

THE OCCULT REVIEW

MARCH
1907

EDITED BY
RALPH SHIRLEY

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EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

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MARCH 1907

No. 3

NOTES OF THE MONTH

I EXPRESSED the intention in my last "Notes of the Month" of making some further reply to the criticisms passed upon the position I had taken up relative to modern orthodox Christianity by Mr. G. Herbert Johnson. I think on one point he is somewhat unfair to me. He quotes me as saying, "It is marvellous how little Christ concerned Himself about right belief," adding, "Surely He did concern Himself about it. For the very existence of God is a dogma, a revealed belief. Would any one say that Christ would have regarded its acceptance or non-acceptance as a matter of no consequence?" Now, I think if the point I intended to lay stress upon had been appreciated, this criticism would not have been made. What I desired to do was to contrast the Creeds with the Bible narrative, and to suggest that to a person who had learnt his Christianity from the Creeds, the Bible narratives (if it were represented to him—as it is represented—that these are the authority for the Creeds) would come to him with a very great shock of surprise, and this not so much from what they say—though this, I am convinced, would astonish him not a little—but from what they leave

unsaid. This statement, of course, applies with lesser force to the fourth Gospel than to the synoptics, but it does apply even to the Gospel according to St. John. My point, then, was not that Christ said that belief mattered nothing, but that after reading the Creeds and the Thirty-nine Articles, the little stress which He laid upon belief as contrasted with the stress which He was represented as laying was positively amazing. I do not suggest—far from it—that Christ would have repudiated the good work done by the bishops and the hard-working clergy of the Church of England. On the contrary, I think He would have made much of their work for humanity and minimized the errors of their teaching. But I am equally convinced that He would have repudiated (if indeed He condescended to notice) many of the dogmas contained in the Creeds. But it is abundantly clear that these disputations never interested Him in the least. He left them to the Scribes and Pharisees. As Renan well says, “He never argued about God—for He felt Him directly in Himself. The rock of metaphysical subtleties against which Christianity broke from the third century onwards was in no-wise created by the founder. Jesus had neither dogma nor system, but a fixed personal resolution which, exceeding in intensity every other created will, governs to this hour the destinies of humanity.”

Then, again, I am taken to task with regard to an observation on the subject of the discrepancy between the Synoptic Gospels and that ascribed to St. John. This is a point which I think I may say without hesitation is almost universally admitted outside the orthodox camp. Renan (for instance), with whose view of the character of Jesus and the miraculous side of the Gospel record I am by no means entirely in accord, remarks in his introduction to the *Vie de Jesus*, “If Jesus spoke as Matthew represents Him, He could not have spoken as John represents Him.” Neumann, again, writes in a similar strain. (*Jesus*, by

Arno Neumann. Trans. M. A. Canney. London: Adam and Charles Black.) Neumann is by no means an extreme writer, but he asks, “How are we to appraise and to use the Gospels as sources for the History of Jesus?” and replying to his own question observes, “Here at the present day it is of fundamental importance that we should recognize that the Gospel according to John *stands in a distinct category*.” He goes on to say:—

CHRISTIAN
DOGMA IN THE
CREEDS AND
THE GOSPELS.

THE FOURTH
GOSPEL AND
THE SYNOPTICS.

It (the fourth Gospel) cannot be placed earlier than the second century, and, arising as it did as a protest against Judaizing parties and as a defence of ideas of religion conceived in an unhistorical way, all the details in the story, as regards localities, time and personal characteristics, have been adapted to the requirements of that Christian philosophy in which the Gospel is steeped or have been displaced through its influence. To the author of this Gospel Jesus is the "Word of God"; that is to say, the second person of the Godhead, who existed before Abraham, and, in fact, took part in the creation of the world (i. 1-3; viii. 5, 8; xvii. 5). Holding this view, he is naturally obliged to represent the appearance of Jesus on earth as the thinly veiled manifestation of a Divine Being. Thus the Jesus of John is neither baptized nor tempted, does not waver in Gethsemane, has foreknowledge of everything (John i. 48 f., ii. 24 f., etc., etc.), prays only for the sake of the bystanders (xi. 41 f.), when hanging on the Cross says "I thirst" only in order to fulfil an Old Testament prophecy (xix. 28), calls upon his betrayer to hasten his wicked deed (xiii. 26 f.), and by a brief word, "I am He," makes five hundred Roman soldiers recoil and bend the knee (xviii. 8 f.). The author's conception of the religion of Jesus, pervaded throughout by the spirit we have indicated, is certainly sublime enough, but it is far removed from the simple, sober, naive facts of history as we find them in the Gospels according to Mark, Matthew and Luke.

Those interested in this question might also refer to the article "John," by Dr. Paul W. Schmiedel, in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, and to a very clearly written but rather too brief treatise in *Problems of the Future*, by the late Samuel Laing, entitled "The Historical Element in the Gospels." I only make these references (and many more might be made) to show that the attitude I have taken has ample support among students and critics of the subject.

Mr. Johnson makes another point against me for disputing the authenticity of the text when it tells against my view. I stated in my notes that there was strong reason to believe that the passage in Matthew xxviii. 19, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," was not authentic. If it were, it is quite obvious that the ground would be cut from under my feet as regards my contention that Jesus Christ was not a Trinitarian in the Church's sense of the word. It is obviously impossible for me in my brief notes to enter into a detailed discussion with regard to the relative authenticity of the various parts of the

THE QUESTION OF AUTHENTICITY. Gospel narrative, but I may observe that nowhere else in any of the four Gospels is there any remark attributed to Jesus with which this one is at all parallel or in keeping, and also that it is not this particular verse but the whole chapter in

which it occurs which is from the critic's standpoint suspect. The records of the Resurrection and the post-resurrection occurrences in the Gospels are full of the gravest discrepancies, and more than any other part of the Gospel narrative are mutually incompatible. It is no doubt extremely difficult to arrive at definite conclusions as to the comparative historical value of the Gospels, but it is pretty generally agreed that the gospel attributed to St. Mark has a superior claim to any of the other three as representing an earlier and more nearly contemporaneous tradition. Many of my readers will doubtless be familiar with the observations of Papias in this connexion, but they bear so directly on the point at issue that I cannot refrain from referring to them here. Papias was Bishop of Heiropolis and suffered martyrdom about A.D. 160. Now, Papias is quoted by Eusebius as expressing a poor opinion of the written documents then in existence treating of the life of the Founder of Christianity, and stating his own personal preference for oral tradition. His

THE SILENCE
OF BISHOP
PAPIAS.

reason is that there are only two such documents having any weight, one a collection of reminiscences taken down unmethodically from the mouth of St. Peter by St. Mark, the other a collection of sayings of Jesus written by St. Matthew in Hebrew and subsequently badly translated into Greek. The presumption is that the Gospel of St. Mark as we know it was a biography written up from some such series of reminiscences as Papias describes. In any case, the deductions to be drawn from the observations of this early Christian bishop seem sufficiently clear, though perhaps I need hardly remark that an attempt has been made to explain them away.

Perhaps the strongest confirmation that we have of the main basis of the Gospel narrative lies in the Epistles of St. Paul, the authenticity of which it seems somewhat difficult to call in question.

It is very much to be hoped that discoveries may be made in Egypt and elsewhere in the near future which will throw a clearer light on these the most important three years of the world's history.

My correspondent is certainly justified when he says that "on grounds of common sense in religions as in everything else there must be such a thing as orthodoxy. There must be a correct religious as there is a correct scientific belief." But the point on which we join issue here is just this: Is the orthodoxy of the Anglican

WHAT IS
ORTHODOXY?

Church a correct religious belief, or is it not? I admit that, if it is not, it has no right, properly speaking, to the name "orthodoxy." But here we are merely playing with words. If I or any one else speaks of an Anglican Churchman as orthodox, we do not thereby admit that his views are unimpeachable, but merely that they are unimpeachable from the Church's standpoint. Clearly, the Reverend R. J. Campbell is not orthodox. But it does not follow from this that his beliefs are farther removed from the truth than those of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is just a matter of opinion. As to the importance of right belief in the abstract, however, I must profess myself quite at one with Mr. Johnson. As stated above, my desire was to contrast the Christ of the Gospels with the Christ of the Creeds, and to emphasize His disregard of many of those dogmas on which His soi-disant followers have laid (to my mind) so misleading a stress. You can believe in the Trinity and be a reprobate; you can disbelieve in the Trinity, and lead a noble, indeed a holy life. Nay, more, you may have a right conception of

**DOES BELIEF
INFLUENCE
CONDUCT?**

God and of the universe as far as the intellect of man can grasp it, and yet be guilty of debased and immoral conduct. The converse of this, however, is not equally true. If you believe that God requires you to persecute your fellow-men who cannot accept your religion, in order that their souls may be saved from perdition, you may persecute from conscientious motives—in other words, you may do evil through erroneous belief, in spite of your good intentions.

It might be interesting to consider if and how far a man should be held morally responsible for his own mental obliquities; but however little the individual's responsibility, they certainly tend to affect conduct, and it not infrequently happens that the law takes cognizance of their results.

I have received four applications for Psychometric Delineations for this month signed respectively "Fontana," "José," "Zerubabel," and "Faith." The first of these sends eight coupons but no article or letter. The second and third send no article for psychometrizing, and the fourth sends an article but no coupons. I would point out in this connexion that an article constantly worn gives the Psychometrist a much better chance than a letter, but that if a letter is sent for diagnosis this should be enclosed in a second envelope inside the other. If this is not done the letter

will be handled before it reaches the Psychometrist and confused conditions will result. The same remark of course applies to articles sent.

It is welcome news that a new and abridged edition of F. W. H. Myers' *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*,

ABRIDGED
EDITION OF
MYERS'
"HUMAN
PERSONALITY."

edited by his son, Leopold H. Myers, is now to be obtained of the original publishers, Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. The price, 10s. 6d. net, will put it within the reach of many who hesitated to expend two guineas on the larger book, and the condensation has been carried out with considerable judgment, and in the main, on lines indicated by the late Mr. Myers before his death. The appendix has been cut down with a somewhat unsparing hand, many records illustrative of the argument in the text being omitted *in toto*. This, however, was inevitable, and the reader may well congratulate himself that the main argument of the book has been so well preserved, while the kind of evidence relied upon in support of the contentions advanced is clearly shown. For the full weight of its cumulative value he must necessarily look elsewhere.

Another re-issue that will be of interest to a number of Occultists is that of the publications of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland. There are not a few of those who have

"THE PERFECT
WAY."

turned away in despair from the old orthodoxy to whom *The Perfect Way; or, The Finding of Christ*, came as a revelation of the inner truths of a seemingly dead creed. I remember reading it myself years ago with the greatest interest. At times, it is true, the authors appear fanciful and ingenious rather than convincing, but the book is throughout suggestive of new meanings and fresh lines of thought, and forcibly draws the reader from the shibboleths of a formal Christianity to the contemplation, in its true inwardness, of a higher and more spiritual creed. The books are published by the Ruskin Press, Stafford Street, Birmingham.

May I make an appeal to all those interested in the success of the OCCULT REVIEW to assist me by sending me any names and addresses that may occur to them of people who would be likely to take in the magazine? A particular point will be made of sending to all names and addresses thus given a sample copy of the REVIEW, and also a circular and prospectus. It is a difficult matter to reach all who are interested in Occult Research, and assistance of this kind is greatly appreciated by the Editor.

AB INITIO

BY ANTISS C. GARY

WHAT did I do in the past, I wonder,
By Theosophy portioned as mine of Fate?
'Neath what skies ran that conflict under?
Came Death too soon? Did he tarry late?
Was Love my shame, or Life's crowning glory?
Was Hate my captive, or crowned my king?
There is no page of the vanished story
To be returned for my reckoning.

Filled joy or sorrow that far-off living?
Was I of noble or low degree?
Was I proud of strength that now Karma's giving
Restricts so sadly the soul of me?
Was I kind or cruel, who now so lonely
These questions ask? Am I opposite
In the scale of Fate, or the outcome only
Of former living because of it?

Fifteen hundred years since that living,
Fifteen hundred are yet to be,
Before this bundle of hopes and grieving
Becomes embodied again as me.
Ah, the little time for the Soul's completing,
And the dragging passage of centuries,
The moment's space of the earth-life fleeting,
Ere is reached the last of its victories.

The creed were useful if surely tracing
The web of the net that now confines,
The justice plain of Life's present placing,
Soul's right of freedom for which it pines.
That knowledge waiting in far, cold spaces
Between the living is all unknown,
While the conflict rages in earthly places
To the struggling human it is not shown.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE GRAAL LEGEND

BY ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE

I.

THE INTIMATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF SUBSURFACE MEANING.

THE study of a great literature should begin like the preparation for a royal banquet, not without some solicitude for right conduct in the King's palace—which is the consecration of motive—and not without recollection of that source from which the most excellent gifts derive in their season to us all. Surely the things of earth are profitable only in so far as they assist us towards the things which are eternal. In this respect there are many helpers, even as the sands of the sea. The old books help us, perhaps above most things, and among them the old chronicles and the great antique legends. If the hand of God is in history it is also in folklore. We can scarcely fail of our term, since lights, both close at hand and in the unlooked-for places, kindle everywhere about us. It is difficult to say any longer that we walk in the Shadow of Death when the darkness is sown with stars.

