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ON CHRISTIAN ORIGINS—A SYNTHESIS

BY W. F. SUTHERLAND

I.

James Morgan Pryse is one of that numerous band who deny the historicity of the man Jesus. In his *Restored New Testament*,¹ he argues well for the idea that what we now have are but the distorted and butchered remnants of a drama which at one time formed part of the Greek Mysteries and which narrated the trials and tribulations of the Sun-God Dionysos. According to Pryse, the original drama bears every indication of having been cast in the form of a superb poem, but the compilers of the New Testament story, having had access only to incomplete prose notes, turned the Greek drama into Jewish mock-history, and, moreover, not being Jews themselves, nor being familiar with Jewish history, they did it badly. "They wrote in the amateurish style of uncultured men in the common Greek vernacular of the day and their only sources of information concerning the Jews were the Greek Version of the Jewish scriptures and the writings of Josephus and Tacitus. Their ignorance of Jewish

customs and the geographical features of Palestine is everywhere apparent in their work, and the Jewish colouring which they have given to the narrative rolls off like a cheap paint as one turns the pages of the Gospels, revealing a solar allegory which is Hellenic in form and substance. The work of the forgers was not all done at one and the same time; the text shows successive stages of degradation. The first compilers being "pagan" Greeks, were familiar with the doctrine of reincarnation; and they connected their new "history" with the Jewish sacred writings by making out that its characters were reincarnated Jewish worthies. But as the new religion developed, abandoning, one after another, the basic truths of antiquity, the doctrine of reincarnation was eventually repudiated, and the new scriptures were made to center wholly on the Messianic idea, while the distinctly Christian doctrine of eternal damnation was formulated and made a lurid feature of the new cult. The literary peculiarities of the text show conclusively that the period of "inspiration" during which the Gospels were revised to suit the growing theological notions of the fanatics of the new faith extended

¹ James Morgan Pryse: *The Restored New Testament*. Watkins, London, 1925.

over several centuries. "The erasing knife and sponge paved the way for the "inspired" pens of the priests who were slowly formulating the new religion; for the early theologians, instead of deriving their doctrines from their revealed scriptures, revised the scriptures to suit the policy of the Church!"

The compilers had no knowledge of the esoteric meanings of their myths, and were men without culture, literary training, inventiveness, or imagination. They were simply exoteric priests, coarse, cunning, and unscrupulous. "But fortunately," Pryse says, "the essential elements of the allegory were preserved, thanks to the very ignorance of the ecclesiastics through whose hands it had passed." For the same reason the *Apocalypse* seems to have come down to us entire and unspoiled. "Though written in crabbed Greek and filled with phrases borrowed from the New Testament, the *Apocalypse* is nevertheless purely Hellenic in spirit and substance. It is absolutely faithful to the Platonic philosophy; and its divinities (angels) are simply the Gods and Goddesses of the Grecian mythology. Moreover, the *Apocalypse* is really a poem. It seems quite possible that the existing text is but a condensed prose version of a magnificent metrical original; if so, the phraseology from the Old Testament was adapted to disguise the real significance of the poem, and the work was done by someone who understood the subject-matter. In this it differs from the *Synoptics* which were given their present form by ignorant forgers."

One wonders just what the inner compulsion may have been that moved these early and "exoteric" priests to recast the early mystery drama into the form in which we have it; that is, if Pryse be correct. There is an element of artificiality about the whole affair—a group

of priests, "ignorant, cunning and unscrupulous", setting themselves deliberately to the task of creating a new religion. With Pryse, as indeed with Christian apologists as well, there is a complete cutting-off from the economic, political, and philosophical life of the times, Christianity with the one becomes a fortuitous happening, one of many such which arbitrarily alter the course of history, and with others, a miraculous dispensation of divine providence. It is debatable if world-wide religions come into being either way.

We do know that the Pagan, esoteric, side of Christianity was not altogether forgotten in the Church itself for some time after the beginning of our era. Origen taught the pre-existence of the soul, and the return of the Exile, who is man, to the Divine source. Moreover, he was quite well aware of Pagan affinities. "That there should be certain doctrines not made known to the multitude which are revealed after the exoteric ones have been taught is not a peculiarity of Christianity alone but also of philosophic systems in which some truths are esoteric and others exoteric. Some of the hearers of Pythagoras were content with his ipse dixit; whilst others were taught in secret those doctrines which were not deemed fit to be communicated to profane and insufficiently prepared ears. Moreover, all the Mysteries that are celebrated throughout Greece and barbarous countries have no discredit thrown upon them. . . . To the literal-minded we teach the historical Jesus and him crucified; but to the proficient, fired with the love of the divine wisdom, we impart the Logos."²

² In *Contra Celsus*, quoted by Yarker in *Arcane Schools*. Tait, Belfast, 1904.

II.

To help us in our endeavour to understand what happened, we turn to another student of origins, Eduoard Dujardin,³ who also doubts the historicity of the man Jesus, but who argues well for the long-continued existence of a primitive Jesus-cult with close affiliations with the Mysteries and quite definitely influenced by Pythagorean rites and doctrines—particularly as to the belief in the resurrection of the dead and the life hereafter.

