THE METAPHYSIC

OF

CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM.

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A SYMPHONY.

BY

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"Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."—*Bible.*

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1899.

LOVINGLY DEDICATED

TO

MY WIFE

IN MEMORY OF OUR SOJOURN

IN

THE EAST.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

"Si notre foi diffère quant à la forme et aux dogmes, nos âmes restent toujours d'accord sur un principe éternel et divin."—GEORGE SANDS.

AN immense difficulty has to be encountered by those who have been deeply impressed by the value and beauty of Christianity when they are called upon to consider the claims of other faiths. Anyone who has had within his experience and under his observation such an exceptional case as that of a sincere Christian who, from childhood to old age, has set before him the ideal Christ and the Christian conception of an all-compassionate Father—a Christian whose inner light has been so pure that no darkness of doubt has ever dimmed it, and no doctrinal warfare has ever stained its radiance—he, I contend, has an almost insuperable obstacle to overcome when he attempts to associate holiness and purity, of the same supreme order, with the followers of other religious systems which have been formulated for the comfort and salvation of humanity.

It is doubtful if any ordinary adherent of the Christian faith, however extensive his sympathies towards persons outside his own flock, has ever been able to pass this barrier, which always seems to interpose itself when search is made for a common bond of union with an alien belief.

A man may have lived many a year in the East, and witnessed there, with deep appreciation, the purity, the endurance, the touching self-denial of the devout peasantry, and the beautiful charity of the poor towards the poor; or he may have associated with saintly ascetics in India, and with the yellow-robed and gentle *religieux* of Ceylon; he

may have surveyed the famous temple of that fair island, in the intense stillness of a tropical night, till all identity of self seemed to vanish in the solemnity of the surroundings, and the only sound was that of a monk's intoning voice heard from within the dungeon-like apertures of the building, and the only light that of the fitful fireflies amid the lofty and drooping foliage;—yet, in each and all of these experiences, that aroma of holiness, so perceptible at times in our own religious atmosphere, would somehow seem strangely absent to the unacclimatized senses, and no halo would be distinguishable by a vision which had been restricted by prejudice.

Still more difficult is it to rise to the same height of reverence for a saintly and surpassing personality if it is presented in sacred records other than those to which one has owned a prior allegiance. Nevertheless, the discovery in other religious systems of a correspondence with one's own particular persuasion must assuredly tend towards the attainment of that attitude of mind commended by St. Paul of "being all things to all men." To pave the way towards the acquisition of this mental posture in relation to religious concepts is the main object I have had in view in composing this small book.

It has been said that no age has more needed a departure in this direction than our own. "On the one hand, sectarian hatred and dogmatism almost obscure the great truths *common* to all mankind; on the other, merciless and destructive criticism, in undermining much that used to be generally accepted, seems at times to threaten even the foundations of truth."

Some people, however, maintain that there is an appreciable value to be attached to all dogmatic declarations, and that those who are working in strictly-confined theological grooves are contributing, as specialists, to a knowledge of the whole. Even if these workers are possessed of all the uncharitable qualities sometimes attributed to the narrow-

minded, yet they may be held deserving of encouragement in view of the probability that the more their limited ideas become exposed to the light by their enthusiastic endeavours to assert them as final truth, the sooner will their imperfections be obliterated. The fragmentary opinions they cling to will then be discovered to possess no value except as constituent elements of the whole.

Others go the length of advocating that the flames of bigotry should be fanned to furnace-heat in order that the feeding fuel may be the more rapidly consumed.

In any case, the more apparent it becomes that every religion worthy of the name springs from a root common to all, and is really, at bottom, the one true cosmic religion, and that the variations are superficial and unimportant in themselves, the greater will be the advantages accruing to humanity in the political, social, and moral spheres. In other words, the advantage to be derived from the study of the obscure phases of religions lies in this—that, in so doing, our minds are better able to grasp the solidarity of religious thought and aspirations throughout the world. We are enabled to see more clearly that all religious forms, and even formless philosophies, however crude and idolatrous the former may appear to people of wide culture, and however mystical and evasive the latter may be regarded by those of narrow vision, are but the effects of one cause common to all.

When we have got rid, Buddhistically, of the idea of separateness, or, in a Christian sense, have exercised self-suppression, we can then proceed to eliminate the notion of separateness in religions and philosophies. Thus, whether we are Determinists or Indeterminists, we shall experience the sensation that, according to the law of development, it is in the scheme of things for us to struggle forward on our several paths, not in antipathy to, but hand in hand with, those who make use of different modes of progression towards one identical goal.

Missionary propagandism, under these conditions, will have the same *raison d'être*, and our cherished symbolisms will in no wise suffer. Holding this view, I have felt no misgivings as to the propriety of placing side by side, as it were, the historical and radiant figures of Jesus the Christ and Gotama the Buddha, and of indicating an analogy between the essential features of the two systems of religion which these great deliverers of a world on earth have fashioned and commended for the acceptance of their fellow creatures.

Indeed, Buddhism should occupy a very large place in the affections and admiration of all true Christians on account of the many points of resemblance discernible in the characters and gospels of Gotama and Jesus.

St. Augustine, the great vindicator of Christianity, clears the ground for an assimilation of the two systems. He writes: "For the thing in itself which is now called the Christian religion really was known to the ancients, nor was wanting at any time, from the beginning of the human race until the time that Christ came into the flesh, from which the true religion which had previously existed began to be called Christian; and this in our day is the Christian religion—not as having been wanting in former times, but as having in later times received this name."

Köppen says: "As, from the standpoint of Buddhism, all men—nay, all beings—are brothers, children of one sin, sons of the same nonentity, thus all religions of the globe appear to it as related, as sprung from one source; all pursuing the same end, and arriving at the same goal. The religious views, creeds, etc., etc.....of all nations, Churches, schools, sects, and parties, however diverse they may seem, are hence, according to the conception of the believing Buddhist, not alien, but inwardly akin. They are merely peculiar forms, modifications, obscurations, degenerations of the same truth—of one law, one faith, one

redemption. For him there is only one doctrine and one Way; and all religions belong, in one way or another, to this doctrine, and are all on that Way."

Among the things that can never be shaken are the foundations of Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, and other cognate religious systems. Here and there, perchance, a steeple may come down with a crash, a minaret may fall, a pagoda crumble into dust; but the foundation-stones, laid beneath the surface, buried in mystery, and encompassed by darkness, remain irremoveable, changeless, and eternal.

It is, then, in this brooding darkness which envelopes their occult sources that we must take our stand; and not until we have grown into and become one with the encircling gloom, and been subjectively steeped in it, can we hope to understand or pronounce a fair judgment upon what is the less obscure and objective.

The comparative study of religions requires approach with an open and receptive mind, and a large amount of intuitive sympathy with all. It cannot be fairly undertaken if the initial object of investigation is to mould the one or the other to the shape of personal fancy.

Mr. Arthur Lillie, a most interesting exponent of Buddhism in relation to Christianity, says that the study of an ancient religion is not philosophy, but pure history. This may be true, in a sense; but, at the same time, it is necessary that the records of the past should be studied in a philosophical and synthetic spirit, with an Impressionist rather than a pre-Raphaelite tendency. Mr. Lillie hardly makes due allowance for the measure of failure which must accompany all human efforts to do justice to a great idea, and perhaps overstrains the theory that literary and philological analysis have had their day, and that archæology and history should now reign supreme.

In connection with the placing of too great a reliance upon the "letter" of venerated records, a warning—serious

enough if we appropriate it to ourselves—has issued from the pen of the Rev. Spence Hardy, who, in a passage of his book, entitled *Eastern Monachism* (p. 166), emphasizes with tremendous force the precarious position of those who take their stand solely upon sacred books. "The priests of India," he writes, "are encompassed by weapons that may be wrested from their hands and used to their own destruction. When it is clearly proved to them that their venerated records contain absurdities and contradictions, they must of necessity conclude that their origin cannot have been divine; and, the foundations of the system being thus shaken, the whole mass must speedily fall, leaving only the unsightly ruin as a monument of man's folly, when he endeavours to form a religion from the feculence of his own corrupt heart or the fancies of his own perverted imagination."

It may be apposite here to demonstrate how far short of the Pauline standard the cultivated European critic falls, by referring to some remarks of the Rev. Prof. Bruce in one of his Gifford Lectures* of last year, in which he treats of Gotama's views concerning the moral order of the universe. Of the two leading doctrines of Buddhism, Karma is called by him "fantastic" and Nirvana "morbid"; and, not content with such a contemptuous dismissal of these remarkable conceptions, he proceeds to say: "The well-being of the race demanded warriors, brave in the field of battle against evil, not monks, immured in cloisters and passing their lives in poverty, wearing the yellow robe of a mendicant order."

This rhetorical flourish may have sounded very effective and convincing as a peroration, and have produced the desired result of clearing the lecturer from any possible imputation of sympathy with Buddhism, except as an ethical system of considerable excellence; but such a summing-up of Buddhism is neither more nor less than a

* *Vide Glasgow Herald*, January, 1898.

throwing of dust in the eyes of beholders, and is, in my opinion, very far removed from the dispassionate survey one would expect from a Gifford Lecturer. Alighting on such a misrepresentation of his religious system, a Buddhist would naturally feel aggrieved, and his belief in our self-adopted reputation for fair-play all round might be rudely shaken.

"Karma" is undoubtedly one of the so-called mysteries of Buddhism; but is it in any sense more fantastic than any other religious mystery? Is this theory of the transmigration of character (as it has been somewhat loosely described) more fanciful in its conception than that of the transmigration of the soul, a "vaguely-apprehended, feebly-postulated ego," to a dim locality such as heaven? Then, again, it may be asked, what is there so objectionable in a quiet, unobtrusive resistance to evil, that it should prompt the lecturer to magnify the importance of a crude aggressiveness?

It is by no means true that Buddhist monks are usually immured in cloisters; they, in fact, move about freely as examples, within human limits, of the highest morality, and they chiefly occupy themselves (as in Burma) with the education of children.* General Forlong, in his *Short Studies in the Science of Comparative Religions*, says: "Gotama's religion widened from Jaino-Buddhism into one of work and duty towards his fellows; his instructions to the order of monks were to the following effect: that they were not to *beg* from door to door, but only to accept gifts in return for services performed; and this was their service—to be an example to all men."

Condemnation of these monks for passing their lives in poverty sounds strangely inappropriate coming from the lips

* Those who have not yet read that pathetically beautiful book, *The Soul of a People*, by H. Fielding, are referred to chapters x. and xi., wherein are set forth the true characteristics, functions, and aspirations of the Buddhist monkhood in Burma.

of a Christian professor; and, as to the well-being of the race not demanding the wearing of yellow garments, one might reasonably ask if it demanded the wearing of a black gown. We must, in all fairness, I think, credit Gotama with possessing a large measure of that "Light which lighteth *every man* that cometh into the world."

Sir Edwin Arnold, I believe, refers to the mysteries of Buddhism as "blank abstractions," but I do not suppose he regards them as more "blank" than the mysteries of other religions. All mysteries are, in a sense, blank abstractions, and the blanker they are the nearer the truth; and what religion is without them? It may be conceded, however, that such a conception as "Ultimate Reality" upon which to fall back in time of need might prove to some minds a more comfortless one than that presented by the "Compassionate Father" of the Christian God-idea. But even this Christian symbolism has an element of mystery in it.

Then there is the poetic phase of anthropomorphism, which is not altogether to be despised from an æsthetic point of view. Such as the Mohammedan Allah, who is described with exquisite imagery in the Bostān of Sâdi as a beautiful cup-bearer at Sufistic banquets,

"So fair,
They spill the wine and stare,"*

which recalls the anthropomorphic Deity of the Psalms:—

"In His hand is a cup, and the wine is red."

Another picture of great poetical merit is that of the Incarnate Saviour of the Mexicans, who does not ascend to heaven on his departure from the earth, but sets forth upon the wide ocean in a wizard bark of serpent skins for the fabled shores of the kingdom of his Father.

Dr. Paul Carus, in his preface to *The Gospel of Buddha*, says: "A comparison of the many striking agreements between Christianity and Buddhism may prove fatal to a

* Author's translation of *Bostān of Sâdi*.

sectarian conception of Christianity, but will in the end only help to mature our insight into the essential nature of Christianity, and so elevate our religious convictions. It will bring out that nobler Christianity which aspires to be the cosmic religion of universal truth.....It will serve both Christians and Buddhists as a help to penetrate further into the spirit of their faith, so as to see its full width, breadth, and depth."

The theological formation which has gradually developed into what may be called the crust of creeds, and which has probably now reached its limits of hardening, is seen, from day to day, under varying influences, to be cracking into wider and deeper fissures. The curious inquirer now possesses ample opportunities of looking below the surface and observing some of the conditions that have, in the course of ages, given rise to the accretions.

The deeper we look, or the further our horizon recedes, the greater perhaps is the sense of bewilderment and isolation; yet so to wander is, at any rate, to be free; and we need not just at present fear that ultimate knowledge is nescience, when our vision will no longer be bounded by any horizon, and when even vision itself will at last disappear.

As it has been stated of science, so it may be affirmed of all inquiry, "that at a certain stage of its development a degree of vagueness best consists with fertility."

Christianity and Buddhism possess three prominent features—"the metaphysical," "the ethical," and "the biographical." As the two latter have been so exhaustively contrasted in connection with these systems, I have confined myself in the following pages chiefly to a consideration of their mystical relationship.

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SANSCRIT AND PALI TERMS USED.

SAMSKĀRA, SANKHĀRA — Includes everything of which impermanence may be predicated, or, which is the same thing, everything which springs from a cause. (Childers.) Gestaltungen—Oldenberg's *Buddha*, German edition. Conformations—English translation of Oldenberg's *Buddha*.

SKANDHAS ... The five attributes or elements of being—form, sensation, perception, discrimination, and consciousness.

BHIKKHU, BHIKSHU — Mendicant, monk, friar.

AKĀSA ... Space.

SAMSĀRA — The ocean of Birth and Death, transiency, worldliness, the restlessness of a worldly life, the agitation of selfishness, the vanity fair of life. (Paul Carus.)

MAHĀYĀNA ... The great vehicle—viz., of salvation.

HINĀYĀNA ... The little vehicle—viz., of salvation.

KARMA ... Action, work, the law of action, retribution, results of deeds previously done, and the destiny resulting therefrom. (Paul Carus.)

ERRATUM.

For Professor Oldenberg's *Buddhism* read everywhere Professor Oldenberg's *Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order.*

CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM.

CHAPTER I.

JESUS AND GOTAMA.

"For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"—BIBLE.

IN any attempt to appreciate the relationship of Christianity to Buddhism it is important to bear in mind, not only the differences which have characterized the process of their evolution, but also to recognize that the two religions are, in their origin, distinct as to time and *locale;* that they developed on different soils, and have borne fruit of very different kinds; and that the races which subsequently appropriated them as religious systems were in many respects dissimilar, and lived under widely divergent conditions. Only by regarding these religions as growing apart, and in no manner connected in this sense, can we ultimately arrive at a just and logical estimate of the character of the founders.

It is not by confounding their sources at the start, or by attempting to prove that the one system is a product of the other, that we can in the end draw closer the bonds which seem to unite them. A consideration of almost equal weight is that of the dual nature of the great personalities of Jesus and Gotama. We must not confuse the significance of the term "God" with the man Jesus, nor the mystical principle embodied in the title "Buddha" with the personal and

human Gotama. Both Jesus as God and Gotama as Buddha are dual personalities, and combine in themselves tangible and intangible realities. The former is to be regarded as man and God, the latter as Gotama and Buddha.

But, while wishing to emphasize the fact of the independent origin of Christianity and Buddhism, I have no intention of combating the fact that a spurious Buddhism had, in the garb of Essenism, established a footing in Palestine at a date anterior to the Christian era, and that, under the influence of St. John the Baptist, the recognized leader of the Essenes, a way was prepared and made ready for the great light which was to shine forth afresh in the majestic humanity of Jesus. The presence of Essene Buddhists in Palestine at that date is a matter of history, and has been clearly established by prominent Oriental scholars. Moreover, the Church of England itself has, through the medium of some of its most reliable authorities, openly acquiesced in the fact.

The Essenes, who were, from the second century before Christ onwards, domiciled in the Holy Land, although virtually Buddhists, do not seem to have preserved intact the tenets of Gotama, though the ethics remained unadulterated. They retained many of the qualities of the monastic Buddhists, such as asceticism, brotherly love, a rare benevolence towards mankind in general, and the still rarer consideration for animal life. Nor was any departure made from the vows of chastity, the belief in the transitory nature of things, and in their attitude of non-resistance to evil. It was rather with regard to metaphysical obscurities that they wandered from the strict teaching of Gotama ; and we cannot wonder that such was the case when we remember the doubts, difficulties, and uncertainties that must have beset the paths of these followers of Gotama when they had no longer the Enlightened One to point to them the way of truth.

Especially do they seem to have gone astray in the matter of the doctrine of the soul. This they described "as coming from the subtlest ether, and as lured by the sorcery of nature into the prison-house of the body." The Essenes derived their Buddhistic tenets and practices directly from Gnosticism, which is said to have prevailed in Alexandria two centuries before the birth of Christ, and its existence in that city owed its origin to the importation of Buddhism from India, constant communication having been established in those days between Egypt and the West Coast of India as far north as the mouths of the Indus.

Further, the edicts of King Asoka go to prove that at about this time he was on intimate terms and in frequent correspondence with the Greeks ; also, that during his reign and under his royal patronage Buddhist missionaries found their way to Egypt, and there scattered the seed from which arose the Gnostics, or Therapeuts, and the kindred sect of the Essenes.

Mr. Arthur Lillie, in his *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 75, writes : "The most subtle thinker of the modern English Church, the late Dean Mansel, boldly maintained that the philosophy and rites of the Therapeuts of Alexandria were due to Buddhist missionaries who visited Egypt within two centuries of the time of Alexander the Great. In this he has been supported by philosophers of the calibre of Schelling and Schopenhauer and the great Sanscrit authority Lassen. Renan, in his work *Les Lanques Sémétiques*, also sees traces of this Buddhist propagandism in Palestine before the Christian era. Hilgenfeld, Mutter, Bohlen, King, all admit the Buddhist influence. Colebrooke saw a striking similarity between the Buddhist philosophy and that of the Pythagoreans. Dean Milman was convinced that the Therapeuts sprung from the 'contemplative and indolent fraternities' of India."

When we travel back from Essenism to Gnosticism we approach nearer geographically and conceptionally to the

source from which they both originated. Gnosticism, however, presumes to tell us more than Gotama chose to reveal as to the beginnings of things, and enters into details about various spiritual emanations which are at variance with any inferences that can be legitimately drawn from early Buddhism.

In the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, under "Gnosticism," we read: "The Supreme Being, according to Gnosticism, was regarded as wholly inconceivable and indescribable; as the Unfathomable Abyss; the Unnameable. From this transcendant source existence sprang by emanation in a series of spiritual powers. It was only through these several powers that the Infinite passed into life and activity, and became capable of representation. To this higher world was given the name of Pleroma, and the divine powers composing it in their ever-expanding procession from the Highest were called Æons."

Jesus, according to the Gnostic conception, was one of these higher Æons or Buddhas "proceeding from the Kingdom of Light for the redemption of this lower Kingdom of Darkness."

If the above was whittled down to the bare statement that the Boundless, to be made perceptible, had to become active and creative, and that thus it happened that the Boundless was manifested by and in the universe, Gnosticism, on this point, would not greatly differ from what was probably in the mind of Gotama when he pointed out that the Uncreate or Unproduced must have existence, otherwise the created, the produced, could not be.

In face of the historically-established fact that Buddhism had reached Palestine before the Christian era had commenced, and that Buddhistic influences were widely disseminated throughout the Holy Land when Jesus arose upon the scene, I wish to maintain that Jesus, although nurtured in the mixed society of ceremonial and Essenic Jews, cannot be claimed as belonging to the Essenes or

any other sect *after* he emerged from his long retirement and commenced his ministry. During the time of his withdrawal from publicity it must be assumed that he was growing in wisdom, and continued to do so until the perfect enlightenment came to him, when the Holy Ghost descended upon him, and he knew himself to be the Son and symbol of God, and, as such, capable of revealing the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to those who had ears to hear and eyes to see. This view, or reading, of the Scriptures was the cardinal tenet of the adoptionist Christology of the Paulician school in Armenia.

Jesus, as human, was undoubtedly begotten, not made, and died. Jesus, as divine, became so, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the *manhood* into God—first the natural, after that the spiritual, as St. Paul says. Jesus, as God, was immortal.

Jesus, as a perfected soul on earth, was a presentation of the Logos, in the sense given to this term by Dr. Paul Carus, "as forms of speech," which, containing in words eternal truth, is the most important part of the human soul, when soul is regarded as the formative factors of the various forms and their relations that have been evolving, and are constantly evolving and re-evolving. Jesus was, in this respect, altogether independent of his *entourage*, although a part of it in all other relations. He utilized what was good and answered his purpose in the tenets of the several sections of the society in which he moved. He was an eclectic, and stood midway between mystical and anti-mystical Israel.

The Essenes, as already stated, derived their doctrines and customs chiefly from the Gnostics of Egypt, and the origin of the latter has been traced to the propagation of Buddhism by Indian missionaries sent to Egypt in the time of King Asoka.

Now, Gotama Buddha was, in point of time, an earlier presentation of Logos; and, as Gotama's influences were

at work in Palestine when Jesus appeared, it follows in the natural course of things that Jesus, as a presentation of this same Logos, or Bodhi, would have shown a stronger leaning towards the tenets and practices of the Essenes than towards those of the ceremonial Jews.

The position of Jesus in Palestine closely corresponded with that of Gotama in Hindustan. Gotama was isolated between the ceremonial Brahmin class and the extreme mystical party. He also assimilated, as Jesus did, in furtherance of his mission, some of the tenets of each party, with certain modifications. He shocked the ceremonialists by showing disdain for rites as rites, and estranged himself from the extreme mystical party by refusing to give his imprimatur to factitious asceticism. In the same manner Jesus ignored some of the Essenic restrictions by partaking of wine and animal food.

Brahmanism suffered corruption through the acquisition by the priests of wealth and power. To the endowment of the Christian Church, and the elevation of its priests to temporal sway by the Emperor Constantine, has been attributed the beginning of the decadence of the Christian ideal. The decline of true Buddhism in India was due in a great measure to the munificence of King Asoka, who erected and enriched monasteries and other religious institutions. This led ultimately to many serious abuses, as well as to deviations from the precepts which Gotama had endeavoured to inculcate.

In Palestine, at the commencement of the Christian era, the ceremonial Jews or Pharisees,* though a numerically small section, were the dominant party of Judaism, and were represented by dignitaries of an overbearingly proud

* An indiscriminate denunciation of the Pharisees is, I think, unjustifiable. They must be held deserving of commendation in so far as they were guided by conscience to a close adherence to the letter of that Law which had been delivered to them by the Almighty, through Ezra the Lawyer, for strict and undeviating observance.

demeanour. Suppressed by them, the spirituality of the Essene Buddhists was thrown into the shade, and, when the voice crying in the wilderness was no longer to be heard and the commanding personality of St. John the Essene disappeared from the scene, Essenism as an organization came to an end.

To contend with these ceremonialists of Palestine and the corrupt Brahmanism of India, and to further the success of their respective missions in the face of these formidable forces, both Jesus in the one case and Gotama in the other realized the expediency of initiating a mode of proselytism which, by the humble bearing and unworldly aspect of its agents, would differentiate it from the arrogant and exclusive methods of the priestly classes. The missionaries whom these new lights sent forth into the world to propagate the doctrine of salvation received explicit instructions not to provide themselves with gold or silver, or change of raiment and shoes; in fact, they were to pose as examples of that humility and forbearance which was the keynote, in their ethical significance, of the two systems as formulated for the redemption of humanity. In both cases the spell of this evangelism was soon to be lost in a resurgence of the very evils it was intended to suppress—the pride of ecclesiasticism and the ascendancy of ritual—under the widening shadows of which the underlying truths of symbolism became obscured.

