strain that process entails Christianity is now passing. The Churches are passing through the greatest ordeal they have been called on to bear. Clerical authority is being called back to careful knowledge of facts. But the hand that has assailed it is turning into an instrument of blessing. All the conclusions of natural science and scientific criticism are pointing to a God and to the great purpose of his Christ; but they point also to the necessity of apprehending those truths clearly, and of disengaging them from cobwebs of error, misunderstanding and untenable doctrine about them spun by the speculative or perverse brains of schoolmen and theologians in days gone by. And as they point to the old body of dogmatic teaching which the world is now rejecting, they seem to say, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, He is risen, and will be found in a Religion reconstituted on nobler, broader lines of thought, that will be not so much the contradiction as the fuller realisation of the old."

And Science? Science in Newton's phrase, has been picking up pebbles on the shore of the boundless ocean of knowledge; nay, recently, and especially in regard to the problem of Consciousness, she has been doing more. Amazed at what the tide has washed up, in her eagerness she has sailed out a little way upon the waters, let down her drag-nets and drawn up further treasures from the secret places of the deep; treasures that on inspection are justifying the hopes and confirming the beliefs of anxious watchers from the shore. But when her present inquiries are completed; when she has added to our faith knowledge, and we to our knowledge have added wisdom and power, will humanity even then have completed its education? Will it be content to rest even at that stage, thinking it has exhausted knowledge and solved all problems?

Nay! come up hither to this wave-washed mound,
 And to the furthest flood-brim look with me.
 Then reach on with thy thought till that be drowned,
 Miles and miles distant though thy last thought be.
 And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond,
 Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is more sea!*

* D. G. Rossetti, "House of Life," lxxii.

REVIEWS

By SCRUTATOR

AUTOMATIC SPEAKING AND WRITING. By Edward T. Bennett,
London : Brimley Johnson and Ince, Limited.

THIS work is one of the Shilling Library series, which deal with psychical literature and inquiry, and constitutes a very valuable addition to the subject. Mr. Bennett has brought together a mass of information of a thoroughly authentic character in support of the spiritualistic belief in the possibility and actuality of communication with the denizens of the world beyond. The author first of all defines the nature of automatic writing and speaking, not forgetting to mention the dangers which attach to the cultivation of the faculty. He says :

It is exceedingly common for automatic writing to take the form of messages and communications from deceased relatives and friends, signed with the names of the professed communicators. The question whether such messages are what they profess to be is not now under consideration. But if the automatist believes them to be so, and if, under the influence of such belief, he allows them to obtain an influence over him, a situation is produced which may lead to serious results.

The fact that the bulk of such communications is entirely without special value as literature or statement of fact does not touch its genuineness or authenticity, which may be all that is claimed by those who believe in it from evidence received. The bulk of ordinary conversation, and, indeed, the great bulk of our literature, contains no single fact that is new, no special revelation, and very little that is of permanent interest. The fact that such communication from the other side of things is at all possible—accepting the thing as proven for the moment—is its sole claim to our recognition and consideration. In support of this position the present work cites with commendable precision and detail three groups of "communications": (1) Those in which definite facts are stated, or in which information is conveyed, unknown by any normal means to the automatist; (2) those in which the intelligence claims to give evidence of its identity with a deceased person; (3) those as to which the principal interest consists in the character of the communications. It is to the first two of these groups of automatic phenomena that the student of Occultism will give his keen attention. The wide-awake reader will require to know whether the absence of "normal means" of knowledge necessarily entails that the communications should be regarded as proceeding from a spiritual or disembodied source. That, I take it, is the purport of the second group of evidences. The author shows considerable discretion in providing for the possibility of subliminal mental

phenomena, as he does when quoting a series of instances from Myers' "Human Personality," which could not be taken in evidence under the second section of the above category. Thus we have Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood cited as contributing to the S. P. R. report a planchette communication from a missionary who had been dead 143 years, which is entirely unsupported by any extraneous evidences of authenticity; and a case reported by Dr. Ermacora of certain automatic writing which "informed us of facts entirely unknown to our *ordinary consciousness*." Even the author's own experience with Miss Lottie Fowler is not suggestive of anything more than community of thought. Read by themselves the statements made by the medium might as well have referred to the bonus of a goose club as to the purchase of a piece of freehold property. The medium may have been answering to the thought of the querent, but the average man would say that the answers were such as to have a value and pointing solely within the consciousness of the querent.