This Jesus-cult had existed in Palestine long before the invasion of the Caananites, who escaped it as did the Israelites after them, at least until the time of David. David turned to the worship of Jahveh and endeavoured to impose his new religion on the whole of Palestine, with more success near Jerusalem than remotely. On the death of Solomon, Palestine separated into the two kingdoms, and there then ensued the historic struggle between Jahveh, now the tribal god of Judah, and Jeshou, Joshua, or Baal-Jeshouah, who was like Dionysos, the God of Many Names, the God of Salvation and of Healing, and whose worship was still observed in Israel and among the Galileans. The struggle was interrupted by the period of the captivity, only to be resumed with new vigour on the return of the exiles from Babylon. Jahvehism readily re-established itself in Judaea, and so came into conflict once again with the pre-Caananitish religion which had never ceased to exist among the peoples of the North. It was only with Judas Maccabeus that Judaism finally won out and the law of Moses was imposed by fire and sword over the whole of Palestine. The inhabitants of the northern prov-

inces were forced to choose between circumcision and eviction, and those in Galilee suffered the same fate.

No doubt many conformed but there were those who clung in secret to their ancient ways whatever their physical obeisance to the God of the moment may have been, and it is surmized by Dujardin that from time to time, bands of the faithful, those of the brotherhoods of the Essenes, the Nazarenes and of other and still more obscure sects, undertook the ancient pilgrimage to Gilgal near Jericho, to the Place of the Skull, for that is what Gilgal and Golgotha both mean, and there enacted the age-old rites, the lustrations, the expiatory sacrifice, now only a symbolical crucifixion, and the feast of the communion.

And it may have been, as Dujardin suggests, that some of the faithful, on the last occasion when the rites were celebrated, saw, or thought they saw, the transfigured God, who on the third day and according to the ancient rite and myth, rose from the dead rejuvenated. All these matters, the rites themselves, the details of the journey (highly improbable if in truth to Jerusalem) and the ecstatic vision itself may well have found their way into the *New Testament* in the guise of history.

In all this Dujardin finds his reasons for the evangelical fervour with which the primitive faith was promulgated and for the alacrity with which it was received.

III.

But it is for these very reasons that Dujardin fails wholly to satisfy. And we note also that the Messianic hope of the Jews could never have appealed to the vast hordes of the uncircumcised. Moreover, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead could never have come, as we have it, at any rate, from the Pythagoreans, though it may well have been the case, as Pryse suggests, that Christianity adhered originally to a

³ Eduoard Dujardin: *Ancient History of the God Jesus*. Abridged version by A. Brodie Sanders. Watts, London, 1938.

belief in reincarnation. Certainly the Gnostics had it and it was definitely though not uniquely Pythagorean.

Dujardin notes that the mythical Jesus, like Dionysos, Osiris, Adonis and many others had in prehistoric times been a God slain by his followers and that later he had become a God delivered over to the Demons who crucified him. Dujardin also quotes Isadore Levy as to the influence of Pythagoreanism through the wide-spread adoption of its doctrines and rites, on both the Jews and others at Alexandria. Pythagoreanism, it would appear, gave inspiration to the Pharisees, the Essenes, the Nazarenes, and other similar sects of the period. The name Nazarene or Nazorean having been applied to the Christians in Palestine, Pythagoreanism thus would have been of much influence on the nascent Christianity of the period. To this we might add that the Essenes, and the Therapeutæ, who were akin to the Essenes, disappeared from history about the time Christianity as an organized religion came into being. The presumption here, of course, is that they merged with the Christians or even that they were the early Christians.

By emphasizing these matters, we are led to the conclusion that a much deeper and more far-reaching assimilation took place than is conceded by Dujardin. On this basis, the essentially dual character of Christianity, partly Jewish, partly Hellenistic, admits of explanation as arising out of an historical process, a number of centuries in the period just prior to the Christian era being available for its accomplishment. The points of difference between Dujardin and Pryse are reconciled, and of more importance, the origin of the mystery elements in the New Testament becomes simple. It suffices merely to say that the Mystery drama of Pryse, along with certain of its early corruptions and its uncouth vernacular, was part and parcel

of the Pre-Christian and Hellenized Jesus-cult as it was practised in Palestine, particularly in Galilee.

While the Hellenistic influence was paramount, Christianity was undoubtedly influenced also by post-exilic Judaism, since, through Babylonian influences, this latter had also become a mature religion, with its own esoteric schools, its kabbalistic symbolisms, and its sacred literature, partly traditional, partly mythical, and wholly mystical in import—a literature which had been re-cast to serve as a vehicle for inner truths. It is probably from this source that the Seer of Patmos found the garb with which to clothe the Sun-God of the Apocalypse, the enrobing probably having taken place in Alexandria.

We note in passing that by this reconciliation of the theories of Pryse and Dujardin a modicum of virtue is preserved to the Christian Fathers.

IV.

But there is nothing in all this to negate the possibility of an historical Jesus. There was, it is true, the mystical crucifixion of the Sun-God on the cross of matter and spirit, the crucifixion of the mystery tradition, but there may well have been a literal crucifixion also, one carried out on the person of the Great Initiate, the Teacher, the Reformer, and the Rebel, he who for a few brief hours became King of the Jews. It is of significance in this connection that crucifixion was the accepted mode of capital punishment inflicted in Roman times upon all lacking the privileges accompanying full citizenship in the Roman Empire. And Jesus could not have been unaware of this fact, nor could He have been unaware of that other and symbolical crucifixion of the Sun-God, seeing that to all accounts He was a member of one of the mystery sects and was so recognized in the traditions which have come down to us.