As told in the story of the Great Renunciation, Gotama goes into retirement at an early age; Jesus also becomes a recluse. It is probable that he spent the years elapsing between his adolescence and the commencement of his ministry among the Essenes, who dwelt in caves in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, where he would have found ample opportunity for meditation, as well as genial companionship at hand, if desired.

Jesus and Gotama both issued from their retreats and mystic communions, impregnated with a deep sympathy

for a suffering world, for the weary and heavy laden. They both accentuated with the same fervour of conviction the futility of laying up treasure upon earth, and pointed to the same mysterious heaven where true joy alone was to be found. But none of the dicta of Gotama have approached, either in a doctrinal sense or in uncompromising severity, the declaration of the Prophet of Nazareth as to the absolute necessity of renouncing the most sacred family ties before acceptance could be possible as a true and faithful disciple: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple."

The use of vehement declamations of this nature was probably forced upon the speaker by the condition of those days, when it was more than ever necessary to draw a sharp line and to emphasize the depth of the chasm that must divide followers of the ideal from those in thrall to the material. It has been remarked by Mr. Lillie that, if Jesus had had to deal with people in a later or more advanced state of civilization, other methods and other language would in all probability have been used to suit the altered conditions.

The attitude towards relations which Jesus, in the above-quoted passage, seems to have expected a disciple to assume may receive some elucidation from a story told in Visuddhi-Maga, which is headed by the translator, Mr. H. C. Warren,* "And Hate Not his Father and Mother." The story, briefly related, is to this effect:—

A young man left his father's house, and, having joined the Buddhist order of mendicants, was lost sight of by his parents. The mother sorrowed for the long absence of her son.

Meanwhile the young monk had been allotted a cell in a certain monastery. But it so happened that this cell had

* *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 434.

been provided at the expense of his father, who was a devout layman. When the father heard that the cell had been occupied, he set forth to visit the occupant, and, as was customary, to beg him to seek his alms at his house for a space of three months. The young monk appeared at the door of the cell, in his yellow robe and with shaven head, and, unrecognized by his father, accepted the invitation to receive alms at the house of the layman.

Day after day he attended at the threshold of his father's house, and took food from the hands of his parents. Still the mother continued to grieve for her long-absent son, accounting him dead.

One day, as the monk was returning towards the monastery, after parting on the road with his mother, the latter's brother, an elder, overtook her. She fell at her brother's feet, weeping and lamenting for her son.

"Then thought the elder: 'Surely this lad, through the moderateness of his passions, must have gone away without announcing himself.' And he comforted her, and told her the whole story. The lay woman was pleased, and, lying prostrate, with her face in the direction in which her son had gone, she worshipped, saying: 'Methinks the Blessed One must have had in mind a body of priests like my son when he preached the course of conduct customary with the great saints, showing how to take delight in the cultivation of content.....This man ate for three months in the house of the mother who bore him, and never said, 'I am thy son, and thou art my mother.'.....For such a one *mother and father* are no hindrances, much less any other lay devotees."

On one occasion, when I was privileged to attend an ordination service at Kandy, I was much struck with an incident which occurred at this time-old ceremony. At the conclusion of the service, when the melodious intoning of the celebrants had ceased to reverberate in the solemn ruins of the dimly-lighted aisle, the young initiate was placed at

the bottom of the row of monks, who were seated, cross-legged, in the nave of the temple. During the service the lay spectators had been railed off at the entrance, which faced the shrine, beneath which the chief abbot presided. But, when the newly-ordained monk had assumed a sitting posture in the place assigned to him, the railing was removed, and his female relations—perhaps his "beloved one" among them—came forward and prostrated themselves at his feet. The initiate sat with downcast eyes, unmoved by the demonstration, recalling to mind one of those statues of Buddha in which the countenance is represented with that abstracted yet compassionate expression so characteristic of the Perfect One. Then also was brought to my recollection that saying of Jesus recorded in the Gospel when he turned towards his mother and exclaimed: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"

It may, I think, be indisputably affirmed that the deep insight of these great reformers into the problems of life, the profound impression they made upon a vain world, their sublimated ideas, their superhuman influences, their stainless lives—that all these proclaim them to have been veritable embodiments of the mystic Sophia and one with God. Separated only by the time appointed for their appearance in the world, they were both presentations of the same Logos, called in Buddhistic terminology "Bodhi" or Intelligence. Whether there was a difference between the quality of presentation in the cases of Jesus and Gotama, whether the one produced a more flamboyant light than the other, and in what respects and how the media differed, are questions that can only be answered by Christians and Buddhists themselves, according to the light that is in them.

In the person of Jesus the human became divine. It was not a case of the conversion of the godhead into the flesh.

The whole of the so-called Athanasian Creed, read in the light of positive psychology, appears to be a statement of

many important truths, and, for all we know, it may be literally true that, unless a man makes this creed his own and acts up to it, he cannot be saved in the sense indicated. The creed is applicable to the needs of the whole world, and, therefore, is rightly called the Catholic faith. Unfortunately its patristic terminology has led the unenlightened to conclude that it is exclusive and sectarian ; consequently, many earnest Christians have evinced an inclination to reject it, and efforts have been made to have it expunged from the Liturgy of the Church of England.

Although it may be accepted as a true statement that the typical Hindu mind, which ranges over such a vast area of speculation, will never be induced by missionary zeal to confine itself within the apparently limited formulæ of Christian doctrine, it must not be overlooked that even the symbolism of Christianity represents and covers a shoreless ocean in which thought can disport itself without ever coming into contact with the limitations of the concrete. The Hindu mind binds itself, as it has been said of Art, to no creeds, no articles of faith, no schemes of salvation, no confessions. It cannot by its very nature. The unconditioned is its country, its native land, its home.

Christ rose from the dead, as the purified soul of man will at last be detached from the conditioned, though still remaining a quality of the conditioned. The Christ principle, the Comforter, or the Holy Ghost, does not, with the ascension of Christ, leave us comfortless, but stays with us to the end.

With regard to the posthumous appearance of Jesus and all phenomena of a like nature, it is not easy to find room in positive psychology for such a thing as a docetic body ; yet it would seem absolutely needful for the logical expansion of such a science to include, as a speculative possibility, the seeming existence of loose integrations of matter with apparent form and outline, of vaporous counterparts of animal organisms, of aspects of matter not familiar to mankind,

having a place in the general scheme of the apparitional world.*

Further, unless we doggedly refuse to rely on the published experiences of eminent and trustworthy men, such as Mr. Myers and his associates, the case of Mrs. Piper must be taken *au sérieux*. Those who accept an animistic solution have undoubtedly cleared a fence, but there still remains an obstacle before them in the shape of the definition of "spirit."

In seeking for an interpretation that will harmonize with the general tenor of Buddhistic philosophy and positive psychology, it is incumbent that the irrefragable "Law of Causation," *à l'œuvre* in the phenomenal world, should be taken into account, and any attempted effort of explanation of unfamiliar powers, such as those exhibited by mediums, demands that a place should be found for them in the mosaic of cause and effect. Mediumistic powers, it seems to me, are merely an extension of the faculty of expression-reading. Efferent nerves discharge impressions which can be read. Everyone, more or less, can read the expressions of a face, and learn thereby, to a limited and imperfect extent, the thoughts of an individual. In the case of the medium, the terminal organs of the afferent nerves being hyper-sensitive, the medium is able to do more than read in a general way the thought of a person by the impression conveyed through the discharge of the efferent nerves of a person. A medium, therefore, receives, in proportion to the degree of hyper-sensitiveness possessed by the terminal organs of the afferent nerves, the intimate knowledge harboured in the brain-cells of another person, which is constantly being discharged by the efferent nerves of that person. These powers, which I relegate to the realm of

* Maimonides and the Kabbalists speak of Genii—semi-material beings whose bodies are of fire, air, water, mixed with fine earth and visible at times to man. *Vide Bible Folk-Lore* (p. 190), by the author of *Rabbi Jeshua*.

causation, must not be confounded with "Bodhi," or "Logos," which is not subject to any phenomenal law.

The founder of the Brahmo Somaj, Keshub Chunder Sen, idealized Christ as a universal principle in these striking sentences:—

"As the sleeping Logos did Christ live potentially in the Father's bosom, long, long before he came into this world of ours.....Wherever there is intelligence, in all stages of life, where there is the least spark of instinct, there dwells Christ, if Christ is the Logos. In this right and rational view do not the Fathers all agree? Do they not speak of an all-pervading Christ? Do not they bear unequivocal testimony to Christ in Socrates? Even in barbarian philosophy and in all Hellenic literature they saw and adored their Logos, Christ.....I deny and repudiate the little Christ of popular theology, and stand up for a greater Christ, a fuller Christ, a more eternal Christ, a more universal Christ.

"I plead for the eternal Logos of the Fathers, and I challenge the world's assent.

"This is the Christ who was in Greece and Rome, in Egypt and in India. In the bards and the poets of the Rig-Veda was he. He dwelt in Confucius and in Sakya Muni (Gotama Buddha). This is the true Christ, whom I can see everywhere, in all lands and in all times, in Europe and in Asia, in Africa, in America, in ancient and modern times. He is not the monopoly of any nation or creed. All literature, all science, all philosophy, every doctrine that is true, every form of righteousness, every virtue that belongs to the Son, is the true subjective Christ, whom all ages glorify. He is pure intelligence (Bodhi), the word of God, mighty Logos. Scattered in all schools of philosophy and in all religious sects, scattered in all men and women of the East and the West, are multitudinous Christ-principles and fragments of Christ-life, one vast and identical Sonship diversely manifested."

The writer of an article in a review* says that the expression, Logos, is introduced "with startling suddenness by St. John in the exordium of his Gospel, and that there is nothing in the Old Testament or in the Synoptic Gospels to prepare the way for it, or to explain it." He inclines, the writer says, to attribute the introduction of the idea by St. John to the influence of Philo-Judæus, who elaborated it from the account of the Creation given in Genesis, to such an extent that he came to call the Logos, or intermediary power, the Son of God. Philo, after profound meditation, to quote his own words, "heard even a more solemn voice from my soul, *accustomed often to be possessed by God and to discourse of things which it knew not*, which, if I can, I will recall." Philo, the writer says, must have "observed that the Mosaic cosmogony leaves the *modus operandi* of creation in obscurity. The account given is '*God said*, Let there be light,' and so on. Thus the spoken word of God is represented as the efficient cause of creation. But to attribute speech to the Most High was manifestly a concession to the frailty of the human intellect."

Mr. W. E. Ball concedes that the Logos-idea was prevalent in the East long before the time of the Evangelist, and in this connection he refers to the Vedic vach or speech. This notion also possibly emanated from a cosmogony similar to that found in Genesis. He proceeds to say "that the editors of the Septuagint deliberately set themselves to soften down those passages in the earlier books of the Bible which were conceived to be most open to the charge of anthropomorphism. A single example will suffice. In Exodus xxiv. 9–11 it is related that Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy elders, ascended Mount Sinai '*and saw the God of Israel.*' The Hebrew text is

* "St. John and Philo-Judæus," by W. E. Ball (*Contemporary Review*, January, 1898).

clear beyond dispute; but in the Septuagint the passage reads, 'and saw the place where the God of Israel stood.'" Then we are referred to the "one living and true God, who, according to the Christian articles of faith, is without body, parts, or passions." As, however, in the Christian Scriptures it was recorded that he had been seen and conversed with, it became necessary to assume an emanation or intermediary power for this speaking and visible phase of God; hence, first, the unpersonified Logos of Philo, and afterwards the Logos made flesh in the person of Jesus according to St. John. The writer thinks that, however much the conception of Philo in the direction of a Logos as the Son of God may be minimized in its importance (on account of Philo's silence on the divine human as a Messiah) with reference to its bearing upon the writings of St. John, there is no doubt that Philo supplied "a theological vocabulary for the expression of Johannine and Pauline doctrine." "St. John grasped Philo's conception of the word as not only the revelation of the *silent* God, but also as a reflection of the invisible God." "Jesus never described himself as the son of God." Such endeavours, however, as the above to fix the genesis and growth of an idea from a concrete statement in a book, and to hypothecate its translation from one leader of thought to another, leaves out of reckoning the possibility of ideas finding a place in individual minds by means of a mystical faculty, or what is commonly called revelation. This mystical faculty is the power of sublimating ideas, a power, evolved from materialities, that, at a certain stage of thought, produces a capacity for abnormal insight into the nature of things, a capacity that can be developed by training; that is to say, when the faculty of knowledge becomes so far removed from the mechanical influences of the brain that its connection with the nervous system may be considered to be on the verge of absolute severance. This faculty is due to no individualized external power, but is simply a development from the

totality of things, their inherent qualities, their relationship and interactions.

Both Philo and St. John may be credited with the possession of a certain amount of this abnormal power, and considered as presentations of Logos, but not in the same perfection as Jesus and Gotama. "Bôdhi," Dr. Paul Carus says, "is that which conditions the cosmic order of the world and the uniformities of reality. Bôdhi is the everlasting prototype of truth, partial aspects of which are formulated by scientists in the various laws of nature. Above all, Bôdhi is the basis of the Dharma; it is the foundation of religion; it is the objective reality in the constitution of being from which the good law of righteousness is derived; it is the ultimate authority for moral conduct."

It is evident from historical sources that there were many Buddhists living at and after the time of Gotama, when traditions and legends accumulated, who had not assimilated his doctrines in their entirety and purity. So it was in the case of Jesus, whose followers and interpreters arrived at various conclusions in respect of his teaching.

Some who have emancipated themselves from the "letter that kills," and have acquired the power of grasping realities, have conceived the true position of Jesus and Gotama to have been that of clairvoyants, and, consequently, it is not to be expected that a complete mastery of the meaning of their communications would ever be attainable by ordinary human knowledge. This latter conclusion, in respect of Jesus, is most clearly established by passages to be found in the New Testament.

Jesus and Gotama laboured under the same difficulty: they knew more than was translatable into language, or communicable to their followers. Parables were attempted as media for imparting a glimmering of this knowledge to the ignorant and obtuse. Professor Oldenberg says: "When we try to resuscitate, in our own way and our own language, the thoughts that are embedded in the Buddhist teaching, we

can scarcely help forming the impression that it was not a mere idle statement which the sacred texts present to us, that the Perfect One knew much more which he thought inadvisable to say than what he esteemed it profitable to say."

Jesus withheld all explanation as to how evil came into the world. He dealt with it as a fact. He did not even theorize about the origin of evil. He taught, on the principle of his well-known saying, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." "A careful regard to audience is traceable in his use of apocalyptic language about his second coming; it is to Jews only—the Twelve, or the high priest, or the Sanhedrin, or Nathaniel, the 'Israelite indeed'—that he speaks of cleft heavens, cloud chariots, and attendant troops of angels. With the Roman governor he avoids Jewish metaphors" (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Eschatology").

Both Jesus and Gotama must have realized the hopelessness of imprinting their so-called esoteric teaching (which underlay and intertwined with the ethical) upon the understanding of those who had not cultivated noumenal instincts. Gotama had need, even on his death-bed, to explain everything all over again to his closest companion, the beloved disciple Ananda. In how many ways Jesus endeavoured to convey the meaning of the kingdom of God to his hearers! Yet to this day how few have grasped a fraction of its import. The meaning must be felt rather than understood by the intellect. In fact, it is necessary to become a Parsifal to do so ("for not many wise men after the flesh are called"). Also, one must get as far as possible away from the bondage of the intellect, which handicaps one in the attempt. A full knowledge of such mysteries cannot be attained until the machinery of the brain is left a considerable distance behind; until ideas are no longer in positive connection with the neural vibrations of the brain. The clock cannot hear what is going on around it for the

noise of its ticking. Plotinus says: "To reach the ultimate goal, thought itself must be left behind; for thought is a form of motion, and the desire of the soul is for motionless rest, which belongs to the One."

Neither Jesus nor Gotama committed themselves to writing; hence we are entirely dependent, in our judgment of the purport of their mission, upon the general tenour of communications vouchsafed to us by the special correspondents of their era. It is upon these synoptists and other recorders that people build their theories, and pile up interpretations in various very restricted senses.

But defining is truly dethroning in the cases of Jesus and Gotama. Like the dove in the Song of Solomon, they abide in the clefts of the rocks, in the secret places of the stairs. The suppliant can only satisfy his thirsty soul with an invocation: "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely!" Theism, Atheism, Deism, and many other 'isms must be cast out of our minds into the bottomless pit before we can hope to place our trembling feet within even the threshold of their presence. There, perforce, we must arrest our progress, lost in transcendent wonder. This, as Carlyle says, is worship in its highest sense.

No allusion was made either by Jesus or Gotama to the miraculous circumstances said to have attended their nativity; and, although there exist no data for the assumption that the historians of the latter were inspired writers like those of the New Testament, the messianic halo with which Buddhist tradition has encircled the figure of Gotama tends to bring together the personalities of the two reformers into closer pictorial relationship. But this blending of the portraiture cannot be taken in any sense as a help towards wheeling into line the psychological forces in the field of inquiry. Nevertheless, the interest attaching to these traditions as coincidental, and the consideration that the date of the Buddhist chronicles is

anterior to that of the New Testament, render them worthy of brief notice.

M. Ernest de Bunsen* says: "Among a circle of Indians prophecies were accredited which announced the incarnation of an angel, called the Anointed or Messiah, who should bring to earth the Wisdom or Bôdhi from above, and establish the kingdom of heavenly truth and justice. He would be of royal descent, and genealogies would connect him with his ancestors. The 'Blessed One,' the 'God among Gods,' and the 'Saviour of the World' was, according to Buddhistic records, incarnate by the Holy Ghost, of the royal Virgin Maya, and he was born on Christmas Day, the birthday of the Sun, for which reason the Sun became the symbol of Gotama Buddha. To be like Gotama is to reach the ideal† which has been set to humanity, and to be like God. Salvation does not depend on any outward act, but on a change or renewal of the mind, or a reform of the inner nature, or faith in the innate guiding power of God, of which the celestial Buddha, incarnated in Gotama, was held to be the highest organ. The saving faith, therefore, was brought by, and centred in, the incarnate Angel-Messiah, the Saviour of the World. Salvation is by faith, and faith comes by the Maya, the Spirit or Word of God, of which Gotama, the Angel-Messiah, was regarded as the divinely-chosen and incarnate messenger, the Vicar of God, and God himself on earth. According to Chinese-Buddhistic writings, it was the Holy Ghost, or Shing-Su, which descended on the Virgin Maya. The effect produced by this miracle is thus summed up in the most ancient Chinese life of Buddha which we at present possess, translated between A.D. 25 and 190: 'If the child born from this conception be induced to lead a

* *The Angel-Messiah of Buddhists, Essenes, and Christians*, pp. 25, 32.

† "Jesus is the father of all those who seek in dreams of the ideal the repose of their souls" (Renan).

secular life, he shall become a universal monarch; but if he leaves his home, and becomes a religious person, then he shall become Buddha, and shall save the world.'"

Dr. Paul Carus, in his *Buddhism and its Christian Critics*, pp. 150-51, says: "According to the orthodox Buddhist conception, there is no doubt about it that the incarnation of Buddha, in the person of Gotama Siddharta, has passed away. Gotama has died, and his body will not be resurrected. But Buddha continues to live in the body of the Dharma—*i.e.*, the law or religion of Buddha; and, in so far as he is the truth, he is immortal and eternal."

"The whole world may break to pieces, but Buddha will not die. The words of Buddha are imperishable."

The idea of the appearance of a periodical Messiah was extant throughout the Jaino-Buddhist times, thousands of years before Gotama Buddha entered upon his mission in the field of religious reformation. "Millions of Buddhists still believe that their Lord will come again to redeem his people, appearing as Maitri."* The twenty-three Buddhas who preceded Gotama—"the immortal saints universally acknowledged by the Jains as coming to earth in divers ages to aid and bless mankind"—have been recorded, with their names, fathers' names, and symbols, reaching as far back, it has been calculated, as 6,000 B.C. "The Blessed One said: 'The Buddha that will come after me will be known as Maitrâiya, which means he whose name is Kindness.'"

The conception of a mystical Trinity was introduced into both the Christian and Buddhist systems of belief at a late stage of their development. In the case of Buddhism it arose from the simple formula:—

> "I take refuge in Buddha,
> I take refuge in the Dharma,
> I take refuge in the Sangha"—

* *Vide* General Forlong's *Short Studies in the Science of Comparative Religions.*

that is, in the Prophet, the Law, and the Church. These afterwards were interpreted to stand for the Self-Existent, the Son (Logos) or Sophia (Wisdom), and the Holy Ghost (or uniting principle).

Gotama has also been said to possess three personalities, and every one of them is of equal importance.* "There is the Dhârma Kâya; there is the Nirmâna Kâya; there is the Sambhôga Kâya. *Buddha* is the all-excellent truth, eternal, omnipresent, and immutable; this is the Sambhôga Kâya, which is in a perfect state of bliss. *Buddha* is the all-loving teacher, assuming the shape of the beings whom he teaches; this is the Nirmâna Kâya, his apparitional body. *Buddha* is the all-blessed dispensation of religion; he is the spirit of the Sangha and the meaning of the commands which he has left us in his sacred word, the Dhârma; this is the Dhârma Kâya, the body of the most excellent law."

"It was proclaimed," says Mr. Lillie, "that Gotama possessed a superfluity of good Karma, or Righteousness, which was available for all men to partake of, whereby salvation might be had." He quotes from the Bible as a parallel to this idea: "By the righteousness of one the free gifts came upon all men unto justification of life"; also: "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

To be saved by "the blood" in a realistic sense is another way very much accentuated by St. Paul. To be saved through "faith in the blood" has been taken to mean, by some interpreters, through faith in the genealogy, or divine stock, from which Jesus traced his descent, as well as through "faith in the life" (which is the blood)—that is, by following the life-example of the Son, in contradistinction to the idea of salvation through a materialistic reliance on the details of a violent death.

The doctrine of Predestination, which holds such a prominent position in Christian theology, cannot be excluded

* *Vide Gospel of Buddha*, by Paul Carus, p. 227.

altogether from a consideration of Buddhistic philosophy, in which, however, it bears a somewhat different signification. Although both Jesus and Gotama made use of the language of "free-will" as we talk of to-morrow, which never is, one is forced to conclude that, by virtue of their position as manifestations of the Logos, they were both aware of the scientific certainty of the non-existence of what is commonly understood as "free-will." The very fact of the law of causation being the pivot around which Buddhist philosophy revolves seems to assure us that this was, in the knowledge of Gotama, the central law of the Kosmos, and such that it could not be affected by the will of an individual who was not an independent individual, but simply part and parcel of the molecular contents of the apparitional world.

As Gotama recognized that the mind and sense of humanity were so deeply ingrained with the notion of free-will, he was constrained to use the *argumentum ad hominem*, and outwardly base his ethical system on a free-will which seemed natural to humanity to believe in, but which was nevertheless a delusion.

The several passages in the New Testament in which the doctrine of Predestination is plainly set forth are too well known to necessitate their quotation here. St. Augustine says: "What happens of thee he himself [God] works in thee. Never anything happens of thee which he himself does not work in thee.....Never is anything done by thee unless he works it in thee."*

The universal feeling that we possess "free-will" is no proof of its reality, and only on the basis of the axiom that nothing is too unscientific or extraordinary to be possible (which is sound enough) can it be accepted as a possibility. Even Locke could not, for the life of him, reconcile omniscience and free-will, although he believed in both.

* *Cf.* "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil: I, the Lord, do all these things" (Bible).

Taking free-will as a sensation, we must pronounce it to be just as illusory as any other sensation, except as a sensation. On the other hand, the Determinist view cannot be classified as a sensation, but is rather a product of reason. Professor James says: "Genuine Determinism affirms, not the impotence of free-will, but the unthinkability of free-will."

St. Paul writes, with reference to sin: "It is no more I that do it, but sin (or evil Karma) that dwelleth in me." And we are instructed in some parts of the Christian Scripture that all good is of God, and not of ourselves. Here, then, there appears to be a complete obliteration of the idea of free-will in respect of actions either good, bad, or indifferent; and in confirmation of this view it is necessary to remember that the language of free-will was used for convenience sake, that God is distinctly said "to have called those things which be not as though they were." St. Paul says: "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly." Possibly he may have had in mind when he delivered this dictum the vanity, or vain conceit, of assuming free-will.