In the second portion of the work, Mr. Bennett gives some twenty or more instances of communications in which the communicators expressly endeavour to establish their identity by mention of their names, the dates of death, cause of death, age at death, and other particulars, and certainly in most cases are as accurate in their statements as human beings who have transferred their interests to another locality might be expected to be in regard to the date and conditions of their removal. The singular thing is not that mistakes occur at times in one item or another, but that there is any evidence at all in support of these communications; for which record we have to thank James Burns, the long-suffering editor of *Medium and Daybreak*. The communications were received through the medium of J. J. Morse, were published in the columns of the *Medium and Daybreak*, and were confirmed in writing to the editor by various persons who had personal knowledge of the deceased "communicators."

Mr. Bennett has done his work well; judiciously, patiently and honestly; and it is safe to say that in all future transactions of evidential nature, these researches and records will be referred to as standard literature.

THE TEACHINGS OF ZOROASTER. By Dr. S. A. Kapadia, M.D., L.R.C.P. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, W.

CURRENT interest in psychology, in all that has regard to the nature, origin and destiny of the human soul, is just now so keen that Comparative Theology, in effect Orientalism, should find for itself a welcome and a place prepared. Dr. Kapadia has given us in one of the "Wisdom of the East" series, published by the Orient Press, a very concise and deeply interesting summary of the Teachings of Zoroastrianism. Before the Aryan incursion to India monotheism, allied to a simplicity and purity of thought fostered by the pastoral life, was the dominant

faith among the early Iranians. From the spiritual and intangible to the natural and objective was a step in the decadence of this faith which finally led to the worship of the visible heavens, and of the Sun as the lord of Heaven. What followed was in the nature of a landslide, and a yawning gulf opened up between the adherents of the pristine faith and the priests and followers of the new cult. On the one side were the Mazdayasnians, on the other the Daevayasnians. The latter were eventually forced to take refuge in India. The position is clearly put by Dr. Kapadia.

Inevitable war of creed and faith resulted in the migration of the weaker and polytheistic branch to the fertile plains of India, where it took root and blossomed into the absolute Brahmanism of the modern Hindus. The other remained on the native soil, flourished for centuries, built up an empire, and finally in its turn gave place to the Moslem hordes of Arabia. It migrated, and by the irony of Fate sought and obtained shelter with religious toleration among the banished sister branch of the primeval stock.

The author then recounts the coming of Zoroaster, who was born at Rae in Media, some sixteen hundred years before our era. In the digest of the teachings of the Yas'na and the Vendidad concerning Creation, Dualism, Good and Evil, Body and Soul, the moral law, &c., Dr. Kapadia has given us the pith of Zoroastrianism, and it is impossible to escape the strange parallel which is found to exist between this system and that of the Pentateuch. In this system Yima is the Noah and Zoroaster the Moses of the Hebrew tradition, and there can be very little doubt in any well-informed mind as to which were the prototypes. In the chapter on "Precepts of Purity" Dr. Kapadia recapitulates the teachings of Zoroaster upon hygienic subjects and the marriage laws. In distinction to most other religions, Zoroastrianism "condemns fasting or total abstaining from food as a wicked and a foolish act which injures and enervates the body." On the life hereafter and the resurrection of the body there is nothing insisted upon as doctrinal which is unfamiliar to the average western mind in touch with the teachings of the Old Testament, but everything is differently put and seen through a differently coloured glass. The form is familiar, the colours are those of the time and place in which the teachings were promulgated.