Now, there are a few legends which may be said to stand forth among the innumerable traditions of humanity, wearing upon them the external signs and characters of some secret or mystery within them which belongs, as it would seem, rather to eternity than to time. They are in no sense connected with one another—unless indeed by certain roots which are scarcely in time and place—and yet, by a suggestion which is deeper than any suggestion of the senses, it would appear as if each were appealing to each, one bearing testimony to another, and all recalling all. They might be broken fragments of some primitive revelation which, except in these legends, has passed out of written records and far from the memory of man. The fullness of their original design may be, and sometimes is, reconstructed from age to age, but the result bears always, and that of necessity, the tincture of its particular period, reflecting the first intention sometimes in a glass darkly and sometimes in a crystal brightly,

SOME ASPECTS OF THE GRAAL LEGEND 127

so that it is less or more, according to the mind of the age. To the class of which I am speaking belongs the Graal Legend, which in all its higher aspects may be included among the legends of the soul. Perhaps I should say rather that, when it is properly understood, the Graal is not a legend but a personal history.

It will be intelligible from this one statement that I am not putting forward a thesis for the instruction of scholarship, which is otherwise and fully equipped, and it may be desirable to make it plain from the beginning that my offering to the consideration of the literature is intended for those who have either found their place within the sanctuary of the mystic life or are at least in the outer circles. I take up the subject where it has been left by the students of folklore and by all that which might term itself authorized scholarship. *Ut adeptis appareat me illis parem et fratrem*, I have made myself acquainted with the criticism of the cycle and I am familiar with the cycle itself. It is with the texts, however, that we shall be concerned, or at least more especially, and I approach them from a new standpoint. As to this, it will be better to specify from the outset its various particulars as follows : (1) The appropriation of certain myths and legends which are held to be pre-Christian in the root-matter, and their penetration by an advanced form of Christian Symbolism carried to a particular term; (2) the evidence of three fairly distinct sections or schools, the diversity of which is less, however, in the fundamental part of their subject than in the extent and mode of its development ; (3) the connexion of this mode and of that form with other schools of symbolism, the evolution of which was going on at the same period as that of the Graal literature ; (4) the close analogy in respect of the root-matter between the catholic literature of the Holy Graal and that which is connoted by the term Mysticism ; (5) the traces through Graal romance and other coincident literatures of a hidden school in Christianity which, because it is an expression that has been used for over a century, I shall continue to call the Secret Church, though it predicates an instituted office that, I think, scarcely belongs to the unmanifested company with which it will be seen that I am concerned. Perhaps, within the admitted forms of expression, the idea corresponds more closely with that which is understood by the school of the prophets, though the term only describes a certain highly advanced state by one of the gifts which may be taken to belong thereto. This, I should add, is on an express assumption that the gift has little connexion with the external meaning of prophecy ; it is not

the power of seeing forward, but rather of sight within. In subjects of this kind, as in other subjects, the greater naturally includes the lesser, it being of minor importance to discern, for example, the coming of Christ in a glass of vision than to understand, either before or after, the vital significance of that coming. I mention this instance because it enables me to say, on the authority of my precursors, that it was out of the secret school, or company which had secured its election, that the Christ came at His season. The Graal romances are not documents of this school put forward by the external way, but are its rumours at a distance. They are not authorized, nor are they stolen; they have arisen, or the consideration of the Hidden Church follows from their consideration as something in the intellectual order connected therewith. From this point of view it is possible to collect out of the general body of the literature what I should term its intimations of subsurface meaning into a brief schedule, as follows: (a) The existence of a clouded sanctuary; (b) a great mystery; (c) a desirable communication which, except under certain circumstances, cannot take place; (d) suffering within and sorcery without; (e) supernatural grace which does not possess efficacy on the external side; (f) healing which comes from without, carrying in most cases all the signs of insufficiency and even of inhibition; (g) in fine, that which is without enters within and takes over the charge of the mystery, but it is either removed altogether or goes into deeper concealment—the outer world profits only by the removal of a vague enchantment. The unversed reader may not at the moment follow the specifics of this schedule, but if the allusions awaken his interest I can promise that they shall be made plain as we proceed.

II.

THE LITERATURE WHICH EMBODIES THE LEGEND.

The mystery of the Graal is a word which came forth out of Galilee. The literature which enshrines this mystery, setting forth the several quests which were instituted on account of it, the circumstances under which it was from time to time discovered and, in fine, its imputed removal, with all involved thereby, is one of such considerable dimensions that it may be properly described as large. This notwithstanding, there is no difficulty in presenting its broad outlines so briefly that if there be any one who is new to the subject, he can be instructed sufficiently for my purpose even

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from the beginning. It is to be understood, therefore, that the Holy Graal is, excepting in the German version of the legend, represented invariably as that vessel in which Christ celebrated the Last Supper and consecrated for the first time the elements of the Eucharist. According to the legend, its next use was to receive the blood from the wounds of Christ when His body was taken down from the Cross, or alternatively, from the side which was pierced by the spear of Longas. Under circumstances which are variously recounted, this vessel, its content included, was carried westward under safe guardianship, coming in fine to Britain and there remaining in the hands of successive keepers. In the days of King Arthur, the prophet and magician Merlin assumed the responsibility of carrying the legend to its term, with which object he brought about the institution of the Round Table, and the flower of Arthurian chivalry set out to find the sacred vessel. In the quests which followed, the knighthood depicted in the greater romances has become a mystery of ideality, and nothing save its feeble reflection could have been found on earth. The quests were to some extent preconceived in the mind of the legend, and although a few of them were successful, that which followed was the removal of the Holy Graal. The companions of the quest asked, as one may say, for bread, and to those who were unworthy there was given the stone of their proper offence, but to others the spiritual meat which passes all understanding.

That this account instructs the uninitiated person most imperfectly will be obvious to any one who is acquainted with the great body of the literature, but, within the limits to which I have restricted it intentionally, I do not know that if it were put differently, it would be put better or more in harmony with the general sense of the romances.

The places of the legend, its reflections and its rumours, are France, England, Germany, Holland, Italy, Spain and Wales. France and England were united in respect of their literature during the Anglo-Norman period, and when this period was over England contributed nothing to the Graal cycle except renderings of French texts and one compilation therefrom. It should be further remembered that, according to the mind of scholarship, several of the Anglo-Norman texts are not extant in their original form, but have been edited and harmonised. Germany had an indigenous version of the legend, combined, by its own evidence, with a French source which is now unknown. The Dutch version is comparatively an old compilation, also from French

sources; Italy is represented only by translations from the French, and these were the work of Rusticien de Pise; the inclusion of Spain is really a question of liberality, for there is no Spanish version of the Graal legend as such, or it exists only in the rare allusions of a certain romance of Merlin, which again was originally in French. As regards Wales, there is also no indigenous literature of the Graal legend, as it was understood by the French romancers, but there are certain primeval traditions and bardic remanents which are held to be the root-matter of the whole cycle, and two at least of the questing knights are found among the Mabinogion heroes. In the thirteenth century and later, the legend, as we now have it, was carried across the Marches, but it is represented by translations only. It follows that the Graal literature, as I understand the term, belongs solely to France and Germany. To these restrictions of place may be added a restriction of time, for nothing which is now extant can be dated prior to 1175, and after *circa* 1230 we have only translations and digests. The allocation of individual texts to particular dates within this period is, in certain cases, inferential and in some entirely speculative. It will be understood, therefore, that in presenting the subjoined tabulation I am not concerned with rigid priority in time but rather with affinities of intention, by which certain texts fall into defined groups. The literature may in this manner be classified into sections as follows:—

(A) The Lesser Histories or Chronicles of the Holy Graal, otherwise, the Cycle of Robert de Borron, in which is comprised: (1) The Metrical Romance of Joseph of Arimathea; (2) the Lesser Holy Graal, which is a prose version of the metrical romance as above; (3) the Early Prose Merlin, which represents a lost metrical romance, or more accurately a poem of which 500 lines alone remain extant; (4) the Didot Perceval, so called after the designation of the only manuscript by which it is known; it presents one version of the search after the Holy Graal, as distinguished from its legendary history and the connexions thereof.

The characteristics in common of these four romances, by which they are grouped into a cycle, are: (1) The idea that certain secret words were transmitted from Apostolic times and were carried from East to West; (2) the succession of Brons as Keeper of the Holy Graal immediately after Joseph of Arimathea.

(B) The Greater Chronicles of the Holy Graal, comprising: (1) The Saint Graal, or Joseph of Arimathea, called also the first branch of the Romances of the Round Table and the Grand or

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Greater Holy Graal; (2) the later prose romances of Merlin, being that which, because it is more widely diffused, has been sometimes termed the Vulgate, and that which is known as the Huth Merlin, following the designation of the only extant manuscript; (3) the great prose Lancelot; (4) the great prose Perceval le Gallois, an alternative version of the quest, known also in English as the High History of the Holy Graal; (5) the Quest of the Holy Graal, called also the last book of the Round Table, containing the search and achievement of Galahad. From my standpoint this is the quest *par excellence*.

It should be understood that the great prose Perceval and the great quest of Galahad exclude one another, so that they stand as alternatives in the tabulation. The characteristics of this cycle are: (1) The succession of a second Joseph as Keeper of the Holy Graal immediately after his father, Joseph of Arimathea, and during the latter's lifetime, this dignity not being conferred upon Brons, either then or later; (2) the substitution of a claim in respect of apostolical succession for that of a secret verbal formula.

(C) The Conte del Graal, otherwise, the Perceval le Gallois of Chrétien de Troyes, being the metrical romance which comprises the quests of Perceval and Gawain. It was successively continued by several later poets, some of whose versions are alternative and exclusive of one another. The Conte del Graal is the largest document of the Anglo-Norman cycle.

(D) The German cycle, comprising: (1) The Parsifal of Wolfram von Eschenbach; (2) the Titirel of Albrecht von Schaffenberg; (3) Diu Crône by Henrich von dem Türlin; (4) the Lancelot of Ulrich du Zazikhoven.

The dominant text of the German cycle is that of Wolfram, which is almost generically distinct from the histories and quests offered by the Anglo-Norman versions. At the moment it will be sufficient to say that it represents the Holy Graal as in the custody of a knightly company which, both expressly and by inference, recalls the order of the Knights Templar. As a final consideration in respect of all the cycles, it may be added that the romantic literature of chivalry diminishes in consequence and interest in proportion as it is removed from the Arthurian motive and period. It does not matter how remote the connexion may be, there is still the particular atmosphere. The Carolingian cycle in comparison is mere indiscriminate and violence. There are no books in the manner of chivalry to compare with *The Morte d'Arthur*, *The High History of Perceval* and *The Quest of the Haut Prince Galahad after the Holy Graal*.

III.

THE IMPLICITS OF THE MYSTERY.

There are several literatures which exhibit with various degrees of plainness the presence of that subsurface meaning to which I have referred in respect of the Graal legends ; but there as here, so far as the outward text is concerned, it is suggested rather than affirmed. This additional sense may underlie the entire body of a literature, or it may be merely some concealed intention or a claim put forward evasively. The subsurface significance of the Graal legends belongs mainly to the second class. It is from this point of view that my departure is here made, and if it is a warrantable assumption, some at least of the literature will, expressly or otherwise, be found to contain these elements in no uncertain manner. As a matter of fact, we shall find them, though it is rather by the way of things which are implied, or which follow as inferences, but they are not for this reason less clear or less demonstrable. The implicits of the Graal literature are indeed more numerous than we should expect to meet with at the period in books of the western world. I believe them to exceed, for example, those which are discoverable in the alchemical writings of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, though antecedently we might have been prepared to find them more numerous in the avowedly secret books of Hermetic adepts. In a single section of a paper which is short of necessity I can deal only with those which are most important, leaving to a later period any additional examples which may transpire as the inquiry proceeds.

The explicit in chief of that cycle which I have termed the Lesser Histories or Chronicles of the Holy Graal is that certain secret words were communicated to Joseph of Arimathea by Christ Himself, and that these must remain in reserve, being committed from Keeper to Keeper by the oral method only. On the other hand, the implicit of Robert de Borron's poem resides in the question as to what he understood by their office. In the Lesser Holy Graal the implicit of the metrical romance passes into actual expression, and it becomes more clear in this manner that the secret words were those used by the custodians of the Holy Graal in the consecration of the elements of the Eucharist.

When the Greater Holy Graal was produced as an imputed branch of Arthurian literature, there is no need to say that the Roman Pontiff was then as now, at least in respect of his claim, the first bishop of Christendom, and, by the evidence of tradi-

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tion at least, he derived from St. Peter, who was *episcopus primus et pontifex primordialis*. This notwithstanding, the romance attributes the same title to a son of Joseph of Arimathea, who is called the Second Joseph, and here is the first suggestion of a concealed motive therein. The Greater Holy Graal and the metrical romance of De Borron are the texts in chief of their particular cycles, and it does not follow, or at least in all cases, that their several continuations or derivatives are extensions of the implicits which I have mentioned. In the first case, the early prose Merlin has an implied motive of its own which need not at the moment detain us, and the Didot Perceval is manifestly unauthentic as a sequel, by which I mean that it does not represent the mind of the earlier texts, though it has an importance of its own and also its own implicits. On the other hand, in what I have termed the Greater Chronicles of the Holy Graal there is, if possible, a more complete divergence in respect of the final document, and I can best explain it by saying that if we can suppose for a moment that the Grand Saint Graal was produced in the interests of a Pan-Britannic Church, or alternatively of some secret school of religion, then the Great Prose Quest, or Chronicle of Galahad, would represent an interposition on the part of the orthodox church to take over the literature. At the same time, the several parts of each cycle under consideration belong thereto and cannot be located otherwise.