If it be permissible to assert that we exercise no control, in the sense of free-will, over the functions of our digestive organs, which perform their work without our being sensibly conscious of it (except in the case of abnormal disturbance), one would think the assertion might be extended in regard to cerebral functions also. We conceive thought to precede many of our actions, but if thought is the non-spatial accompaniment of cerebral cell-action, and the latter is no more amenable to the control of free-will than our digestive organs are, then those actions which are the sequences of thought cannot be "free-will" actions.

It is generally admitted that there are occasions when an individual acts without exercising free-will; when, for instance, a man loses his head, as the expression goes, in a sudden catastrophe. There are also distinctly involuntary

actions, such as blushing, turning pale, perspiring, etc. It seems, then, that an individual only exercises his will, according to general belief, under certain conditions. But if free-will is acknowledged to be absent under some conditions, may we not reasonably conclude that it may be absent altogether, and only exists as an illusion of the senses?

Anyhow, circumstances—or, in other words, the molecular activities of the universe—appear to be the dominant factor in determining our actions. These activities, when working through cerebral cells, turn out thoughts; when operating through the skin pores, they produce perspiration.

Locke, in his chapter on "Power" (human understanding), seems to draw very near to an admission of Determinism, but then flies away from it, evidently alarmed by the spectre of irresponsibility. He labours to demonstrate that uneasiness or desire determines the will to the successive (so-called) voluntary actions whereof the greatest part of our lives is made up, and by which we are *conducted* through different causes to different ends. This is, as far as it goes, unadulterated Determinism.

Dr. Paul Carus defines freedom of will as the power to do that which one wills, not as the freedom of a man to will what he wills. Indeterminism he declares to be based upon error, because it attributes to man an exceptional place in the universe. Man is supposed to be exempt from the uniform and inexorable law of cause and effect which rules in the universe. He says: "The decision of a free man depends upon his character"; but character is only the result of innumerable causes, which has become a cause upon which other effects follow, according to the cosmic law of causation, which must include in its impartial sway man as well as all other integrations of matter.

Determinism is morally safe, because man cannot escape from the *feeling* that he possesses free-will, which, nevertheless, is an illusion, in the sense that "illusions are

ideas that have not originated from the data of experience."

In *Light* (April 18th, 1898) there is quoted the following, as part of a discourse on "The Evolution of Mind," delivered by Professor Jordan: "The plant searches for food by a movement of the feeding parts alone.....The tender tip is the plant's brain. If locomotion were in question, the plant would need to be differently constructed. It would demand the mechanism of the animal. The nerve, brain, and muscle of the plant are all represented by the tender growing cells of the moving tips. The plant is touched by moisture or sunlight. It 'thinks' of them, and in so doing the cells that are touched and 'think' are turned towards the source of the stimulus. The function of the brain, therefore, in some sense exists in the tree, but there is no need in the tree for a special sensorium."

A comment in *Light* on this discourse runs as follows: "In higher organisms the mind becomes more and more localized, until in the higher animals it has a special organ—the brain, which, however, is shut up in darkness and 'has no knowledge except such as comes to it from the sense-organs through the ingoing or sensory nerves.' Being filled with these impressions, some of which are actual sensations, while others are memories of past sensations, *the brain must make a choice* among them by fixation of attention, if it is to act properly. To find data for such a choice is the function of the intellect. This, Dr. Jordan tells us, is the difference between mind and mere instinct, or inherited habits. Mind chooses, instinct cannot, for it is but an automatic mind-process inherited from generation to generation."

It must be remembered, however, that this faculty of choosing, said to be possessed by the brain and acquired by a process of development, is not free, but conditioned. The terminal organs of the afferent nerves also may be said to possess this faculty of choice, yet limited by their qualities and the nature of the external influences to which they are submitted.

The admission of a faculty of choice does not involve the idea of absolute freedom, nor need it disturb the Buddhist conception that there exists nothing behind the organism in the shape of an ego-entity, or soul, which chooses or remembers, and that there is no hidden agent which prompts the conveyance of impressions.

If we admit this faculty of choice to be possessed by the brain and terminal organs of the afferent and efferent nerves, it simply involves the concession that the stored-up memories in the brain, and the habits acquired by the muscular organism, as results of past external influences, act in the *manner* of choice; and in this sense only, it would seem, can the notion of "freedom" be scientifically and logically entertained.

If the faculty of choice, in this restricted sense, as the possession of a pluricellular organism such as man, is accepted in confirmation of the existence of "freedom," then we must accord the possession of "freedom" to the simplest form of life. The cellule composed only of protoplasm and a nucleus possesses the very same faculty.

M. Alfred Binet tells us of the highly-developed psychical functions of the spermatozoid; how it searches out the locality of the ovule situated at a distance; how, with a sense of direction, it traverses the whole length of the intervening space, overcoming all obstacles—which are many—in its path, to attain the desired object; and he maintains that such actions cannot be explained by simple irritability, nor by chemical affinity. The brain may possess this faculty, and the power to carry into effect the choice, as qualities of its mechanism; but there is no discrete entity behind the brain as agent.

"Is it quite certain that, when consciousness seems to affirm that 'I can choose so and so,' it means more than 'it is possible such and such a choice will take place in my mind'? If it does not mean more than this, its affirmation is not against Determinism" (*Mind*, April, 1898, p. 191).

Even if the faculty of choice is granted, it is limited in the sense that choice does not always produce the effect chosen.

"Locke and Hume say 'Liberty is a power to act as *we* choose.' But can *we* choose? Are *we* the original causes of our choice? And what is the power to which action is subjected? Must it not be subject to some other power, and, therefore, not free, unless it is a self-existent power?"

Enough has been said, perhaps, on this subject to explain the author's position in assuming that both Jesus and Gotama must have been, by necessity of their omniscience, well aware of the truth of Determinism. Yet, having to deal with phenomenal beings, they were constrained to treat them as such, and address them in phenomenal terms, and to lower themselves to the level of those sensations from which the illusive and unconquerable feeling of responsibility arises.

The fact of occult powers having been attributed to Jesus and Gotama makes it necessary to include in this chapter a brief reference to the subject of magic,* and to consider in what light we should regard this art in connection with these two characters.

It has been remarked that the opposition to magic has seldom been connected with sceptical doubts as to its reality, and that the distinction drawn between white and black magic was due to the assumption by the priestly class of the sole right to the exercise of magic in their rites, and "hence magicians who were outside the pale of priesthood were called sorcerers, or dealers in black magic." The pages of the Christian Bible are aflame with magic, and, on opening the Old Testament, one seems to stand on the threshold of an unmeasurable cavern, where dreams the Great Magician that inhabiteth Eternity.

No one who has not made of magic, in its several

* Magic I define as the art of visualizing and utilizing those aspects and qualities of matter that are not familiar to the normal senses.

branches, a close study—who has not literally soaked in mysticism (that "powerful solvent of definite dogma")—or who is not gnomic, intuitionally "in the know" without study, can possibly pose as an authoritative interpreter of God's Holy Word.

An authority on the Hermetic Philosophy says that astrology is to be found "throughout the Bible, from the very first chapter of Genesis, when the stars were set for *signs* and seasons and days and years, on to the Book of Revelation, where the wonder was seen in heaven, the woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and all the great astrological problems in that book; and the great truth, the Incarnation itself, announced by the star of the Epiphany.....All the occult methods of divination more or less find their place in the Bible and in the scheme of religion. The divination by Urim and Thummin is a well-known form of clairvoyance which is practised now. Joseph's divining-cup was merely a species of magic mirror, the form of which is well known now, and is used by some clairvoyant seers. The use of music by the prophet Elisha, when the kings of Israel and Judah went out against Moab, is precisely the same as is now used by many Spiritualist mediums and seers, though not with the same effect ordinarily. And so one might go on with all the forms of divination. It can be clearly proved that divination by cards was known and practised in Biblical times by the Biblical prophets; all this showing that during the times of the Old Testament, and with *commendation* from the prophets, and in use by the prophets, were modes of divination which postulated the truth of the Hermetic science."

It stands to reason that Jesus as God, and Gotama as Buddha, must have been acquainted with all the laws of nature, and, consequently, were in full possession of so-called occult powers. The manifestations of these powers enter more largely and distinctly, as true records, into the life of Jesus than into that of Gotama. The acts of Jesus

were one continuous demonstration of occult power, and his disciples were, in a lesser degree, gifted with the same powers.

That which is known as ceremonial magic was not made use of to any extent by Jesus and Gotama as a method or means for the production of these powers. This was not requisite with them, as it is in the case of ordinary individuals, who must have recourse to those aids which have been found by occultists, after long experience, to be the most efficient means of attaining their object.

Clumsier methods have been used with a minimum amount of success; but, if the operator desires to arrive at any degree of perfection in the art, it is just as necessary for him to observe closely the rules laid down by the ceremonialists of magic as it is for a gamekeeper to make use of the accepted symbolism in the training of a retriever—that is, if the object is to accomplish the undertaking with the least trouble and the best results. Jesus and Gotama,* on account of their unique position as being *en rapport* with this power, had no occasion, therefore, to resort to ceremonial magic.

The Indian saint Mozoomdar (whose acquaintance I had the privilege of making in India), in his introductory remarks to *The Oriental Christ*, a book published by him in 1883, points out how estimates of character vary if viewed from different standpoints, and how, when the singularity of a nature happens to lie in its manysidedness, representations of it may be conflicting, but quite genuine and correct. The whole of the introduction to this work shows such remarkable and original insight into the character of Jesus, as judged from an Oriental point of view, that I cannot forbear to give a few quotations, more especially as they may tend

* "Gotama, as Buddha, possessed an intuitive insight of the nature of every object in the universe, a knowledge of the mind of all beings, and of the finality of the stream of life" (*The Gospel of Buddha*, by Paul Carus, p. 244).

to help forward the purpose of this chapter by demonstrating how the personalities of Jesus and Gotama are interchangeable under certain aspects in respect of their mystic significance.

Early in the introduction the writer says: "It is held that the celestial figure of the sweet Prophet of Nazareth is illumined with strange and unknown radiance when the light of Oriental faith and *mystic* devotion is allowed to fall upon it. It is a fact that the greatest religions of the world have sprung from Asia. It has, with some accuracy, been said, therefore, that it is an Asiatic only who can teach religion to Asiatics. In Christ we see not only the exaltedness of humanity, but also the grandeur of which Asiatic nature is susceptible."

In the following very plain terms he distinguishes Christ as the Logos of the Gospel of St. John, with which may be classified the "Bodhi," or Intelligence of the Buddhists: "He was the thought and energy of God. He was the plan of God. He was the light of divine reason and love, as yet involved within the great impenetrable. In that sense the whole universe was at one time merely the thought of the Infinite Being. And every one of us has sprung from the formless ocean of divinity that spread through all."

"John the Baptist," he writes, "had announced the kingdom of heaven. Jesus pointed to it. Pointed where? .....He pointed to the kingdom of heaven in his own heart. He pointed to the inner sphere where his disembodied spirit communed with the eternal spirit of life; and, beholding God in him and himself in God, he exclaimed: 'I and my Father are one.'.....He also beheld his brethren in him, and cried: 'Abide in me, and I in you.'"

This, the writer says, is pure Idealism, and Christ even idealized his flesh and blood, and administered them to his disciples as a sacrament.

Finally, this enraptured saint of Hindustan places

before the reader two characters in illustration of the distinctions which may be said to exist between Eastern and Western conceptions of Jesus: "One of them is an elaborately learned man, versed in all the principles of theology. His doctrine is historical, exclusive, and arbitrary.....He insists upon plenary inspiration, becomes stern over forms, continually descants on miracles.....condemns men to eternal darkness and death. He continually talks of blood and fire and hell.....he hurls invectives at other men's faith.....All scriptures are false which have grown up outside of his dispensation, climate, and authority.....He is tolerated only because he carries with him the imperial prestige of a conquering race. Can this be the Christ that will save India?

"By his side another figure. He is simple, natural. He is a stranger to the learning of books. Out of the profound, untaught impulses of his soul he speaks.....His doctrines are the simple utterances of a fatherhood which embosoms all the children of men, and a brotherhood which makes all the races of the world one great family.....All nations respond to his mystical utterances about heaven and earth. .....His self-immersed air, absent eyes.....which show that his spirit is far, far away, point him out to be the Prophet of the East, the sweet Jesus of the Galilean lake.

"Throughout the whole Eastern world the perfume of his faith and devotion has spread. The wild genius of Mohammed knew and adored him amid the sands of Arabia. The tender, love-intoxicated soul of Hafiz revelled in the sweetness of Christ's piety amid the rosebuds and nightingales of Persia. Look at this picture and upon that..... When we speak of an Eastern Christ we speak of the incarnation of unbounded love and grace; and when we speak of a Western Christ, we speak of the incarnation of theology, formalism, ethical, and physical force. Christ, we know, is neither of the East nor of the West; but men have localized what God meant to make universal."

Happily there is no need to substantiate the fact of the immense consolations derived by humanity from the Christian mode of regarding the past, the present, and the future, with all its dazzling possibilities, in the direction of a New Jerusalem; but it must, indeed, seem strange to those nurtured amid Christian influences that a religious system such as Buddhism, which does not recognize a God or Soul or Immortality in the Occidental sense of these terms, should claim to have as its product that *cœur léger* temperament which is said to be, and to have been, the distinctive characteristic of its countless adherents.

When the mind wanders afar from the dogmatic of the scholiast, the life of Jesus presents itself with a dramatic force of loveliness and grandeur which, of its kind, cannot be surpassed; and the poetic pathos of the New Testament, though not so resonant as that to be found in the pages of such works as Job and the Prophets, possesses a pastoral charm of its own at once soothing and stimulating.

In Buddhistic literature, and in the intensity of Buddhistic thoughts, there are extraordinary and unrivalled beauties which are emphasized in a remarkable manner, in the sympathetic rendering accorded to them by such exponents as Professor Oldenberg and Mr. Lafcadio Hearn. One must be insensitive to a degree if such writers and interpreters of Buddhism do not succeed in striking a chord of overwhelming harmony throughout the system.

Chapter II.

GOD AND THE KOSMOS.

"Differences veil a fundamental unity."—Bruno.

Both Christianity and Buddhism can be set to the same music, the music of the unconditioned. The definition of the Christian God as invisible and eternal, and as that which has not parts, body, or passions, is incontestably an attempt to convert our thoughts to a belief in, and appreciation of, the unconditioned. The entire teaching of Jesus moves in this direction; and this will be recognized at once if we permit ourselves to interpret his symbolic utterances in the right and only logical sense. To be saved—that is, to realize the unconditioned—we must believe in Jesus; namely, in his teaching.

If humanity could assume this attitude of mind—if it could attune its thoughts to what Christian symbolism really means, or ought to mean—then all the magnificent ritual of the Holy Catholic Church, the realistic hymnology, even the shibboleths of the Salvationist, would no longer give rise to the supercilious contempt of the so-called intellectual world, but would everywhere be recognized as the expression of the most exalted philosophy, and consonant with the latest results of psycho-physiological research. "The proud have held me exceedingly in derision, yet have I not shrinked from thy law." Everything that teaches us that the end of all things and the goal of all men is a complete realization of the "unconditioned" is the acceptable word of God.

Gotama, using a symbolism of his own, and by means of parables not wholly dissimilar to those employed by Jesus, taught the self-same truth. The flesh has to be crucified —that is, the idea of separateness has to be eliminated— and then only will Heaven, Nirvana, at-oneness with the unproduced (with God), be a reality.

It is legitimate to speak of Jesus as God, and Gotama is known as Buddha. Here we have, then, Jesus-God and Gotama-Buddha. But God and Buddha are but two different terms used for the expression of one identical idea. The recognition of "Buddha" as an equivalent for "God" has been very generally ignored by interpreters of Buddhism; hence the confusion of thought which has existed in this connection. This in some measure may also be due to the fact that Gotama, in preaching to the Brahmins, made use of the word "Brahma" to denote God.

Jesus and Gotama were gnomic, or divinely wise—that is, they *knew* of the "unconditioned." They both ardently desired to communicate this knowledge to the world, and the way of escape from absolute bondage to the conditioned to a realization of the unconditioned. If, knowing the way, man still elects to continue in bondage to the conditioned state, in a hell of misery or through a series of incarnations, he can do so by disregarding the injunction, "Set not your affections on things on earth."

Gotama pointed out the *straight* path that leads to a union with Brahma (God); but there was also a circuitous path indicated by him, by which we can make "golden stairways of our weaknesses." To the different symbolism employed by Gotama, and the meaning attached to this symbolism by his exponents, may also be attributed the failure of many acquainted only with the outlines of Buddhism to assimilate the term "Buddha" with that of "God" in its universalist sense.

When we come to a careful and impartial study of the Gospel of Buddha, it is astonishing what a close connection

is to be found therein between the God idea of the Christian community and the Buddha idea of the Asiatic world. Gotama does not, as many suppose, exclude the notion of God as that of all-pervading Love. "The whole wide world," he says, "above, below, around, and everywhere, will continue to be filled with Love, far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure." "Buddha is the all-loving teacher, assuming the shape of the beings whom he teaches." This is the second person of the Buddhist triad, the apparitional body of Gotama.

The splendid symbolism of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, common to both Christianity and Buddhism, falls like the cloudy hangings of a gorgeous sunset between us and the unconditioned. Many of the spectators are held spellbound and enslaved by the beauty of the phenomena alone; a few see its meaning, and realize the noumenon. The symbol is, as it were, a yearning of the visible to suggest the invisible, the conditioned speaking to us of the unconditioned. The small minority —the Blessed Ones, the Arhats of Buddhism, the saints of Christendom—they are those who know the Lord, who see God. Yet there remains for every being a sure hope of the deathless life.

After many a weary round of births and deaths or long sojourns in Purgatory, after many a climb up the dark ladder of life, every being at last will reach the desired goal, and see the fulfilment of prophecy when God will *be* all and *in* all.

A great Orientalist has pronounced Buddhism to be the most godless of all heathen religions. If this assertion means that the god of the heathens is anthropomorphic and that of the Buddhists is not so, then the statement of this distinguished scholar, though a little staggering at first sight, may be regarded as containing an element of truth, but not the whole truth.

The question whether the true Buddhism of Gotama

recognized a god in any sense of the expression still exercises the minds of controversialists. At the very outset of our inquiry into the Buddhistic conception of a god or no-god, we are confronted by directly conflicting conclusions arrived at by two eminent authorities. Professor Rhys Davids regards the true Buddhism of Gotama to be nothing but blank Atheism, whereas Mr. Arthur Lillie unflinchingly pronounces it to be Theism *pur et simple.*

In my judgment, all the controversy that rages around the Hinayâna* and the Mahayâna, which represent respectively the Southern and Northern schools of thought, only confuses the issue; and the opinions of sectarian Buddhists, or even the edicts of Asoka, cannot, I think, be accepted in themselves as directly supporting any hard-and-fast theory regarding the Theistic or Atheistic tendencies in the teaching of Gotama.

With reference to the evidence of the edicts, it must not be overlooked that Asoka figured as a good Theist while Viceroy at Ujain, and for some years subsequent to his becoming Emperor of India—a fact which several of his edicts, I believe, confirm.

A God, one Person (yet three Persons in One), without body (yet walks), without parts (yet seen), without passions (yet with compassion), a spirit, an indefinable, an illocatable, incomprehensible substance in which we live and move and have our being, that cannot be known, yet can be found

* The Hinayâna, or Small Vehicle of Salvation, was the abstract and philosophical presentment of Buddhism as first conceived. It was more adapted to the sage than to the masses who required a symbolic presentation, such as is afforded by the Mahayâna, or Great Vehicle of Salvation. We see the same kind of development holding a place in the history of Christianity. Upon the enigmatical utterances of Jesus and the mystical sophisms of St. Paul there has been raised a splendid fabric of dogmatic ecclesiasticism; and under the shadow of its symbolism the poor in spirit, the ignorant and the weak, have found consolations which would not have been theirs if no such development of the abstract principles of the faith had taken place.

(those that seek after me shall find me), which some people have beautifully symbolized as a loving Father and others have debased into a jealous and vindictive tyrant—of such a God only, as an eternally conditionless mystery, it can surely be established, from a review of Buddhistic evidence, that it is not, and has not been, totally ignored.

It is difficult to see the force of denoting God as super-personal or super-anything. He or It is personal, and everything else as masked by materialities, and in the sense of all things being his contents. Particles of matter are the contents of form. Form cannot be manifest without matter. God is pure or shapeless form, as well as the formative power of form.

Dr. Paul Carus, in referring to the God idea of the Buddhists, says: "No religion can exist without belief in the existence of an ultimate authority of conduct; but in this sense Buddhism, too, teaches a belief in God. The Abhidharma, or Buddhist philosophy, distinctly rejects the idea of a creation by an Ishvara—*i.e.*, a personal creator; but it recognizes that all deeds, be they good or evil, will bear fruit according to their nature, and they teach that this law, which is ultimately identical with the law of cause and effect, is an irreversible reality; that there are no exceptions or deviations from it. Thus law takes, to some extent, the place of the God idea, and Buddhists gain a personal attitude to it, similarly as Christians do when speaking of God, in quite a peculiar way. The doctrine of the Trikâya, or the three bodies, teaches us that Buddha has three personalities. The first one is the Dharma-Kâya, or the body of the law; it corresponds to the Holy Ghost in the Christian dogmatology. The second personality is the Nirmâna-Kâya, or the body of transformations; it is transient in its various forms, and its most important and latest appearance has been Gotama Siddhârta. This corresponds to the second person of the Christian Trinity, to God the Son, or Christ.....The third personality of Buddha is called

Sambhoga-Kâya, or the body of bliss. It is the Christian idea of God the Father. Buddha, in his capacity as Sambhoga-Kâya, is described as eternal, omnipresent, and omnipotent. He is the life of all that lives, and the reality of all that exists. Thus he is the All in All, in whom we live and move and have our being."*

General Forlong, in his *Short Studies in the Science of Comparative Religion*, informs us that "the first great Hindu Creating Father was a real Prajā-pati, 'Lord of Creations'—a true Hermaik Brahmā; and, being depicted as a potent masculine Zeus, like to Yahvê, Chemosh, Amon, etc., he in time naturally became distasteful to cultured and pious philosophic minds searching after a *great ideal*, and no magnified man, solar or royal governor. As did Vedantists, so have others developed a *great neuter Brahm;* even pious Christian philosophers have sought, and some few dared to own, a Brahm, despite the direct anthropomorphic teaching of the Christian and Hebrew Scriptures. Thus the Rev. Principal Caird, D.D. (Glasgow University), boldly says, in his Gifford Lectures, 1895–6, that in his view 'Christianity knows no such thing as a First Cause, or an Omnipotent Creator and moral governor of the world, a being framed after the image of man, an anthropomorphic potentate seated on a celestial throne and dispensing rewards after the manner of an earthly sovereign or magistrate.'"

It is remarkable to find a parallel conception of Law, as associated by Buddhists with the idea of divinity prevailing among the Egyptians, who "recognized a divinity in those cases only when they perceived the presence of a fixed Law, either of permanence or of change. This *regularity*, which is the constitutive character of the Egyptian divinity, was called Maāt. Maāt is, in fact, the Law and Order by which

* *Buddhism and its Christian Critics*, by Paul Carus.

the universe exists. Truth and Justice are but forms of Maāt as applied to human action."*

In Mr. Arthur Lillie's book, *The Influence of Buddhism on Primitive Christianity*, there is struck a note of playfulness which almost leads one to suppose that the writer does not intend that he should be taken seriously everywhere in his fascinating pages. This is apparent even in his treatment of the Jewish conception of an Almighty ruler, when he takes for his text (Judges i. 19): "The Lord was with Judah, and He drove out the inhabitants of the mountains, but *could not* drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had chariots of iron." In a similar spirit in this connection he would probably handle rather roughly the notion of omniscience.

