

Eleusis

The Epilogue and Dedication of Volumes I, II, III

Aleister Crowley

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EPILOGUE AND DEDICATION

November 18, 1906.

MY DEAR ION,—I address you by the unfamiliar title in giving you, a man self-damned, God knows how unjustly, as the author of the phrase, "I am not an appreciator of poetry, and I have no Keats," these volumes. For the matter thereof is already in great part yours and as such cannot be given. The rest I offer because it is hardly possible to close definitely, as I do now, a period of many years' work, without reflecting upon that period as a whole. And, when I do so, I find you at the beginning like Ladas or Pheidippides of old, running—ready to run until you achieve the goal or your heart burst; but you are among a crowd. I join you. Eight years ago this day you, Hermes, led me blindfold to awake a chosen runner of the course. "In all my wanderings in darkness your light shone before me though I knew it not." To-day (one may almost hope, turning into the straight) you and I are alone. Terrible and joyous! We shall find companions at the End, at the banquet, lissome and cool and garlanded; companions with a Silver Star or maybe a Jewelled Eye mobile and uncertain—as if alive—on their foreheads. We shall be bidden to sit, and they will wreath us with immortal flowers, and give us to drink of the seemingly wine of Iacchus—well! but until then, unless my heart deceives me, no third shall appear to join us. Indeed, may two attain? It seems a thing impossible in nature. May it not be that—near as the resounding roar of the viewless spectators sounds to our dust-dimmed ears—there stands some awful opposer in the way, some fear or some seduction? Why do you grip that bar in your left hand? Does not this loin-cloth irk my limbs? We should have shaved our heads before the race—the curls are moist and heavy! Why did we cumber ourselves with sandals? Long ere now our feet would have grown hard. Well, if my heart bursts, it bursts; you must give these volumes to the young athletes, that they may learn wherefore I failed—wherefore it was given unto me to run thus far. For, if I have put nothing else therein, most surely that is there.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

EPILOGUE AND DEDICATION OF

VOLUMES I., II., III.

ELEUSIS.

THOSE who are most familiar with the spirit of fair play which pervades our great public schools will have no difficulty, should they

observe, in an obscure corner, the savage attack of Jones minor upon Robinson minimus, in deducing that the former has only just got over the "jolly good hiding" that Smith major had so long promised him, the

determining factor of the same being Smith's defeat by Brown maximus behind the chapel, after Brown's interview with the Head-Master.

We are most of us aware that cabinet ministers, bishops, and dons resemble each other in the important particular that all are still schoolboys, and their differences but the superficial one produced by greasing, soaping, and withering them respectively; so that it will meet with instant general approval if I open this paper by the remark that Christianity, as long as it flourished, was content to assimilate Paganism, never attacking it until its own life had been sapped by the insidious heresies of Paul.

Time passed by, and they bullied Manes and Cerinthus; history repeated itself until it almost knew itself by heart; finally, at the present day, some hireling parasites of the decaying faith—at once the origin and the product of that decay—endeavour to take advantage of the "Greek movement" or the "Neo-pagan revival" in the vain hope of diverting the public attention from the phalanx of Rationalism—traitorously admitted by Luther, and now sitting crowned and inexpugnable in the very citadel of the faith—to their own dishonest lie that Paganism was a faith whose motto was "Carpe diem,"¹ and whose methods were drink, dance, and Studio Murder.² Why is Procopius cleaner than Petronius? Even a Julian could confute this sort of thing; but are we to rest for ever in negation? No: a Robinson minimus ipse will turn, and it is quite time that science was given a chance to measure itself against bulk. I shall not be content with giving Christian apologists the lie direct, but proceed to convict them of the very materialism against which they froth. In a word,

¹ "Gather ye roses!" is the masterpiece of a Christian clergyman.—A. C.

² A peculiarly gross case of psychopathic crime which occurred in 1906.

to-day Christianity is the irreligion of the materialist, or if you like, the sensualist; while in Paganism, we may find the expression of that ever-haunting love—nay, necessity!—of the Beyond which tortures and beautifies those of us who are poets.