The further divisions under which I have scheduled the body-general of the literature, and especially the German cycle, will be considered at some length in their proper place, when their explicit and implied motives will be specified ; for the present it will be sufficient to say that they do not put forward the claims with which I am now dealing, namely, the secret formula in respect of the De Borron cycle and a super-apostolical succession in respect of the Greater Holy Graal, with that which derives therefrom. As regards both claims, we must remember that although we are dealing with a department of romantic literature, their content does not belong to romance ; the faculty of invention in stories is one thing, and I think that modern criticism has made insufficient allowance for its spontaneity, yet through all the tales of chivalry it worked within certain lines. It would not devise secret Eucharistic words or put forward strange claims which almost make void the Christian apostolate in favour of some unheard-of succession communicated directly from Christ after Pentecost. We know absolutely that this kind of machinery belongs to another order. If it does not, then the apocryphal

gospels were imbued with the romantic spirit, and the explanation of Manichean heresy may be sought in a flight of verse.

I suppose that what follows from the claims has not entered into the consciousness of official scholarship, because it is otherwise concerned, but it may have entered already into the thought of those among my readers whose preoccupations are similar to my own, and I will now state it in a summary manner. As the secret words of consecration, the true words which have to be pronounced over the sacramental elements so that they may be converted into the true Eucharist, have, by the hypothesis, never been expressed in writing, it follows that since the Graal was withdrawn from the world, together with its custodians, the Christian Church has had to be content with what it has, namely, a substituted sacrament. And as the super-apostolical succession, also by the hypothesis, must have ceased from the world when the last Keeper of the Graal followed his vessel into heaven, the Christian Church has again been reduced to the ministration of some other and apparently lesser succession.

If I were asked to adjudicate on the value of such claims, I should say that the doctrine is the body of the Lord and its right understanding is the spirit. Whosoever therefore puts forward a claim on behalf of secret formulæ in connexion with the Eucharistic rite has forgotten the one thing needful—that there are valid consecrations everywhere. The question of apostolical succession is in the same position, because the truly valid transmissions are those of grace itself, which communicates from the source of grace direct to the soul; and the essence of the sacerdotal office is that those who have received supernatural life should assist others so to prepare their ground that they may also in due season, but always from the same source, become spiritually alive. It remains, however, that the implicits with which I have been dealing are actually the implicits in chief of the Graal books, and that they do not make for harmony with the teaching of the orthodox churches does not need stating. From whence therefore and with what intention were they imported into the body of romance? Before this question can be answered we shall have to proceed much further in the consideration of the literature, but my next section can deal only with a preliminary clearance of the ground.

As a conclusion to the present part, let me add that any scheme of interpretation which fails to account for the claim to a super-efficacious Eucharistic consecration and a super-apostolical succession accounts for very little that is important in the last

resource. It is in this sense that I take up the subject at the point where it has been left by scholarship, considering these problems in the light of all that can be gathered from the texts themselves, from certain coincident literatures, and from the theological and historical position of the Celtic Church, as a preliminary to the consideration in fine which I have already indicated by my reference to a secret school existing within the Church, or at least to be approached intellectually more readily from this direction.

IV.

SOME ANTECEDENTS IN FOLKLORE.

The beginnings of literature are like the beginnings of life—questions of antecedents which are past finding out, and perhaps they do not signify vitally on either side, because the keys of all mysteries are to be sought in the comprehension of their term, rather than in their initial stages. Modern scholarship lays great and indeed exclusive stress on the old Celtic antecedents of the Graal literature, and on certain Welsh and other prototypes of the Perceval Quest in which the sacred vessel does not appear at all. As regards these affiliations, whether Welsh, English, or Irish, I do not think that sufficient allowance has been made for the following facts: (a) That every fiction and legend depends, as already suggested, from prior legend and fiction; (b) that the antecedents are both explicit and implicit, intentional or unconscious, just as in these days we have wilful and undesigned imitation; (c) that the persistence of legends is by the way of their transfiguration. We have done nothing to explain the ascension of the Graal to heaven and the assumption of Galahad when we have ascertained that some centuries before there were myths about the Cauldron of Ceridwen or that of the Dagda, any more than we have accounted for Christianity if we have ascertained, and this even indubitably, that some ecclesiastical ceremonial is an adaptation of pre-Christian rites. Here, as in so many other instances, the essence of everything resides in the intention. If I possess the true apostolical succession, then, *ex hypothesi* at least, I do not the less consecrate the Eucharist if I use the Latin rite, which expresses the act of Christ in the past tense, or some archaic oriental rite, which expressed it in the present.

There is in any case no question as to the Graal antecedents in folklore, and I should be the last to minimize their importance after their own kind, just as I should not abandon the official Church because I had been received into the greater Church which

is within. I believe personally that the importance has been unduly magnified because it has been taken by scholarship for the all in all of its research. But there is plenty of room for every one of the interests, and as that which I represent does not interfere with anything, which has become so far vested, I ask for tolerance regarding it. My position is that the old myths were taken over for the purposes of Christian symbolism, under the influence of a particular but not an expressed motive, and it was subsequently to this appropriation that they assumed importance. It is, therefore, as I may say, simply to clear the issues that I place those of my readers who may feel concerned with the subject in possession of the bare elements which were carried from pre-Christian time into the Graal mythos, as follows :—

1. We hear of an Irish legend concerning the Cauldron of the Dagda, from which no company ever went away unsatisfied. It was one of the four talismans which a certain godlike race brought with them when they first came into Ireland. As the particular talisman in question, though magical, was not spiritual, it is useless to our purpose ; but it connects with the palmary hallow of the Graal mystery, because that also was food-giving, though this property was the least of its great virtues, just as the stone of transmutation by alchemy was classed among the least possessions of the Rosicrucian Fraternity.

2. There is the Cauldron of Bendigeid Vran, the son of Llyr, in one of the old Welsh Mabinogion, the property of which, says one story, is that if a man be slain to-day and cast therein, to-morrow he will be as well as he ever was at the best, except that he will not regain his speech. He remains, therefore, in the condition of Perceval when that hero of the Graal stood in the presence of the mystery with a spell of silence upon him. Except in so far as the Cup of the Graal legend concerns a mystery of speech and its suppression, it is difficult to trace its correspondence with this cauldron, which I should mention, however, came into Wales from Ireland. It so happens that institutions of analogy are made sometimes by scholarship on warrants which they would be the first to repudiate if the object, let us say, were to establish some point advanced by a mystic. I do not reject them, and I do not intend to use similar comparisons on evidence which appears so slight ; but I must place on record that the derivation, if true, is unimportant, even as it is also unimportant that Adam, who received the breath of life from the Divine Spirit, had elements of red earth which entered into his material composition. The lights which shine upon the altar are not

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less sacramental lights because they are also earthly wax ; and though the externals are bread and wine, the Eucharist is still the Eucharist.

In addition to analogies like those which I have just cited, there are two versions of the quest or mission of Perceval into which the mystery of the Graal does not enter as a part. In their extant forms they are much later than any of the Graal literature. One is the story of Peredur the son of Evrawc in the Welsh *Mabinogion*, and the other is the English metrical romance of *Syr Percyvelle*. The Welsh *Mabinogi* is like the wild world before the institution of the sacraments, and from any literary standpoint it is confused and disconcerting. Scholars have compared it to the *Lay of the Great Fool*, and I think that the analogy obtains, not only in the Welsh fable, but also in such masterpieces of nature-born poetry as that of *Chrétien de Troyes*. On the other hand, the English poem is a thing of no importance except in respect of its connections, and as to these it will be sufficient to say that even scholarship values it only for its doubtful traces of some early prototype which is lost.

The antecedents of the Graal legend in folklore have been a wide field for patient research, nor is that field exhausted ; it has also offered an opportunity for great speculations which go to show that the worlds of enchantment are not worlds which have past like the Edomite kings ; but as I know that there was a king afterwards in Israel, I have concluded at this point to abandon those quests, which for myself and those whom I represent are without term or effect, and to hold only to the matter in hand, which is the development of a sacramental and mystical cosmos in literature out of the wild elements which strove one with another, as in the time of chaos so also in pre-Christian Celtic folklore.

REMARKABLE OCCURRENCES AND PRESUMABLE EXPLANATIONS.

BY FRANZ HARTMANN, M.D.

(Continued)

VI

THOUGHTS OF THE LIVING ACTING AT A DISTANCE

This year I stayed as a guest at the house of the Princess M. de R—— at R——, a suburb of the city of F——. One morning at 10 a.m. the Princess drove to the city, while I was occupied with writing. At about 1 p.m. I suddenly heard the Princess in a loud voice, calling twice my name at the door of my room, as if she were calling for help. I immediately jumped up from my desk and opened the door, but no one was there. I asked the servants whether the Princess had returned, but received a negative answer. Half an hour afterwards, the Princess drove up in her carriage; I went to meet her and asked her whether she had met with an accident, whereupon she answered that the horses had run away and that she had been terribly frightened and was thinking of me. However she had not pronounced my name.

This would go to indicate that the inner personality has a consciousness and faculties separate from those of the outer one, and although the two are as one, nevertheless the inner man may exercise functions and send out vibrations without their coming to the consciousness of the external personality. That hearing my name called was a subjective experience is proved by the fact that none of the servants heard it, although they were near enough to hear it, if the sound had been physical instead of being astral.

Still more remarkable is the following :

VII

SPIRITUAL HEALING AT A DISTANCE

When a child I was vaccinated and the consequence was such that I would by far have preferred to have the smallpox

ten times. My blood was thus poisoned, and for thirty years I suffered from an *eczema* which rendered life almost intolerable to me. In vain I consulted the best known physicians and specialists in Europe and America. I recklessly swallowed all kinds of medicines which they prescribed, and submitted to all sorts of treatment, hoping thereby rather that this would put an end to my life, than to find any relief. The matter grew finally so bad that it was impossible for me to get an hour's sleep without taking first large doses of chloral and then inhaling the vapours of chloroform. It was after the middle of December, 1875, when I was at F—— (Texas) in this condition and thinking of suicide. By accident I heard of a Dr. Newton of New Orleans, who performed wonderful cures by treating patients at a distance without giving medicine. I wrote to him, but days passed without my receiving an answer and I thought no more of it.

On the first day of January, 1876, I was called to a farm some forty miles from F—— to perform a surgical operation. After a sharp ride on horseback I arrived in the evening, and after attending to the patient made up my mind to stay at that farm over night, as it was already too late to return. After supper I sat on the porch, thinking of the sleepless night that would now be in store for me; when suddenly I received something like an electric shock which thrilled through my body. I immediately thought of Dr. Newton. I looked at my watch. It was 8.20 p.m. That night was the first one in many years that I slept soundly, and I have been perfectly well ever since. A few days after this occurrence I received a letter from Dr. Newton from San Francisco, he having in the meantime moved to that place. In this letter he said, "I send you at this moment an electric shock, which will cure you. No further treatment is necessary. The letter was dated at a time corresponding exactly with 8.20 p.m. when the difference of time between Texas and California is taken into consideration.

I believe that in this case not merely mental, but spiritual (magical) vibrations were acting and that a person being in conscious possession of such a spiritual power might cure himself and others by an effort of will, but I am also certain that persons possessing such a power are very few and that all those who in their advertisements claim to cure for a certain amount of money people at a distance have no such powers at all, but that if perchance a cure follows such an imaginary treatment, it is merely due to the auto-suggestion of the patient himself and his faith in the doctor. This, however, was not the case with me, as

I thought no further of Dr. Newton and had no faith in getting cured at all.

VIII

MENTAL CURE AND POSSESSION

In the year 1888 I was at W—— (N.Y.), having received an invitation from Mrs. H—— to visit the headquarters of "Christian science" and mental cure, which was established there and to study their methods. Among the "healers" were two young ladies, Miss M—— R—— and Miss J—— W——, with whom I soon became acquainted. I stated to them my belief that their cures by mental action were due merely to the faith of the patient; for even the Bible states that when Jesus performed a cure, He never said, "I cured thee," but "Thy faith made thee whole." To this those ladies objected and said that they often cured people without the patient knowing that he was treated, and as I was suffering from an aching tooth on that day, I thought I would try the experiment and told them of it, saying that if they would treat me for it they should do so later without telling me about it, and that I did not believe in it anyhow.

Soon after that conversation I went with Miss R—— to a lecture, while Miss W—— went away. Now it is essential for my purpose to describe the appearance of Miss W——. She was a very pretty girl, slender and small with dark hair and ringlets. She was dressed in white and had a red sash around her waist. I thought no more of her but listened attentively to the lecture, while Miss M——. R—— was sitting next to me.

Suddenly a strange feeling came over me. I saw myself as being Miss J—— W——. I was a young, slender and delicate girl with black hair and ringlets, in a white dress and with a red sash around my waist. And not only did I see myself in that way, but I also had the feelings, which such a pretty young lady would probably have; for I thought of my appearance and whether my hair were in good order and whether I would be likely to be admired, etc. I must say that looking at myself with my physical eyes, I saw that I had not changed, and in my innermost consciousness I also knew who I was; but Miss J—— W—— had, so to say, taken possession of my astral self; astrally I was Miss W——. My toothache was gone.