Mr. Lillie, further on in his book, quotes a conversation that is said to have taken place between Gotama and some Brahmins on the subject of ultimate union with the Eternal Brahma. Gotama points out that all their talk about union is foolish talk, because they know nothing about him. But this does not necessarily imply, as one would gather from the commentary, that Gotama knew nothing of a Brahma, or quality of the kosmos or Buddha, which was indefinable, and could only be adumbrated in language, and no more. His sole intention, it seems to me, was to impress on his audience that this Brahma could not be approached by a factitious asceticism, and that all speculations as to his nature and origin would be mere waste of time and energy. Subsequently, on p. 83, Gotama is made to refer to this Brahma as a non-Theistic "It"—evidently the neuter Brahm—the absolute, or the great "I am" of the Christian Bible.

Here I would refer *en passant* to the following passage which occurs on p. 84: "There are two schools of Buddhism, and they are quite agreed in this, that Buddhism is the quickening of the spiritual vision."

* *Vide Book of the Dead* (British Museum).

This, Buddhistically understood, is true enough, but there is a danger of the Christian reader associating with the expression "spiritual" the idea of the existence of a spirit in man as an ego-entity. Interpreted in this sense, the expression would be wholly inapplicable to any possible phase of Buddhistic thought or doctrine. Gotama knew of no independent spirit-entity in man, so there could be no such thing as animistic vision in Buddhism.

In the New Testament it is evident from the context that Jesus, when negatively describing a spirit as that which hath not flesh and bones, was not alluding to spirit in the sense given to it by modern psychologists as "ideas," or as applied to the Sankhâras by the translator of Professor Oldenberg's book on Buddhism, but had in view those presentations of matter of human shape, without flesh and bone development, the appearance of which from time to time has been confirmed by not a few rational and reliable people.

With reference to Mr. Lillie's comments on the Jewish conception of an Almighty Ruler, it may be remarked here that *executive* omnipotence and omniscience convey the notion of qualities that cannot be philosophically applied to the absolute as conceived by Brahmins. This is very clearly enunciated in the philosophy of the Upanishads.

Mr. A. E. Gough, in his book on this subject, writes: "The Self (Brahma, or Reality) is said to be omniscient, but the reader must not be misled; this only means that it is self-conscious.....The omniscience of the Reality is its irradiation of all things."

It (Reality) knows but knows nothing, it sees but sees nothing, it loves but loves nothing; because "It" is knowledge, sight, love, etc. It transcends the relation of subject and object. In the New Testament we meet with the expression, "God is love"—that is, a quality with no objective application. It is the unseen and eternal in contradistinction to the seen and temporal.

"Brahma is Beatitude. But we must be cautious.

Brahma is not Beatitude in the ordinary sense of the term. It is a bliss beyond the distinction of subject and object..... The Indian philosophers everywhere affirm that Brahma is knowledge, not that Brahma has knowledge."*

This is very like Schelling's idea as portrayed in his account of the ultimate goal of the finite ego: "The ultimate goal of the finite ego is enlargement of its sphere till the attainment of identity with the infinite ego. But the infinite ego knows no object, and possesses, therefore, no consciousness or unity of consciousness, such as we mean by personality. Consequently, the ultimate goal of all endeavour may also be represented as enlargement of the personality to infinity—that is to say, as its annihilation. The ultimate goal of the finite ego, and not only of it, but also of the non-ego—the final goal, therefore, of the world—is its annihilation as a world."†

Mr. Gough, in the book already referred to, remarks "that Buddhism is the philosophy of the Upanishads with Brahma left out; that in Buddhism Brahma, or the inner light, is replaced by zero, or a vacuum; that there is no light of lights beyond the darkness of the world-fiction; that the highest end and final hope of man is a return into this vacuum, or aboriginal nothingness of things. This is Nirvana, the extinction of the soul; the path to it is the path of inertion, apathy, and vacuity."

Buddhism expounded in this fashion is likely to produce a very erroneous conception of what it really proves to be.

In the first place, such expressions as "vacuum," "emptiness," "voidness," must not be interpreted solely in a negative sense; there is a positive sense also to be taken into account. The positive aspect of such expressions has been very clearly set forth by the great Chinese philosopher, Lau-toze, in the following manner: "The thirty spokes unite in the one nave, but it is on the empty space (for the

* *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, by A. E. Gough.
† *Vom ich als Princip der Philosophie.*

axle) that the use of the wheel depends. Clay is fashioned into vessels, but it is on their empty hollowness that their use depends. The door and windows are cut out (from the walls) to form an apartment, but it is on the empty space (within) that its use depends. Therefore, what has a (positive) existence serves for positive adaptation, and what has not that for (actual) usefulness."*

Secondly, although Gotama preached a kind of quietism, it was not the quietism of inertion and apathy. He exhorted his followers to vigorous activity in the acquisition of knowledge: "He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise, who, though young and strong, is full of sloth, whose will and thought are weak, that lazy and idle man will never find the way to knowledge (enlightenment). If anything is to be done, let a man do it; let him attack it vigorously."†

Mr. Gough says that to gain this extinction the sage must loose himself from every tie and turn his back upon the world.

This is very much akin to the way in which a Christian must act, according to the teaching of the New Testament, if he would gain heaven, union with God, with Love, with a quality. But it would be doing injustice to the spirit of Christianity and Buddhism to describe their ultimate goals as annihilation, aboriginal nothingness, and extinction, and the path to it as one of inertion, apathy, and vacuity, in the ordinary sense of these terms.

The expression "annihilation" has much to answer for. It has been flaunted scornfully in the face of Buddhism by Vedantists of bygone ages and by Christians of this century; it has been hurled from pulpits with tremendous vehemence into the ears of bewildered congregations, and it has formed a text for delighted and triumphant denunciation in innumerable articles—in fact, with annihilation inscribed on its

* Taken from *Buddhism and its Christian Critics*, by Paul Carus.

† *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xvii., pp. 68 and 75.

banners, the whole host of Buddha's army has been depicted as marching inevitably to utter and irretrievable ruin.

At this juncture let us turn to a later authority, Mr. Lafcadio Hearn, who, in answer to the question, What remains to rise above all forms and the total disintegration of body and final dissolution of the mind? sets forth the Buddhist conception in the following manner: "Unconsciously dwelling behind the false consciousness of imperfect man—beyond sensation, perception, thought—wrapped in the envelope of what we call soul (which, in truth, is only a thickly-woven veil of illusion), is the eternal and divine, the absolute Reality; not a soul, not a personality, but the All-self without selfishness—the *Muga no Taiga*—the Buddha enwombed in Karma. Within every phantom-self dwells this divine; yet the innumerable are but one. Within every creature incarnate sleeps the Infinite Intelligence, unevolved, hidden, unfelt, unknown, yet destined from all the eternities to waken at last, to rend away the ghostly web of sensuous mind, to break for ever its chrysalis of flesh, and pass to the supreme conquest of Space and Time."*

There is no doubt, as General Forlong informs us in his *Short Studies in the Science of Comparative Religions*, that Buddha's followers "finally revered him as a god, mixing up the first high and pure teaching of his faith with all the varied old and new doctrines, rites, and follies peculiar to each race and land which developed it. Every religion has to submit to this ordeal."

It cannot be too often reiterated that a personal moral ruler of the universe, "a gigantic shadow thrown upon the void of space by the imagination," or a sublimated edition of man located in the sky, is entirely foreign to true Buddhism; and, although Gotama deprecated as futile all speculations into the ultimate origin of things, he, in his

* Lafcadio Hearn's *Gleanings in Buddha Fields.*

"Buddha" capacity, was aware of the theory of an uncaused cause, whether called "Akâsa" or "Dzyu," or anything else, from which everything has issued in obedience to a law of motion inherent in it.* This uncaused cause has its counterpart in the incomprehensible Uncreate of the Athanasian Creed. It is the God without and the kingdom of heaven within. A Buddha and It are one.

In the "White Lotus of Dharma" Gotama is made to declare that, though in the form of a Buddha, he is in reality the Self-existent.† On the other hand, from a purely phenomenal point of view, "a Buddha is simply a very wise man, and means 'The Awakened.'"

"Buddha, as a Buddha, knew all about the ultimate origin of the Kosmos. The personal Buddha, however, abstained from any such speculations, holding that, for the purposes of practical ethics, the wise man not only may, but must, avoid the distraction of speculation as to any ultimate cause" (Rev. Spence Hardy). "Self-conquest and universal charity, these are the foundation thoughts, the web and woof of Buddhism, the melodies on the variations of which its enticing harmony is built up" (Professor Rhys Davids). Such, too, according to the Christian Scriptures, is religion, pure and undefiled, before God and the Father.

The Rev. A. Sherring points out how the success of Gotama in overcoming the forces opposed to him "is unparalleled in human history.....That a solitary man, prince and ascetic, after pondering for five years over all the great doctrines of religions, priestcraft, falsities, the immoralities, shams, and confusions of those times, and the groans and miseries of his countrymen, that he should devise an entirely new system, think it out, and put it in order to meet objectors and overcome their arguments, and then go forth to the gradual conquest of India, and send forth mis-

* *Vide Buddhistic Catechism*, by Colonel Olcott.

† *Vide* Lillie's *Buddhism*.

sionaries who have converted 500 millions of people—that all this was the ultimate result of that one man's energy, sagacity, and resoluteness of will is assuredly one of the most astounding events in the annals of the world. He was a simple philosopher, reasoner, and calm disputant, employing no physical force whatever; while the morality which he enforced was the purest the world ever saw." General Forlong, in quoting this passage, says: "Such, divested of a few professional words, is the deliberate opinion of one of the best, the most learned and experienced missionaries."

Professor Rhys Davids seems to level a shaft at the typical Christian when he says that the Buddhist saint does not mar the purity of his self-denial by lusting after a positive happiness in a world to come; nor, it might be added, does the essential Christian who realizes the kingdom of heaven within.

If we take the word "God" in a restricted anthropomorphic sense, and the word "soul" to mean an entity that survives the body, it will appear strange to many, as Professor Rhys David says, that a religion which ignores the existence of such a God, and denies the existence of such a soul, should be the very religion which has found most acceptance among men. The same authority remarks that of any immaterial existence Buddhism knows nothing. This is true if "immaterial" or "spiritual" is taken to mean something altogether divorced from matter.

The universe, according to Buddhism, is not merely an arrangement of matter into forms and substances, but it consists also of the qualities of matter, and the relationship of the different particles and qualities to each other. The philosophy of Buddhism, in this connection, is Monism, which is described by its exponents as "a unitary world-conception, but not a one-substance theory. It does not imply that the world consists either of matter alone or of spirit alone, or that all its phenomena are motions only;

but that our concepts of spiritual, material, mechanical, and other processes are abstractions, representing special features of reality; reality itself being one inseparable and indivisible entirety."

The phenomenal is a mode of the noumenal, as heat is a mode of motion. "*Ex*-istence" is a mode of "istence." There is no "beyond," no "behind the veil"; it is all one. If we take, as a provisional analogy, the flower of a tree to be the noumenal, and the root the phenomenal, they are both—as belonging to the tree—the same, and yet not the same. The soul might be likened to the blossom at the apex, at a point farthest away from the earth. The more perfect this soul-blossom becomes, the nearer it approaches the possibility of entering upon the unconditioned as immortal beauty—

"Like to the flower
That fades into itself at evening hour,"

and becoming thereby identical with truth.

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

Many people assign to music a power, exceeding that of all other arts, of sublimating the emotions of the human heart. Altering somewhat the form of the definition of Poetry as given by Theodore Watts, in his article on the subject in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, one might say that absolute music is the *non*-concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical sounds. The state of the mind under the influence of music has been compared to a "sea of emotion—uncurdled by thoughts." This mental condition may also be super-induced, I think, by means of sculpture, painting, and poetry. In fact, I would maintain that the success of an artist, whether he be musician, poet, or painter, must always be measurable by his power of suggesting the unconditioned, or of bringing the human mind as near as possible to a *thoughtless* state of emotion, and, finally, to that of non-emotion.

In the gospel according to Buddha it is written :

"There lurks in transient form immortal bliss."

The true artist can cause this immortal bliss to be felt, in all its Nirvanic beauty, by those naturally susceptible to such influences, as well as by those who, by a course of training, have rendered themselves capable of receiving them.

There is no line of demarcation between the noumenal and phenomenal. The one fades into the other, as all forms and outlines would disappear into the surrounding atoms or cosmic dust under a sufficiently powerful magnifying glass. "Appearance (the world of phenomena) is the real, as confusedly and partially understood.....The real is the apparent completely understood, and seen in the light of the whole.....Appearance is the appearance of reality..... If we know 'only phenomena,' we must thereby know *something* of that of which they are phenomena."*

According to Buddhistic teaching, there are two worlds, so to speak—the one ruled by the law of causality, the other over which the law of causality has no power. A Buddhist would say that "the man who applies to the strictly unconditioned predicates such as being and non-being, which are used properly enough of the finite, the conditioned, resembles one who attempts to count the sands of the Ganges or the drops of the ocean."

With much the same sort of reasoning Jesus referred to the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven when addressing those who had eyes and did not see, and ears and did not hear.

In view of the apparent fact that the human body has reached its utmost limits of development, as a physical organism, there seems to be a thinkable probability that it will eventually, by a devolutionary process and by the

* *Vide Mind*, October, 1898 ; "The One and the Many," by D. G. Ritchie.

atrophy of its present clumsy and imperfect organs, return, step by step, during the gradual cooling of this planet, to the condition of the psychic life of a simple cellule, and ultimately to the unconditioned; back, as Huxley puts it, to the indefinable latency from which we arose; or, as Carlyle expresses it, "pass stormfully across the astonished earth from God and to God."

Starting from the simple cellule, we see, in a way, how "Tanha," or the desire to extend the scope of activities, has persistently striven in this direction until the ultimate possibilities of the development of physical organism have been reached in man.

This highly-differentiated organism has become more and more sensitive to pain, more and more dissatisfied with its limitations; and man, recognizing these limitations, desires to abandon them altogether. Consequently, he seeks refuge in the hope of a future life, where limitations will no longer curb and embarrass him, and where he will cease to be subject to pain, passion, and sorrow.

Jesus and Gotama have indicated how by the suppression of this "Tanha," how by detachment from the things of the world, we can approach that simple cellular life-stage which is on the road to Heaven, Nirvana, and the Unconditioned. It is easy to realize how much pleasanter it would have been for us all if the simple cellule from which we spring had not been so persistently ambitious in the direction of activities. Its relatively prescribed functions suggest a most desirable condition of peace compared to that "unrest which men miscall delight."

Human life is but a drop in the ocean of organic existences on this planet—about 1,500 millions only among countless myriads of beings. It cannot, then, be accounted strange in a world containing so great a variety of organisms, with their varying tastes and needs, that man should find much that is distasteful and unsuitable to him which is pleasant and acceptable to other beings. The vulture feasts

on carrion loathsome to man. Man partakes of food at which a rhinoceros would shudder.

Morality, as a law and corollary of organized life, being confined to humanity, it follows that immorality, as subversive of this law, would be of necessity abhorrent to those who appreciate a law without which social life would become intolerable, and not worth living. But, when we come to consider why it should be that the exquisite process of the decomposition of flesh should be less pleasing to the senses than the formation and fading of a sunset, we are forced to the conclusion that the world was not made for man, but man for the world.

The "part" working indiscriminately with and for the "whole" is an ethical law observable throughout the universe. All individuals are, unconsciously for the most part, carrying into effect the will of God by the will of God. We speak about individual effort to attain this perfection or avoid that evil, because we cannot divest ourselves of the feeling of free-will. To speak and act under a sense of free-will is forced upon us by the delusion of separateness.

It is often the case that God is only recognized in the beautiful aspects of nature. St. Paul says: "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God that worketh *all* in *all*." We have to see God, not only in the sweet waters, but also in the deadly swamp; in the healthy child as well as in the fœtid diseases of the sick. "That art thou," as the Buddhist truly says. The delicious and the disgusting are equally necessary as factors in the scheme of the universe; there is in both the same cosmic law fulfilling itself. "Dragons and all deeps: fire and hail fulfilling his word." A difference only exists in the appreciation of them.

This Monistic view of nature in no respect stands in the way of our regarding God as the sublimated reality of an ideal existence. Dr. Paul Carus, in his booklet on *The Idea of God*, says: "If the idea of God is an empty dream

which we must expel from our minds, why not expel all ideas and all ideals? They are just as much and just as little real.....From this point of view a denial of the existence of God would, with consistency, lead us also to a denial of an integral, or a logarithm, or a differential. An integral is just as little a concrete object as is God. And the idea of God is just as important in the real life of human activity, human thought and emotion, as the idea of honesty is in the mercantile world, that of courage among warriors, and that of faith in science."

Buddha has taught that there are worlds more perfect and developed, and others less so, than this earth; and that the inhabitants of each world correspond in development with itself.* Mr. Lafcadio Hearn says: "The Buddhist denial of the reality of the apparitional world is not a denial of the reality of phenomena as phenomena, nor a denial of the forces producing phenomena objectively and subjectively.....The true declaration is, that what we perceive is never reality in itself, and that even the ego that perceives is an unstable plexus of feelings which are themselves unstable, and in the nature of illusions. This position is scientifically strong, perhaps impregnable."

Indian philosophers have attempted, with a fair measure of success, to overcome the perplexity presented by the idea of diversity in unity. They say that, "as an individual can conjure up visions of various phenomena in his waking state without destroying his sense of unity as an individual, so there may be a multiform creation in the One Absolute without any suppression of its unitary nature. To the Unconscious Absolute phenomena stand in the relation of dreams to the individual who is conscious of dreams on awaking. But the Unconscious Absolute does not awake; therefore 'It' remains unconscious of phenomena. The variety of the world is like the variety of a dream."

* *Vide Buddhist Catechism*, by Colonel Olcott.

In a commentary on the Essence of the Upanishads the fictitiousness of emanations from unity is thus illustrated :—

"A belated wayfarer mistakes a piece of rope lying on the road for a snake; the delusion disappears, but the rope remains the rope. So with the apparitional world: the delusion passes, and unity remains.*

"All the figments of the world-fiction may be made to disappear in such a way that pure thought, or the self, shall alone remain, in the same manner as the fictitious serpent seen in a piece of rope may be made to disappear, and the rope that underlies it may be made to remain. The rope was only the rope all the time it falsely seemed to be a snake. The fictitious world may be made to disappear as the fictitious snake is made to disappear, and this is its sublation."†

Professor Seth, referring in his book, entitled *The Position of Man in the Kosmos*, to Mr. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*, remarks: "Reality 'must own' and somehow include appearance." In another part of his book he writes: "We are ourselves immersed in the process of the universe. We can only live our own life, and see through our own eyes. If we could do more, that would mean that we ourselves had vanished from the universe; the place which had known us would know us no more; and there would be, as it were, a gap created in the tissue of the world."

Under "Mysticism," in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, we read: "Our consciousness of self is the condition under which we possess a world to know and to enjoy; but it likewise isolates us from all the world beside. Reason is the revealer of nature and God; but, by its acts, reason seems the thing reasoned about. Hence mysticism demands a faculty above reason, by which the subject shall be placed in immediate and complete union with the object of his

* *Cf.* "Illusions are sensations wrongly interpreted" (D. G. Ritchie).

† *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, by A. E. Gough.

desire—a union in which the consciousness of self has disappeared, and in which, therefore, subject and object are one."

The Great Self, or Immanent Power—expressions barely communicable to the understanding by the rather restrictive sounding and abrupt terminology of the word "God"—perhaps nearer in thought to the Will in Nature of Schopenhauer—with which the Brahmins of India sought communion, has been to them from time immemorial the Alpha and Omega of their being. When religion steps in it is a frame of mind, not a set of opinions. They cannot in truth be called superstitious; they are, to coin a word, *substitious*. They sink, plummet-wise, into the fathomless; the line is severed, and they are lost in the depths and caverns of nescience. The concrete, with them, has always ranked lower than the abstract.

Vamadéo Shastri, writing in the *Fortnightly Review* of November, 1898, on the theological situation in India, says :—

In Europe, as I understand, your churches have long ago closed the era of unlimited metaphysical speculation, retaining only certain mysterious dogmata that are authoritatively prescribed as facts—that are not philosophical discoveries, but are declarations of revealed truth.

You have drawn up your creeds; you have settled finally all essential beliefs in future rewards and punishments, in man's redemption from sin and resurrection, and, above all, in a Divine Personality. You have numbered and ended the list of your sacred books; you look for no fresh revelation; you have regulated by ordinances the rites and ceremonies which unite the worshippers and divide the Churches.....

But I want you to understand that we are still wandering in the metaphysic wilderness, and that Christianity, returning at last after an interval of so many centuries, finds us still engaged on the same problems as those which occupied the schools of Antioch and Alexandria and the secret professors of the Jewish Kabbala.

We have never yet set limits, either by philosophic criticism or by ecclesiastic ordinance, to the range of free inquiry or to the thinking faculty. We cannot submit to the restrictions placed by faith upon inquiry into mysteries; we are driven by our mental constitution to overleap the bounds of sentient experience, and to con-

struct, like your ancient heretics, some intelligible theory of the unconditioned.

We are incapable of apprehending a Personality, except in the sense of something that masks or represents an incomprehensible notion ; and dogmatic systems are to us no more than the formal envelopes of spiritual truth.

. . . . . .

Two cardinal ideas run through our deeper religious thought. One is the Maya, or cosmic illusion, which cuts the knot of any difficulty touching the relation between Spirit and Matter, and produces Unity by exhibiting the visible universe as a shadow projected upon the white radiance of eternity ; the other is the notion of the soul's deliverance by long travail from existence in any stage or shape.

. . . . . .

In short, we have a religion, but no theology.

"By Plotinus 'The One' is explicitly exalted above the 'νοῦς' and the 'ideas'; it transcends existence altogether, and is not cognizable by reason. Remaining itself in repose, it rays out, as it were, from its fulness an image of itself, which is called 'νοῦς,' and which constitutes the system of ideas, or the intelligible world. The soul is in turn the image or product of the 'νοῦς,' and the soul, by its motion, begets corporeal matter. The soul thus faces two ways—towards the 'νοῦς,' from which it springs, and towards the material life, which is its own product" (*vide Encyclopædia Britannica*).

A consideration of the theosophy of the "Sohar," or Book of Splendour, does not afford a key to the solution of this problem. We meet there with the same difficulty, the inconceivable transition point, where the "inactive" mingles with the "active." Ensoph is the Absolute, the great "I am," the endless, the boundless, the incomprehensible.

Mr. Bradley, in his book on *Appearance and Reality*, asks whether we really have a positive idea of an absolute defined as "one comprehensive sentience"; and he answers that, while we cannot fully realize its existence, its main features are drawn from our own experience, and we have also a suggestion there of the unity of a whole embracing

distinctions within itself. "Identity only exists through differences, unity through multiplicity. Such is the constant thesis of the Hegelian philosophy."*

The apparent connection between the Buddhist and Christian conceptions of a God is very ably stated by Dr. Paul Carus, and with the following extracts from his writings I may fitly close the subject of this chapter :—

"Buddhism is commonly said to deny the existence of a God. This is true, or not true, according to the definition of God.

"While Buddhists do not believe that God is an individual being like ourselves, they recognize that the Christian God idea contains an important truth, which, however, is differently expressed in Buddhism. Buddhism teaches that Bôdhi, or Sambôdhi, or Amitabha—*i.e.*, that which gives enlightenment, or, in other words, those verities the recognition of which is Nirvana (constituting Buddhahood)—is omnipresent and eternal."

. . . . . .

"Christianity possesses in the idea, and, indeed, in the very word 'God,' representing the authority of moral conduct in a most forcible manner, a symbol of invaluable importance; it is an advantage which has contributed not a little to make Christianity so powerful and popular, so impressive and effective, as it has proved to be. In this little word 'God' much has been condensed, and it contains an unfathomable depth of religious comfort."

* *Vide* Professor Seth's *Position of Man in the Kosmos.*

Chapter III.