πάντα καθαρὰ τοῖς καθαροῖς—and, while there is no logical break between the apparently chaste dogma of the Virgin Birth and the horrible grossness of R. P. Sanchez in his *De Matrimonio*, Lib. ii. Cap. xxi., "Utium Virgo Maria semen emiserit in copulatione cum Spiritu Sancto," so long as we understand an historical Incarnation: the accomplishment of that half of the Magnum Opus which is glyphed in the mystic aphorism "Solve!" enables an Adept of that standing to see nothing but pure symbol and holy counsel in the no grosser legends of the Greeks. This is not a matter of choice: reason forbids us to take the Swan-lover in its literal silliness and obscenity; but, on the other hand, the Bishops will not allow us to attach a pure interpretation to the precisely similar story of the Dove.¹

So far am I, indeed, from attacking Christian symbolism as such, that I am quite prepared to admit that it is, although or rather because it is the lowest, the best. Most others, especially Hinduism and Buddhism, lose themselves in metaphysical speculations only proper to those who are already Adepts.

The Rosicrucian busies himself with the Next Step, for himself and his pupils; he is no more concerned to discuss Nibbana than a schoolmaster to "settle the doctrine of the enclitic Δῆ" in the mind of a child who is painfully grappling with the declension of *Neavlas*. We can read even orthodox

¹ Recently, a certain rash doctor publicly expressed his doubts whether any Bishop of the twentieth century was so filthy-minded a fool. They were, however, soon dispelled by telegrams from a considerable section of the entire Bench, couched in emphatic language.

Christian writers with benefit (such is the revivifying force of our Elixir) by seeking the essence in the First Matter of the Work; and we could commend many of them, notably St. Ignatius and even the rationalising Mansel and Newman, if they would only concentrate upon spiritual truth, instead of insisting on the truth of things, material and therefore immaterial, which only need the touch of a scholar's wand to crumble into the base dust from which their bloodstained towers arose.

Whoso has been crucified with Christ can but laugh when it is proved that Christ was never crucified. The historian understands nothing of what we mean, either by Christ or by crucifixion, and is thus totally incompetent to criticise our position. On the other hand, we are of course equally ill-placed to convert him; but then we do not wish to do so; certainly not *quâ* historian. We leave him alone. Whoso hath ears to hear, let him hear! and the first and last ordeals and rewards of the Adept are comprised in the maxim "Keep silence!"

There should be no possible point of contact between the Church and the world: Paul began the ruin of Christianity, but Constantine completed it. The Church which begins to exteriorise is already lost. To control the ethics of the state is to adopt the ethics of the state: and the first duty of the state will be to expel the rival god Religion. In such a cycle we in England seem to be now revolving, and the new forced freedom of the Church is upon us.

If only the destruction is sufficiently complete, if only all England will turn Atheist, we may perhaps be able to find some Christians here and there. As long as "church" means either a building, an assembly, or even has any meaning at all of a kind to be intelligible to the ordinary man, so long is Christ rejected, and the Pharisee supreme.