(Jesus the Nazorean has no geographical implications.) The parallels could not have been lost on the followers of Jesus and with them the fusion of the historical with the mythical and with the mystical, the notion of the Christos, would follow easily and as a matter of course. No other theory suffices half so well to provide a dynamic focal point for the origin of the new religion.

Incidentally, the previous quotation from Origen stands forth in a clearer light, with its greater and lesser vehicles.

For an historical Jesus there is indeed a goodly measure of support, entirely apart from the generally untrustworthy testimony to be found within the Church itself. According to Eisler⁴ who has reconstructed the original text of the Slavonic Josephus and who has examined other ancient documents as well, there has been preserved in out-of-the-way corners of the world, as well as in stray quotations in Christian and apologetic literature, sufficient material to permit us to reconstruct with clarity and plausibility, and even with a certain amount of picturesque detail, the fundamental features and mission of Jesus, particularly as these appeared to His enemies. By a comparison of the mercilessly cold, detached and unsympathetic pen-portrait which thus emerges with the naively idealizing presentation of the Church, it is possible to come quite close to the truth of the Nazorean prophet-king and about His elder relative the schismatic high-priest of the Jews, Johanna, "the Hidden One", whom we know as John the Baptist.

It is Eisler's claim that a history of Christian origins, or more exactly of the Nazorean Messianic Movement, can be written which will coincide chronologically with the history of the Jews and

Romans from 4 B.C. to 135 A.D. This period was characterized, "perhaps not for the first time in history but certainly for the first time with a clear consciousness of the contrasting principles involved," by the clash of the masters of the world with the world revolution of the oppressed. And this clash was not unmixed with the conflict between the ancient city states and the Orient, which of necessity and by an innate law, strove for world-dominion and ended by forcing their own imperialistic doctrines upon an unwilling Orient. The conflict began with the Greek city-states with Persia, and it ended to all outward appearances with the battle of Actium, where perished Cleopatra's dreams of a world-empire uniting old Persian with the newer Roman.

For a few short years there was indeed peace of a sort but on the death of Herod, there occurred in Palestine another in the long series of insurrections which characterized the relations between the people of that country and their foreign oppressors. The people asked for amnesty, relief from the intolerable burden of taxation, and the right to choose for themselves a pure and pious high-priest instead of the Hellenized favourites who had been chosen and deposed by Herod, according to his own good will and pleasure. The demands were refused, the supplicants were in part slaughtered, and those who escaped were forced to flee to the mountains and the desert.

It was at this time, that the people chose for their leader one Johanna B. Zekharajah, who preached the coming of one whose shoes he was unworthy to unlatch, with such effect that not one but three Messiahs came forward, Judas of Gaulan, the slave Simon of Peræa, and the giant shepherd Athronga. They and their followers went up to Jerusa-

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⁴ Eisler: *The Messiah Jesus*.

THE SUN

Total Eclipse Scheduled for June 30

Theosophical students have undoubtedly noted press reports that scientists all over the world are making elaborate preparations to observe, study and capture on colour film the sun's total eclipse which will occur at 7:10 a.m., June 30th. It will last only 90 seconds and will not recur until 1963. Within those 90 seconds the astronomers hope to gain further knowledge about the solar surface, its corona—that colossal mass of rarified gas surrounding the sun—and the exact temperature of the sun, estimates of which range from 4,000 to 35,000 degrees centigrade. Other scientists will try to measure within hundreds of feet the distance between Europe and North America.

Queries on the nature of the sun and its emanations submitted to the Master K.H. by Mr. Sinnett in 1882, and the Master's replies, as recorded in Letters Nos. XXIIIA and XXIIIB of *Mahatma Letters*, are, therefore, of considerable interest at this time:

Query (9) Is the sun's corona, an atmosphere? of any known gases? and why does it assume the rayed shape always observed in eclipses?

Answer (9) Call it a chromosphere or atmosphere, it can be called neither; for it is simply the magnetic and ever present aura of the sun, seen by astronomers *only* for a brief few moments during the eclipse and by some of our chelas—whenever they like—of course while in a certain induced state. A counterpart of what the astronomers call the red flames in the "corona" may be seen in Reichenbach's crystals or in any other strongly magnetic body. The head of a man—in a strong ecstatic condition, when all the electricity of his system is centered around the brain, will represent—especially in darkness—a perfect simile of the Sun during such periods. The first

artist who drew the aureoles about the heads of his Gods and Saints, was not inspired, but represented it on the authority of temple pictures and traditions of the sanctuary and the chambers of initiation where such phenomena took place. The closer to the head or to the aura-emitting body—the stronger and the more effulgent the emanation (due to hydrogen science tells us, in the case of the flames); hence—the irregular red flames around the Sun or the "inner corona." The fact that these are not always present in equal quantity shows only the constant fluctuation of the magnetic matter and its energy, upon which also depend the variety and number of spots. During the periods of magnetic inertia the spots disappear, or rather remain invisible. The further the emanation shoots out the more it loses in intensity, until gradually subsiding it fades out; hence—the "outer corona," its rayed shape being due entirely to the latter phenomenon whose effulgence proceeds from the magnetic nature of the matter and the electric energy and not at all from intensely hot particles as asserted by some astronomers. All this is terribly unscientific, nevertheless a *fact*, to which I may add another by reminding you that the Sun we see is not at all the central planet of our little Universe, but only its veil or its reflection. Science has tremendous odds against studying that planet which luckily for us we have not: foremost of all—the constant tremours of our atmosphere which prevent them from judging correctly the little they do see. This impediment was never in the way of the ancient Chaldee and Egyptian astronomers; nor is it an obstacle to us, for we have means of arresting, or counteracting such tremours—acquainted as we are with all the *akasic* conditions. No more than the *rain* secret, would this secret—supposing we do divulge it—be of any practical use to your men of