SOUL, SELF, INDIVIDUALITY, AND KARMA.

"Verily every man is altogether vanity; for man walketh in a vain show, he disquieteth himself in vain."—Bible.

The feat of mental gymnastics performed by Gotama regarded as a phenomenal being, which led to the abrogation of "soul" as an ego-entity from its dominion in the minds of men, combined with the amazing fact that nearly a third of the population of this planet has, for many centuries, enthusiastically acquiesced in this dethronement of animism, must be regarded as one of the most striking wonders in the religious history of the human race.

As astronomical science disposed of the geocentric theory of the universe, greatly to the advantage of theological progressiveness, so the exponents of modern psychology hope to dispel the delusion of the ego-centric theory of man, and to clear the way for a more scientific and a truer conception of that which is commonly understood by the word "soul." According to the teaching of these psychologists, there is no ego-entity, or hidden and mysterious factor, that stands behind the psychic and physical organism of man.

The soul of man consists of a group of ideas, and these ideas are in intimate connection with the so-called external world, as also with what may be expressed as the internal world of a Being wherein has taken place the development of the hereditary germ.

In Buddhism it appears to me to be a matter of choice

whether we apply the term "soul" to a group of ideas, which, in the case of the Saint, as sublimated ideas, synchronously cease with the formative faculty, and vanish ultimately into the unconditioned, or to the effects of a man's disposition, which continue as impressions on the characters of those who receive them.

"Man" is a name for a materialized presentation of reality—that is, for particles of matter assuming form under the influence of a formative faculty and the results of the interactions, relations, and qualities peculiar to the particles and this particular aggregation.

On the occurrence of what is known as death the components of the body are no longer held together, as it were, by the formative faculty, and the body loses its vitality. But, in the ordinary course of things, of form there remains this formulative faculty, or impulse to re-combine. "Form is destructible, yet it remains 'form' in the sense that it has within it the power to renew form."

The most important factor in the formation of man is not the material particles that make up his body, but "form." This "form" is a reality, but not a materiality. If the interaction of the component parts, under the influence of externalities, ceases to work towards the preservation of the formative faculty or re-combining influence, a material presentation of "form" will not re-ensue, and the discontinuance of the formative element is Reality, Truth, Nirvana, God.

If the desire to describe a triangle on paper does not exist, the materialized presentation of a real axiomatic triangle will not be formed, while the perfect triangle still remains a Reality. In this case, under certain influences, the formative faculty has been subdued, and the consequence is that the material form of the triangle, in its necessary imperfection, has not been produced. The perfect triangle is the undescribed triangle. Should bubbles on the surface of the ocean be deprived of this formative faculty which

made them as they are, the power to resume their shape after dissolution would be gone for ever. But if the faculty to re-form remained, they would again crop up on the surface of the sea, the formative faculty making use of the materials at hand under the influences of "form."

Analogously, the Saint, according to Buddhism, who is rid of the formative faculty, does not re-exist as a phenomenal being. It might be objected that to make use of the expression "formative faculty" is only to revert to the doctrine of essences and faculties as principles of explanation, and to rely on the exploded superstition of *apriorism*. But this is not the case. The formative faculty is a quality of form, and form is an experience. The intangible and manifest, such as form, can as reasonably be credited with qualities as the tangible and material.

"The soul is a special form of life, as the flame is a special form of motion." It is also a product of life, and life is the arrangement and re-arrangement of matter, subject to form, with which are associated the qualities of matter and the relations and interactions of these qualities.

"Gotama," Dr. Paul Carus remarks, "strange to say, anticipated the modern conception of the soul as it is now taught by the most advanced scientists of Europe." St. Paul, too, may be reckoned as one who, if he had lived in these days, would have given his support to that positive philosophy which regards the soul as a product of materiality; for, he says: "Howbeit that was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy; the second man (the soul) is the Lord from heaven."

When the distinction between the expressions "materiality" and "reality" is clearly discerned, it removes a difficulty out of our way when we come to consider a means of bringing into harmony the Christian and Buddhist conception of "soul." It has been contended that, if you deny substance to the soul, it is tantamount to asserting the non-

existence of the soul. But if it is admitted that "reality" has existence as well as "materiality," this objection falls to the ground.

The definition of matter as that which occupies space is not a comprehensive one. It is only the definition of a supposed quality of matter; it is abstracted in our minds from other qualities. Therefore, if we regard "soul," more especially in its sublimated condition, as something akin to a quality of matter after matter, as we perceive it, has been abstracted, we have a residuum which both Christians and Buddhists alike can accept as an approximate explanation of the nature of "soul."

The eschatology of the soul, as indicated in the two systems, is less easy to harmonize. The soul, according to Catholic notions, after the death of the body, undergoes a purgatorial process; and, in the general view of Protestants, awaits—sleeping or waking—in the ante-room of a judgment-hall until a final verdict is pronounced on the Day of Doom; and then, and not till then, is it allotted its ultimate rest or unrest.

On the other hand, that which is in Buddhistic thought the counterpart of this soul, whether we call it a "group of ideas" or the "effects of Karma," must submit, till absolutely bereft of the formative faculty or desire to live, to continuous incarnations. This, however, does not involve a process of transmigration, as is sometimes incorrectly assumed.

Several illustrations have been made use of to explain the migrationless nature of the process. "When a lamp is lit at a burning lamp there is a kindling of the wick, but no transmigration of the flame." A thought is conveyed by words from one to another, but of the thought itself there is no migration. Neither is there migration of any part of an object to a photographic plate, nor in the reflection of an object in a mirror.

It is matter for speculation whether the Christian idea of

tarriance in an ante-room, and more especially the purgatorial process, might not be strained in meaning so as to imply that re-incarnation on this planet is the fate of some souls, prior to their ultimate reception into Paradise or condemnation to everlasting fire. Some such idea, maybe, was afloat in the lifetime of Jesus, when the question was asked: "Is this Elias come again?"

The Christian and Buddhist conception of "soul" differs considerably as to position. The one stands isolated; the other is not so posited. The soul, according to the Buddhist, is not a "self-in-itself." "Buddhism does not deny the existence of a soul or individuality, but denies the independent existence of a soul or individuality." The Christian conception of the soul corresponds with that of Kapila, the founder of the Sankhya philosophy, in so far as he conceived the soul to be a kind of transcendent, sublimated body, the thinker of our thoughts and the doer of our acts. This dualism was rejected by Gotama.

It is necessary to bear in mind, with a view to the proper comprehension of Buddhistic teaching in regard to the immortality of the soul, that "although the Samskâras, or soul-forms, constituting our existence, come to an end as activities in the case of the saint who has extinguished desire, there remains an immortal residuum in the unconditioned elements of soul-form which are beyond the reach of death." After death such a saint might be said to have a continued existence (as others have) in the effects shed upon others by his Karma during his lifetime. The difference, as I understand it, is this: that, in the case of the saint, the *formative* element of Karma, as it has taken shape in bodily existence, ceases to be from the date of his sainthood; and subsequently the effects of Karma, which *must* continue to be shed on others as impressions as long as he lives, are informative—that is, do not carry with them a desire to live; and, consequently, the saint, from the date of his sainthood,

may be said to have no continuing existence in the life of another sentient being.)

Dr. Paul Carus, in his handy little book, entitled *The Dharma; or, The Religion of Enlightenment*, remarks: "Buddhism sheds a new light upon Christian doctrine. Thus the continuity in the evolution of life, which does away with a wrong conception of a separate self, explains and justifies the Christian idea of original sin (or, as it ought to be called, 'inherited sin'); for men inherit not only the curse of their ancestors' sin, but actually consist of their sinful dispositions; every man is a re-incarnation of previous deeds, and represents, for good and for evil, their legitimate continuation."

"Being," in a Buddhistic sense, in the words of Professor Oldenberg's translator, is the procession regulated by the law of causality—of continuous being at every moment, self-consuming and anew-begetting. What is termed a "souled" being is one individual in the line of this procession, one flame in a sea of flame.

So quaintly beautiful is the following dialogue between King Milinda (the Greek King Menander) and the Saint Nagasena that, notwithstanding its frequent quotation, I venture to reproduce it:—

"The Saint Nagasena says: 'It is not the same being, and yet they are separate beings, which relieve one another in the series of existences.'

"'Give an illustration,' says King Milinda. 'If a man were to light a light, O great king, would it not burn through the night?'—'Yes, sire; it would burn through the night.' 'How, then, O great king, is the flame in the first watch of the night identical with the flame in the midnight watch?'—'No, sire.' 'And the flame in the midnight watch—is it identical with the flame in the last watch of the night?'—'No, sire.' 'But how then, O great king, was the light in the first watch of the night another, in the midnight watch another, and in the last watch of the night another?'—'No,

sire; it has burned all night long, feeding on the same fuel.' 'So, also, O great king, the chain of elements of being (Dhamma) completes itself; the one comes, the other goes. Without beginning, without end, the circle completes itself; therefore it is neither the same being nor another being which presents itself last to the consciousness.' "*

Omar Khayyam says :—

> " We are no other than a moving show
> Of magic shadow-shapes that come and go."

The body disappears, even in Christian eschatology, as an earthly body for ever; but its scattered chemicals are re-utilized, according to some, to clothe the soul in heavenly places, or for purposes of torture and indescribable anguish. Others have sought consolation in the thought of the re-appearance of the body's elements in various beautiful forms —in the ruby goblet, in the flowers, in the foam of the sea :—

> " And this reviving herb, whose tender green
> Hedges the river-lip on which we lean—
> Ah, lean upon it lightly; for who knows
> From what once lovely lip it springs unseen !"

Of those believing in the separateness of the soul there may be many who fondly crave that the "gentle dews" of eternal sleep may fall at last upon its suppliant eyes.

> "He giveth His beloved sleep."

A writer in the *Monist* of January, 1898, makes the following remarks in a reference to "self": "In the psychological theories of Christianity and Buddhism there is more agreement than at first sight appears, for it is difficult to say what we must understand by self. 'Personality' is used by Christian thinkers in a very loose sense. In the doctrine of the Trinity it is not incompatible to speak of three personalities in One."

He quotes texts from St. Paul's epistles to the Corin-

* From *Buddhism*, by Professor Oldenberg.

thians: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So, then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. Now, he that planteth and he that watereth are one." In this connection the writer observes: "Here, apparently, everyone is supposed to have no separate existence whatever, except in God and through God."

The self, soul, or individuality, which continues after the dissolution of the body, has been broadly described as character or disposition; therefore, in using the term "self" in a Buddhistic sense, we must put aside every idea beyond what is conveyed to the mind by this interpretation. This character or disposition does not come to an end as an activity until "Tanha," or the thirst to live for living's sake, is extinct. Therefore, when Buddhistic thought is converted into conventional language, we must be cautious how we interpret such a statement as "*We* are saved by our individual merits." The "we" here means only "character," which, if improved during a lifetime, carries with it this improvement, of which a new being will reap the benefits.

Professor Rhys Davids calls the mystery of Karma "a desperate expedient, a wonderful hypothesis, an airy nothing, an imaginary cause beyond the reach of reason." But he previously states that it affords an explanation quite complete, to those who can believe it, of the apparent anomalies and wrongs in the distribution here of happiness and woe. So it may be said, also, of the mysteries attaching to Christianity. They satisfy the believer, though they present difficulties to the reasoner. According to the Christian formula, we are, as Burton says, fallen beings, not through our own fault; condemned to death, not through our own demerits; ransomed by a Divine Being, not through our own merits.

The Buddhist saying, "From birth came death," and the story of the Garden of Eden, seem to possess some figurative connection with the transition of micro-organisms from a

fissiparous to a duogynous condition. The amœba is endowed with the potentialities of eternal life; but when the spermatozoid and ovule (the symbolic serpent and apple) appeared on the scene, when the luminous Adam passed successively through the fissiparous and androgynous states, and finally became man and woman, death entered into the world.

The writer in the *Monist* already referred to, commenting upon the text, "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour" (1 Cor. i. 5), says: "The coincidence of Buddhism and Christianity is remarkable in this passage; for, as the Buddhist Scriptures speak of the fruits of Karma, so Paul speaks of the rewards of one's labour."

Mr. Lillie, in referring to the doctrine of re-incarnation, quotes from an article in the *Church Quarterly Review*,* in which, he says, "the author of the article, in proof of the existence of this doctrine, adduces the question put by the disciples of Christ in reference to the man born blind. And if it was considered that a man could be born blind as a punishment for sin, then it must have been plainly committed before his birth." In the *White Lotus of Dharma* there is an account of the healing of a blind man: "Because of the sinful conduct of the man (in a former birth) this malady has arisen." He also remarks that, in the case of the paralytic (Luke v. 18), the cure was effected, not by any physical processes, but by annulling the *sins* which were the cause of the malady.

The Rev. Mr. Spence Hardy, in his *Manual of Buddhism*, observes that "no one can tell but a Buddha how Karma operates or how the chain of existence commenced. It is as vain to ask in what part of the tree the fruit exists before the blossom is put forth as to ask for the locality of Karma." When the King of Ságal inquired where Karma resides,

* October, 1885.

its locality, Nagasena replied: "Karma is like a shadow that always accompanies the body. But it cannot be said that it is here, or that it is there; in this place, or in that place."

It has, I believe, been stated by some writers that it would have been as well if Gotama had not encumbered his teaching with such a complex and metaphysical theory as Karma, and had confined himself to the admirable moral precepts which form the real backbone of his system. It has been thought, too, that in introducing Karma into his scheme of things he was playing the *rôle* of an opportunist, because he felt it to be necessary for the success of his mission that it should not be altogether severed in outline from such a conception as that of metempsychosis, which was deeply implanted in the minds of the Brahmanic philosophers of those times. Buddhism would certainly have been incomplete if it had not included mysteries, as Christianity would not be Christianity without an admixture of the indefinable.

"Karma," as "working," may, I think, be regarded as one of the essential components of Christian thought with regard to the soul. It is the working of the soul at the same time, the being-made-soul or disposition. As the latter it is heritable and appropriable; its effects are endless, and this "working" is carried on, so to speak, from generation to generation, organically and inorganically—in the rock, in the flower, and in all animal life—the same producing the same, and yet not the same.

The doctrine of Karma is justifiably proclaimed as the most important tenet of Buddhism, for on it depends the whole system of morality and of individual responsibility; and yet, strange to say, there is no part of Buddhism which has occasioned so much controversy and difference of opinion. It is at once the foundation of belief for millions of true believers and the basis of scepticism on the part of many who would otherwise willingly concur in the dogmas of this religion. In this respect it holds an analagous

position to that of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body in the judgment of Christianity.

Is it possible, some ask, that a belief in the doctrine of Karma, which has exercised so enormous an influence for good over countless millions of human creatures—many of them men of the highest order of culture and intellectuality—should only be resolvable into an "airy nothing"? We may have to acknowledge that the reason is not able to follow the idea of Karma through all its phases, nor yet to assimilate the various postulates which it demands. But can Christianity boast of doctrines which are always reducible to the canons of reason and common sense? We think not.

Here, again, we find a common ground between these two religions. Neither is capable of being wholly defended by matter-of-fact methods; both demand a certain measure of faith from their adherents. The strength of the dogma of Karma lies rather in the fact that, like the ideas of free-will, heaven, and God, it is innate in a large portion of mankind; and it would be sheer presumption to dismiss with a few contemptuous phrases a belief which is deeply embedded in nearly one-half of the human race.

The seeming injustice of the unequal distribution of happiness and suffering among human beings is a problem which Christianity does not attempt to solve. Buddhism, on the other hand, grapples with the difficulty; and we have the much-debated doctrine of Karma as the result. There can be no doubt that this doctrine, once accepted, removes all difficulty out of the way. Karma is literally "action," or "doing." This action, after death, and during life too, bears fruit, for the consequences of action cannot be destroyed. It is, in fact, the scientific theory of the conservation of energy.

When the individual dies his Karma effects are re-incarnated, as it were, in another being, and form the connecting link between the two individuals—the one the author of the

Karma effects, the other the inheritor of them. In this particular way we have a sufficient explanation and justification of moral retribution.

How this second individual comes into existence expressly for the purpose of inheriting the Karma of the first, and the nature and mode of the transmigration of Karma, are questions which have generally been placed beyond the scope of the human intellect, and will be considered later on.

A way out of this difficulty has been proposed, by which, while still adhering to the essentials of the doctrine of Karma, we can reduce it to a form more capable of being grasped and supported by our reason ; but it has no authority among the utterances of Gotama, and, in accepting it, we should be diverging somewhat from orthodox Buddhism. Suppose we take as an analogy the case of a river, which, after flowing some hundreds of miles, is dried up by the heat of the sun. It is evident that the river, while flowing between its banks, has been absorbed in a great measure by the porous earth, and has gone to fructify the soil. The trees, grass, and crops which have been produced by its moisture are, of course, its Karma—the effects of its action, or "doing." When it has ceased to flow, the whole of its Karma has been dissipated into various effects, which, in their turn becoming causes, exercise their influence over practically the whole earth. There is no Karma, intact and integrated, which, according to some views of Buddhism, should be the *raison d'être* of another *river*.

In the same way, an individual, while alive, scatters his Karma (or the influence of his character) among his surroundings. When he has ceased to live he has also ceased to act, and, consequently, there can be no more Karma. This is one way of getting rid of the idea of a lump of Karma, which after death, in some way or another, is supposed to produce, or to have produced, for it another body, into which it may carry the defects, virtues, vices, and follies

of its originator. Another weakness which has been considered inseparable from the orthodox teaching of Buddhism is the fact that it seems to fail to account fully for the action of heredity. When two people have children, does it not appear right to think that their children should inherit their Karma? But it is obviously impossible that this should be the case, except in the unlikely contingency of both parents dying exactly at the moment of their children's birth. And, again, why should a man's Karma be embodied in an individual having no visible connection with his offspring; or how can we reconcile the non-existence of selfhood as a permanent entity with the recognition of a more or less self-sufficient Karma, which preserves its separateness not only through life, but after death, and into life again? These and other similar questions arise, and demand explanation from the bewildered brain.

These questions, it has been contended, do not arise as difficulties impossible of solution, if we consider the analogy given above. The children of two people are obviously their Karma, and they appropriate, so to speak, a very large proportion of the effects of their "doing"—as it is only just and reasonable that they should do. Innumerable actions on the part of the parents have led up to acquaintance and union, and the birth of the child is merely the climax of an endless chain of causes and effects.

But this process of reasoning closely borders on the confines of metempsychosis, in the phraseology of which the doctrine of Karma has often been mistakenly expounded. The doctrine of Karma is a modification of metempsychosis, and, as such, certainly stands on a more scientific and rational basis than its prototype.

In consequence of the intermixture of the two theories in the minds of exponents of Karma, much misapprehension has arisen, and this doctrine continues to be a stumbling-block to students of Buddhism. A considerable amount of confusion arises also, I think, from the fact that writers on

Buddhism fail to discriminate between Karma, the law of Karma, and the effects of Karma, although the word Karma includes the two latter. It is a mistake to assume that Karma, interpreted as "thoughts, words, and actions," is perpetuated as such, for each thought, word, and action passes for ever away while it happens; each dies, yet each continues for all eternity in the effect it produces.

"The being of a past moment of thought has lived, but does not live, nor will it live."

"The being of a future moment of thought will live, but has not lived, nor does it live."

"The being of the present moment of thought will live, but has not lived, nor will it live."

It cannot be held, therefore, if we read Buddhism aright, that Karma in itself possesses continuity.

"The 'I' of to-day has to take all the *consequences* of the *actions* (Karma) which the 'I' of yesterday performed. Thus the individualized Karma of future times will reap all that which the individualizing Karma of the present time *sows*."*

Professor Rhys Davids (*Buddhism*, p. 103) says: "Identity is preserved in that which alone remains when a man dies; in the result, namely, of his action, speech, and thought, in his good or evil Karma (literally his 'doing') which does not die." This statement would have gained in clearness if he had written "*in the result* of his good or evil Karma which does not die," in the concluding sentence.

If we allow ourselves to consider Karma, taken in the sense of "doing," as retaining a separateness apart from its diffusion of influences, and being carried on from generation to generation as an individualized compound, then we at once find ourselves in direct conflict with the doctrine of "inseparateness," which is the mainstay of the rationality of Buddhist thought, the basic concept of Buddhism.

* Paul Carus.

If we understand by the Samskâras that phase of a man's soul which is impressed upon other generations by heredity and education, and that which "is preserved by the law of Karma and conditions the continuity of man's existence in the whirl of constant changes," it must be exclusively in the sense that these Samskâras are formative faculties peculiar to, and always to be found (in normal cases) in interconnection with, those temporary aggregations which present themselves to our perceptions as human beings, but which are not permanent.

It is only when the expressions "Karma" and "action" are used in their widest meaning, and include this formative faculty, that they can with propriety be regarded as possessing continuity, but not permanency. The particular formative faculty ceases to be, in those exceptional cases when "it directs itself to the cessation of all conformations."

This self-forming formative faculty, in its normal condition, is the cause of the continuity of being, or becoming. Its disappearance is happiness. We find this Buddhistic truth very clearly stated in the New Testament. "He who loses his life shall find it"—which, being interpreted, is "He who loses the formative faculty shall find the deathless."

Karma, as "thought, speech, and action," must be regarded as the ethical individuality, and the body as the corporeal individuality. As things in themselves they are both impermanent, but the effects of both are lasting. There are physiological and local as well as psychological results to be taken into account.

The body is continually shedding effects, and lives again after death in its diffused elements; so Karma gives off effects and lives again in its moral results; yet both these individualities are inseparably connected as long as the individual's life lasts.

The text so often quoted in this connection should, for purposes of Buddhistic exposition, read: "What a man sows, that will *the race* (not he) reap." "Herein is that

saying true, one soweth and another reapeth" (John iv. 37).

"Man weaves and is clothed with derision;
Sows, but shall not reap.
His life is a watch and a vision,
Between a sleep and a sleep."

What has been called physical or local Karma is applied to the effects of locality and climate upon the development of races and individuals.

A writer in the Journal of the Maha-Bodhi Society (November, 1898)* says: "The theory of Karma, as Gautama formulated it, is all-embracing and comprehensive. It ranges over the whole field of life and morality. It ascribes causes for things; explains the working of the complicated machinery of the cosmos; abolishes the unwholesome idea of universal chaos and absence of motive power; substitutes in its place a definite and well-arranged system admirably suited to the needs of mankind; and finally establishes firmly the supreme importance of individual morality and responsibility. What more can one desire? 'All very well,' the sceptic replies. 'It may perform all you say it does, but I must be able to grasp it thoroughly and work it out in my own mind. I will take nothing for granted. I must be able to follow, to understand it, and harmonize it with facts of which I have certain knowledge. None of your vague insinuations for me.' I reply: How can you with your limited and finite empirical knowledge fully understand that which is limitless and infinite? The doctrine of Karma embraces all the greatest problems of life and the cosmos; and how can you, a mere atom in the universe, expect to grasp the whole? It is sufficient that you should have a working theory which fulfils your requirements, and is at the same time sanctioned by your reasoning power. More you cannot expect to have. The doctrine of Karma, in short, marches step by step with

* *The Doctrine of Karma*, by Henry Melancthon Strong.

our reason. At no point does it break away from the laws of common sense. The difficulty lies in the fact that, while our reasoning at a certain point comes to a halt through lack of further material, the doctrine of Karma perseveres onwards into the spheres of higher knowledge whither our limited brain capacity cannot follow.

. . . . . .