Now the materialism which has always

been the curse of Christianity was no doubt partly due to the fact that the early disciples were poor men. You cannot bribe a rich man with loaves and fishes: only the overfed long for the Simple Life. True, Christ bought the world by the promise of Fasts and Martyrdoms, glutted as it was by its surfeit of Augustan glories; but the poor were in a vast majority, and snatched greedily at all the gross pleasures and profits of which the educated and wealthy were sick even unto death. Further, the asceticism of surfeit is a false passion, and only lasts until a healthy hunger is attained; so that the change was an entire corruption, without redeeming aspect. Had there been five righteous men in Rome, a Cato, a Brutus, a Curtius, a Scipio, and a Julian, nothing would have occurred; but there was only the last, and he too late. No doubt Maximus, his teacher, was too holy an Adept to mingle in the affairs of the world; one indeed, perhaps, about to pass over to a higher sphere of action: such speculation is idle and impertinent; but the world was ruined, as never before since the fabled destruction of Atlantis, and I trust that I shall take my readers with me when I affirm so proud a belief in the might of the heart whose integrity is unassailable, clean of all crime, that I lay it down as a positive dictum that only by the decay in the mental and moral virility of Rome and not otherwise, was it possible for the slavish greed and anarchy of the Faith of Paul to gain a foothold. This faith was no new current of youth, sweeping away decadence: it was a force of the slime: a force with no single salutary germ of progress inherent therein. Even Mohammedanism, so often accused of materialism, did produce, at once, and in consequence, a revival of learning, a crowd of algebraists, astronomers, philosophers, whose names are still to be revered: but within the fold, from the death of Christ to the Renaissance—a purely pagan movement—we hear no more

of art, literature, or philosophy.¹ But we do hear—well, what Gibbon has to say.

There is surely a positive side to all this; we agree that Pagans must have been more spiritual than their successors, if only because themselves openly scoffed at their mythology without in the least abandoning the devout performance of its rites, while the Christian clung to irrelevant historical falsehood as if it were true and important. But it is justifiable—nay, urgent—to inquire how and why? Which having discovered, we are bound to proceed with the problem: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" receive the answer: "By taking heed thereto accord-

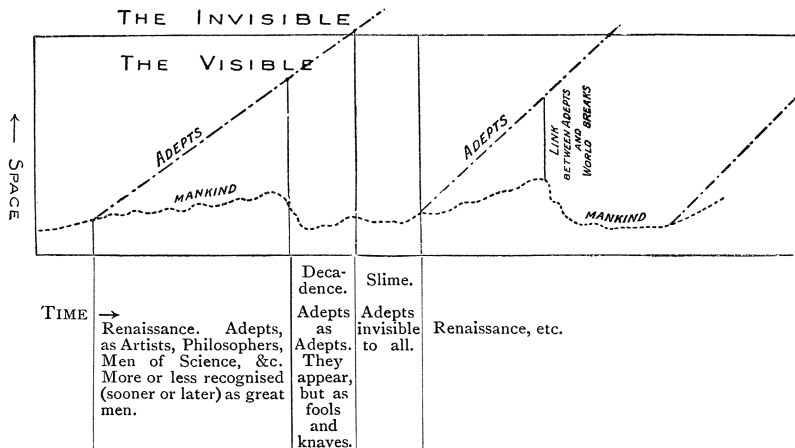
¹ Such philosophy as does exist is entirely vicious, taking its axioms no more from observed fact, but from "Scripture" or from Aristotle. Barring such isolated pagans as M. Aurelius Antoninus, and the neo-Platonists, those glorious decadents* of paganism.

* Decadence marks the period when the adepts, nearing their earthly perfection, become true adepts, not mere men of genius. They disappear, harvested by heaven: and perfect darkness (apparent death)

ing to thy word," and interpret "thy word" as "The Works of Aleister Crowley."

But this is to anticipate; let us answer the first question by returning to our phrase "The Church that exteriorises is already lost." On that hypothesis, the decay of Paganism was accomplished by the very outward and visible sign of its inward and spiritual grace, the raising of massive temples to the Gods in a style and manner to which history seeks in vain a parallel. Security is mortals' chiefest enemy; so also the perfection of balanced strength which enabled Hwang-sze to force his enemies to build the Great Wall was the mark of the imminent decay of his dynasty and race—truly a terrible "Writing on the Wall." An end to the days of the Nine Sages; an end to the wisdoms of Lao Tan on his dun cow; an end to the making of classics of history and of odes and of ethics, to the Shu King and the Shih King, and the Li-Ki,

ensues until the youthful forerunners of the next crop begin to shoot in the form of artists. Diagrammatically:



By the Progress of the World we mean that she is always giving adepts to God, and thus losing them; yet, through their aid, while they are still near enough to humanity to attract it, she reaches each time a higher point. Yet this point is never very

high; so that Aeschylus, though in fact more ignorant than our schoolboys, holds his seat besides Ibsen and Newton in the Republic of the Adepts—a good horse, but not to be run too hard.—A. C.

and the mysterious glories of the holy Yi King itself! Civilisation, decadence, and the slime. Still the Great Wall keeps the Barbarians from China: it is the wall that the Church of Christ set up against science and philosophy, and even to-day its ruins stand, albeit wrapped in the lurid flames of Hell. It is the law of life, this cycle; decadence is perfection, and the perfect soul is assumed into the bosom of Nephthys, so that for a while the world lies fallow. It is in failing to see this constant fume of incense rising from the earth that pessimistic philosophies make their grand fundamental error: in that, and in assuming the very point in dispute, the nature of the laws of other worlds and the prospects of the individual soul. Confess, O subtle author, that thou thyself art even now in the same trap! Willingly, reader; these slips happen when, although one cannot prove to others, one knows.¹ Thou too shalt know, an thou wilt:—ask how, and we come suddenly back to our subject, just as a dreamer may wander through countless nightmares, to find himself in the end on the top of a precipice, whence falling, he shall find himself in bed.

Hear wisdom! the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind.

A man is almost obliged to be in communion with God when God is blowing his hat off, drenching him to the skin, whistling through his very bones, scaring him almost to death with a flash of lightning, and so on. When he gets time to think, he thinks just that. In a church all is too clearly the work of man: in the matter of man's comfort man's devices are so obviously superior to God's: so that we compare hats and languidly discuss the preacher.

Religion is alive in Wales, because people have to walk miles to chapel.

¹ Let me run wild for once, I beg; I am tired of emulating Mr. Storer Clouston's Sir Julian Wallingford, "whose reasoning powers were so remarkable that he never committed the slightest action without furnishing a full and adequate explanation of his conduct."—A. C.

Religion is alive among Mohammedans, who pray (as they live) out of doors, and who will fight and die for their ideas; and among Hindus, whose bloody sacrifices bring them daily face to face with death.

Pan-Islam is possible; pan-Germany is possible; but pan-Christendom would be absurd. There were saints in the times of the Crusades, and Crusaders in the times of the Saints: for though the foe was more artificial than real, and the object chimerical, a foe and an aim of whatever sort assist the concentration which alone is life.

So that we need not be surprised to see as we do that religion is dead in London, where it demands no greater sacrifice than that of an hour's leisure in the week, and even offers to repay that with social consideration for the old, and opportunities of flirtation for the young.

The word "dear" has two senses, and these two are one.

Pressing the "out-of-doors" argument, as we may call it, I will challenge each of my readers to a simple experiment.

Go out one night to a distant and lonely heath, if no mountain summit is available: then at midnight repeat the Lord's Prayer, or any invocation with which you happen to be familiar, or one made up by yourself, or one consisting wholly of senseless and barbarous words.¹ Repeat it solemnly and

¹ I am ashamed to say that I have devoted considerable time to the absurd task of finding meanings for, and tracing the corruptions of, the "barbarous names of evocation" which occur in nearly all conjurations, and which Zoroaster warns his pupils not to change, because "they are names divine, having in the sacred rites a power ineffable."

The fact is that many such names are indeed corruptions of divine names. We may trace Ebeieh in Eie, Abraxas in Abrae, Tetragrammaton in Jehovah.

But this, an initiate knows, is quite contrary to the true theory.

It is *because* the names are senseless that they are effective. If a man is really praying he cannot bring himself to utter ridiculous things to his God, just as Mark Twain observes that one "cannot pray a lie." So that it is a sublime

aloud, expectant of some great and mysterious result.

I pledge myself, if you have a spark of religion in you, that is, if you are properly a human being, that you will (at the very least) experience a deeper sense of spiritual communion than you have ever obtained by any course of church-going.

After which you will, if you are worth your salt, devote your life to the development of this communion, and to the search for an instructed master who can tell you more than I can.