Science unless they become Occultists and sacrifice long years to the acquirement of powers. Only fancy a Huxley or a Tyndall studying *Yogvidya!* hence the many mistakes into which they fall and the conflicting hypotheses of your best authorities. For instance: the Sun is full of iron vapours—a fact that was demonstrated by the spectroscope showing that the light of the corona consisted largely of a line in the green part of the spectrum, very nearly coinciding with an iron line. Yet Professors Young and Lockyer rejected that; under the witty pretext, if I remember, that, if the corona were composed of minute particles like a dust cloud (and it is this that we call “magnetic matter”) these particles would (1) fall upon the sun’s body, (2) comets were known to pass through this vapour without any visible effect on them; (3) Professor Young’s spectroscope showed that the coronal line was not identical with the iron one, etc. Why they should call those objections “scientific” is more than we can tell.

(1) The reason why the particles—since they call them so—*do not* fall upon the sun’s body, is self-evident. There are forces co-existent with gravitation of which they know nothing; besides that other fact that there is no gravitation properly speaking; only attraction and repulsion. (2) How could comets be affected by the said passage since their “passing through” is simply an optical illusion; they could not pass within the area of attraction without being immediately annihilated by that force, of which no *vril* can give an adequate idea, since there can be nothing on earth that could be compared with it. Passing as the comets do through a “reflection” no wonder that the said vapour has “no visible effect on these light bodies.”

(3) The coronal line may not *seem* identical through the best “grating spec-

troscope,” nevertheless, the *corona* contains iron as well as other vapours. To tell you of what it does consist is idle, since I am unable to translate the words we use for it, and that no such matter exists (not in our planetary system, at any rate)—but in the sun. The fact is, that what you call the Sun is simply the reflection of the huge “storehouse” of our System wherein ALL its forces are generated and preserved; the Sun being the heart and brain of our pigmy Universe; we might compare its *faculae*—those millions of small intensely brilliant bodies of which the Sun’s surface away from the spots is made up—with the blood corpuscles of that luminary—though some of them as correctly conjectured by science are as large as Europe. Those blood corpuscles are the electric and magnetic matter in its sixth and seventh state. What are those long white filaments twisted like so many ropes, of which the *penumbra* of the Sun is made up? What—the central part that is seen like a huge flame ending in fiery spires, and the transparent clouds, or rather vapours formed of delicate threads of silvery light, that hangs over those flames—what—but magneto-electric aura—the *phlogiston* of the Sun? Science may go on speculating for ever, yet so long as she does not renounce two or three of her cardinal errors she will find herself groping for ever in the dark. Some of her greatest misconceptions are found in her limited notions on the law of gravitation; her denial that matter may be *imponderable*; her newly invented term “force” and the absurd and tacitly accepted idea, that force is capable of existing *per se*, or of acting any more than life, *outside*, independent of, or in any other wise than *through* matter: in other words that *force is anything but matter* in one of her highest states,—the last three on the ascending scale being denied because only science

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OFFICE NOTES

We hope that considerable interest has been aroused in the proposed *Alternative Policy for the Theosophical Society* which has been put forward by Mr. T. H. Redfern of Peace Lodge, Hyde, England, and which was published in the May issue of this magazine. Mr. Redfern presented his proposals in draft form for 'critical consideration and amplification'. He regards 'the present relations (or lack of them) between the several branches of the Movement as a breach of the first principle of theosophical work—that of Brotherhood'; there are many who will agree with him and who are aware of the anomaly of there being several mutually exclusive nuclei of Universal Brotherhood in ex-

istence on the same planet at the same time. The proposals are worthy of serious examination, and if they are unacceptable in their present form, the author would welcome criticisms and amendments in both form and substance; we will be glad to publish the comments of readers in the magazine.

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H. P. Blavatsky, Collected Writings Vol. VI covering her writings during the years 1883-1885 is shortly to be published by the Blavatsky Writings Publication Fund of Los Angeles, California, through the efforts of Mr. Boris de Zirkoff. This will be a companion volume to the one published in 1950, which was Volume V of the series and which included many of the writings of H.P.B. during 1883. The new volume will contain material little known among students of today and will be of unusual interest and occult value. The edition will be limited and orders should be placed as early as possible. The price is \$5.00 plus 20 cents for mailing charges. Orders should be sent to *Theosophia*, 615 So. Oxford Avenue, Los Angeles 5, California. These books will also be on sale in Canada through the Toronto Theosophical Society, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5.