The latter half of the book is devoted to extracts from the Zoroastrian scriptures and ethical literature, which, taken in connection with the very essential introduction to the Parsi religion by Dr. Kapadia, makes up a book embracing all that is best of a very noble faith.

IMMORTALITY: its Naturalness, its Possibilities and Proofs. By J. M. Peebles, M.D., A.M., Ph.D.

THIS pamphlet is the substance of a lecture which was to have been delivered before the Members and Associates of the Victoria Institute, but which was at the last moment replaced by a sub-

stitute on the ruling of the Committee. At the head of this pamphlet, in italics, the following legend appears : "The Institute's object being to investigate, it must not be held to endorse the various views expressed either in the papers or the discussions." But the Institute refused either to hear or to discuss. Yet, on reading, one is not taken aback by any unexpected heresy or violence done to the spirit of Christianity, which it is the avowed object of the Institute to foster. Dr. Peebles opens with remarks on the dignity and usefulness of old age, and of the naturalness and beauty of Death, recalling Shelley's words : "How beautiful is Death, Death and his brother Sleep !" The first indication of the *motif* of the lecture occurs in the words :

The falling and disappearance of the body is incident to the birth of the spirit, which, when passing into the many-mansioned house of the Father, often signals backwards and whispers, "I still live!"

The question is put—and to Dr. Peebles as a potential nonagenarian the question no less than the answer must needs be serious—"Does man consciously survive death? And, if so, what awaits him behind that cold grim portal?" The Victoria Institute did not care to know. Launching into his subject Dr. Peebles engages with the "God-idea" inherent in man, who intuitively apprehends that which is affirmed "unknowable." The Neo-Platonic concept of God as Causation is admittedly rather a shock to the Picture-Bible student, yet as Intelligent Energy it is not so far sundered from our orthodoxy, which affirms the Omniscient and Omnipotent. The nature of man is then dealt with and the complex of Spirit, Soul and Body scrutinised. Dr. Peebles supports the view that the Soul is perishable, the Spirit immortal.

It is the spirit that is immortal and *not the soul*. Mark well this point: *not the soul*. No such phrases as "the immortal soul" or "the immortality of the soul" occur in either the Old or New Testaments. Philo Judæus, as did several Greek and Roman writers, differentiated soul and spirit, so also did Paul when speaking of the "quick and powerful word of God" that "divided asunder soul and spirit."

Professor Schubert is quoted as saying : "The soul is the inferior part of every intellectual nature, while the spirit is that part of us which tends to the purely rational, the lofty and divine." Then comes the argument for the existence of the "Soul-body," which is described as

"a substantial organised entity, an aggregate of sublimated elements, and the counterpart in form of the physical body." And further : "This particled fluidic soul or soul-body is the vehicle, the etheric clothing, of the immortal spirit. It is this body that is resurrected out of the physical, perishing body at death. The resurrection from mortality to immortality is perpetual."

The argument brought forward by Dr. Peebles that the existence of brain organs, implying functions and faculties, "indicates a present purpose being fulfilled or a prophetic purpose to be actualised and fulfilled in a future state of existence," has been elsewhere used in support of the doctrine of Re-incarnation, as

has also that one which has reference to the insufficiency of a lifetime for the purpose of character-adjustment, reconciliation, atonement, etc.

Dr. Peebles favours the idea of continual progression rather than that of Re-birth involved by the cyclic law. But as regards the phenomena of Spiritualism, the facts of post-mortem communication with the world, these are forced home to our consciousness in the trenchant words of Dr. T. J. Hudson: "The man who denies these facts is simply ignorant." And forthwith the lecturer arrays the evidences and quotes, not scientists and philosophers alone, but also the clergy, on the normality and reasonableness of such communications from the spiritual world. It is quite uncertain what might constitute evidence to the members of the Victoria Institute, but one cannot help thinking that the Committee must have been fearful of results from the reading of so much as was intended to be placed before them. The lecture was eventually delivered on May 25 at the rooms of the Spiritualist Alliance.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

ANNALS OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE. London: Philip Wellby, 6 Henrietta Street, W.C.