Now the earlier paganism is simply overflowing with this spirit of communion. The boy goes down to the pool, musing, as boys will; is it strange that a nymph should reward him, sometimes even with wine from the purple vats of death?

Poor dullards! in your zeal to extinguish the light upon our altars you have had to drench your own with the bitter waters of

test of faith to utter either a lie or a jest, this with reverence, and that with conviction. Achieve it; the one becomes the truth, the other a formula of power. Hence the real value of the Egyptian ritual by which the theurgist identified himself with the power he invoked. Modern neophytes should not (we think) use the old conjurations with their barbarous names, because, imperfectly understanding the same, they may superstitiously attribute some real power to them; we shall rather advise "Jack and Jill went up the hill," "From Greenland's icy mountains," and such, with which it is impossible for the normal mind to associate a feeling of reverence.

What may be the mode of operation of this formula concerns us little; enough if it succeeds. But one may suggest that it is a case of the will running free, *i.e.* unchecked, as it normally is, by the hosts of critical larvæ we call reason, habit, sensation, and the like.

But the will freed from these may run straight and swift; if its habitual goal has been the attainment of Samadhi, it may under such circumstances reach it. It will require a very advanced student to use this type of faith. The Lord's Prayer and the minor exaltation are the certainties for this event.—A. C.

most general unbelief. Where are the witches and the fairies and the angels, and the visions of divine St. John? You are annoyed at my mention of angels and witches; because you know yourselves to be sceptics, and that I have any amount of "scriptural warrant" to throw at your heads, if I deigned; you are all embarrassed when Maude Adams leans over the footlights with a goo-goo accent so excessive that you die of diabetes in a week, and asks you point-blank: "Do you believe in fairies?" while, for your visions, you do not go to St. John's Island, and share his exile; but to his Wood, and waste your money.

The early pagan worships Demeter in dim groves: there is silence; there is no organisation of ritual; there the worship is spontaneous and individual. In short, the work of religion is thrown upon the religious faculty, instead of being delegated to the quite inferior and irrelevant faculties of mere decorum or even stage-craft. A Christian of the type of Browning understands this perfectly. True, he approves the sincerity which he finds to pervade the otherwise disgusting chapel; but he cares nothing whatever for the "raree-show of Peter's successor," and though I daresay his ghost will be shocked and annoyed by my mention of the fact, Browning himself does not get his illumination in any human temple, but only when he is out with the universe alone in the storm.

Nor does Browning anywhere draw so perfect and so credible a picture of the intercourse between man and God as the exquisite vision of Pan in "Pheidippides." It is all perfectly natural and therefore miraculous; there is no straining at the gnats of vestment in the hope of swallowing the camel of Illumination.

In the matter of Pentecost, we hear only, in the way of the "conditions of the experiment," that "they were all with one accord in one place." Now, this being

the only instance in the world's history of more than two people in one place being of one accord, it is naturally also the only instance of a miracle which happened in church.

The Quakers, arguing soundly enough that women were such a cause of contention chiefly on account of their tongues, and getting a glimpse of these truths which I have so laboriously been endeavouring to expound, hoped for inspiration from the effects of silence alone, and strove (even by a symbolic silence in costume) to repeat the experiment of Pentecost.

But they lacked the stimulus of Syrian air, and that of the stirring times of the already visible sparks of national revolt: they should have sought to replace these by passing the bottle round in their assemblies, and something would probably have happened, an 'twere only a raid of the police.

Better get forty shillings or a month than live and die as lived and died John Bright !

Better be a Shaker, or a camp-meeting homunculus, or a Chataqua gurl, or a Keswick week lunatic, or an Evan Roberts revivalist, or even a common maniac, than a smug Evangelical banker's clerk with a greasy wife and three gifted children—to be bank clerks after him !

Better be a flagellant, or one who dances as David danced before the Lord, than a bishop who is universally respected, even by the boys he used to baste when he was headmaster of a great English public school !