After the lecture Miss W—— appeared and told me that during the lecture she had been in her room and concentrated her thought upon me, and I may add that perhaps in consequence

of this intense amalgamation Miss W—— and myself became very great friends.

An explanation of this case seems to me unnecessary ; it only goes to show that the physical body is only the house in which the mind, constituting the inner man, resides, and that if the inner man is drawn out of it by something which attracts his outward attention, his place may be occupied by the spirit of another person and perhaps even by the ghosts of the dead. It seems to me that for the purpose of investigating the mysteries of the inner life, we ought to seek the solution of such riddles rather within our own inner life than in speculating about external phenomena, and this was also the opinion of Miss J—— W——, for she wrote in my notebook the following verses :—

Why idly seek for outward things ?
 The answer inner silence brings.
 Thus to the mind disturb'd by nought
 The uttermost of truth is taught.

IX

DAEMONIACAL OBSESSION

Numerous cases of daemonic obsession have come to my personal knowledge and our insane asylums are full of them. I should, therefore, not be at a loss to cite cases that have come under my personal observation, but I prefer to mention one which has been stated to me by a friend. I chose this case on account of its remarkable peculiarity.

The Marchese N—— was an Italian nobleman of means living in Paris. He was a very sober and quiet gentleman, leading a retired life and occupying himself with reading books on mysticism, and it is also said that he indulged in certain occult practices, such as staring into a magic mirror and hypnotizing himself for the purpose of producing an "exteriorization" of his astral body and developing clairvoyance. This gentleman went to bed one evening in apparently perfect health and woke up a raving maniac during the night. He broke the furniture and made such a noise in the hotel where he lived as to disturb all the inhabitants. He had to be held down by force until the doctors came who put him into a strait-jacket and carried him to a hospital. Upon the advice of his relatives he was taken back to Italy and put into an insane asylum, where he occupied a cell and at intervals continued to rave.

This state continued for several months, when the Marchese became suddenly reasonable again. He ate and spoke and acted like any other sane person, and no trace of insanity was noticeable about him any more. Therefore, after a few weeks of observation he was permitted to return to Paris, where he resumed his previous way of living.

Now the remarkable thing in this matter is that after he had left the asylum his ghost was seen by many in the cell which he had occupied, and one of his friends while on a visit to Paris told him about this circumstance. Thereupon Mr. N—— became very curious to see himself his own ghost. Against the advice of others he went to Naples, visited the asylum, entered the cell and was at the next moment a raving maniac again and remained so until he died.

The presumable explanation of this case is, that this person, owing to a want of self-possession and self-control, has created an "elemental being" within himself, constituting a second personality, a creation of his mind. Such "elementals" are the usual products of some suppressed desire and grow by attracting corresponding elements from the surrounding astral, mental and spiritual atmosphere. Everything in the world, be it visible or invisible, is the ultimate product of desire and imagination. A person may be obsessed by his own thought or idea if he allows it to grow. Ideas are germs within the mind, comparable to seeds in the soil, which grow by attracting to themselves from the ground elements corresponding to their own nature. All forms are representations of corresponding ideas; they are, so to say, materialized spirits. If there were no spirit of humanity in the world, there would be no men and women as its representations. If that spirit or "class-soul" of which a horse or dog are representatives were not in existence, there would be neither horses and dogs. So it is with everything, daemons included. A devilish idea in the mind of man attracts to itself daemonical influences for its own growth, and the more it is hidden and suppressed, the more will it grow, for every power grows by resistance. Thus it may grow at the expense of the vitality of its owner, until it becomes for the time being an apparently self-existing entity, capable of becoming objective and of manifesting itself in a form separate from its creator, as is shown by numerous instances known in the history of spiritualism and in the history of the lives of the saints. The account given above is an illustration of such possibilities.

X

REINCARNATION

A very remarkable case which would go to show the truth of the doctrine of reincarnation came to my knowledge last autumn. My friends at F—, of whom I already made mention in a previous article, are in almost continual contact with the invisible world. They do not need to hold "sittings" for spiritistic phenomena, because they are already surrounded by such phenomena, very much against their wishes. There are often the most unearthly noises in their house, in daytime as well as at night; noises like the firing of guns, rolling of cannon balls over the floor, moving of furniture, etc. What those evidently intelligent powers are I do not know; but there seem to be a great many "undeveloped and earth-bound spirits" who come for instruction and aid.

Not long ago there came an entity, claiming to be the spirit of a cardinal D—. This cardinal asserted that in his past life he had committed a murder. He said that he had poisoned a certain person, and that this person was now reincarnated and living as a young boy at F—. He gave the age and the name of the boy as G— P—, and described him. He said that he could not find peace until he had received forgiveness from that boy for having murdered him in his past incarnation. He gave the street and the number of the house where the boy lived, and begged that our friends should hunt him up, tell him the story and ask his forgiveness. Research proved that a cardinal D— had been living at the time stated. Thereupon our friends started to hunt for the boy, whom they finally found after some difficulties caused by the fact that he was an adopted son of a family, living in a tenement now occupied by many poor people, and that his real name was but little known. To make the matter still more interesting, this boy had a dream in which he witnessed the perpetration of the murder. After having been told the request of the cardinal, he, of course, freely pardoned him, and the spirit appeared only once more and expressed his gratitude.

This case hardly admits of any other explanation, except that the whole thing was a comedy played by some "elemental." It is surely more probable that the spirit of the cardinal was actually earth-bound and detained in purgatory until his conscience had found the relief desired, by being pardoned by his victim.

XI

THE FOOLISHNESS OF TRUSTING IN LYING SPIRIT
COMMUNICATIONS

1. Last year a number of "theosophists," and among them some well-known lecturers, received certain spirit communications through the mediumship of a lady in B——, in which they were advised to sacrifice all their worldly possessions, abandon their parents and to become "Chelas" of a certain Mahatma. They were requested to go to Madagascar, there to await "further orders." This they accordingly did. They landed at Antanarivo and waited, but no "further orders" came. All of these ten persons took the swamp fever; five of them died, three returned, and the fate of two more is not yet known. It is believed that this is a case of black magic, and that some enemy of the theosophical movement made use of the credulity of these persons for the purpose of removing some of its advocates.

2. It is remarkable to what extent certain credulous people will believe even the greatest nonsense if it comes from the "other world." A very prominent citizen of Vienna was told by the spirits that he must spend 30,000 florins for the purpose of establishing a factory for the manufacture of "planchettes," so that the poor people might obtain them at cost price. He would have actually done so if he had not been prevented by his family, who caused a legal guardian to be appointed for him, although in every other respect he was quite reasonable. Such is the effect of an idea that becomes fixed in the mind when the mind becomes obsessed by it. This chapter of human folly might be continued *ad infinitum*.

(To be continued.)

THE CLAIM OF ASTROLOGY

By ALFRED FELLOWS

MODERN Science has flung open the great Book of the Heavens and teaches all who will to read it as the wisest of the ancients could not have done; nevertheless one volume is forbidden and discredited. Exact computation is made of the movements of each heavenly body, knowledge of its nature and substance is revealed, the lustre of tens of thousands of stars undreamt of by the wise men of Egypt and Chaldea is minutely observed and recorded; but the quest of their direct influence on the lives and destinies of men is a pursuit alike by law and science reprehended.

Those who do not believe that nature revealed all her inmost secrets to mid-Victorian scientists, and who further hold that their wide knowledge of material things did not always furnish them with the patience, humility and intuition necessary for judging the truth or untruth of men's former faiths, may not now consider the case of astrology as entirely a *chose jugée*. Sir David Brewster could not understand how the movements of Venus or Mars could confer qualities ascribed to them by astrologers, so Sir David Brewster said astrology was nonsense; but nowadays a scientist's inability to follow the sequence of cause and effect is not considered sufficient to disprove a connexion if there is evidence otherwise that it exists. Thus, astronomers, geologists and physiologists dogmatize on the age of the earth, contradicting each other; then the discovery of radium puts the whole question in the crucible again, and meanwhile science is learning to be humble and to study facts before dictating answers.

To the open-minded man then—the only true scientist—astrology must stand or fall by the weight of evidence for or against it; and the fact that many of the wisest men of the world have believed in it will rather induce him to approach it respectfully than to condemn it because the law of gravitation was not understood before Newton. And, of course, the truth of astrology does not depend on astronomical theory at all. The question, for example, whether persons born at or near the new moon, and especially during solar eclipses, are more likely to have trouble with their eyes than other people is one that a scientific man might almost solve by statistics, with the present

advanced methods of probability calculation ; it is purely one of fact, and if true, might be discovered by an experienced and observant midwife absolutely ignorant of the Copernican theory, but happening to observe the moon's waxing and waning in connexion with her professional duties. Students of the occult who have read Professor Karl Pearson's essays on chances will understand the scientific method which might be employed in the above test and may wish that this investigator had time or inclination to take up such a problem.

The fact that the ancients believed in astrology is, so far as it goes, evidence in its favour ; but a deduction may be made which is greatly against it. On this point the words of a fine scientist and a man of truly judicial mind, written about the middle of the last century, may be quoted. In reviewing an astrological almanack, he says : " If anything ever had a fair trial it was astrology. The idea itself is natural enough. A human being, set down on this earth, without any tradition, would probably suspect that the heavenly bodies had something to do with the guidance of affairs. I think that any one who tries will find that the planets do not prophesy ; but if he should find to the contrary he will of course go on asking. . . . If astrology had been true, it must have lasted in an ever-improving state. If it be true, it is a truth, and a useful truth, which had experience and prejudice both in its favour, and yet lost ground as soon as astronomy, its working tool, began to improve."

Thus wrote Professor Augustus de Morgan ; his argument being, that astrology has had the fairest possible trial, and has been found wanting. In passing, his remark that it had experience in its favour, should mean, if anything, that it was true ; the professor perhaps meant " theory " rather than experience. " Prejudice " is at least open to question, since the introduction of Christianity ; Moses specifically forbade astrology, and the burning of the magical books in the New Testament points the same way. But whether prejudice has been for or against, it has had thousands of years of trial, and the fact that it is not established yet is certainly an adverse one.

In this connexion, the advances of modern astronomy must carefully be considered. By far the most important for this purpose are the discoveries of the two outer planets of the Solar system, Uranus and Neptune.

If, as the experts of the present day believe, these bodies exercise strong influence, two observations may be made ; the first that ancient astrologers, ignorant of two out of nine of their

guides, should have blundered so often that their science might well have been discredited ; and second that modern astrologers, with all the wisdom of the ancients at their backs, and accumulating knowledge of the hitherto unknown factors, ought to force conviction even on an unwilling world, if they speak truly. Sheer weight of evidence, as in the case of Harvey's theory of blood circulation, or of Galileo's teaching, should break down the most stubborn opposition.

This is the paradox noted by Professor de Morgan, that astrology has declined as astronomy advances ; but a little consideration will show that this argument, though it has its own weight, is by no means conclusive against astrology. For, first, the assumption that there has been a gradual advance in the one case and recession on the other is not a true one. The mediaeval church was sternly hostile to astrology, which could hardly be expected to make progress in such an unfavourable atmosphere ; the very fact that Ptolemy is still a leading authority is significant. But even astronomy, when it threatened the literal interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis, and suggested that the earth was not the centre of creation, fared no better. So that for the first twelve or thirteen hundred years of Christianity there was no advance in astronomy likely to help astrologers much, as the ancients had considerable powers of forecasting the movements of the stars, and even in our own day a native of India, quite ignorant of modern astronomy, has made a marvellously accurate forecast of the movements of the planet Mercury.

Since the Reformation astronomers have forced recognition of their theories, while astrologers have failed to do so ; but the point can be made, that the two stand to one another almost in the same relation as the multiplication table to the differential calculus. To find the exact position of the planets at any moment is somewhat troublesome ; to find it with sufficient accuracy for a radical figure in astrology is not very difficult ; but to find the influence of each body when it varies with its position in the ecliptic, its position with reference to the horizon, and its "aspects" to all the others, to balance it with and against the influences of the others when so found, and to judge the real value of the whole position would surely be a task of the utmost possible complexity, even if the astrologer were provided with the wealth of data which modern scientists demand and receive so unsparingly. But in this respect his difficulties are increased ten thousandfold by his long boycott ; some of his chief text-books are hundreds of years old (a book on astronomy may be out of date in a dozen) ;

no penny of the money lavished on the endowment of science by modern millionaires has been devoted to him, and, worst of all, his one request for accuracy in timing events is so often disregarded that his finer calculations may be rendered entirely useless. Then, too, he may justly complain that the dicta of his ancient guides require the same treatment as those of Galen or Aesculapius; a modern doctor will recognize his predecessors' powers of observation, but will correct their deductions in the light of progress, which the astrologer finds exceedingly hard to do in the absence of records. And in particular that branch of astrology connecting places with certain signs and degrees of the Zodiac appears especially to have suffered from its proscription. Some great cities have ceased to exist since the old astrologers took pains to find their vital "place" in the heavens; new countries and kingdoms have arisen and old ones disappeared. We have Italy, Austria, Russia now, but no Roman Empire.