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The exposé of *Occult Chemistry* which was published in this magazine a few months ago, has been followed up by *Theosophical Notes* in a series of lengthy articles entitled *The Genesis of a Mythology*, which deal not only with *Occult Chemistry*, but with other phases of Neo-Theosophy and with Theosophical history. Those students who are interested in learning the facts should read these articles. Neo-Theosophy, or Leadbeaterianism or post-Blavatsky Theosophy (or whatever other name is used to distinguish the later accretions and distortions of the original message of Theosophy) is so widely accepted in

the Society that many members are not aware of the fact that this popular brand of teaching is in many respects directly contradictory of the original source material and is far inferior in value. Members of the Society are assumed to be truth seekers, but the burning fire of the desire for Truth at any cost which led persons into the Society often flickers out in the morass of the psuedo-occult. We are still of the opinion that *Occult Chemistry* belongs in the psuedo-occult and that the book should not have been re-printed.

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The Northeast Theosophical Foundation announces the programme of activities at its summer centre. Pumpkin Hollow Farm, Craryville, New York. These include a discussion of major aspects of *The Secret Doctrine* each Sunday morning, a two day visit by the President Mr. Sri Ram and his wife, Srimati Bhagirathi together with lectures and other activities. Those interested in attending should write to the Trustees at the above address.

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Congratulations to Durban Lodge, South Africa, on having attained its fiftieth birthday. The quarterly issue of *The Link*, official organ of the Theosophical Society in Southern Africa, was prepared by the members of Durban Lodge. Its appearance is excellent and the magazine reflects the tolerance, open-mindedness—and the saving grace of humour of the Durban members. The following is quoted from the President's message: "We members of Durban Lodge are generally an unorthodox lot. We have little respect for spiritual authority, none for dogma. We test every idea, every theory, against the pure standard of experience. We are young in spirit, and many of us in body. We feel the urgent need for a communion of all souls, in fact as well as in word, a

harmonizing of personalities, a bridging of the gulfs that separate man from his fellows. The warmth of friendship and fellowship is to us a very valuable thing, and opinions are much less important. We welcome different ideas, the challenge of a sincere and honest conviction, however unorthodox and uncomfortable. We prefer discussions to lectures, stimulating interchange of ideas to soaking up others' theories like a dry sponge. We try to bring out a person's deep and often inarticulate beliefs, natural to his own personality, rather than present him with a tailor-made set of responses to life. Each person is unique, to be interpreted only by understanding and sympathy, and each has his contribution to make to his own adventurous discovery of life."

AN AVATAR SPEAKS

Look not upon us as the gods,
Who were but men—
Though we are somewhat further
On the Way.
We stood where thou art standing, once,
Long ages past—
Attainment is not reached
In just a day.

Life after many lives must be
The price of gain.
Lives fraught with disciplines and tests
Unknown to thee.
Unknown the many terrors met,
Unknown the pain—
A dauntless courage wilt thou need
To make thee free.

Build unto us no temples who
Were, once, born men—
Erect no altars for the rite
Of daily prayer.
The temple of the heart is all
The fane we ask—
But, when we look within, may love
Be waiting there!

Hesper Le Gallienne Hutchinson.

CHRISTIAN ORIGINS

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lem, besieged the Roman garrisons and were finally suppressed, but only with the greatest difficulty. Slave and shepherd perished, while Judas escaped to the hills with his followers only to be slain ten years afterwards when he ventured upon another stroke.

"About this time there appeared a man" says Eisler, paraphrasing his own restoration of the Slavonic Josephus—"if it is possible to call this royal beggar glowing with faith in his God and filled with divine inspiration, this poor and crippled workman, whose words have now for almost two millenia resounded through the world." Descended from progeny of the ill-fated Zerubable, and brought up in the faith and in the tradition of this fateful lineage, he grew into the consciousness of having been chosen for the role of a liberator-king, "of having been destined to unheard-of grandeur, and, unheard-of suffering, to be the martyred servant of God and at the same time the future world-ruler." For a time he followed the 'Hidden One' whose sect was akin to his own in order to fulfil the law and to be taken into the new community of the regenerated Israel. Yet, Eisler continues, what he himself announced went beyond the strict demands of the old hermit. "If the latter had required the fulfilment of all righteousness as the condition of the coming of the Anointed, Jesus taught the 'better righteousness' of 'non-resistance' the hard and quiet heroism of the weak. Not to do wrong to anyone, *ahimsa*, as again in our own time a great spirit, a mahan'atma, a religious genius, tried to teach in India; not to resist even the oppressors, but to conquer their hardness by a victorious kindness; not to judge a brother nor to seek justice against him; not to rule over any one, but to serve all, nay, even to love one's enemies."

Along with this superhuman demand of disinterested pacifism he promises the poor, the oppressed, and the heavy-laden an easier yoke, a new law of God, a new constitution, a redemption also from the superimposed hostile world-empire, and of the incarnate arch-enemy of God ruling over it until the end of the Aeon. The people who listened to this preaching were attracted not so much by the narrow path he pointed out to them, as by the alluring hope of a golden age in which the first should be last and the last should be first, when those who now hunger and thirst would be fed, whilst those who now feed would go hungry; and still more, by the dark rumour that the despised sinners would partake of that kingdom before the righteous. Here and there one of these wild fellows followed him; thus Simon the *Barjona*, the outlaw, whom he called Kephas and Petrus; Siman and Judas, the Zealots, the Fanatics, former companions of the sons of Judah of Galilee; Further, two or three adherents of the Baptist.