"There are two methods by which the doctrine of Karma may be explained—viz., by individualization and by generalization; the former is the more orthodox and popular, the latter more sound and philosophical. But, although we find in the recorded sayings of Gautama support of the former and little or none of the latter, I think we may infer that his attitude was due to the exigencies of the conditions under which he lived and the ignorance of the masses who surrounded him. For the same reason Christ was forced to clothe his teachings in simple and primitive guise in order that they might be readily grasped by the popular mind. As an outcome of this necessity, we have the parables of the New Testament and much of the veiled language therein contained. To these are due in large measure the controversies and differences of opinion which now exist as to the proper interpretation of the words of Christ. The significance of many of Buddha's utterances has been similarly degraded. Countless 'birth stories' have sprung up to satisfy the popular craving for something concrete and simple in which to believe. Their themes have no real authority in Buddhistic teaching, but they serve the same purpose as do the Christian parables and myths. The student of Buddhism who stumbles upon them by chance may be led into false notions with regard to the religion, and accept as authoritative that which has no real authority. Herein lies their harm. That they are not strictly in accordance with Gautama's teachings there can be no doubt. The theory of soul-transmigration upon which these tales are chiefly founded is an excrescence on Buddhism,

and should be regarded in the light of a heresy. As Professor Rhys Davids observes: 'Buddhism does not teach the transmigration of souls. Its doctrine would be better summarized as the transmigration of character.' Professor Oldenberg puts with much clearness the teaching of the action of transmigration and Karma when he says: 'Buddhism teaches: "My action is my possession, my action is my inheritance, my action is the womb which bears me, my action is the race to which I am akin." What appears to man to be his body is in truth the action of his past state, which, assuming a form realized through his endeavours, has become endowed with a tangible existence.'

"The same idea is expressed in a slightly different form by Dr. Paul Carus, who says: 'We ourselves continue in the accumulated results of our actions.' In these concise and seemingly simple statements we have the fundamental dogma of Buddhism and the foundation of Gautama's system *as it has been handed down to us.* When we come to analyze them carefully, the difficulties which at first lie hidden become apparent. We see that a man during his lifetime scatters the effects of his actions (*i.e.*, his Karma) in all directions. Upon his death a new sentient being, 'realized through his endeavour,' comes into existence to inherit and carry on his Karma. These two beings are not connected in any way the one with the other. There has been no transmigration of soul or of the ego, for Buddhism denies the existence of either as a permanent entity, but describes them as temporary aggregations only. How, then, does moral retribution act? or how can we reconcile the non-existence of self as a permanent entity with the recognition of the existence of a more or less integral and permanent Karma which preserves its separateness, not only through life, but after death and into life again. How, too, is it possible that his Karma, although scattered in all directions during his term of life, at the moment of

death is intact and whole for transmission to another body?

"Moreover, it is obvious that, if the death of one human being is the cause of the birth of another, the human race would not progress numerically. The very fact of the numerical increase of mankind defeats this theory and renders it untenable by all those who desire to believe only what their reason sanctions, and to eschew whatever demands the acceptance of authority or the exercise of faith. In short, as Professor Rhys Davids has put it, the weakness of the Buddhistic conception is that 'the result of what a man is, or does, is held not to be dissipated.....but to be concentrated together in the formation of one new sentient being.'

. . . . . .

"By digressing somewhat from strict Buddhistic teaching, and leaving behind the *letter* (not the spirit) of the law, we can, I think, arrive at a more satisfactory explanation by a method I have called 'generalization,' in contradistinction to the method just dealt with—viz., Individualization.

"According to the orthodox conception, an individual takes up the Karma of another while it is intact and has not suffered from distribution and dispersion. But there is a broader and less primitive, albeit more heterodox, manner in which we may regard the doctrine, and one which, I think, we may infer was in the mind of Gotama himself when he enunciated the narrower conception in order to simplify it sufficiently to be capable of being grasped by the ignorant. Instead of a man's Karma being individualized—*i.e.*, handed on in an integral state from individual to individual—we should regard it rather as having been generalized and disintegrated during life, leaving no residuum at death. Thus, what is inherited at birth is not the Karma of any one person, but rather the Karma of the race as a whole. 'The souls of men continue to exist as they are impressed

upon other generations by heredity and education,'* but the soul of the individual does not continue to exist. It is the soul of the race, not of the individual, which is perpetuated.

"The Karmas of all are, as it were, cast into the mixing-pot and thoroughly sifted, and then, and not till then, embodied in different forms. Seeming inequality of division must be accounted for by the action of local Karma.† There is obviously an advantage associated with this theory not applicable to the theory of individualization. Whereas the latter tends to promote the fallacious idea of personality and self-hood, the former has a wider significance, and tends rather to promote the belief in universal brotherhood by merging personalities into one great whole. It is, in fact, more truly Buddhistic, and, by inspiring a more cosmopolitan sentiment of fellowship, is calculated to overcome, in a great degree, that fallacy most difficult of all fallacies to overcome—the idea of the ego as a permanent entity. The difficulty, also, which is universally felt of accounting for the birth of a new sentient being at every death is by this means obviated.....

"Most assuredly we require an explanation of our present condition, and we must accord all honour to Buddhism for having afforded us one both rational and satisfactory. When men come to see and to realize that by every deed committed, and by every word uttered, they are carving out, for evil or good, the future of the race, and that the suffering they now endure they owe entirely to the past sins of

* Dr. Paul Carus in *Buddhism and its Christian Critics.*

† *Local Karma.*—The term is used to express the character stamped upon any place by the action of former dwellers therein. Those who follow afterwards are supposed to inherit the Karma of the locality. Thus we see the nations at the present day expiating the sins of their forefathers, or enjoying the fruits of their good deeds. It is a well-known fact, also, that crimes tend to repeat themselves in the same districts, and even houses.

humanity, their sense of responsibility will be increased, their hold upon morality strengthened, the bond of unity, 'the brotherhood of man,' confirmed. Abolish the fallacy of cosmic chaos; substitute in its stead the idea of a definite system and purpose; show that man is the only framer of his destiny, the only author of his existence, the only cause of his own suffering—and the foundation of morality will be made sure, the redemption of the race brought within measurable distance. This is the end for which the doctrine of Karma was formulated, and to this end it has been labouring, a silent but progressive force, for many centuries."

The Rev. T. Sterling Berry, D.D., in his *Comparative Study of Christianity and Buddhism*, treats the latter as a whole in a spirit of commendable catholicity; but when he comes to points of contrast he fails signally to preserve equanimity of judgment, and distorts the import of Gotama's precepts in the most amazing fashion in his endeavour to bring them into opposition to the teaching of Jesus. His view of Karma, however, is, I think, a valuable contribution to the literature on the subject, and worthy of reproduction. He writes: "Strange and well nigh unintelligible as this theory seems, it is nevertheless possible, I believe, to get at the real thought that moulded Gotama's conception—actions of every kind as possessing the nature of seed sown; men were found, to some extent, to reap the consequences of their actions during their lifetime; but this takes place only in a limited and incomplete sense during the existence to which the actions belong. At the close of a life many acts remain like seed sown, but not yet grown up. Hence the theory that when a man dies he leaves the sum-total of the acts of his life as a kind of complex seed, made up of good and bad elements, which, by his death, springs up into a fresh existence, the same and yet not the same; in somewhat of the sense in which it might be said that ordinary seed which springs up as identical and yet not

identical with that which is sown. Viewed in this light, the theory loses its apparent absurdity. It becomes, in fact, a mode of expressing partly what we understand by the law of heredity, which involves a transference of character and a reproduction of the consequences of action; and partly the law of retribution, that 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.'"

The continuance of an individual's Karma, conceived as the effects of a man's character upon individuals whom he influences, is a perfectly thinkable process, and a generally accepted fact. But, when we are called upon to consider how it comes about that, on the death of a sentient being, a new sentient being is at once produced, to take up the effects of the deceased one's Karma, then we seem to be launched into a mystery that can only be explained by another mystery.

If such a doctrine is to be interpreted literally, it would seem to necessitate a numerical equality of births and deaths; a new-born babe would have to be ready at each death to receive the Karma-effects of the deceased. It might, however, be made faintly thinkable by including available births in other solar systems, and by allowing for a certain number of Karmas coming to an end by the attainment of Nirvana. This planet is held by Buddhists to be in sympathetic relationship with the other worlds, and there are countless millions of beings who change places. A number of men die somewhere on this earth, and they may not be re-born here at all; a number of beings die in some other planet, and may be re-born here at the same time.

This particular phase of the doctrine of Karma has been so distinctly enunciated in Buddhist writings that it becomes a question for the interpreter of Buddhism to decide whether it should be retained as a literal statement, and so dismissed as an unthinkable, or whether it should be given the chance of being classified as rational by expansive treatment.

Buddhism is so systematically and eminently rationalistic throughout its teaching that one feels impelled to a supreme effort to sustain its reputation in this one respect. In any case it would seem just to assume that it had a rationalistic basis in the mind of Gotama, however difficult it may be for us to discover the foundation of Rationalism on which it rests. An apparently irrational theory should not be rejected as irrational as long as it is within the bounds of possibility that the apparent irrationality is due to the limitations of our reason, or the absence of data, that have not come under our experience and knowledge of Cosmic laws. Everything may be contrary to what we think it to be; and everything may be opinion only.

As some beautiful poems cannot be thought out in connection with one's immediate environment without a loss of poetic value, but require mental transposition to a distant and different scene for their beauty to be fully and poetically realized, so, unless we remove our imagination from its every-day associations to an entirely different "scenery" of thought, we cannot expect to intelligently appreciate the complete significance of Buddhistic conceptions. As Professor Oldenberg puts it, we must, when approaching the study of Buddhism, divest ourselves wholly of all customary modes of thinking.

Buddhism lays stress everywhere upon the connectiveness of everything with everything; and everything is, at all times, something other than itself. Consciousness (Vinnâna), for instance, is described as "that which enters into the womb, and from which arise name and corporeal form"; yet consciousness and name and corporeal form have no dividual existence.

"Body, perceptions, and sensations vanish, but not conscience; but consciousness only exists as long as it is connected with name and corporeal form. Consciousness, however, is not essentially different from perceptions and sensations; it is also a Samskâra, and, like

all other Samskâras, it is changeable, and without substance."*

Consciousness has been described as the director of the organs, and, in this sense, vaguely assumes the place of an ego. Consciousness, as a "highly-developed and insubstantial product of the brain," possesses the faculty of acting *in the manner* of choice; it is derived from conformations, and conformations from ignorance.

There is a continuance of soul-forms after the death of an individual—that is, of the impressions caused by the character of an individual. This is the preservation of form by means of Karma (deeds). Obviously these soul-forms cannot continue unless there is an individual to receive the impression. Therefore, when it is said that, immediately upon the death of a sentient being, another sentient being is produced to receive the effects of the deceased's Karma, the statement may have been only intended to imply that for the continuance of soul-forms there must always be sentient beings to receive their impressions.

It does not seem necessary to suppose that on A's death B takes up the whole of A's Karma. The effects of A's

* In the place of a "sphere of being," with its supply of ready-made consciousness for the transmissive process in the brain, as hypothecated by Professor William James in his lecture on *Human Immortality*, I would substitute a formative faculty immanent in the universe, and assume the metamorphosis into consciousness, as we know it, to be a function of the brain. This theory would be quite reconcileable with the physiological view that consciousness is the final phase of the activity of the sensory nerves in the cortex of that organ. Fechner's conception of a psycho-physical threshold would also adapt itself to this theory as well as to the other; the threshold being understood as representing the functional capacity of the brain to extend or limit the scope of consciousness. The ultimate extension of consciousness would result in a return to the elemental informative. In the case of limited extension, consciousness would be carried on as a consciousness-germ, or Skandha, into a new being, on the death of a being.

Karma have been impressed, more or less, on all those who have come in his lifetime, and will come after his death, within range of his influence. In the latter case the influence is continued in the effects of his writings, speech, or other actions.

An individual during his lifetime will be impressed with the effects of the Karma of many individuals, and has to take the consequences, whether good or bad, with power of adding to or modifying the received effects. "The same character of deeds reappears wherever his deeds have impressed themselves on other minds."

The subject of Karma becomes hopelessly complicated if such a statement as the following is taken literally: "Buddhism is convinced that, if a man reaps sorrow, disappointment, pain, *he himself*, and no other, must at some time have sown folly, error, sin; if not in this life, then in some former birth." The language here employed is liable, unless the reader is on his guard, to take him back to the heresy of Metempsychosis, which Buddhism arose to destroy.

It perhaps needs reiteration that the "He Himself" in a former birth is not even the deeds of a different set of Skandhas—of a body of different constituent parts. The "He Himself" is only the effects of deeds done by a constantly becoming and constantly vanishing set of Skandhas, the particles of the human tornado which assume temporary form. The effects received become the "He Himself"; herein is the retributive phase of the doctrine of Karma.

The effects of Karma on their passage through preceding births on to future births are the only existent and continuing "I." A, who has received good influences from B, bad from C, and indifferent from D, has lived before, in a Buddhistic sense, in B, C, and D.

Buddhistic birth stories should, I think, be read in this light. When A performs an action similar to one performed centuries ago by B, it is to be understood that the effects of that particular action in B have reached A through many

intervening lives in either a modified or unmodified form. Other actions of A which had not been performed by B must be traced back in their effects to C, D, E, etc. A has only lived as B by virtue of the effects of particular and similar acts reaching him through the law of cause and effect.

"Within the sphere of causality we can all exclaim with Jesus: 'Before Abraham was I am.'"

There is yet another direction in which we may look for a solution of the problem. Life or being is frequently compared in Buddhistic expositions to a flame which is the same, and yet not the same, from the time it is lighted to the time of its extinction. Each moment of being passes away as, simultaneously or concurrently, a moment of being commences; and in this sense, on the death of a being, another being is simultaneously produced, until being comes to an end with death, as the flame expires at the moment of extinction.

This view agrees with that part of Buddhistic philosophy which asserts that nothing *survives* being except the effects of being; "being," in this connection, being taken as the entire life-history of an organism, whether animal or vegetable, and as the existence of a flame from its inception to its extinction.

The working of the law of Karma has been found so intricate that many Buddhists have relegated it to the category of Unthinkables. They regard it as such that it can only be understood by those who have attained to the "*intellectus mysticus*." The one thing considered requisite for the comprehension of its complexities is to solve the problem of the Four Noble Truths by following the Noble Eight-fold Path. A study of Buddha's psychology, they contend, is absolutely necessary to the disciple who wishes to know the processes of the ever-changing consciousness. The mind in itself is pure, but by coming into contact with impurities such as anger, harbouring of anger, selfishness, etc., it is soiled.

The practical psychology of Buddhism is based on ethics, and the student has to cut off all the impurities from the mind to enable him to properly comprehend the Nirvanic condition. So long as one thinks of self, so long is he re-born. Unless self is absolutely surrendered, unless "Thou hast lost thyself to save thyself, as Galahad,"* Karma continues; and that means ignorance; and ignorance can have no vision of the Holy Grail, fails to reach Nirvana, unites not with God!

There is no cessation in the continuous flow of thought between one life and another until Nirvana is reached. The "being" born in another life is absolutely not the same that died here, nor absolutely another; but is the result of the one. "My substance was hid when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth."

* "Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom,
Cried: 'If I lose myself, I save myself!'"
—*The Holy Grail* (Tennyson).

Chapter IV.

HEAVEN AND NIRVANA.

" Soles occidere et redire possunt.
Nobis, quum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda."
—Catullus.

Innumerable figures of speech have been brought into requisition to convey to the imagination the import of the terms " Heaven " and " Nirvana." None of these, taken either separately or collectively, can be held to include all that is indicated by the above expressions. To speak of reaching Heaven, or Nirvana, is somewhat misleading; no measurement of space is applicable to them; no phenomenal expression in itself will pass muster.

A later and more material aspect of heaven, known as the Western Paradise, and only referred to, I think, in the Mahāyana, has been provided, it would seem, for the satisfaction of those who require a temporary halting-place for thought before moving on to more abstract conceptions. This heaven is illustrated with all those inimitable colours and touches which oriental inventiveness uses with such alluring effect. It is naïvely located ten millions of miles to the west.

There, in a light that never was on land or sea, where lotus flowers of every imaginable hue vie with each other to cluster at his holy feet, sits enthroned the Buddha of Infinite Light, the Compassionate, the Perfect One.

The sweet radiance of his pitying smile pervades the

heavens for thousands of leagues. The beautiful expressions of his countenance cannot be numbered, for they are as countless as the sands of Gunga's sacred stream; nor can his compassion be measured—it is illimitable as a shoreless ocean. The magical grace of his form is compared to the "moon on high when she marches full-orbed" through the unclouded expanse of the Empyrean. If ever so "gentle a zephyr blows amid the trees," the atmosphere vibrates with all delicate and enticing melodies. The voices of the Devas are heard chanting his praises. An aerial choir, the birds of Paradise, answer back with antiphons of rapturous song as they soar above in the gilded air which fills the pavilions of the Blest. Such, and much more, is the "Pure Land," the land of Amita, the Buddha of Infinite Light.

The introduction into the picture of pavements of gold, crystal streams, precious stones, jewels, and many of the paraphernalia which the pageantry of this nether world demands for its embellishment brings to remembrance the splendours enshrined in that final revelation of things to be, which was delivered to man in the person of St. John the Divine.

Nirvana has been called "The Imperishable," "The Infinite," "The Eternal," "The Everlasting," "The Transcendent" "The Serene," "The Formless," "The Goal," "The Other Shore," "Rest," "The True," or "The Truth." It has been compared to an "island which no flood can overwhelm," to a "City of Peace," "The Jewelled Realm of Happiness," "An Escape from the Evil One."* For the Christian Heaven, in like manner, a great variety of metaphors abounds.

But the mere gazing at, and admiration of, these pretty pictures will not conduce to a comprehension of them—will not help us to discover what formulated in the mind of the

* Taken from *Buddhism and its Christian Critics*, by Paul Carus.

artist the design of the picture he painted. For this needful purpose it may not prove unprofitable to have recourse, in the first instance, to the metaphysics of the grand old Oriental mystic, St. Paul. By his assistance we may find that these conceptions, Heaven and Nirvana, on which so much wealth of imagery has been lavished, and about which controversy has well-nigh exhausted itself, will resolve themselves into something less indefinite, and more thinkable, of one nature and of one significance.

In his Epistle to the Corinthians he tells us "God hath chosen the things that are not to bring to nought the things that are." Now, the "things that are not" must assuredly be taken to mean that which is, figuratively speaking, beyond the threshold—something, in this respect, more than the subliminal* reveals; in fact, the ultra-liminal, and, consequently, the immutable. They are the quality Truth, residing in, but inseparable, as long as senses last, from, the "things that are"—namely, in materiality as we perceive it; materiality being here understood as "potential feeling, from which develop ideas, or the soul of man."

Ultimately perfected ideas, or soul, become this quality, Truth; they become that which is within and outside all things—in short, what Jesus calls "the kingdom of God within," as well as the Heaven around us.

The expression "bring to nought" has its equivalents in the terms "annihilation" and "extinction," so often used in connection with Nirvana, for the desperate purpose of depreciating the Buddhist conception of Heaven. The "things that are" are material objects as we perceive them, which are mutable, and never the same one moment together —never really are, but are for ever undergoing a process of becoming ("God calleth those things which be not as though they were," Rom. iv. 17). Material objects are mutable,

* "Subliminal" I use here in a strictly etymological sense—*sub limen*, up to the lintel.

and Heaven and Nirvana are immutability. Plotinus says: "The return to God, or The One (or Truth), is the consummation of all things, and the goal indicated by Christian teaching." This oneness, however, does not imply extinction. "He who has entered upon Nirvana is not annihilated; on the contrary, he has attained the deathless."

The identical idea is prevalent both in New Testament teaching and in Buddhistic doctrine, that the realization of that state of blessedness which is called "Heaven" in the one case, and "Nirvana" in the other, could be brought about during the lifetime of the saint. "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God" (Luke ix. 27).

"The kingdom of heaven is within you" is also a sufficiently explicit statement on the part of the Christian Scripture to substantiate the possibility of such an experience.

In an article published in the *Monist* of January, 1898, and bearing on this subject, there occurs the following passage, accompanied with extracts from the works of several Christian mystics:—

"The Buddhist idea, that salvation consists mainly in dropping our own self, in becoming nothing, in self-annihilation for the sake of becoming Buddha—viz., divinely incarnate—can be found in many Christian writers. The highest religious aspirations are not the result of an anxiety for the salvation of one's own soul, but a yearning for a union with God."

Scotus Erigena writes: "In God all things will be put to rest and remain One, Indivisible, and Immutable."……

"God does not perceive what is Himself."

According to St. Augustine: "If the soul is to comprehend God, it must forget itself, for if the soul sees and comprehends itself it neither sees nor comprehends God."

"If the soul loses itself through God and forsakes all things, it finds itself again through God."……

"Whenever the soul comes to uniting itself with God it becomes annihilated."……

"All perfection and all bliss consists in this, that man enters into the ground that is groundless."……

"How shall I love God? Thou shalt love Him as He is—a not God, a not spirit, a not person, a not image; but rather as He is—a true, pure, clear One, separated from all two-hood; and in this One we shall eternally disappear *from nothing into nothing.*"*……

Erckhart says: "How shall that man be who shall behold God? He shall be dead. Our Lord says: 'No man shall see me and live.'"

According to Buddhistic teaching, "He who has conquered ignorance and got rid of desire enjoys the supreme reward already in this life. His outer man may still be detained in the world of suffering, but he knows that it is not he himself whom the coming of the Sankharas† affects."

*I.

O Bhikshus, the uncreated, the invisible, the unmade, the elementary, the unproduced, exists (as well as) the created, the visible, the made, the conceivable, the compound, the produced; and there is an uninterrupted connection between the two.

II.

O Bhikshus, if the uncreated, the invisible, the unmade, the elementary, the unproduced was nonentity, I could not say that the result of their connection from cause to effect with the created, the visible, the made, the compound, the conceivable, was final emancipation.

III.

O Bhikshus, it is because of the real existence of the uncreated, the invisible, the elementary, the unproduced, that I say that the result of their connection from cause to effect with the created, the visible, the made, the compound, the conceivable, is final emancipation.—(*Verses from the Buddhist Canon*, translated from the Thibetan of the Bkah-hgyur, by W. Woodville Rockhill.)

† "Sankhara is both the preparation and the prepared……To the Buddhist mind the made has existence only and solely in the process of being made; whatever is is not so much a something which is as the process rather of a being, self-generating, and self-again-consuming" (Oldenberg).

Enlightenment and Nirvana are synonymous. "Buddha is said to have entered upon Nirvana when he died. Yet at the same time we are told that Buddha had attained Nirvana already during his life."*

"If thou knowest the destruction of the Sankharas, thou knowest the Uncreated" (Dhammapada); or, as Professor Oldenberg's translator renders it, "Let others pursue the uncreated by their erroneous paths which will never carry them beyond the realm of the created. As for thee, let the attainment of the Uncreated consist in this, that thou reachest the cessation of the created."

Gotama, in a conversation between himself and an unbeliever, said: "Illustrious disciple, Nirvana may be compared to the nothingness defined as the absence of something different to itself. We may justly define Nirvana as that sort of non-existence which consists in the absence of something essentially different."†

There are to be found several passages in the New Testament which seem to confirm the interpretation given to St. Paul's saying about the "things that are not." Heaven is spoken of as an inheritance that fadeth not away —that is, the "things that are" fade away, but the things that are not do not fade away. The things that are not seen (that are not) are eternal, and the things that are seen (that seemingly are) are temporal.

This it hath not entered the heart of man to fully understand. We only see through a glass darkly; through the web of illusion. "But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

Jesus answering his interrogators, exclaims: "What *house* will ye build me, or what is the *place* of my rest?" This was a rebuff to those who endeavoured to localize the illocatable. "The Most High dwelleth not in temples made

* Paul Carus.

† Pari Nirvana Suttha, chap. xxxix., i.; as given in Oldenberg's *Buddhism*.

with hands." "My kingdom is not of this world." Jesus spoke to the people in parable because it was not given to them to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

Gotama said: "Whatsoever has not been revealed by me let that remain unrevealed, and what has been revealed let it be revealed."