If Leo ruled Rome it does not therefore rule Italy. North and South America, Australia, New Zealand; half the map of the world, indeed, has been discovered since Ptolemy wrote; some ancient places, for unknown reasons, are suspected to be under new dominion; and again, great and populous towns which are younger than Christendom remain to be observed in this regard, rendering definite forecast impossible. These are a few of the modern astrologer's difficulties, to which others may easily be added. Trained scientists, moreover, have rendered astrologers no assistance whatever save in the one initial problem of finding the planets (an error of a few minutes in timing a birth might well neutralize all this gain), while he can keep no official records; so it will be seen that the astrologer's failure need not be due to the falsity of his theories, but to his inability to work them out properly, and to obtain the necessary co-operation in his labours.

However, at the present day these difficulties are understood, and allowance may be made for them by fair-minded men. For hundreds of years religion crushed the study of astrology, and after religion had failed to stop research, the popes and cardinals of science fulminated against it; but dogmatic science has also lost its influence, and the twentieth century allows everything to be considered on its merits. Speaking generally, scientific men even yet contemptuously hold aloof from astrology, though there have been one or two notable exceptions; but they could not now dismiss properly prepared evidence on the plea that it was obviously all nonsense.

What, then, have modern astrologers to prove to establish

their case ? One very simple test is sufficient, if successful. For if it appears that in the long run their statements are more often true than false, and nothing else is found to account for this, their theories must stand until better are found. One, or even a dozen striking fulfilments are not sufficient, though they may draw public attention ; these in the midst of a mass of failures would be even less valuable as evidence than a number of less sensational announcements with a higher percentage of successes. While it must also be remembered that, just as any ungifted person prophesying how a tossed penny will fall will be right about as often as not, so the seer who predicts that "death will be busy amongst notable personages this year" and publishes a hieroglyphic of a funeral is fishing in very shallow waters.

No doubt in this connexion the almanacs published by various professional astrologers do not monopolize the ambiguity which prophets seem to consider their own privilege ; so, too, men living by their forecasts must find it more difficult to admit mistakes than other people. But it is no disrespect to the editors of these almanacs to say that the rigid proof of astrology must come, if at all, by other means than theirs. For no one can calculate the *a priori* probability of the world's history for a year ; and though the almanacs may, and probably do, make their own converts, they can but prepare the soil to receive the proper seed when the time comes.

A real scientific test would doubtless be a matter of time, money and very hard work, including much routine drudgery ; the success of astronomy has been established on sheer drudgery of computation and repeated observation. One eclipse prophesied within a minute might be a fluke ; a hundred cannot be. It is entirely a question of the percentage of successes and failures.

The kind of test necessary may be easily suggested. For example, astrologers state that the position of the sun, moon and planets at a child's birth influence its appearance, health and destiny ; and also, speaking generally, that the half, full or new moon is unfavourable at birth, though of course the unfavourable influence may be modified or neutralized by other factors. Now if the exact times of birth of ten thousand children or more were to be registered, noting those born within measurable time of half, full or new moon, and if such children had for some unaccountable reason shorter lives on the average than others, the scientific man might be compelled to give the astrologer a hearing. If the same thing happened in another ten thousand cases the result would be strengthened ; and finally, if in a long

continued series of observations the death-rate was sensibly higher for the last class, unbelieving scientists would be attacked in their very stronghold.

Such an experiment would of course require co-operation and perhaps help from physicians and midwives, firm believers in astrology in ancient times (a fact not without significance), but now just as hostile to it. When the births of thousands of children had been carefully noted, together with any circumstance which brought them into a particular table of death-rate, they would still have to be traced, and the statistics left to develop. Perhaps a skilled astrologer could suggest some points of detail to shorten the experiment; for example, he might take some particularly deadly aspect (as, for example, the opposition of the Sun and Saturn from the "angles") and ask every one who would help him to inform him of any birth under it, and then see if he could prove that an abnormal number of those on his list died early. It may be noted that Somerset House registrations are of very little use in this connexion; a morning horoscope may be splendid, an evening one very bad, and vice versa, but the register only shows the day and not the hour.*

Tedious as this test might be, the astrologer has everything to gain by it. If the statistics he collected kept on violating the scientific man's death tables, the latter would eventually have to own himself beaten; if a normal death-rate was obtained, the only inference would be that the particular aspect does not affect the duration of life. The astrologer would then have to admit one mistake, and a serious one, but it would not preclude him making a fresh experiment on another aspect, his new statistics having their own perfectly independent value.

Another test, shorter and perhaps more practicable might be devised on the converse system by submitting a quantity of horoscopes to a chosen committee of astrologers and making them pick out those of certain persons with strongly marked characteristics; if they could prove that out of a dozen or more horoscopes they could identify that belonging to a particular individual and could repeat such a process with a negligible percentage of errors, they would have very strong evidence that their theory had truth in it. A modification of this plan would be to choose men with some salient characteristic and find whether the corresponding "aspect" was registered in their horoscopes; if, for example, ninety-five per cent. of those who broke away from orthodoxy in politics or religion and boldly

* In France the Acte de Naissance gives the hour.—Ed.

defied convention were found to have a strong aspect between Mars and Mercury, the man who said it was all pure accident might have to face rather a hard sum in probabilities. But the last device might be rendered difficult by the ignorance of many of the subjects about the time and place of their births ; though the aspect of the two planets named would not vary much in twenty-four hours, their position in the heavens might modify their influence, and this of course depends on the place and the exact hour.*

Some such tests as the above must be a condition precedent to astrology being recognized by Science ; broadly speaking every new or unrecognized theory has to go through the same rigid ordeal of proof, even if brought forward by the President of the Royal Society, so astrologers have no substantial basis of complaint in this respect. They may be on safer grounds when they complain of lack of suavity and tolerance from those in authority in scientific circles ; but bad manners do not necessarily spell injustice.

Less than the strict proofs demanded by science will satisfy individuals ; and the position and attainment of some of those who have investigated and become believers (including, it is stated, at least one very eminent living astronomer and perhaps many others from Flamsteed onwards) ought at least to suggest to the unconverted that a man who jeers at something he does not understand may find in the end that his own presumption and ignorance are the only objects of ridicule.

As one whose own time of birth was taken to the half-minute for the purpose of a horoscope and of whom it was then prophesied by an astrologer still living that he would be "interested in the occult" the writer may perhaps be privileged to indulge in a few criticisms and observations on the modern developments of astrology. And as a beginning there is one paradox which decidedly requires elucidation.

As every one interested in astronomy knows the "precession of the equinoxes" shifts the "first point of Aries" through a very small angle backwards every year ; the result in a lifetime is almost negligible, but since the time of Ptolemy the accumulated change has in effect brought the signs of the zodiac into the corresponding constellations eastwards. Thus the first point and nearly the whole sign of Aries is in the constellation Pisces, and so with the others. From this it follows that the fixed stars change their signs westward ; for example Antares though in the

* To a certain extent, but I think this test would hold good in nine cases out of ten.—ED.

constellation Scorpio, is in the sign of Sagittarius, Aldebaran "the Bull's North Horn" in Gemini, and so with the others.

If therefore the ancient astrologers associated a sign of the zodiac with a certain influence, and this influence arose from the stars in that sign, the inquirer might suppose that the old text-books had now become inaccurate, or at least that Ptolemy's "Scorpio" should be read "Sagittarius," in which sign may be seen the red star Antares and the fine group of the Scorpion clustered round it. But Ptolemy, who knew the fact of precession, himself states that it does not affect astrology, and this appears to be received by modern astrologers. From which it would follow that the influence of a planet or luminary merely depends on its position in the ecliptic, irrespective of its background of fixed stars; in other words, that the position of the fixed stars is immaterial. If their position is immaterial, it would be thought that astrology would not be concerned with them.* And yet one well-known astrologer has published a table showing the influence of different fixed stars, some of them down to the third magnitude!

If modern astrologers wish their study to be regarded as a science they should certainly clear up this point, and state definitely whether the fixed stars have influence, and if so how it is that precession can be neglected. In passing, it is certain that the ancients ascribed influence to particular stars, especially Regulus, Fomalhaut, Aldebaran, Antares, and of course Sirius.

The criticism of vagueness in prophecy and that Uranus is a "universal solvent" has sometimes been made; amateur astrologers at least might do well to take their subjects into their confidence, and admit absence of data. For example, a child born on December 2, 1899, would have had the sun, moon, and all the planets except Neptune in one small section of the heavens; an astrologer might frankly say that he hardly knew what to make of such a combination.

Of individual horoscopes perhaps that of the late Queen Victoria has been published most often; astrologers point out

* I do not think this argument holds good. By the same method of reasoning it would be possible to deny the influence of the planets. The fixed stars are only considered of importance when they occupy angles or are in conjunction with the Sun or Moon in the radical horoscope. To a certain extent they must, no doubt, be regarded as modifying the influence of the sign of the zodiac in which they fall, but the evidence in favour of the signs exerting the same influence as they did in Ptolemy's time is surprisingly strong.—ED.

with some pride how their text-books are verified by the favourable positions of all the heavenly bodies, all elevated above the earth and Jupiter in the mid-heaven. Amongst prominent men of the last century acquainted with astrology Mr. Ruskin may be mentioned: his references to the position of the planet Saturn rising in his "first house" will be remembered by his readers. As a more modern instance, it has been repeatedly asserted that the Japanese * timed their attacks with reference to astrology; to which may be contrasted the confident promise of victory at Port Arthur made to Admiral Makaroff by the Christian priest, Father John of Cronstadt.

One weakness of astrology at the present moment may be pointed out in a lack of solidarity in its followers. If palmists can unite in defence of their own interests, it ought not to be impossible for astrologers to do so; there should of course be proper latitude for difference of method or opinion. Nor should there be any difficulty in marking impostors; any one who can pass the test of taking the extremely complicated and artificial "primary directions" gives evidence of study, while a person unable to do so can hardly be reckoned a competent astrologer.

In conclusion, no one who investigates astrology on his own behalf need fear that he is wasting time if he combines it with the study of modern astronomy, and with seeing eyes looks up to the heavens themselves and watches the constellations swing into their appointed places. He will then know what the wise men of Egypt and Chaldea thought, and of their tireless patience of watching; and not less will he be able to appreciate the labours of Newton, Herschell, Adams, and men now living. For to-day and yesterday, past and future, to-morrow and for ever, the Heavens testify.

* The Russo-Japanese War corresponded in point of time with the transit of Saturn through Russia's (so called) ruling sign Aquarius. It was immediately preceded by a conjunction of Saturn and Mars in that sign.—ED.

AN HYPOTHESIS CONCERNING PSYCHIC FACULTY

BY ALEPH GIMEL

IT is a matter of almost every-day comment, among those who take cognizance of such data, that the individuals comprising the orders of creation below man have their psychical faculties more largely developed than the latter; and since man represents the highest degree yet reached in physical evolution, and since one naturally regards the psychic as a stage beyond and above the highest physical and mental processes, it appears a retrogression from evolutionary principle when we observe this deficiency in man, a deficiency which marks him as inferior, in that particular, to his lesser brethren, where we should expect to find him their superior. In attempting an explanation, which may elucidate this curious anomaly, I desire not to dogmatize, but merely suggest a theory which appears to me worthy of some consideration.

In a recent contribution to *Light*, upon the subject of animal food in relation to spiritual development, I referred to the well-known fact of man's similarity in anatomical structure, especially in dentition, with the simiinae, from which the inference may be deduced that man, like the anthropoids, is naturally frugivorous, for the rare and not well authenticated instances of the latter adding an occasional reptile to their menu can be set aside as non-essential, but even if admitted, it would not prejudice the fact that their chief sustenance was derived from fruits, herbs and roots.

Man has, however, not only forsaken his proper diet for an omnivorous one, but acquired the additional artificial taste for cooked food. It is in this latter, I think, where the solution may be found to his undeveloped psychic faculties.

It is a well known elementary physiological fact that the body of man is composed of certain chemical compounds, and to restore the loss occasioned by the constant katabolism, caused by work, both voluntary and involuntary, it is necessary to replace these proximate principles, to accomplish which we seek to so adjust our food that it shall contain these chemical com-

pounds in right proportion, and in order to suit the acquired demands of the palate, as well as from a generally accepted theory that assimilation is assisted by the process, the food is cooked before it is eaten.

It is held in Mystical Science that the astral body, which is the receptacle of the soul as is the phenomenal that of the astral, does not instantly leave the physical body at the moment of death; but the process of dis-association is a more or less lengthy one, though hastened by any means which will produce rapid disintegration of the organic body, such as, for instance, cremation. Now man, as the microcosm, represents the four-fold principle which obtains in the macrocosm, each plane of his being requiring its special food to enable it to function, as in the physical body or plane, or atrophy must result.

If therefore, man feeds upon cooked food he nourishes the phenomenal plane of his cosmos only, for the $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ inherent in the food has been driven out by the disruptive action of fire, and nothing is left but its chemical constituents.

Consequently, while his body and purely cerebral functions are nourished and stimulated, the astral receives no aliment. On the contrary, the lower animals, both predatory—except in a few instances of carrion feeders—and herbivorous, assimilate the vital essence of their food together with the elementary compounds requisite for the nutrition of their bodies; thus at the same time stimulating the functions of the astral.

That ordinary food should be required to contain the particular elements that will satisfy the needs of both the astral and physical body, appears a reasonable contention, since it is commonly held that they both belong to the phenomenal plane, in contradistinction to the true psyche, or soul, which is the receptacle of the individuated ego, separate, yet one with the Universal Spirit.