'Having collected a small band, he started on the laying down of a constitution of his kingdom: twelve are to go out to call the twelve tribes of Israel; seventy-two ambassadors are to go to the seventy-two nations of the Gentiles to demand their submission to the Kingdom of God, after the manner of the Persian great king, asking for earth and water. The notion of pacifying the world by a mere message and an announcement of peace and goodwill of the only true God had long before Jesus driven the Pharisaic missionaries over land and sea, to convert all peoples; it is taught here with a childlike trust in God which has never again been attained, in these speeches addressed to the royal messengers.

Failure having attended this effort, Jesus determined upon a new exodus. Conforming to the custom of reformers

before him, he would journey to Jerusalem and there would make a solemn announcement to Israel, at the time of the Passover; and, having done so, would lead his new and true Israel into the desert, not in revolt but peacefully, breaking away and escaping to the comparative freedom of the wilderness. The Zealots and Barjonin among his followers knew better than he, however, that the road he had chosen would lead to trouble and so anticipated the reluctant assent of the master to go and buy swords each for himself.

About a thousand all told entered the city from the Mount of Olives. The Temple is seized and the Barjonin of Jerusalem seize the tower standing above the *Shiloah*, the aqueduct through which David according to legend once entered the old fortress of Jebusites.

The rebellion was suppressed on the preparation day of the Passover by the hastily summoned Roman legions.

According to the genuine *Acta Pilata* as recovered by Eisler from the fragments to be found in the Slavonic Josephus and elsewhere, Jesus was a "malefactor, a rebel, and a robber thirsting for the crown", these being Pilate's own judgments in the matter. Jesus so was convicted of three capital crimes to wit, "Magic (*maleficium*), rebellion (*sedito* and *latrocinium*), and high treason (*crimem laesae maiestatis*)". The mode of his death was quite in keeping with these judgments; he was crucified according to the Roman mode, reserved for those of other than Roman citizenship.

BROTHERHOOD

"The term 'Universal Brotherhood' is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim upon us. . . If it be a dream, it is at least a noble one for mankind; and it is the aspiration of the true adept."—*The Mahatma Letters*.

THE SUN

(Continued from Page 55)

knows nothing of them; and her utter ignorance of the universal Proteus, its functions and importance in the economy of nature—magnetism and electricity. Tell Science that even in those days of the decline of the Roman Empire, when the tattooed Britisher used to offer to the Emperor Claudius his *nazzur* of "electron" in the shape of a string of amber beads—that even then, there were yet men remaining aloof from the immoral masses, who knew more of electricity and magnetism than they, the men of science, do now, and science will laugh at you as bitterly as she now does over your kind dedication to me. Verily, when your astronomers speaking of *sun-matter*, term those lights and flames as "clouds of vapour" and "gases unknown to science" (rather!)—chased by mighty whirlwinds and cyclones—whereas we know it to be simply magnetic matter in its usual state of activity—we feel inclined to smile at the expressions. Can one imagine the "Sun's fires fed with *purely mineral matter*"—with meteorites highly charged with hydrogen giving the "Sun a far-reaching atmosphere of ignited gas"? We *know* that the *invisible* Sun is composed of *that* which has neither name, nor can it be compared to anything known by your science—on earth; and that its "reflection" contains still less of anything like "gases," mineral matter, or *fire*, though even we when treating of it in your civilized tongue are compelled to use such expressions as "vapour" and "magnetic matter." To close the subject, the coronal changes have no effect upon the earth's climate, though *spots* have—and Professor N. Lockyer is mostly wrong in his deductions. The Sun is neither a *solid* nor a *liquid*, nor yet a gaseous glow; but a gigantic ball of electro-mag-

netic Forces, the store-house of universal *life* and *motion*, from which the latter pulsate in all directions, feeding the smallest atom as the greatest genius with the same material unto the end of the *Maha Yug*.

Query (10) Is the photometric value of light emitted by stars a safe guide to their magnitude (considered of course in connection with distance as guessed by parallax) and is it true as astronomy assumes *faute de mieux* in the way of a theory, that per square mile the sun's surface emits as much light as can be emitted from any body?

Answer (10) I believe not. The stars are distant from us, at least 500,000 times as far as the Sun and some as many times more. The strong accumulation of meteoric matter and the atmospheric tremours are always in the way. If your astronomers could climb on the height of that meteoric *dust*, with their telescopes and *havanas* they might trust more than they can show now in their photometers. How can they? Neither the real degree of intensity of that light can be known on earth—hence no trustworthy basis for calculating magnitudes and distances can be had,—nor have they hitherto made sure in a single instance (except in the matter of one star in Cassiopeia) which stars shine by reflected and which by their own light. The working of the best double star photometers is deceptive. Of this I have made sure, so far back as in the spring of 1878 while watching the observations made through a Pickering photometer. The discrepancy in the observations upon a star (near Gamma Ceti) amounted at times to half a magnitude. No planets but one have hitherto been discovered outside of the solar system, with all their photometers, while we know with the sole help of our spiritual *naked* eye a number of them; every *completely* *matured* Sun-star having like in our own system several companion planets in

fact. The famous "polarization of light" test is about as trustworthy as all others. Of course, the mere fact of their starting from a false premise cannot vitiate either their conclusions or astronomical prophecies, since both are mathematically correct in their mutual relations, and that it answers the given object. The Chaldees nor yet our old Rishis had either your telescopes or photometers; and yet their astronomical predictions were faultless, the mistakes, very slight ones in truth—fathered upon them by their modern rivals—proceeding from the mistakes of the latter.