With reference to the saying of Jesus, "*Multa habeo vobis dicere, sed nunc non potestis portare illa*," St. Augustine remarks: "*Manifestum est non esse culpandum, aliquando verum tacere.*"

Dr. Paul Carus, in a chapter headed "Hinâyâna, Mahâyâna, Mahâsâtu" (p. 230, *Buddhism and its Christian Critics*), deals in a most masterly and effective manner with the value of the symbolic in contradistinction to the essential phases of Buddhism and Christianity. In judging the Mahâyâna system (of Buddhism) and its fantastical offshoots, he says: "We must consider the mental state of those nations for whom it was adapted, and it may be that a purer religion would have failed utterly where cruder allegories of what appears to us as childish superstitions exercised a beneficent influence. The Mahâyâna has changed the savage hordes of Central Asia, from whom proceeded the most barbarous hordes, dreaded by all their neighbours, into a most kind-hearted people, with a sacred passion for universal benevolence and charity."

With reference to the Christian Church, he remarks: "What does it matter that, during the development of the Church, the letter of symbolically-expressed truth has crystallized into fixed dogmas?.....He who believes in a myth that contains, in the garb of a parable, a religious truth, and accordingly regulates his moral conduct, is better off than he who is void of any faith. The truth hidden in the myth teaches him and serves him as a guide; it comforts him in affliction, strengthens him in temptation, and shows him in an allegorical reflection the bliss that rests upon righteousness."

The words "rest," "peace," and "sleep" are in the New Testament more often associated with the conditions of a future life than such expressions as "joy" or "happiness." The word "joy" is only to be found once in direct connection with the word "heaven" in the New Testament—*i.e.*, when there was joy in heaven over the repentance of a sinner.

The omission may have been intentional, so that the world might understand that the joy of heaven would be something absolutely different from what we conceive of joy; that there will be a kind of joy, in which joy, as it is known here, is absent.

"There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God."

"He that hath entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works as God did from his."

"Let us labour therefore to enter that rest."

"Ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Such texts seem to draw heaven and Nirvana very close together.

It is undoubtedly implied in some portions of the Christian Scriptures that the souls of the departed are asleep, and will not be disturbed till the coming of the Lord and the final judgment.

"Does not the testimony of the Bible lead us to this conclusion; from the cry of the tired spirit of Samuel, awakened from its sleep by the Witch of Endor, 'Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?' to the saying of the spirit in the Revelation, 'Yea, they rest from their labours.' In the case of Lazarus we have the words of Jesus to this effect: 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep'" (from *Light*).

Many are in love with the satisfying beauty of this sleep which has lasted since death began to be, and desire that it might never be disturbed. This is that yearning for the rest of Nirvana, for the peace that passeth understanding.

The true mission of religious symbolism, of music, of poetry, and the plastic arts is, not to excite the physical emotions of man, not to crystallize appearances, but to translate his soul to this condition of delicious swooning, to turn his gaze inwards to what Brahmanic philosophy calls the fontal essence of things.

From a poetical point of view, it is perhaps melancholy to reflect that the seers of India are being rudely awakened from their reveries, to be at last, as seems probable, completely absorbed into the relatively sordid environment of Occidental progress—in fact, to dream no more. The West has murdered dreams.

Apart from the physical influences of climate and country, the strange yearning of the Indian for an ultimate heaven of unconsciousness may be accounted for by tracing it to a vague remembrance in the human organism of the happy condition from which it primarily emerged, before even animal existence had entered upon the fairly peaceful life-history of an amœba.

The process of transition from the condition of "are" to that of "are not," from the phenomenal to the noumenal, has been conceived by Buddhists and Christians alike to be gradual. As a parallel to the "house of many mansions," so often taken to mean by Christians a progressive ascent through a number of heavens to a heaven of heavens, I give below, in abbreviated form, the "spheres of formlessness" as described by Mr. Lafcadio Hearn, in his book entitled *Gleanings from Buddha Fields.*

"These," he says, "are four. In the first state all sense of individuality is lost, and there survives only the idea of infinite space or emptiness. In the second state this idea of space vanishes, and its place is filled by the idea of infinite reason. But this idea of reason is anthropomorphic, it is an illusion, and it fades out in the third state, which is called the 'state-of-nothing-to-take-hold-of.' Here is only the idea of infinite nothingness. But even this condition

has been reached by the aid of the action of the personal mind. This action ceases; then the fourth state is reached, the state of 'neither-namelessness-nor-notnamelessness.' Something of personal mentality continues to float vaguely here—the very uttermost expiring vibration of Karma—the last vanishing haze of being. It melts, and the immeasurable revelation comes."

Professor Oldenberg says: "It is not enough to say that the final goal to which the Buddhist strives to pass as an escape from the sorrow of the world is Nirvana. It is also necessary to any delineation of Buddhism to note, as a fact assured beyond all doubt, that internal cheerfulness, infinitely surpassing all mere resignation with which the Buddhist pursues his end.....

"Does the path, then, lead into a new existence? Does it lead into the nothing? The Buddhist creed rests in delicate equipoise between the two. The longing of the heart that craves the eternal has not nothing, and yet the thought has not a something, which it might firmly grasp. Further off the idea of the endless, the eternal could not withdraw itself from belief than it has done here, where, like a gentle flutter on the point of merging in the nothing, it threatens to evade the gaze."

Nirvana, according to Mr. James Freeman Clarke, means to the Buddhist the absolute eternal world beyond time and space; that which is *nothing* to us now, but will be *everything* hereafter.

Students of Buddhism are often confronted with the question why sorrow and pain should have held such prominent places in the mind of Gotama. Explanations have been afforded that this was due, in a large measure, to a pathetic nature, born of climate and environment. The *mind* of the inhabitants of Hindustan is still an unfathomable mystery; the great heart of India beats slowly, and those waves of sprightly emotion which are distinctive peculiarities of the natives of Europe are but barely

discernible ripples on the still surface of the Indian character.

To the poetic people of the Ganges the immense plains of India, their broad and voiceless rivers, the magic beauty of an oasis, the distant silence of the Himalayas, the brooding calm of the atmosphere, all appear to labour in unison to the same end—to fashion the restless heart of mortals after their own emotionless image, to expand it into that fulness of peace which is theirs, and to guide the children of men into the haven where they would be.

This mode of thought, or no thought; this complete abandonment of self, culminating in the ascetic, to the desire of union with the Infinite, can be differentiated from the meditative pose of the Christian by the absence in it of anything approaching to emotion or affection. These are weaknesses to be set aside. There can be no calm where sensations enter—not even a breath of divine love must stir the ocean of their pictured rest. Gotama fully recognized that true joy was only to be found when the notion of selfhood was in abeyance, as it most certainly is found invariably in those cases in which we lose, as it were, the sense of objective being in an absorbing subject, or in the presence of a fascinating personality.

There is an indescribable pleasure realizable in engrossing occupations of mind and body which distract attention from ourselves as selves. Hence the apotheosis of love as the ultimate possible bliss, whether it be manifested in the adoration of the human or in the ecstasy of the saint. Charles Beaudelaire declares the whole aim of life is to dispel *ennui* —the *ennui* of sitting still by walking, of lying down by change to an erect posture, and so on. Virtue, vice, love, etc., are all efforts to attain a state of oblivion of our individuality, to *s'enivrer* with distractions of some sort or another. Sorrow is the realization of ourselves as separate entities. The Buddhists declare that, when we rid ourselves of the idea of this separateness, then, and then only,

will true joy be found. The same truth is expressed in the New Testament: "He that loseth his life shall gain it."

The drooping head upon the cross, the livid corpse of the Saviour—such pictures are strikingly emblematic of the sacrifice of self-hood, which is ever the cause of pain. Self-hood crucified—that is the Great Deliverance, that is Heaven, that is Nirvana! We must do more than take up the cross and follow; we must hang upon it, be nailed to it, if we would be saved.

It has been urged that the foundations of Buddhism rest upon the assumption that life is not worth living; everything leads to pain and sorrow; the joys of life are ignored. Hence, if it were proved that the enjoyments of life outweighed the sorrows, would it not be clearly shown that Buddhism is *de trop?* For it is clear that life, in that case, would be worth living. This view of life is not only supported by a general consensus of opinion, but seems to be additionally strengthened by the universal desire to live. That this desire would not exist if the pessimistic idea of Buddhism regarding existence were well founded is evident.

In opposition to this view, my conception of Buddhism, as represented in its literature, is that its foundations rest upon the assumption that there is a life more worth living, in which all sorrow is eradicated; that only ignorance leads to pain and sorrow; that knowledge leads to their extinction. I am not aware that the joys of life are wholly ignored by Buddhists.

If it is granted that happiness predominates over unhappiness, and that life must consequently be worth living, this need not exclude the desire for a life more worth living, in which there is no unhappiness. If Buddhism is the wretched, pessimistic system it is declared by some to be, why should it not be allowed to hypothecate a heaven, when even the joyous, optimistic Christian, who finds life so worth living, speaks of being "delivered from the misery of this sinful world," and hopes for a life worth living?

Quite three-quarters of the population of this planet, as represented by its religious beliefs, which is supposed to find life worth living, looks through the spectacles of faith towards a life more worth living, after the dissolution of the body. In short, there are two distinct lives recognized by Buddhists —the *living* life and the *non-living* life ; and it goes without saying that the latter is by far the more desirable of the two.

" Not the life of men's veins,
Not of flesh that conceives ;
But the grace that remains,
The fair beauty that cleaves
To the life of the rains in the grasses, the life of the dews on the leaves."

Dr. Paul Carus says: "The good tidings of Buddha's religion are not so much the recognition of the existence of pain and care as the conquest of evil and the escape from suffering. The following verses from the Dhammapada have no pessimistic ring :—

" 'Let us live happily, then, not hating those who hate us !

" 'Among men who hate us, let us dwell free from hatred !

" 'Let us live happily, then, free from ailments among the ailing !

" 'Among men who are ailing, let us dwell free from ailments !

" 'Let us live happily, then, free from greed among the greedy !

" 'Among men who are greedy, let us dwell free from greed !' "

There are many passages to be found in the New Testament, in our Christian Liturgy, and especially in the Hymnology of the Churches, which emphasize "suffering" as the normal and inevitable condition of humanity, almost leading one to suppose that it is the predominant factor in human life.

In the Burial Service we thank God that our brother has

been delivered from the miseries of a sinful world, and Job is brought into requisition to show that "man that is born of woman is *full* of sorrows."

In a beautiful hymn we have the following verse :—

"If I find Him, if I follow,
What His guerdon *here?*
Many a sorrow, many a labour,
Many a tear."

For an assembly of young men and maidens in the first rapturous dawn of maturing youth to sing—

"O Paradise, O Paradise,
'Tis weary waiting here,"

though delightfully pessimistic, does not seem quite up to the standard of absolute truth.

These sorrows, these labours, these tears, this weary waiting, represent the experiences in store for the initiate, and the conditions under which the Christian must progress who would reach the goal of his dearest aspirations.

"Death is self-surrender ; all loss is a kind of death ; the only-begotten Son is the summing up of what is dearest, most *one's own—i.e.*, God can only be *at one* with his work, can only make it to be truly his work by eternally dying—sacrificing what is dearest to him. God does not, therefore, *cease to be;* he does not annihilate himself ; he lives eternally in the very process of sacrificing his dearest work. Hence God is said to be love ; for love is the consciousness of survival in the act of self-surrender.....Such would be the *atone*ment of the world-god eternally living in his own death, eternally losing, and eternally returning to, himself" (Nettleship).

It cannot be denied that "suffering" was the burden of Gotama's song, the refrain of his passionless, yet beautiful, utterances.

Jesus has been described "as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Jesus wept.

The whole creation weeps.

"What think ye, my disciples (the Perfect One said), whether is more, the water which is in the four great oceans, or the tears which have flown from you, and have been shed by you, while ye strayed and wandered in this long pilgrimage, and sorrowed and wept because that was your portion which ye abhorred, and that which ye loved was not your portion? And while ye experienced this through long ages more tears have flown from you, and have been shed by you, while ye strayed and wandered on this long pilgrimage, and sorrowed and wept because that was your portion which ye abhorred, and that which ye loved was not your portion, than all the water which is in the four great oceans" (Oldenberg's *Buddhism*).

St. Paul conjures up a vision of the immense figure of creation, prostrate, groaning beneath the silent heavens. "The true Buddhist certainly sees in this world a state of continuous sorrow; but this sorrow only awakes in him a feeling of compassion for those who are yet in the world. For himself he feels no sorrow or compassion.....He seeks Nirvana with the same joyous sense of victory in prospect with which the Christian looks forward to his goal, everlasting life" (Oldenberg).

The doctrine of an irrevocable doom for the unbeliever and obdurate sinner is not easy to follow, because it would seem to imply "a failure of the redemptive work of the Saviour unless all for whom he died ultimately partake of salvation." If many are called and but few are chosen; if the gate is narrow, and only a microscopic minority enter thereby, the supreme sacrifice of the only-begotten Son of God is liable to lose significance in the eyes of an *exigeant* public.

Jesus "treated popular religious terms such as Hell and Heaven as symbols." "He employed the familiar images of Heaven and Hell to impress on men's consciousness the

supreme bliss of righteousness and the awful misery of sin."

"When our Lord came, he found the doctrines of last things presented in forms already fixed, and the terms Gehenna, Paradise, etc., in familiar, even proverbial, use" (Eschatology, *Encyclopædia Britannica*).

Every being, according to Buddhistic teaching, attains Nirvana in the end; so may it not be in "the times of the restitution of *all things*, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began"?

If symbolism were only taken for what it represents, every Buddhist could join with the Christian in many of the exquisite invocations of the Psalms. There is no rest to be found in the impermanent. To find the peace which passeth understanding, we must ultimately have recourse to the unconditioned, the permanent, Nirvana, God. The prayer of the Christian as well as the aspiration of the pure Buddhist is to be, whether living or dead, one with the Uncreate.

Professor Oldenberg says that "the devotion of abstraction is to Buddhism what prayer is to other religions." There is here a distinction without a difference. Abstraction is nothing more nor less than true, perfect, sublimated prayer. Real, unadulterated prayer is only possible when the mind is totally relieved of distractions.

Jesus went apart to pray; so the Buddhist monk seeks the silence of the forest or the seclusion of the cave to commune with the unconditioned, with "Our Father which art in Heaven," with the Uncreate of the Athanasian Creed. He who abstracts himself from the "plurality of the phenomenal world" anticipates the cessation of the impermanent.

"Come, then! Into solitude will I go, into the forest which Buddha praises; therein it is good for the solitary

monk to dwell who seeks perfection. In the *sîta* forest rich in blossoms, in the cool mountain cave, will I wash my body and walk alone."

The counting of inhalations and exhalations of the breath, and other practices of a like nature, are used as so many short cuts to this state of abstraction or prayer. For this purpose they are as valuable as ceremonial magic professes to be for the ready acquisition of power over unknown laws and qualities of nature.*

Christianity and Buddhism cannot be differentiated in this matter of abstraction. Gibbon writes: "The fakirs of

* "Our prayer is to Him to preserve us in future, to assist us in our troubles, to give us our daily food, not to be too severe upon us, not to punish us as we deserve; but to be merciful and kind. But the Buddhist has far other thoughts than these. He believes that the world is ruled by everlasting, unchangeable laws of righteousness. The Great God lives far behind His laws, and they are for ever and ever. You cannot change the laws of righteousness by praising them, or by crying against them, any more than you can change the revolution of the earth. Sin begets sorrow, sorrow is the only purifier from sin; these are eternal sequences; they cannot be altered; it would not be good that they should be altered. The Buddhist believes that the sequences are founded on righteousness, are the path to righteousness; and he does not believe he could alter them for the better, even if he had the power by prayer to do so.....This has been called a pessimism. Surely it is the greatest optimism the world has known—this certainty that the world is ruled by righteousness; that the world has been, that the world will always be, ruled by perfect righteousness.....The God who lies far beyond our ken has delegated his authority to no one. He works through everlasting laws. His will is manifested by unchangeable sequences. There is nothing hidden about His law that requires exposition by his agents, nor any ceremonies necessary for acceptance into his faith. Buddhism is a free religion. No one holds the keys of salvation but himself. Buddhism never dreams that anyone can save or damn you except yourself, and so a Buddhist monk is so far away from our ideas of a priest as can be. Nothing could be more abhorrent to Buddhism than any claim of authority of power from above, of holiness acquired, except by the earnest effort of a man's own soul" (*The Soul of a People*, by H. Fielding).

India and the monks of the Oriental Church were alike persuaded that, in total abstraction of the faculties of the mind and body, the purer spirit may ascend to the enjoyment and vision of the Deity. The opinion and practice of the monasteries of Mount Athos will be best represented in the words of an Abbot who flourished in the eleventh century. "When thou art alone in thy cell," says the ascetic teacher, "shut thy door, and seat thyself in a corner; raise thy mind above all things vain and transitory; recline thy beard and chin on thy breast; turn thy eyes and thy thoughts towards the middle of thy belly, the region of the navel, and search the place of the heart, the seat of the soul. At first all will be dark and comfortless; but, if you persevere day and night, you will feel an ineffable joy; and no sooner has the soul discovered the place of the heart than it is involved in a mystic and ethereal light."

Here, in these practices attributed to Christian saints, we have an exact parallel to those in use by Hindu ascetics even of the present day. It must be clearly understood, however, that the Buddhist attaches no merit to such practices, unless they conduce to the banishment of ignorance. Asceticism, as a thing in itself, is useless.

Heaven and Nirvana are unpainted pictures, undescribed actualizations; they are realities, not materialities. There is a never-ending, unsatisfied, restless craving, conscious or unconscious, throughout the Kosmos to enter upon reality. The suns and their satellites whirl about aimlessly in search of it. The whole universe is in sore trouble because, through ignorance, it is not. "The vulture's eye hath not seen it; the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not with me." And yet it is there!

The use of such exaggerated terms as "immense," "infinite," "illimitable," etc., is to be accounted for by referring the habit to unconscious efforts by the conditioned to express the unconditioned. The sea, mountains, the

heavens, owe their fascination to a suggestion of the unconditioned possessed by them.

In moments of attempted aspiration we are prone to look upwards into space—a symbol of the boundless. On the other hand, when the mind is engaged in working out details and calculations, there is the habit of looking downwards. Not only men, but beasts of the field, look upwards for help in their dying moments; upwards into space, where the conditioned seemingly vanishes into the unconditioned.

I have often witnessed the pleading expression of dying antelopes and other wild animals, their eyes being almost invariably directed to the sky above in their last moments of life.

I was on one occasion more than usually struck with this beautiful expression—appealing, as it were, to the skies for mercy—in the case of a wounded bear when in its death throes amid the snowy solitudes of the Himalayas.

Let us draw the curtains apart, and behold for a moment the scene of the enacted tragedy. Out of the violet mists spread by the viewless hands of a yet unrisen sun, black crags uplifted their glacier breasts to receive the first ravishing kiss of dawn; and the forests, obedient to the silence imposed by the kingly peaks, stood austere and unstirred by the affectionate airs of heaven. The staining blood, the furry mass, the clutching claws of the wild monster in his struggle with life and death, presented to the imagination some weird sacrifice consummated upon an altar, built of immaculate snow.

It was then that this remarkable pleading expression of the eyes arrested the attention of my Himalayan huntsman, who, turning round to me, exclaimed: "He is seeing God." The Psalmist says: "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help."

Human beings, as well as all animal nature, seem to make their final appeal for help or pity to something above

or beyond this conditioned world. The enhancement of the beauties of landscape and architecture by the effects of mist and twilight is due to the obliteration of detail by these atmospheric conditions. Detail is fatiguing to the eye and brain. These organs unconsciously demand the repose which the absence of detail confers. Hence the charm of impressionism in Art.

In the countenances of the blind, who possess one sensation the less to distract and weary them, there is not infrequently to be noticed a peculiar scintillation of peace which seems to speak to one of the time when all sensations will cease to be, and to herald the approach of that eternal beatitude which is so highly uplifted above the joys of this transitory world.

There is also a strong Nirvanic suggestion in the appearance of some of the eminent ecclesiastics of the Roman Catholic faith, in those instances where the flesh shows traces of the consuming fire of asceticism. Benevolence, compassion, love, genius, joy—all these are presented, but with a minimum of the earthy adhering to them. In this aspect they create an impression very different to that communicated to us by the comfortable placidity of those who have only experienced happiness of a less exalted description.*

In "stillness," another attribute of the unconditioned, there abides an enchantment that cannot be surpassed by other conditions. Yet even the rapture engendered by the sight of a furious and incontinent sea can be explained by the fact that the pleasure derived therefrom is solely due

* The extraordinary veneration in which the Cowley Fathers and Roman Catholic priests are held in India has often been attributed, and rightly so, I think, to the unassuming asceticism which characterizes these lowly followers of the Great Master. Celibacy, self-denial, poverty, meekness—these never fail to win the admiration and respect of the people of Hindustan who cherish their ideals more fondly than is apparently the case in many other countries.

and in proportion to the magnitude of the display, and magnitude suggests the "illimitable."

The ambition to scale the highest summits, in whatever position or capacity, the idea of resurrection, the fascination of the word "eternal," the hope of everlasting rest—all these tend in the same direction, all point to the Empyrean, where detail seems to fade into a vacuum, into Nirvana, into Heaven, into God.

Chapter V.

SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS.

It is only when we come to take a bird's-eye view of these two great religions, which have exercised so enormous and so abiding an influence over the human race, and when clearness of vision is unobscured by numberless petty details and dogmas, that we can perceive the factors common to both which have given them their present stability and strength.

No religion, no system of morals, no philosophy, can be secure unless they rest upon the groundwork of universal truth and necessity; and it is certain that, if Christianity and Buddhism did not possess these supports, they would not now be what they actually are—the ruling forces to millions of human beings.

It has been said with much truth that the daily life of an ordinary man is a continual round of intoxication. Some form or other of inebriating excitement seems absolutely necessary to him, if he is to escape from the Slough of Despond of *ennui* and all its evil consequences. The remark is equally true of the human race as a whole. It cannot survive, apparently, without constant stimuli to urge and goad it forward. Were such stimuli wanting from time to time, man would probably degenerate, and cease to show that love of progress and activity which is so essential to his existence as man. Consequently, we note, looking back through the vista of history which lies open to our view, the periodical appearance of some great religious reformer, whose task it is to infuse new zeal and strength into the flagging energies of his fellow-creatures. Gotama,

Jesus, Savonarola, General Booth, are all greater or lesser instances in point; have all worked upon the same basic conception, however different the condition of their times may have required the superficial doctrines of their various creeds to be.

Some—Jesus and Gotama, and possibly Mahomed—worked with the full cognizance of the task before them; others, who have not been gifted with so large a measure of divine insight, have wrought and lived for the same purpose, blindly, and unconscious of the complete significance of their action.

But, it may be asked, if Jesus and Gotama were gnomic, how comes it that the Buddhism and Christianity of to-day are so radically different in their outward manifestations? To answer this question we have merely to take a broad glance at history.

At the time of the advent of Gotama the people of India were in possession of a civilization remarkable in many respects, but most remarkable, perhaps, in the freedom and latitude of thought prevalent. It is difficult for many who have been brought up within the contracted influences of those who regard all alien religions and non-Christian countries as so many black spots on the pages of history and on the maps of the world, and who have been surrounded in their youth by the innumerable restrictions placed upon all speculative propensities, to realize that, at the time when they were mere cave-dwellers and unclothed sojourners with the beasts of the field, a great and lofty civilization was existent in what they would possibly consider a barbarous corner of the globe, and that a people there held dominion whose chief intellectual pastime was to range over the vast domains of speculative thought and all the interminable mysteries of life. The Indian has been a philosopher by birth and breeding from time immemorial; and only among a race of philosophers could such a religion as Buddhism, with its sudden iconoclasm, have been preached

with so little opposition, and have taken root so rapidly, when we come to consider the strong hold the Brahmanical ceremonial had upon the people at that time.

With the inception of Christianity, however, the case was very different. At the birth of Jesus the inhabitants of Palestine, with the exception of the Essenes, were sunk low in the mire of bigotry, prejudice, and priestly domination. The mind of the people was less philosophically prepared to grasp a broad and exalted creed such as essential Christianity; it required dogmas more definite, doctrines more easily comprehended; and Jesus had perforce to mould his utterances to the temperament and mental capacity of the people among whom he preached.