But the importance of the astral plane rests in its office of intermediary between the purely spiritual, or subliminal, and phenomenal, or supraliminal consciousnesses. It is the diaphragm which divides the high creative faculties from the lower sense organs, and yet unites the two. If, therefore, its power of functioning is hindered by mal-nutrition, man, as an entity, is limited in expression to the phenomenal, and no longer enjoys the use of that instrument whereby occurrences on the psychic plane are cognised. There have been numerous interesting examples given lately in the OCCULT REVIEW, of which I will quote one, from the article by Mr. Reginald B. Span in the October

number, to wit that relating to a certain Herefordshire farmer who, driving home from market, took a short cut down a lonely lane he had not traversed before.

“When in a dark part of the road the horse suddenly pulled up, snorting with fright, and refused to go on. As he could see nothing ahead to cause the animal any alarm, he administered several sharp cuts with the whip. . . . On relating this incident to friends later, he was told that a murder had been committed at that spot several years before, and that a wraith was supposed to haunt that part of the road.”

This story was corroborated by another farmer who related a similar experience.

Now, whether the horse in question was affected by a “permanent centre of hallucination,” or encountered the astral of the murderer, or the victim, or both, it is certain that it was *en rapport* with something which remained unperceived by the driver.

As we are engaged on a theory it is permissible, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to hypothesize that the horse was fed with the ordinary food of hay, oats and grass, all of which would, of course, contain the vital essence in active potentiality; while the farmer consumed the usual fare of roast and boiled viands.

Hence the astral of the horse was in full functional activity, while that of the man was in a more or less atrophic condition.

It would seem that so long as man pays attention to the needs of his physical body only, and nourishes it with what may be expressed as devitalized pabulum, so long will he fail to command, to its full extent, that power of psychic discernment which by right is his.

To those who have made the experiment of living on a frugivorous diet, the difference between the vital taste of raw fruit, and the vapid deadness of cooked food, is strikingly apparent, as is also the difference between that of fresh spring water and the same after boiling; it is palpable that some other change has taken place besides the alteration of its chemical condition.

That there exist individuals possessing certain psychic faculties who yet conform to the conventional diet of cooked food cannot be denied; but they form a very small minority when compared with humanity generally; whereas the power to become *en rapport* with the astral plane appears to be the common possession of the lower animals.

VISIONS INDUCED BY AN ORIENTAL POWDER

[I have been asked to include the following experiences in the pages of the OCCULT REVIEW. The percipient is one of the rather numerous people who have tried Mr. Woodcock's "Eastern Powders" and have seen "visions" under their influence. The powder, when smouldering, produces an effect somewhat similar to incense. A number of records of interesting experiments with its aid have already appeared in the pages of "Light," to the back numbers of which journal readers who wish to know more of its probable effects are referred. It seemed to me likely that many readers of this magazine might not have heard of the powder and might like to try it.—ED.]

Time, 11.55 p.m. Thursday, June 28, 1906.

THE rain descended in torrents, as only summer rain knows how to descend. The hands of the little Bee clock on the mantelpiece pointed to within five minutes of the witching hour. Everything was still save for the soft beating sound of the rain as it fell upon the leaves of the trees. I was not sleepy, but, as I looked before me, a strange numb, dazed feeling seemed to softly close over my brain, and a thin vapoury mist enveloped me round about.

The familiar surroundings vanished, and I was in space. Still I heard the soft splashing of the heavy rain upon the leaves, but *where* was I? Around me twisted and contorted were forms that I looked upon with calm dispassion, albeit I knew they were *tortured souls*.

They vanished. I stood in a long almost colourless room in the Tuileries. It was mirrorless, and I glanced around missing a mirror. The furniture was negative, even the gilding on the chairs was subdued, everything seemed in a half-light. The three croisées, which were on the left hand of the room entering from the door, were closed. I felt suffocating, not because the windows were closed, but from a feeling of strangling. The room swam, and a fierce agonizing pain swept from the base of the skull up through the head. A vision of much bloodshed and flame flashed before me as I stood there alone with the room swimming round. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." I heard the voice plainly, and almost simultaneously the rumble of a distant cart. I knew it was the tumbrel, and that I was *Marie Antoinette*.

Consciousness was going, and I knew that it was going and

involuntarily I put my hand to my throat, for I could not breathe, and the pain was intense. Then mercifully everything was blotted out in beneficent oblivion.

When consciousness came recollection also came, and with it pain, physical and mental.

Such was my first experience with the *Mysterious Powder*.

My second trial with the powder was in company with six others. *No result*.

Time, 2.20 p.m. Monday, July 9, 1906.

A purple darkness, slowly, softly fell, enclosing me within it, and completely blotting out the objects in the room. A pleasant receding sense of leaving the world on clouds of purple down—everywhere purple, above, around. A thread of silver (the ascending smoke) ran through it. Gradually the heads and shoulders of a vast crowd became visible. As far as I could discern it was composed of men, the majority of whom had bowler hats on; a few had white straw ones.

The space was rather larger than that before, and in front of the Royal Exchange, and there were many hands upraised.

(2) The doctor * strolled slowly across in front of me, and looking towards me thoughtfully, almost gravely, his left hand in his trouser pocket. An elderly man of about sixty came behind him. He was dressed in the old-fashioned style of a century ago. He had his right hand upraised, and in it were several documents folded and not new looking. He smiled, showing strong yellow-white teeth. His face was round and clean shaven save for a fringe of almost white whiskers. He was of robust build, had rosy cheeks and blue, rather prominent eyes.† In the air in large letters the words, the first rather dim, "Win," "Success." The latter absolutely glittered.

(3) A stretch of heathery moorland bounded by low, sunless hills; a rather broad foamy stream, and in the distance a plain, lonely, two-story, whitewashed cottage.

Inside in an upper room (I *knew* it was inside that same house) an old lady in a white cap with a black ribbon round it bent over an old carved chest. An old-fashioned silver cup was in her left hand, on the third finger of which were two rings, one plain gold, the other with a flash of diamonds in it. Her right

* The husband of the friend with whom I live.

† He has been recognized as the doctor's guide, of whom at the time I had never heard.

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hand held up the lid of the chest. It was a nervous, unyielding-looking hand.

Her black eyes gazed intently into the box ; whatever she looked at must have been pretty far down, for I could see into it at least half-way, and so far it was empty. "The time has come ; be up and doing." (Then I heard a name which comes to me uncertainly as *Minnie* or *Marion*.) "How long ?" I asked (I had no thought as to why I asked the question), and had no thought, so far as I know, in asking it, I simply remember asking it. The answer was, "Yes, 100 years."

Sounds from downstairs roused me, I looked at my watch. It was 2.40, so that I had been gone twenty minutes.

Such is my third experience with the *Mysterious Powder*.

There is no headache this time, and I am quite awake and fresh.

Time, 9.55 p.m. Saturday, July 21, 1906.

A grey mist which quickly became a glaring white, ultimately resolving itself into snow. Large Druidical stones in a leaning position and the dim outline of a cross against a corner stone.

A white figure, encased in the white snow and moving, moving gently along as though borne on a drifting tide, but the tide was made of snow.

(2) A banqueting hall, a long table, and men dressed in the style of Henry VIII's time toasting each other. The candles suddenly grew dim, and there glided into the space between the long table and the wall the lady in white, lying, still surrounded by the white cloud-snow. A man (one of the toasters) drew a revolver from his belt. "Egad," he exclaimed, and discharged the weapon, shattering the mirror behind, and which reached from ceiling to floor.

(Sancho barked in the back garden and Harriet called Blackie, the cat, and I awoke. 10.15.)

So ended my fourth experience with the *Mysterious Powder*.

A huge ball, like a sphere of what seemed *liquid light*. Gazing at it, shadowy figures (themselves light) evolved from it, and stepped into the space of the room. Presently it was crowded. The beings that filled it were sexless, in so far as I was able to point and say, "This is a man or this is a woman," yet they were of the stature of men and women, and very soon I heard their voices intermingling, and now and then rippling into laughter. They were as the voices of men and women, softened and made

musical by distance. The figures moved about, graceful and vapoury. I could not feel they were flesh and blood, they were too evasive.

A wail almost human struck my ears, and simultaneously a flash of indescribable light rent the atmosphere as it were, and from the form of each of these numberless beings vivid light in various convolutions ascended. It struck me as I looked that the light went *upward* and never downward. The sounds continued and resolved themselves into most exquisite music, which rose into tracks of dazzling light.

Suddenly the music ceased, and the wonderful tracks of light became broken up simultaneously with a crashing sound. On the ground lay a shattered violin, and beside it a man in modern evening dress, grasping in his long white fingers the neck of it. The bow had fallen from his right hand and lay just beyond the reach of his outstretched arm. Springing forward I suddenly found myself standing in the middle of my own room. The vision had vanished, and the *Mysterious Powder* had burned itself out.

L. STILL.

REVIEWS

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE UNIVERSE. By John Denham Parsons. London: T. Fisher Unwin.

ALONG with Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe* and Myers' *Survival of Bodily Death*, this work by John Denham Parsons will probably take a prominent position in the controversial literature of the day. Hinton has said: "We know a great deal about the How of things, the unsolved question is Why?" Mr. Parsons would attempt an answer to the latter question, and explicitly has embodied his reasoning on this point in a considerable section of the work before us. The volume is a very bulky one, running into 600 pages, and one needs but to scan a page or two in order to learn that Mr. Parsons does not indulge in mere verbiage. It is a serious work, and must be seriously considered. The fact of Mr. Parsons' membership in the Society for Psychical research naturally prepares us for a full treatment of such subjects as Spiritism, Multiplex Personality, the Subliminal Consciousness, etc., and probably this section of the work and that other dealing with such subjects as Omnipresence; Man's Place in the Universe; Space, Time and Memory; the Mistakes of the Mystics, etc., will be found to embody the wider interest and provoke the fuller discussion. Indeed, I feel justified, under present conditions, in merely indicating the scope of other sections of this work and giving rather closer attention to these two.

The work opens with a definition of the soul of man, its hope of a life to come, the relation of body and brain to mind and volition, the definition of substance and of life. Matter as "a local state of an omnipresent substance" is familiar to every student of theosophic teachings, but Life as "a property of Mind" is certainly ingenious and for aught we know may be the truth of the matter. At all events it is entitled to as much consideration as the six alternative theories permitted by the Law of Permutations from the three factors of Life, Substance and Consciousness. If there were more factors to juggle with there would be no end to our philosophies, but thank Heaven 2ⁿ—1 fulfils the matter! Fecit Part I.

The next two sections of the work are concerned with problems of the higher criticism and the new theology, embraced under "The Gospel of the Resurrection" and "Other Gospels."

In this latter are included the Reincarnation Theories, and the Law of Karma, the author seeking to prove that the doctrine of repeated births into the world is, so far as India is concerned, post-Vedic, and among the Greeks can be traced no further back than Pythagoras, but he wisely refrains from the task of deciding in what land, and at what time, the doctrine first was promulgated. Mr. Parsons is also concerned to show that the alleged Law of Karma is incompatible with the presumable justice of Heaven and "the assumption that all sorrow and suffering endured but not earned in this life must have been earned but not endured in a previous life," is designated an absurdity. The author holds that those who adhere to this doctrine of Reincarnation and Karma have either overlooked the main issue—that of the purpose of life—or have erroneously come to the conclusion that all pain and suffering are in the nature of penalties. The old argument that the mental personality is not the same from one incarnation to another is advanced against the doctrine, as also that sufferings and sorrows are absolutely necessary to the formation and elevation of character. It is in turn disposed of by the argument that the Omnipresent Deity is in need of no such elevation of character, and that experience therefore is a matter of merit or demerit, of capacity or incapacity, in the individual which, distinct from its various personalities, follows its line of evolution as the Vedantins say: Like a cord threaded through various coloured beads—hence known as the thread-soul or Sutrâtma. What is known as Ahankara, the egoistic sense of separateness, is the cause of all this pain and sorrow, according to Buddhist and Vedantin alike, and the purpose of all religion is the "binding back" or reuniting of the individual with the universal soul.

Before Mr. Parsons can pronounce upon so profound a subject, it would be necessary for him to *prove* pre-existence of the human soul a fallacy. Rightly enough he affirms that, granting rebirth, there must have been a first incarnation to which merit or demerit in the moral sense did not attach. So far as my reading of theosophic literature goes, I understand that this would be conceded, and it therefore remains for our author to inform us at what particular stage in his evolutionary scheme sin and its consequence first entered as a factor into human life. It resolves itself into a matter of pre-existence as distinguished from successive existences, and the state of the soul previous to its entry upon this scene of embodied humanity. The "trailing clouds of glory" which Wordsworth dreamed of is scouted, and

only in a general sense are we admitted to have "come from God, who is our Home." In no other sense than that in which the weed-soul or the tree-soul, so dear to the heart of Prentice Mulford, can be said to have originally "come" from God, is it allowed that human souls have here arrived. We are, in short, "the result of long ascent from the darkest depths of the limitations of life." Thus, while employing the orthodox answer of the evolutionist to what has not unfittingly been called the message from the East, the author of this work fails to enlighten us upon the question as to why, if the evolutionist's theory be correct, certain animal souls should have been favoured with incarnation into human form, while the masses of their species have continued for thousands of years to propagate their special animal forms and their souls to persist therein. And here it should not be lost sight of that Mr. Parsons affirms life in all animal forms only as "a property of mind." What, then, favoured special evolution in the animal mind so as to bring it forward as the *genus homo*? But having regard to all the facts, and especially to the singular event of man's origin and the fact also that since that event no other animal forms have evolved to the human stage, may it not be a true theory that the physical arc of evolution which culminated in the production of the animal man was met at that critical point by the arc of a spiritual involution when pre-existent souls came in to inhabit, and finally to possess the human form? A considerable light is thrown by this theory upon many obscure passages in Scripture which have reference to the intercourse between "men of God" and visitors from the spiritual world. These stories may be allegorical, but the underlying fact seems to have escaped consideration in the present volume. In the opinion of Mr. Parsons we are "at the very best but creatures of the night, knowing certainly neither whence we come nor whither we go." In effect we are in the nursery stage of human existence, and the highest incarnation of intelligence is but—

An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry!