You must not complain of my too long answers to your very short questions, since I answer you for your instruction as a student of occultism, my "lay" chela, and not at all with a view of answering the *Journal of Science*. I am no man of science with regard to, or in connection with modern learning. My knowledge of your Western Science is *very* limited in fact; and you will please bear in mind that all my answers are based upon, and derived from, our Eastern occult doctrines regardless of their agreement or disagreement with those of exact science. Hence, I say.—

"The Sun's surface emits per square mile, as much light (*in proportion*) as can be emitted from any body." But what can you mean in this case by "light"? The latter is not an independent principle; and, I rejoiced at the introduction, with a view to facilitate means of observation—of the "diffraction spectrum;" since by abolishing all these imaginary independent existences, such as—heat, actinism, light, etc., it rendered to Occult Science the greatest service, by vindicating in the eyes of her modern sister our very ancient theory that every phenomenon being but the effect of the diversified motions of what we call Akasa (not *your* ether) there was, in fact, but one element, the causative Principle of all. . . .

Query (12) Is there any truth in the new Siemens theory of solar combustion,—i.e., that the sun in its passage through space gathers in at the poles combustible gas (which is diffused through all space in a highly attenuated condition), and throws it off again at the equator after the intense heat of that region has again dispersed the elements which combustion temporarily united?

Answer (12) I am afraid not much, since our Sun is but a reflection. The only great truth uttered by Siemens is that inter-stellar space is filled with highly attenuated matter, such as may be put in air vacuum tubes, and which stretches from planet to planet and from star to star. But this truth has no bearing upon his main facts. The sun gives *all* and takes back *nothing* from its system. The sun gathers nothing “at the poles”—which are always free even from the famous “red flames” at all times, not only during the eclipses. How is it that with their powerful telescopes they have failed to perceive any such “gathering” since their glasses show them even the “superlatively fleecy clouds” on the photosphere? Nothing can reach the sun from *without* the boundaries of its own system in the shape of such *gross* matter as “attenuated gases.” Every bit of matter in all its *seven* states is necessary to the vitality of the various and numberless systems—worlds in formation, suns awakening anew to life, etc., and they have none to spare even for their best neighbours and next of kin. They are mothers, not stepmothers, and would not take away one crumb from the nutrition of their children. The latest theory of radiant energy which shows that there is no such thing in nature, properly speaking, as chemical light, or heat ray is the only approximately correct one. For indeed, there is but one thing—radiant energy which is *inexhaustible* and knows neither increase nor decrease

and will go on with its self-generating work to the end of the Solar manvantara. The absorption of Solar Forces by the earth is tremendous; yet it is, or may be demonstrated that the latter receives hardly 25 per cent. of the chemical power of its rays, for these are despoiled of 75 per cent. during their vertical passage through the atmosphere at the moment they reach the outer boundary “of the aerial ocean.” And even those rays lose about 20 per cent. in illuminating and caloric power—we are told. What with such a *waste* must then be the recuperative power of our Father-Mother Sun? Yes, call it “Radiant Energy” if you will: we call it Life—all-pervading, omnipresent life, ever at work in its great laboratory—the SUN.

Students are referred also to the several dozen references to the Sun in *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*, all of which will repay careful study.

THE THREE TRUTHS

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.—Idvll of the White Lotus.

BOOK REVIEW

The Most Holy Trinsophia of Comte de St. Germain, published by the Philosophers Press, Los Angeles, California, price \$5.00.

This third edition of the enigmatic Count's unique manuscript is introduced and annotated with commentary by Manly P. Hall. Prepared for "the instruction of the Count's own disciples in cabalistical, hermetic and alchemical mysteries", it is a most interesting record, in the first person, of the experiences undergone by a candidate. The original manuscript of ninety-six pages is in the Bibliotheque de Troyes, and today we have this photostatic copy of the delicate script and all the odd alchemical, hermetic illustrations beautifully reproduced, though alas! only in black and white. The colours of the original would have been revealing.

It is said that this particular manuscript was in the possession of Cagliostro at Rome, and after his death went to a general in Napoleon's army, at whose decease the manuscript was bought cheaply by the Library at Troyes.

There are twelve sections in an English translation, and since we know that at the time of the Count's death or 'disappearance', all his books and papers vanished, this brief record is all the more precious. It is a copy only, for the Count destroyed the original himself, it is said, on a journey, but the drawings, some full page, some just head and tail pieces, are all reminiscent of the Masonic and hermetic symbols to be found in all alchemical writings.

The twelve sections are to be linked with the twelve Zodiacal signs, as Manly Hall points out. They are descriptions of outward adventures, symbolical of inner states of consciousness too, all taking place in scenes of Egyptian and Persian colourings for the most part. As the commentator explains in his in-

troductioin, the Egyptianized interpretations of Freemasonic symbolism, which is so evident in the writings of Ragon and others, is also present in the figures and text of this St. Germain manuscript.