To the east of the Holy Land was India, with its refined and more perfect civilization; to the west, Central Europe, with its savage and ignorant tribes, worshippers of trees, and in servitude to many superstitious practices and customs. Christianity, with its immense potential resources, its innate power for good, required some outlet for its activities; and, as was only natural, it spread in the direction where a pure and sublime religion was most needed, and experienced little difficulty in eventually conquering the savage intellect of Central Europe. Becoming appropriated by men who, living in the far North, depended for their very life upon a ceaseless struggle with adverse circumstances, it gradually lost the softening and refining influences which are so characteristic of the Oriental temperament, and became the vehicle for the passions and ambitions of a race more brutal and more unsympathetic than that among which it took its rise.

And to what an extent has this religion of Christ, the evangel of peace and goodwill, been since prostituted! The mistaken—though, no doubt, well-intended—dogmas formulated by the Holy Catholic Church proved to be, in their short-sightedness and complete lack of insight into human nature, a prolific source of degeneration, bigotry,

persecution, ignorance, immorality, and extreme ecclesiastical tyranny in the Dark Ages. The rigid and narrow doctrines inculcated by the Puritans have been almost as fruitful a cause of moral perversion and reckless narrow-mindedness. To-day it must be acknowledged that we have outgrown the gross and debasing Christianity of those mediæval times; but many of us are still fast chained in the shackles of prejudice and intolerance, with all their concomitant delusions and hypocrisies.

Bruno, in his day, said: "Christianity has been tried for eighteen centuries; the religion of Christ remains to be tried." This remark, however, overstates the case considerably, for it must be confessed that there have been many instances of individual lives which have approached as closely to the ideal as far as it has been practicable within human limits.

True Christianity many of us have yet to learn; it is but the husk which exists with the many as yet. Nevertheless, we flatter ourselves sometimes as the elect of the earth, and despatch emissaries of civilization to the darkest corners of heathendom to carry with them only a very imperfect presentment of our great religion in practice and doctrine.

It is but lately that stern necessity caused the deserts of the Soudan to be strewn with the corpses of many thousands of dervishes, and the pietist section of the British press rejoiced at the great victory of Christianity over Islam, and the fulfilment of a long-cherished *revenge* for the most truly Christian of English soldiers! To such an extent can inconsistency flourish among the most morally advanced of the earth's inhabitants. And if Europeans have been zealous in waging war to the death against the heathen in the name of their common religion, they have been no less ready to turn the gospel of peace into an apologia for such an internecine slaughter as few other causes have given rise to, until, at the present day, it is hardly

possible to write seriously—in order that they may be taken seriously—the words, "How these Christians love one another!"

When we turn to India, to Ceylon, and more especially to Burmah, we are brought face to face with a very different state of things. It is true that in some parts—Thibet, for instance—Buddhism has been debased to an even worse state than Christianity in Europe; but, after all, that is merely asserting that human nature is human nature. The broader aspect of Buddhism in Asia must, to any unprejudiced observer, appear in striking contrast to the prostitution to which other religions in other corners of the earth have been subjected. It seems to be one of the unalterable laws which govern human conduct that the teaching of any great religious reformer should, in the centuries which follow his disappearance from the arena in which he had striven, be brought low and narrowed down, partly by the shortsightedness of its adherents, but mostly owing to the unhealthy influences of ecclesiastical domination such as was typical of mediæval Europe and Brahmanical India. That Buddhism should in great degree have escaped such a fate must be attributed, not only to the intrinsic value of the system itself, but also to the character of the people among whom it has survived.

There have been many calumniators, from interested motives, of Buddhism; but no false representations, however frequently reiterated, can serve to mask the purity and nobility of this remarkable religion. It has never, like Christianity, been made the pretext of warfare and the conquest of alien races; no blood has ever been shed in its propagation; no despairing cries of martyred wives and orphan children rise up from the centuries that are past to stamp its forehead with the brand of Cain. By reason alone has it spread and become endeared to the many millions who now owe it allegiance; reason and truth are the only swords which have been unsheathed in the cause

of its promulgation.* It has, in fact, conquered by its sweet reasonableness alone, unaided by artificial and compulsory means.

The gradually diminishing popularity of the religious war sentiment which actuates people to perpetrate such iniquities as Crusades and Jehads will, it is presumed, afford relief in the future, at least to some sections of the Christian world, by removing an opportunity out of the way for the reproach of those who take their stand by the non-resistance principle as enunciated by the founder of the Christian faith. The carrying out of the non-resistance principle in its totality seems to increase in impracticability in proportion to the advancing complexity of social and national life. A very near approach to the achievement of the object embodied in the principle can only be imagined possible under the most primitive conditions of existence, notably in such cases where the country inhabited provides the necessities of life without involving any violent struggle for their acquisition. Christian nations, by the force of circumstances and the nature of their environment, are unfortunately impelled, it would seem, to disregard and set aside the very distinct teaching of Jesus on this point; and some of us, facing both ways, endeavour to escape from the dilemma, and pour balm upon our consciences, by assuming that war is amply justified by Scripture and expressly sanctioned by the Almighty. In this connection it would perhaps be the most straightforward course for us to frankly admit with Tolstoi that war is as fundamentally un-Christian as it is un-Buddhistic, and to be prepared to face the consequences of its unlawfulness in

* "No ravished country has ever borne witness to the prowess of the followers of the Buddha; no murdered men have poured out their blood on their hearthstones, killed in his name; no ruined women have cursed his name to high heaven. He and his faith are clean of the stain of blood. He was the preacher of the Great Peace, of love, of charity, of compassion; and so clear is his teaching that it can never be misunderstood" (*The Soul of a People*, by H. Fielding, p. 88).

the sight of God rather than to dislocate the teaching of Jesus with a view to the selfish satisfaction of our consciences, and for the ultimate purpose of settling down into a comfortable frame of mind when brought into contact with this unpleasant subject.

In spite of the many detractors Buddhism has had, it has been appreciated in cultivated centres of Europe and America to an extent which is the surest token of its intrinsic worth. In Asia it is difficult to realize how profound and enduring has been its influence for good.

Perhaps, on account of the presence of dogmas, such as the negation of soul as a permanent individual entity and of immortality as it is known among us, which are to the average European intellect absurd and most repugnant, it has been more readily assimilated as a belief by races which, unlike ourselves, are philosophic by nature and by birth. But by far the most important part of Buddhism in its practical significance is the doctrine of Karma, which has proved so great a stumbling-block to many, and a medium of contempt for those professing other faiths. It would hardly be exaggeration to describe this as one of the grandest ethical theories ever devised by the brain of man, ranging as it does over the whole sphere of human activity and existence, and policing, as it were, the actions of human creatures.

Lest it should appear to any of my readers that I have laid undue stress upon the value and beauty of Buddhism in the foregoing pages, I would take this opportunity of disclaiming any intention on my part to draw invidious distinctions between the manifestations of the two faiths of which I have treated, and which, in my opinion, are *fundamentally* one and the same.

In this connection my sole aim has been to give prominence to the many excellent properties possessed by Buddhism, with a view to clearing the way for an impartial appreciation of this religion by those who have never yet

bestowed their attention or extended their sympathies to the subject with unbiased minds.

The dissolution, not the destruction, of symbolism which I have endeavoured to accomplish in dealing with the metaphysic of Christianity and Buddhism—of that symbolism which is so apt, when taken as a thing in itself, to contract our sympathies and darken our vision in respect of religions —will have achieved an object if it succeeds in carrying with it the conviction, at present* so indisturbably possessed by the writer, that *essential* Christianity and *true* Buddhism cannot be differentiated; that the ultimate source of their power and loveliness is one; that they rest upon the same imperishable foundations, which are lost to sight in billowy clouds of mystery, in a splendour beyond imagining.

The priest in Zola's *Rome* looked forward to the day when symbols and rites, so necessary in the infancy of the world, would disappear altogether—"to the time when enlarged, purified, and instructed humanity would be able to support the brightness of naked truth" without their assistance.

It may be, however, that any premature abandonment of symbols, rites, and ceremonies might, under present conditions, prove disastrous, as such a course would go far to arrest artistic tendencies and stifle within us those cravings for the beautiful which are such undeniably potent and useful factors in conducting us onward to a realization of the invisible. All that appears requisite in this direction at the present moment is that the symbolic element in symbolism should be clearly recognized, and symbolism appraised at its true value.

Concurrently with the development of a deeper insight into the realities which subsist in symbols, there should arise in these Northern latitudes a class of people who would

* "In knowledge that man only is to be condemned who is not in a state of transition.....nor is there anything more adverse to accuracy than fixity of opinion" *(Faraday)*.

demonstrate by their character and actions that, under existing social conditions, and in all the turmoil of modern civilization, a nearer approach to the ideal life than has yet been made by a community is within the range of practicalities. This is the most clamant need of the day.

In our Western world we are confronted with innumerable obstacles in the way of leading the ideal, or Christ-like, life. The ideal *life-germ* is in all of us, but too often hidden away under the veneer of respectability, and much obscured by conventionalities. This germ, if not very apparent in our public capacity, is distinctly discernible in the family life as typical of these islands. We see it in the eyes of the wife, in the restraint of the son, and we listen to it in the voices of our daughters. It struggles hard to develop itself in the face of stupendous difficulties. Its growth among our spiritual leaders is frequently handicapped by the isolating effects of aggrandizement. A cardinal, for instance—good and gracious as he invariably is—must always be more or less inaccessible and appalling. Our charities, too, are vitiated by ostentation. Prospectuses demand that a royalty should take the lead, and the titled figure as patrons, if the appeal made is designed to be irresistible. So that, to whichever side we turn, we find ourselves hampered in our aspirations towards the ideal by the exigencies of society, by our customs and absurdities.

Turning to the far East, we are face to face with other conditions, which undoubtedly lend themselves more readily to the impress of the ideal. Burmah is a country where strikingly successful endeavours continue to be made to hold constantly before the eyes of the people exemplars of the ideal life, and the results are astonishing—approximating a perfection which it is hardly possible to over-rate. Notwithstanding the enormous capacity and appreciation its inhabitants possess for the frivolities of existence, they are wont to support out of their slender resources a numerous staff of monks, who are to be found in all parts of the land,

and in every place where their fellow-creatures congregate in small or large numbers.

However far laymen may deviate from the *Path*, the ideal life as exemplified by the monks must not be tampered with. It is the expressed will of the laity that this example should be unremittingly preserved in all its integrity and purity, whatever may be the sum of their own failings. It is this intense admiration and fervour on the part of the lay community for the ideal life, as known to them through the teaching of the Enlightened One, that has secured this incalculable blessing to the people, and made Burmah a model for all nations in this respect.

There is a sadness unspeakable in the thought that perhaps, ere long, this ancient and ennobling bond between the people and their religious teachers, between the material and the ideal, will be swept away in the wake of commerce and utilitarianism, and all their attendant debasements.

Mr. Fielding, in his book, *The Soul of a People*, brings all his unique experiences and intimate knowledge of the Burmese and the monkhood to impress upon us this marvellous object-lesson in the effect of a religion whose abiding principles are an ever-present, living force, and of which it may be truly said it is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

Everywhere, intermingled with this light-hearted people, delighting in colour, dress, and decoration of all kinds, there is ever to be seen the serene and passionless personality of the monk; no reviler of alien creeds; no possessor of priestly power; poorer than the poorest, yet rich in the inheritance of the Dharma; no figure-head of some illustrious superstition, mitred, and heralded through the streets; nought—save a lowly follower of the Perfect One, whose law it is that guides to the Great Peace, which,

> "like a star,
> Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are."

AT

THE MALAGAWA TEMPLE,

CEYLON.

I.

HAIL! Gentle Master, Grave and Sweet!
  Here at Thy shrine we bend the knee;
With island flowers we deck Thy feet,
  And golden corn we bring to Thee.
Star of our Night, Orb of our Day,
Thou art our Refuge, Thou our Stay!

II.

Thy pitying eyes we see downcast,
  Yet are they fain to tell us this—
Sometime, somewhere, life's ocean* past,
  We all shall taste immortal bliss!
Star of our Night, Orb of our Day,
Thou art our Refuge, Thou our Stay!

III.

No adoration, praise, or prayer
  Hast Thou enjoined whilst here we live;
But our great love can scarce forbear
  To pay Thee all our hearts can give.
Star of our Night, Orb of our Day,†
Thou art our Refuge, Thou our Stay!

* Samsāra—The ocean of Birth and Death.

† "Atha sabbamahorattim
  Buddho tapati tejasāti."
—*Samyutta-Nikāya*, edited by M. Léon Feer, p. 284.

APPENDIX.

METRICAL ADAPTATIONS OF BUDDHIST LEGEND AND SCRIPTURE.

THE LAST WORDS OF GOTAMA BUDDHA TO HIS FAVOURITE DISCIPLE ANANDA.

WEEP not, Ananda, sorrow not!
  Have I not said ere this to thee
That from all things which man most loves,
  From these, Ananda, man must flee?

How can it be, Ananda, then,
  That Birth and Growth should not decay,
That all things made, begotten here,
  Should not, Ananda, pass away?

That cannot be. But thou for long
  In thought and words and holy deed
The Perfect One hast glorified.
  Strive on, and thou shalt soon be freed.

It may be so, that thou shalt say
  "The Word has lost its Master here,"
"We have no Master more." Not thus,
  Ananda, be thou fraught with fear.

The Law and Ordinance I taught,
  These are your Master when I'm gone:
Each man his own salvation is,
  Thus only is Deliverance won.

SAMSÂRA AND NIRVANA.*

I.

Look on this life and meditate!
Herein are birth and growth's decay.
Atoms combine and separate;
Nought lasts: all things must pass away.

II.

As flowers are the glories of this world,
Full blossoms scent the morning shade;
The painted petals soon are furled,
And in the heat of noon-day fade.

III.

Lo! everywhere the panting breath
Of Pleasure and Pursuit of fame,
Of panic flight from pain and death
And fierce Desire's consuming flame.

IV.

The world is nought but endless change,
A restless, driven, surging sea.
Is it through lives we thus must range,
Ever becoming, never be?

V.

Is there no permanency, then?
No realm of rest where troubles cease,
Where birth is not, nor death of men,
No City of Eternal Peace?

* From *The Gospel of Buddha, according to Old Records*, told by Paul Carus.

VI.

Must anxious hearts for ever beat?
What power from all this ill redeems?
Will not our hot, earth-weary feet
At last be dipped in cooling streams?

VII.

Buddha, our Lord, with pitying eyes
Came and beheld this world of woe.
He found the path whereby we rise
Above all evil here below.

VIII.

Ye who for life unending crave
Know that there lurks immortal bliss
In transient form. There is no grave,
No death for those who know of this.

IX.

Ye who for riches vainly yearn
Take of the treasure He will give.
Ye who the mighty Truth discern
The birthless, deathless life will live.

X.

Truth is the immortal part of mind;
Possessing truth is rich to be.
In truth the changeless you will find,
The image of Eternity!

REJOICE.*

I.

LET the whole earth with joy resound,
Buddha, our Lord, the Blessed One,
The hidden cause of Ill hath found,
And for the world salvation won.

II.

He who the ravelled knot unwinds,
Buddha, our Lord, has rent the veil!
Illusion now no longer blinds,
Nor fear of death our hearts assail.

III.

Ye who of tribulation tire,
Ye who must struggle and endure,
Rejoice; ye, too, who truth desire,
For now is your deliverance sure.

IV.

Here is a balm for every woe,
Here for the hungry princely fare;
For those athirst the fountains flow,
And Hope triumphant kills Despair.

V.

On mountain heights, in valleys low,
O, darkened soul, where'er thou art,
This light ineffable will glow
With blessings for the pure in heart.

* From *The Gospel of Buddha, according to Old Records*, told by Paul Carus.

VI.

Bind up your wounds, ye bruiséd feet!
O broken, beating hearts, be still!
Drink, thirsty lips, the waters sweet;
Ye that are hungered, eat your fill!

VII.

O children of the night, arise!
The star of morning is on high.
O bleeding breasts, O suppliant eyes,
Be of good cheer, your bliss is nigh.

VIII.

Buddha, our Lord, the truth revealed,
Which gives us strength in life and death;
The sorrowing and the sick are healed,
And every evil languisheth.

THE GOAL.*

I.

WHY thus so long by Karma tied?
O Bhikshus, listen! You and I
The four great truths have set aside,
Not understanding—that is why!

II.

Through rock and plant and breathing things
Migrate† the wandering souls of each,
Till they, beyond imaginings,
The perfect light of Buddha reach.

III.

Karma inexorable reigns!
E'en though you fly from star to star,
The Past on you imprest remains,
And what you were is what you are!

IV.

To new births onwards you must press
Before the hill of light you see
Where shines the beacon Righteousness
From transmigration's bondage free.

V.

The higher birth I've reached, O friends;
I've found the truth, rebirth's surcease;
I've taught the noble path that wends
To kingdoms of eternal peace.

* From *The Gospel of Buddha, according to Old Records*, told by Paul Carus.

† Although the expression "migrate" does not accurately represent the process of transition in a Buddhistic sense, it is retained here for want of a better.

VI.

I've showed to you Ambrosia's lake,
Which all your sins will wash away;
The sight of truth your thirst will slake,
And Lust's destroying strife allay.

VII.

He who has crossed through Passion's fire,
And climbed Nirvana's radiant shore,
His bliss the envious gods desire,
His heart defiled by sin no more.

VIII.

As lotus leaves upon the lake
The pearly drops do not retain,
So they the noble path who take,
Though in the world, the world disdain.

IX.

A mother will her life bestow
To safely guard an only son,
But they unmeasured mercy show,
And give their lives for anyone.

X.

Steadfast in mind let man remain,
Whether he stand or walk or rest;
Living or dying, sick or sane,
Of all, this state of heart is best.

XI.

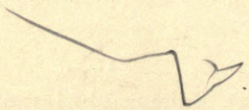
If truth's bedimmed by lust of sense,
Reborn, man must again o'erpass
The desert tracks of Ignorance,
Illusion's mirage, Sin's morass.

XII.

But, when Truth holds entire sway,
With it migration's cause departs;
All selfish cravings melt away,
And Truth its saving cure imparts.

XIII.

O Bhikshus, true deliverance this—
The only heaven to which we soar.
This is salvation's endless bliss!
Here, within sight, Nirvana's shore!



BUDDHA AND THE HERDSMAN.

(Rhymed version of stanzas translated by Professor Rhys Davids.)

I.

HOT steams my food: all milked the cows—
The Herdsman Dhaniya said—
Hard by there stands where Māhi flows
New thatched my lowly shed:
My friends are near, my hearth burns bright,
Then let the rain pour down to-night!

II.

Cool is my mind: no "fallow"* there—
The Holy Buddha said—
One night for Māhi's banks I spare,
And all unthatched my shed.
Lo! now extinguished is the fire;
The lamps of Lust have lost their light.
"Dulness"† and Evil both expire—
So let the rain pour down to-night!

III.

There are no gad flies here, my kine—
The Herdsman Dhaniya said—
Are roaming where the meadows shine,
The rich grass is their bed.
In vain the fickle rain god's might!
So let the rain pour down to-night!

* Referring to the five fallow lands of the mind.
† Dulness is used here in the sense of inactivity of mind.

IV.

My basket raft was woven well—
The Holy Buddha said—
I've reached the shore, I've spoiled the spell,
From me four floods have fled ;
These four—Delusion, Ignorance,
The lust of life, the lust of sense—
No longer powerful to blight.
So let the rain pour down to-night !

V.

Obedient is my wife : no wanton she—
The Herdsman Dhaniya said—
No evil word she spake of me
While she and I were wed.
Long dwelt with me my soul's delight.
So let the rain pour down to-night !

VI.

Obedient is my heart : set wholly free—
The Holy Buddha said—
Restrained, subdued ; o'erwatched by me
Through passion's tempest led.
No evil dims my heart's pure light.
Then let the rain pour down to-night !

VII.

Earning my bread, I live at ease—
The Herdsman Dhaniya said—
My sons around by strength's increase
To ripening manhood bred.
No ill do they my joy to blight.
So let the rain pour down to-night !

VIII.

No man can call me slave ; I roam—
The Holy Buddha said—
At will I roam, each spot a home,
And when I want am fed.
No need for wage or gain to fight.
So let the rain pour down to-night !

IX.

I've barren cows and calves yet young—
The Herdsman Dhaniya said—
And cows in calf and steers among,
A bull lifts up his head—
Lord of the cows, a kingly sight.
Then let the rain pour down to-night.

X.

No cows have I nor calves yet young—
The Holy Buddha said—
For cows in calf and steers among
No bull lifts up his head ;
No lord of cows, no king of might !
So let the rain pour down to-night !

XI.

Then lo ! a cloud o'er hill and plain
That moment thundering poured forth rain.
When herdsman Dhaniya heard with dread
The God's rain rush, he yielding said :

XII.

" O, great the gain accrued thereby !
Since Holy Buddha came to-day,
We trust in thine all-seeing eye.
Be thou, O mighty Sage, our stay.
My wife and I obedient ever
To follow thee will make endeavour.

XIII.

" Under the Happy One we'll lead
A holy life, and, as he saith,
We'll put an end to pain and need,
And pass beyond old age and death !"

BUDDHA AND THE KING.*

I.

THEIR peace I praise who seek not here a home.
It is the peace the Blessed One hath found,
He who resolved in solitude to roam,
The sky his roof, his holy bed the ground.

II.

"Fulfilled with hindrance is the household life,
It is the haunt of passion and of wrath.
Free is the homeless state from every strife."
He, meditating thus, went boldly forth.

III.

And, going forth, wrong deeds he set aside,
Wrong thoughts and words he scattered to the wind,
And in a life pure, calm, and sanctified,
He found that peace whoever seeks shall find.

IV.

To Bimbasāra's royal town he went,
Where lived the ruler of Magādha-land.
Stately he moved, dispassionate, intent,
From door to door, an alms-bowl in his hand.

V.

King Bimbasāra saw him as he crossed
Beyond the terraced slopes of his domain.
So sweet he looked in meditation lost.
The king spake thus to his attendant train:

* This is a rhymed version of the Pabbajjā Sutta, which is contained in the Sutta Nipāta. *Vide* Professor Rhys Davids's *American Lectures on Buddhism*, p. 99.

VI.

"Be full of care for this most noble man;
In outward aspect great, all pure within.
His eyes stray not beyond a fathom's span,
So guarded moves he in this world of sin.

VII.

"See how serenely he performs his task;
Of Royal birth must be this anchorite.
Let the king's messengers run forth and ask,
Where wilt thou rest, O mendicant, to-night?"

VIII.

The messengers, despatched at royal behest,
The king's instructions hasten to obey;
Then, bowing low, the Bhikshu thus addressed:
"Whither, O Bhikshu, dost thou wend thy way?"

IX.

From house to house he wandered guardedly,
And at each door with eyes downcast he stood.
Mindful, restrained, dispassionate was he,
Filling his alms-bowl with the proffered food.

X.

His task performed, in meditation deep
He left the haunts of men, and silently
Set forth to gain Pandāra's caverned steep;
Then, turning, said: "My dwelling there shall be."

XI.

Seeing him stop, the messengers stayed still;
One only to the king this message gave:
"O king, he sits upon Pandāra's hill,
Like to a lion in a mountain cave."

XII.

The prince forthwith upon his chariot rode,
And hastened towards Pandāra's lofty crest;
Then, stepping out, along the path he strode
To where the mendicant had stopped to rest;

XIII.

And, bending low, thus spake he to the youth:
"Young art thou yet, too delicate to face
The life of those who battle for the truth,
Thou seeming scion of an ancient race!

XIV.

"O glory of the vanguard of a band
Of heroes onwards pressing to the fray,
What is thy lineage, where thy royal land?
O let me in these robes thy form array."

XV.

"Hard by Himālaya's slopes there dwells, O king,
A Sākya race, Kosālas known by name,
Descendants of the sun; from these I spring;
From these gone forth, I seek not earthly fame.

XVI.

"Seeing the danger of a carnal life,
I have set forth to battle to the end,
And in this struggle and protracted strife
Raptures ineffable my path attend!"

Zola's Rome