THE April issue of this journal contains an article entitled "Metaphysical Phenomena of Bygone Times," translated by Professor Charles Richet from the Latin. It concerns the phenomena attending upon one named Regina Fischerin, of Halstad, in Austria, who, between the dates July 24, 1641 and June 29, 1642 was the subject of a series of visitations from a soul from Purgatory, whose earthly name was John Clement, commonly known as Zwespenpauer. It appears that the said Clement had when alive "promised God an image of the holy Virgin of Sorrows holding on her knees her Son taken down from the Cross," and that dying, his wife had appropriated the money set aside for this purpose to other uses. But the why and wherefore of his tormenting this maiden with his woes and so afflicting her in mind and body that she is forced to carry out the wishes of the deceased, does not appear conspicuous. At the conclusion of the narrative there is an account of certain experiences of Regina Fischerin which appear to the critical eye as affording some explanation of the whole narrative and the reasons for its perpetuation in the archives of the Chapter of Presbourg.

She saw herself taken by an Angel, who held her by the hand and brought her very far away to a vast plain of horrible solitude; and there she perceived a deep gulf, truly infernal, where diverse individuals suffered the diverse tortures of fire. The flames were black, red, sulphurous, smoky, and sent forth a horrible stench. Some were cooked in vast boilers, and there were immense tubs in which melting sulphur burned, filled to overflowing

with the damned; and these were in ignition like red-hot irons. Demons with two-pronged forks drew out these guilty souls, then, after having taken them out, plunged them again into the flames. And the unhappy ones rolled about in the midst of the fire, unable either to leave it or to remain in it.

After reading this piece of diabolical priestcraft it is comforting to be assured through the sweet humanity of Emanuel Swedenborg, who also saw such "hells" as were proper to his religious education, that "these things are only appearances" (psychic apperceptions) "corresponding to the spiritual state in which these souls are." Professor Richet has promised us a further article in which it is proposed to "examine the conclusions to be drawn from it." The serious consideration of evidences obscured by time and vitiated by the smoke of an inferno which would have had no existence in the mind of Regina Fischerin apart from the teaching of the most important of the witnesses, appears to be a little outside of the scientific methods of investigation for which the Professor recently was heard to plead. The *Annals* include also a very searching and critical survey of the phenomena alleged to take place through the mediumship of Mr. C. Bailey. It is obvious that under the conditions cited all the phenomena could be easily produced by a skilful conjurer. It is a case in which the reputation of trained investigators is involved quite as much as that of the medium.

MODERN ASTROLOGY. Edited by Alan Leo. London: 9 Lyncroft Gardens, West Hampstead.

THE May issue of this journal contains many articles that cannot fail to be of exceptional interest to students of the predictive art. "The Observatory" has some lucid notes on the correspondence between the Four Seasons and the stages of human life, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter being analogous to Childhood, Youth, Manhood and Decline. The Seven Ages of Man are also introduced into this scheme, and it is held that the planets in these various quarters of the annual circle will form some indication of the effects then likely to be experienced. Mr. D. S. Duff contributes an ingenious article on "Names, Numbers and Astrology," but while basing his thesis on the Kabalistic art of Gemetria he manages to shake free of the Hebrew quantities or sound-values, by which alone that system is rendered valid. Bessie Leo writes a good article on "Mercury, the Thinker," and "Sepharial" continues his interesting work on "The Zodiac Symbolised."

The *Theosophic Review* contains several articles of deep interest, notable among which are "Why the Mind has a Body," by Professor C. A. Armstrong, and "Pythagoras and his School," by G. R. S. Mead, and "Evolution and related matters from a Theosophical Point of View," by Mrs. F. Wyman Richardson.