And as regards all the unmerited pain and suffering, the injustices and deceptions, the regrets and disappointments to which human existence condemns us, Mr. Parsons sees in it all—or prefers to see—only the working out of a preconceived purpose in an all-beneficent scheme of evolution; but one searches in

vain for anything like an intelligible and concise statement of what that purpose is conceived to be. The author affirms that neither *Guānam* (knowledge) nor *Bhakti* (devotion) constitutes a royal road or short cut to perfection; that the Indian sages, along with Plotinus and other Mystics, were wrong in affirming a higher criterion than Reason. Intuition and that fuller light called inspiration are nothing more than the automatism of the subliminal consciousness, on which the author naturally depends for all the products of auto-suggestion, including that of religious belief. Mr. Parsons thinks that there must ever be an ultimate appeal to reason in the demonstration of the Eternal Purpose, and "the dominance of abiding law and a great scheme embracing all things existent . . . is traceable to an Unuttered Word and a Thought Unspent whose offspring we are." It is for us to suggest a purpose of life for ourselves in the ceaseless endeavour to discover the purpose of the Universal Mind and intelligently to co-operate with it in the production of "that one, far-off, divine event, to which the whole creation moves." I cannot part from the work of Mr. Parsons without paying tribute to the patience and sincerity which makes a volume of these dimensions possible, nor do I fail to appreciate the thoroughness of the work, its orderliness, and the elegance of its diction. While finding no ground that is new to the versed student of controversial subjects, I do but mere justice to the author in saying that the subject matter has never been more exhaustively or ably treated. The fact that I cannot at all points see eye to eye with him abates in no degree from my appreciation of his work, which I heartily commend to the thoughtful consideration of all and sundry.

SCRUTATOR.

THE MIND AND THE BRAIN. By Alfred Binet, Director of the Psychological Laboratory at the Sorbonne. Authorized translation of *L'Âme et le Corps*. International Scientific Series. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd. 1907. Price 5s.

AMONG Continental authorities in psychology, no name stands higher than that of Dr. Binet. As editor of *L'Année Psychologique*, and as author of several important works on hypnotism and the psychology of suggestion, he has made many valuable additions to the literature of his subject. Consequently, all students of these matters will be interested in his latest volume, which contains a discussion and a hypothetical solution of the

ancient question of the relation of Mind to Matter, from the point of view of an expert physiologist and psychologist.

Dr. Binet begins by examining the nature of our knowledge of Matter. By means of a very little reflection, we discover that we know absolutely nothing of the outer world except our sensations. "All objects are known to us by the sensations they produce in us, and are known to us solely in this manner. A landscape is nothing but a cluster of sensations" (p. 14). Quoting Berkeley, approvingly, he points out that our knowledge of our brains is derived, like our knowledge of a landscape, through sensation. The brain is an idea in the mind, as much as an external object. How then can it be reasonable to think that the brain, which is but an idea in the mind, is the cause of all our other ideas? In other words, the crude materialism which describes thought as a product of the brain, is quite fallacious, and indeed very superficial. (The present reviewer may perhaps be pardoned for mentioning that he has dealt with this point at some length in an article entitled "The Fallacies of Materialism," in the *Independent Review*, January, 1907, to which the reader who desires more detail may be referred.) Apart from mind, matter does not exist. It is sensations in a mind, and is only as for a mind (p. 55).

We seem thus to have reached an idealist position, either Berkeleyan or Hegelian. It is precisely the position defended by Mr. Haldane in his able exposition of Hegelian principles in the Gifford Lectures of 1902-3 (*The Pathway to Reality*, p. 37). But Dr. Binet proceeds to reject idealism almost summarily. If *esse* is *percipi*—to use the Berkeleyan formula—objects exist only as and when perceived. But it is a necessary postulate of science and practical life that the external world continues to exist, whether it is perceived or not. "My inkstand, my paper, my pen, my room, and the surrounding world subsist when I do not see them" (p. 122). Science must make this postulate, because science "requires for its explanations of phenomena the supposition in them of an indwelling continuity." Further, if mind creates the external world, we must ask "What is Mind?" And the answer is that it is "an act of consciousness; it is not a subject which has consciousness" (p. 264). For a subject which feels, is an object of cognition, and takes its place among other objects. A subject is therefore unthinkable. Consciousness cannot exist without an object. It is impossible to understand mind existing without matter.

Having disposed of materialism and idealism—having dis-

proved the existence of both matter and mind—Dr. Binet proceeds to examine the theory of psycho-physical parallelism, which conceives mental phenomena and physical phenomena as occurring in distinct but parallel chains. The chief English exponent of this view is Bain (in *Mind and Body* and other works), whom Dr. Binet quotes ; but the latter avoids the postulate of Substance, with its attributes of Matter and Mind, which was the chief mistake of Bain's system. This parallelism is shown by Dr. Binet to be not quite satisfactory, inasmuch as the chains are not really distinguishable ; in every physical fact there is a mental part. There can be no object without subject, no subject without object. And to bring back the duality to unity (monism)—by comparing mental and physical to the front and back of a page—is quite unnecessary, for unity may be found in the phenomenon itself. Ultimately Dr. Binet rests in a "purified parallelism," which he holds—he is careful to say—as a tentative hypothesis rather than as a fully satisfactory system. The various objections scotch but do not kill it. It leaves open the question of survival of death, which each individual may decide according to his needs, if he must decide at all. If we do not know why the two chains co-exist—how the Leibnitzian "pre-established harmony" comes about—we are obviously unable to dogmatize as to whether they can or cannot exist apart. The book is a typical product of the careful, positivistic, anti-metaphysical French mind ; and though its conclusions are almost materialistic, it is immeasurably superior to the materialist or materialist-monist works in which a famous German scientist has so widely exhibited his remarkable incapacity as a philosopher.

Dr. Binet's arguments against materialism and parallelism seem adequate not only to scotch but also to kill both those theories. Against idealism he is much less effective. Though seeming to accept Mill's doctrine of Matter as Permanent Possibilities of Sensation, and also Berkeley's *esse is percipi*, he nevertheless falls back on common sense—the necessities of science and practical life—as the basis of his belief in the existence of unperceived matter. To this, two objections may be made. Firstly, such an abandonment of philosophy may be said to lead logically to utter scepticism and pessimism, as Mr. Schiller has so ably argued in *Riddles of the Sphinx*—a book, by the way, which is much less well known than it deserves to be. Secondly, Matter having been defined as sensation, and as nothing to us *except* sensation, it is obviously contradictory to speak of my inkstand, etc., existing when unperceived. If the inkstand or

the landscape is "a cluster of sensations," the said objects cannot be said to exist when the *sensations* no longer exist, i.e. when I am not perceiving them. *Something* may exist—though Mill did not think it was possible to prove it—and Dr. Binet may call it either a permanent possibility of sensation, or the " x of matter, of which we know the existence but not the nature" (pp. 18, 21, 25). But it certainly is not the object as known to us, nor, of course, *can* it be. And by thus postulating an x behind Matter, a confusion in definition is introduced; for Dr. Binet has said that Matter is nothing but sensations. Also, such an x approaches rather near to Spencer's Unknowable, which is a self-contradictory term. Again, Berkeley is not answered by pointing to the absurdity of matter existing unperceived by us; for he posits its existence as perceived in the mind of an Eternal Spirit, and specifically protests against the suggestion that it is annihilated in the intervals between our perceptions. Dr. Binet may regard the postulate of this Spirit as unsatisfactory. But is not his postulate of an x unsatisfactory also? And are not Mill's Possibilities almost equally unsatisfying?—for how can we attribute existence to a possibility which is not yet actual. And abandonment of the problem is perhaps the most unsatisfactory of all.

But in spite of the defects mentioned, the book will be welcomed as an interesting and able discussion of a thorny problem which perhaps admits of no full solution. Its author, as we have seen, is the first to recognize the tentative character of his hypothesis; and, as an advance from crude materialism in the direction of a spiritual conception of the Universe, it is a valuable contribution to the International Scientific Series, and to literature in general. I hope it will circulate very widely.

J. ARTHUR HILL.

AN AGNOSTIC'S PROGRESS. By William Scott Palmer. London: Longmans, Green & Co, 39, Paternoster Row.

AMONG the really clever, sincere and inspiring books of recent production is this by Mr. Scott Palmer. It is clever both in construction and expression, sincere beyond the average of autobiographies, and inspiring in so far as it indicates to what superlative heights of well-founded hope and fulness of faith the earnest truth-seeker may certainly attain, even when, as was the case with our author, the start was made from a purely material basis. But behind facts of Natural Selection and the Origin of the Species was the Man, the thinker; and yet more, within the dead body of Nature there was God, and God and the

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Man came through together as the Man-God when all was melted down in the crucible of the mind of this determined thinker. Instead of statics he discovered dynamics to be the true nature of force, and eventually these dynamics were proved spiritual.

He tells us of the stars that guided his feet in the darkness of the earlier years of his intellectual life.

I remember many of my stars, or rather I never forget them. I have only to turn my eyes towards the Shadowy Companion who is my inner, demanding, growing self, to see them standing out as his opportunities and his pegs of reminder. . . . The men who have no shining stars, the men for whom no Epiphany feast has its appropriateness, may well remain unacquainted with their Shadowy Companions, the greater selves, who should be known as selves that may endure.

And what these stars are cannot well be imagined, save one, which always shines somewhere at some time for every man, but we are told with charming frankness what these stars were, and what relative place they held in his empyrean.

For every soul a star ;
And for each life, a new set horoscope.

And here it is better said in the author's own words :—

My stars are mine alone ; they have my meaning only for me, for others they may well be foolishness. There is a star-sermon preached some eighteen centuries before I heard it, preached on Mars' Hill to the men of Athens ; there is a collection of scrawled pictures and diagrams (published in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research) ; there is a wretched, paralysed, scalded cat which I drowned in an area in St. James's Square ; there is Darwin's *Origin*, with several other books ; and there is one face—a woman's.

Whither these leading stars finally have brought him let the Agnostic say for himself. At the end of many pages of this spiritual autobiography, he says :—

I should think the *Origin* a broken fragment if I could not see that when it shows how man sums up in himself the stuff and story of the earth and earthly life, it is pointing to a larger summing-up beyond, a summing-up of which philosophy and psychology have given me glimpses, but which only the God-Man in His further operation can possibly complete.

I have surely quoted enough to justify my opinion of this book, enough, I hope, to recommend it as a conspicuous note in the progressive thought of this new century.

SCRUTATOR.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

THE Open Court, for January, commences its twenty-first volume with "A Retrospect and a Prospect" of the work of science in clearing the way for religion in what, after all, is the supreme aim of both, the search for truth :—

Now it is true that science applied to religion has wrought much havoc with the traditional interpretation of established creeds. Philosophy recognizes the anthropomorphism of the old God-conception; psychology discredits the traditional theory of a soul-entity; comparative religion dispels the claim of the unique and exceptional position of Christianity; higher criticism proves the human origin of the Bible and disposes of a belief in a special revelation. For these reasons science has been regarded as hostile to religion, and so the old-fashioned religionists look upon science as godless and dangerous, while the freethinkers and infidels triumphantly proclaim that science will make an end of religion, and the future will be an age of irreligious science.

To a superficial observer the spread of unbelief may appear to be a symptom of decay, foreboding a final dissolution of religion, but a deeper insight will reveal the fact that we live in a stage of transition, and the disintegration of dogmatism is merely preparatory to a reconstruction of our religious faith on a firmer foundation—firmer because truer; and it is a reconstruction because it will discard only the errors of the past, but not the good that it contains, not the old ideals, the moral endeavour, and the serious spirit of religious aspiration. . . .

Religion makes man feel himself one with the source of life; it identifies him with the law of being, and prompts him to work for the purport of the whole. . . . Rituals and symbols may vary according to taste, historical tradition, and opinion, but the essence of religion can only be one, it must be and remain the same among all nations, and they all search for this common ideal, the religion of truth, pure and undefiled. . . .