That is, if religion is your aim: if you are spiritually minded: if you interpret every phenomenon that is presented to your sensorium as a particular dealing of God with your soul.

But if you come back from the celebration of the Eucharist and say, "Mr. Hogwash was very dull to-day," you will never get to heaven, where the good poets live, and nobody else; nor to hell, whose inhabitants are exclusively bad poets.

There is more hope for a man who should go to Lord's and say he saw the angels of God ascending and descending upon C. B. Fry.

It is God who sees the possibility of Light in Chaos; it is the Churches who blaspheme the superb body of Truth which Adepts of old enshrined in the Cross, by degrading the Story of the Crucifixion to a mere paragraph in the *Daily Mail* of the time of Pontius Pilate.

Bill Blake took tea with Ezekiel: Tennyson saw no more in the Arthurian legends than a prophecy of the Prince Consort (though Lancelot has little in common with John Brown), and the result of all is that Tennyson is dead and buried—as shown by the fact that he is still popular—and Blake lives; for poets read and love him.

Now when Paganism became popular, organised, state-regulated, it ceased to be individual: that is to say, it ceased to exist as a religion, and became a social institution little better than the Church which has replaced it. But initiates—men who had themselves seen God face to face, and lived—preserved the vital essence. They chose men; they tested them; they instructed them in methods of invoking the Visible Image of the Invisible. Thus by a living chain religion lived—in the Mysteries of Eleusis.

Further, recognising that the Great Work was henceforth to be secret, a worship of caverns and midnight groves and catacombs, no more of open fields and smiling bowers, they caused to be written in symbols by one of the lesser initiates the whole Mystery of Godliness, so that after the renaissance those who were fitted to the Work might infallibly discover the first matter of the Work and even many of the processes thereof.

Such writings are those of the neo-Platonists, and in modern times the God-illuminated Adept Berkeley, Christian though he called himself, is perhaps the most dis-

tinguished of those who have understood this truth.¹

But the orthodox Christian, confronted with this fact, is annoyed; just as the American, knowing himself to be of the

filthiest dregs of mankind, pretends that there is no such thing as natural aristocracy, though to be sure he gives himself away badly enough when confronted with either a nigger or a gentleman, since to ape

¹ EXTRACTS FROM BERKELEY'S LIFE

[I] "There is a mystery about this visit to Dublin. 'I propose to set out for Dublin about a month hence,' he writes to 'dear Tom,' 'but of this you must not give the least intimation to any one. It is of all things my earnest desire (and for very good reasons) not to have it known I am in Dublin. Speak not, therefore, one syllable of it to any mortal whatsoever. When I formerly desired you to take a place for me near the town, you gave out that you were looking for a retired lodging for a friend of yours; upon which everybody surmised me to be the person. I must beg you not to act in the like manner now—but to take for me an entire house in your own name, and as for yourself; for, all things considered, I am determined upon a whole house, with no mortal in it but a maid of your own getting, who is to look on herself as your servant. Let there be two bedrooms; one for you, another for me, and as you like you may ever and anon lie there.

"I would have the house with necessary furniture taken by the month (or otherwise as you can), for I propose staying not beyond that time, and yet perhaps I may.

"Take it as soon as possible. . . . Let me entreat you to say nothing of this to anybody, but to do the thing directly. . . . I would of all things have a proper place in a retired situation, where I may have access to fields, and sweet air, provided against the moment I arrive. I am inclined to think one may be better concealed in the outermost skirt of the suburbs, than in the country or within the town. A house quite detached in the country I should have no objections to, provided you judge I shall not be liable to discovery in it. The place called Bermuda I am utterly against. Dear Tom, do this matter cleanly and cleverly, without waiting for further advice. . . . To the person from whom you hire it (whom alone I would have you speak to of it) it will not be strange at this time of the year to be desirous for your own convenience, or health, to have a place in a free and open air!"