In section five, there is a yellow altar, a lighted torch which stood by shining like the sun, and hovering over it was a bird in constant motion, which could only fly when in the midst of the flames: This is obviously the Phoenix and the text says, "Altar, Bird and Torch are the symbols of all things".

Section six is typical of Virgo. The Zoroastrian-like old Persian tells the candidate, "Thou hast let slip the opportunity; thou couldst have seized instantly the bird, the torch, the altar. Thou wouldst have become altar, bird and torch at one and the same time. Now, in order to arrive at the most secret place of the Palace of sublime sciences, it will be necessary for thee to pass through all by-ways." In the hall where they entered was a triangular altar composed of the four elements; on its three points were placed the bird, the altar, the torch. "Their names are now changed", said the old man, and the fourth object, the triangular altar, is called ATHANOR, says the text.

Section eight is obviously Scorpio. At the end the candidate says, "I entered the water which was as thick as cement."

The Mural of section nine resembles the Trojan horse and again we see the Zodiacal link.

In the last section, the twelfth, he finds himself re-entering the hall of Thrones, as he did at his first entrance to the Palace of Wisdom. The fourth object, the triangular altar (what Subba Rao calls the triangular prism of Prakriti, probably) was still in the centre, but the bird, the yellow altar, and the

torch, were now joined and formed a single body. Near them was a golden sun; the sword, which he had brought from the hall of fire in the fourth section, was there and with this he struck the sun reducing it to dust. He touched it and each molecule became a golden sun, like the one he had broken. Then says the text, "a loud and melodious voice exclaimed, "The work is perfect"; the doors of immortality were opened to me; the cloud which covers the eyes of mortals was dissipated. I SAW, and the

spirit which presides over the elements knew me for their master." Thus ends the manuscript.

All these adventures and experiences are for the sake of those elect few, who, as the first section says, "may see, and seeing, may soar after Him, the Eternal . . . and may reflect upon mankind one of the Rays that shine round about His Golden Throne."

No nobler "work" can be imagined.
Surya.

WHY THE MASTERS CANNOT HELP

The following was written by H. P. B. in 1889. In it she states frankly the primal cause of the failure of the Theosophical Society up to that time. Today the Theosophical Movement is split into various separate organizations and the 'solidarity', 'unity of purpose and feeling' and 'brotherly love' is still missing—and missing also is 'the more tangible help' from Those who were behind the founding of the Society.

'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces
That miss the many-splendoured
thing.

The Theosophical Society has just entered upon the fourteenth year of its existence; and if it has accomplished great, one may almost say stupendous, results on the exoteric and utilitarian plane, it has proved a dead failure on all those points which rank foremost among the objects of its original establishment. Thus, as a "Universal Brotherhood" or even as a fraternity, one among many, it has descended to the level of all those Societies whose pretensions are great, but whose names are simply masks—nay even SHAMS. Nor can the excuse be pleaded that it was led into such an

undignified course owing to its having been impeded in its natural development, and almost extinguished, by reason of the conspiracies of its enemies *openly* begun in 1884. Because even before that date there never was that solidarity in the ranks of our Society which would not only enable it to resist all external attacks, but also make it possible for greater, wider, and more tangible help to be given to all its members by those who are always ready to give help when we are fit to receive it. When trouble arose too many were quick to doubt and despair, and few indeed were they who had worked for the Cause and not for themselves. The attacks of the enemy have given the Society some discretion in the conduct of its external progress, but its real internal condition has not improved, and the members, in their efforts towards spiritual culture, still require that help which solidarity in the ranks can alone give them the right to ask. The Masters can give but little assistance to a Body not thoroughly united in purpose and feeling, and which breaks its fundamental rule—universal brotherly love, without distinction of race, creed or colour; nor to a Society, many members of which pass their lives in judging, condemning, and often reviling other members in a most untheosophical, not to say disgraceful, manner.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

The Theosophical Society was formed at New York in 1875. It has three objects:

1. *To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.*
2. *To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.*
3. *To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.*

The Society affords a meeting place for students who have three aims in common, *first*, the ideal of Universal Brotherhood; *second*, the search for Truth, and *third*, a desire to associate and work with other men and women having similar aims and ideals. The acceptance of the First Object is required of all those who desire to become members; whether or not a member engages actively in the work contemplated in the Second and Third Objects is left to his or her discretion.

The nature and purposes of the Society preclude it from having creeds or dogmas, and freedom of thought and expression among its members is encouraged. An official statement on this point; “. . . . there is no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which a member is not free to accept or reject.” The statement calls upon the members “to maintain, defend, and act upon this fundamental principle . . . and fearlessly to exercise his own right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.”

Theosophy or ‘Divine Wisdom’ is that body of ancient truths relating to the spiritual nature of man and the universe which has found expression down through the ages in religions, philosophies, sciences, the arts, mysticism, occultism and other systems of thought. Theosophy is not the exclusive possession of any one organization. In the modern Theosophical Movement, these ancient truths have been re-stated and an extensive literature on the subject has come into being. The teachings are not put forward for blind belief; they are to be accepted only if the truth that is in them finds an echo in the heart. Each student should by ‘self-induced and self-devised’ methods establish his own Theosophy, his own philosophy of life. The Movement encourages all students of Theosophy to become self-reliant, independent in thought, mature in mind and emotions and, above all other things, to work for the welfare of mankind to the end that humanity as a whole may become aware of its diviner powers and capabilities.