An interesting and suggestive article, especially to those who can follow a simple statement in analytical geometry, is entitled "Alice in the Wonderland of Mathematics," by Dr. W. F. White. Alice has been reading about space of various dimensions, and readily recognizes the limitations of a being possessed only of length, and of one having only length and breadth. Therefore the inhabitants of Wonderland are able to show her these, but she asks to see the fourth dimensional world; this idea, however, can only be conveyed to her by implication. So she is shown, traced in lines of light, a curve having an isolated point (a conjugate point), and it is then shown to her that this is merely a particular section of a figure which, as seen from another point of view, gives a curve crossing itself at this point so as to form a loop. Her instructor says :—

One expects the curve to be continuous. Continuity is the message of modern scientific thought. This point seemed to break that law—to be “miraculous.” If all observed instances but one have some visible connexion, we are inclined to call that one miraculous and the rest natural.

In the end Alice perceives that the point that troubled her because of its isolation is really a point common to several branches of the curve, and that “the miraculous is only a special case of a higher law. We fail to understand things because they are connected with that which is out of our plane”—which is occultism reduced to mathematical terminology.

The Word has an account, by Nurho de Manhar, of the “Sepher ha-Zohar,” or Book of Light, one of the great sections of the Kabbalah, or traditional esoteric teaching of the Jews. After mentioning the four “worlds” or orders of being through which the divine efflux descends, from the world of emanation, through the two spiritual worlds to that of matter, the author says :—

The Zohar gives a beautiful illustration of the intimate and unique relation of three worlds from the flame of a lamp, the upper and white light of which symbolizes the intellectual ; the lower and more shaded light, which insensibly blends itself with the upper one, represents the world of feeling ; whilst the grosser material, which is beneath all, is the emblem of the physical world.

Eduard Herrmann, in a concluding article on “The Astral Plane,” describes the astral body, and gives instances of its separation from the material body, winding up by saying that its existence is scientifically proven.

Mr. Sinnett, discussing in *Broad Views* “The Origin and Purpose of Stonehenge,” throws over Sir Norman Lockyer, and regards his conclusions that Stonehenge was erected about 3,600 years ago as “almost comically wide of the truth” ; instead, he appeals to the “sense-perceptions belonging to the higher planes of nature,” by means of which it is possible, he tells us, “to acquire positive and certain knowledge concerning events in the remote past, in reference to which neither literature nor inference can help us to any confident conclusion.”

We are told, on this authority, that about 93,600 years ago some Atlantean adepts made their home in “a considerable city” which once stood on Salisbury Plain. Stonehenge was a temple of sun-worship, and its builders used none of the devices, such as inclined planes, by which they are usually supposed to have brought the huge stones into position :—

Atlantean engineers were really in possession of resources that enabled them to accomplish their work in a much more simple way. They had the art of depriving heavy bodies of their weight for limited periods, and for a definite purpose. And it was by virtue of this art that they dealt with the massive stones of the great structure on Salisbury Plain. . . . In the beginning Stonehenge was presided over by priests representative of exalted dignity, who conducted ceremonies of the simplest purity. The altar-stone, which in later and dismally degenerate periods was desecrated by the blood of human sacrifice, was designed in the beginning to bear simple symbolical offerings of fruit and flowers. . . . It was a wonderful period in which Stonehenge was built, in which ignorance and wisdom went hand in hand, in which the much talked-of veil of Isis, so impenetrable for modern eyes, was transparent or diaphanous. But now again for a few it is diaphanous once more ; for many of us there are rents in it through which glimpses may be obtained of the stupendous infinities beyond.

In another article Mr. Sinnett compares the Zancig performances with other experiments of thought-transference and manifestations of "astral consciousness." A brief communication on "Clairvoyant Impressions," by a writer whose name is withheld, is a record of successful attempts "to know what another person is doing by concentrating the thoughts on that person."

Ultra, a new Italian theosophical review, published at Rome, contains, in addition to articles on stock theosophical subjects, a section on "The Spiritualistic Revival," giving accounts of various remarkable phenomena of clairvoyance, telepathy, premonitions, etc., and invites contributions of instances which might otherwise pass unrecorded. There has been a tendency to believe that Theosophy, like the Church, banned all occultism except its own.

The Swastika, "a magazine of triumph," edited by Dr. Alex. J. McIvor Tyndall, of Denver, Colo., is the latest exponent of the "New Thought" in an almost boisterously jubilant phase. In his opening remarks in the first number the editor says that the world has for ages been seeking happiness, for the most part in "a frantic struggle for material things," but that after all it is the individual that counts, not his possessions. He explains with regard to his adoption of the name of this very ancient and widely diffused symbol as a title, that he "did not take the name of the Swastika for the magazine, but the magazine for the Swastika," having "long remarked that this was an ideal name for a metaphysical journal," since it is "recognized as a holy symbol and as a sign of long life, good wishes and happiness."

CORRESPONDENCE

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

“THE NEW THEOLOGY (?)”

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Has it occurred to you, as it has to me, that a rather remarkable instance of anticipatory appropriateness, if I may use the expression, almost amounting to a kind of prophetic inspiration, or at all events of prevision, was exhibited when the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW selected the subject for the last competition essays a few months ago? Who would have thought then that such a storm was going to arise so soon round a subject which is essentially the same as that chosen for the essays, though in a somewhat different form?

The controversy on “the New Theology”—such a misleading term that I hardly like to use it—is melancholy reading. If anything was necessary to make it manifest, it shows how far many, among priests and people alike, have wandered away from the pure and simple Gospel Message of Him whom they profess to follow. Your pages must not be sullied with the outrageous language which some of the “Shepherds of their Flocks” have used against those who differ from them on matters which they so mistakenly designate—“the essential doctrines of Christianity.”

We seem carried back not only to what we call “the Dark Ages,” but to the time when Nebuchadnezzar set up the image on the plains of Babylon, and commanded all men to fall down and worship it. Surely the need is evident for a voice like that of the writer of the splendid essay to which the prize was awarded. Cannot something be said or done which will help to mitigate the deadening effects of this “theological” controversy. We can almost hear the ancient prophet addressing the words to some now: “My people have committed two evils. They have forsaken Me, the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewed them out cisterns—broken cisterns—that can hold no water” (Jer. ii. 13). Would there not now be a wonderful appropriateness in the language in Isaiah quoted by the Great Teacher: “Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the command-

ments of men " (Mark vii. 7); followed by His own words, "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life"? (John v. 40).

"ONE AND ALL."

(*One of the unsuccessful competitors*).

"COBWEBS" AT SEANCES.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—Referring to your correspondent's experience of feeling cobwebs on his face and hands, there are several references to this phenomenon in Dr. J. Maxwell's *Metapsychical Phenomena*.

On page 331 is the following: "In the darkness, one often imagined one could see clouds of vapour moving about near the cabinet; but there was nothing to prove that this appearance was anything more than an optical illusion. On these occasions the medium frequently complained of a disagreeable sensation on his hands and face, as though he were caught in a spider's web."

On page 329 there is the following, which may be of assistance to your correspondent if he cares to experiment: "M. Meurice said he felt 'queer'; that his hands seemed to be full of hair, or rather of spider's web, and he tried to rub the feeling away. I got up and took down from the mantelpiece a statuette of St. John, the history of which you know. He tried to attract it but without results. We waited, the spider's web sensation returned, and this time I prevented him from rubbing it off; he drew his hands together over and then in front of the statuette, and—his fingers at a distance of five inches from the object—attracted it to him. The statuette moved two inches."

G. F. S.

"THE LIFE BEHIND THE VEIL."

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR—Will you allow me to suggest a theory in explanation of the unfortunate though unavoidable "vague verbiage" and "magniloquent phrases" so commonly used when reference is made to the territory of the supernormal, of which you complain in your Editorial Notes in the February number of the OCCULT REVIEW?

It is owing, I think, to the fact that we have no terms with which to describe this territory, as yet, in our language, the evolution of which latter keeps pace with the race. Hence the experiences of the small minority who have pierced the veil are ever incommunicable to the large majority who have not, to whom, therefore, this territory must of necessity remain a mystery and secret, or, with the usual self-complacency of those who will

accept nothing their limited development does not permit them to verify by their physical senses, they will question the sanity of those laying claim to supernormal experiences because they cannot voice them, language failing to interpret their experiences owing to its limitations.

Without touching the subject of Involution, there are four well defined phases in the evolution of the $\psi\acute{\upsilon}\chi\eta$, viz. :—in the phraseology of the late Dr. Bucke—unconsciousness, simple consciousness, self-consciousness and cosmic consciousness ; or, in the words of Jesus Christ, “the ‘Kingdom of God’ (i.e. cosmic consciousness) is like leaven, which a woman ($\psi\acute{\upsilon}\chi\eta$) took and hid in three measures (i.e. unconsciousness, simple and self-consciousness) of meal (the entity), until the whole (man) was leavened.” The first three of these phases, as is well known, are passed through during the development of every individual from birth to maturity.

No definition of any one of these phases can be given in terms of a lower, hence to express the cosmic sense signs and symbols are resorted to, though their real meaning can be interpreted only by those who have seen behind the veil ; or, if language is attempted, then the most magniloquent phrases—i.e. in the language of the aspirant—are called upon in the futile effort to express the inexpressible.

Here in this lack of speech communication lies the failure, I think, of the investigation of psychical experiences by savants, who, moreover, insist upon certain conditions being observed which, although perfectly in accord with their plane, are incompatible with that which they would investigate.

A mathematician could not well explain how the sun’s distance from the earth is measured to the unlettered, it would be necessary for the latter to rise to the plane of the former ; and so long as savants continue to insist on so-called “test conditions” requiring the higher to express itself in terms of the lower—a direct inversion of the principle of evolution—so long will failure, I fear, attend their efforts, and the veil remain ; it can only be removed by individual qualification, a qualification that entails far more than an aptitude to analyse, measure and weigh ; but plainly defined by Jesus Christ, if only the words are interpreted free from “orthodox” distortion, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

ALEPH GIMEL.

PSYCHOMETRIC DELINEATIONS AND ANSWERS TO ENQUIRERS

BY THE "OCCULT REVIEW" PSYCHOMETRIST

DELINEATION (LOLO).

This has been used by a person who is going through a bad time. I sense anxiety as to the future, also some money troubles ; but these will soon be over, as I feel a decided improvement in the conditions within the next two or three months, and marriage appears to take place during next year with an influence which is at present in the conditions, and though Lolo seems to have some difficulties at present I sense a very successful future. The character is good, but the dislike to hurt others becomes a fault, for it makes this person weak ; this is partly due to the fact that this influence has a great sense of duty which others have taken advantage of ; with more independence and more self-confidence I should at once find more determination to overcome certain conditions which at present suppress this individual very much. I consider this person will travel very far, and there is much more happiness in the future than in the past. I consider the married life of this person a very happy one.

DELINEATION (EUREKA).

Question 1 : What are the prospects of my marriage in the near future ?

Answer : I do not sense marriage for you until the end of this year or very early in next, but then I sense a very happy and successful married life.

Question 2 : Will my desire for foreign travel be gratified soon ?

Answer : I do not feel any movement in your conditions at present, and am afraid you will have to wait another two years before this desire is gratified. I think you would make a serious mistake if you were to leave your present surroundings until your conditions change.

DELINEATION (FONTANA).

This glove is worn by a woman, and I sense a quick, active mind ; she is observant, quick to decide, at times rather impulsive, and at others weighing affairs most carefully ; this is most marked when she is doing things for other people. She is tender-hearted, true and loyal to her friends so long as she feels she can trust them, but she hates deceit and would at once cut the friend who deceived her. This glove gives me a feeling of suppression, I think this is due to an influence in her life, but this seems to pass during the present year. I sense marriage and the influence of two children. Money comes to the wearer of this glove from an elderly lady.

I sense a clever woman, but she does not do what she could for herself, she is very sensitive, and present conditions are very much against her. I sense a much more congenial condition next year, and from that time her life goes forward brightly and happily.

DELINEATION (MAY SENGER).

This glove is worn by a woman who has had a long fight against the uncongenial influences and conditions of her life; she has been very plucky, and has played her part well, but during the past year things have been very difficult and there have been times when she has felt she could bear no more. But though I find a quick active temperament there is a power of endurance which few possess. She is naturally kind and tender but very sensitive, and the man whose influence mars her life does not understand her in the least; he is not a bad man, but it was a fatal mistake for these two people to have married. Another man's influence comes into these conditions, and I sense marriage with him in about three years' time. There is some success for this man during next year which gratifies this woman very much, but I do not sense any real change in her life until the end of next year. Freedom comes then, and after that I sense a happy home life with a good financial and social position. She must do her duty and her reward will surely come.

DELINEATION (FAS).

Question 1 : Shall I change my profession within the course of the next two or three years ?

Answer : I do not sense any actual change in your profession during the next three years, but I sense a much better condition within the next two years. This is due to some success outside your present profession; I think it is a personal success.

Question 2 : Is it worth my while to continue my literary attempts ?

Answer : Yes, for I think you will one day be successful. You have talent, but not much concentration.

DELINEATION (LOU).

Question 1 : Do you see any change in the life I lead now ?

Answer : I do not sense any change until the end of next year; then you marry and your life becomes much brighter and your conditions improve very much.

Question 2 : What will the life be of the man I love ?

Answer : I sense success after delay and disappointment, and a very happy married life with a woman he loves now.

DELINEATION (XAVIER).

Question 1 : Shall I gain socially and financially by marriage ?

Answer : Your marriage improves your position socially at once, but the financial improvement does not come until you have been married about two years.

Question 2 : Will the irritation which troubles me now last long ?

Answer : I consider this irritation will have passed out of your conditions by the end of the present year.

[Other replies are held over until next month.—ED.]

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