"This mysterious letter was written in April. From April till September Berkeley

EXTRACTS FROM THE BOOK OF THE SACRED MAGIC OF ABRAMELIN THE MAGE

I resolved to absent myself suddenly and go away . . . and lead a solitary life.

I am about here to set down in writing the difficulties, temptations, and hindrances which will be caused him by his own relations . . . beforehand thou shouldst arrange thine affairs in such wise that they can in no way hinder thee, nor bring thee any disquietude.

I took another house at rent . . . and I gave over unto one of my uncles the care of providing the necessaries of life.

"Should you perform this Operation in a town, you should take a house which is not at all overlooked by any one, seeing that in this present day curiosity is so strong that you ought to be upon your guard; and there ought to be a garden (adjoining the house) wherein you can take exercise."

"Consider then the safety of your person, commencing this operation in a place of safety, whence neither enemies nor any disgrace can drive you out before the end."

"the season of Easter. . . . Then first on the following day . . . I commenced this Holy

dominance is the complement of his natural slavishness. So the blind groveller, Mr. Conformity, and his twin, Mr. Nonconformity, agree to pretend that initiates are always either dupes or impostors; they deny that man can see God and live. Look! There goes John Compromise to church, speculating, like Lot's wife, on the probable slump in sulphur and the gloomy outlook for the Insurance Companies. It will never do for his Christ to be a man of like passions with himself, else people might expect him to aim at a life like Christ's. He wants to wallow and swill, and hope for an impossible heaven.

So that it will be imprudent of you (if you want to be asked out to dinner) to point out that if you tell the story of the life of Christ, without mentioning names, to a Musulman, he will ask, "What was the

name of that great sheikh?" to a Hindu, "Who was this venerable Yogi?" to a Buddhist, "Haven't you made a mistake or two? It wasn't a dove, but an elephant with six tusks: and He died of dysentery."

The fact being that it is within the personal experience of all these persons that men yet live and walk this earth who live in all essentials the life that Christ lived, to whom all His miracles are commonplace, who die His death daily, and partake daily in the Mysteries of His resurrection and ascension.

Whether this is scientifically so or not is of no importance to the argument. I am not addressing the man of science, but the man of intelligence: and the scientist himself will back me when I say that the evidence for the one is just as strong and as weak as

again disappears. There is in all this a curious secretiveness of which one has *repeated examples in his life*.¹ Whether he went to Dublin on that occasion, or why he wanted to go, does not appear."

[2] "I abhor business, and especially to have to do with great persons and great affairs."

[3] "Suddenly, and without the least previous notice of pain, he was removed to the enjoyment of eternal rewards, and although all possible means were instantly used, no symptom of life ever appeared after; nor could the physicians assign any cause for his death."

It is surely beyond doubt that Berkeley contemplated some operation of a similar character to that of Abramelin. Note the extreme anxiety which he displays. What lesser matter could so have stirred the placid and angelic soul of Berkeley? On what less urgent grounds would he have agreed to the deceptions (harmless enough though they are) that he urges upon his brother?

That he at one time or another achieved success is certain from the universal report of his holiness and from the nature of his writings. The repeated phrase in the Optics, "God is

Operation . . . the period of the Six Moons being expired, the Lord granted unto me His grace . . ."

"a solitary life, which is the source of all good . . . once thou shalt have obtained the sacred science and magic the love for retirement will come to thee of its own accord, and thou wilt voluntarily shun the commerce and conversation of men, &c."

"a good death in His holy Kingdom."

the Father of Lights,"² suggests an actual phrase perhaps used as an exclamation at the moment of a Vision to express, however feebly, its nature, rather than the phrase of a reasoner exercising his reason.

This mysterious letter which so puzzles his biographer is in fact the key to his whole character, life, and opinions.

This is no place to labour the point; I have at hand none of the necessary documents; but it might be worth the research of a scholar to trace Berkeley's progress through the grades of the Great Order.—A. C.

¹ The italics are ours.—ED.

² It occurs in James i. 17.

for the others. God forbid that I should rest this paper on a historical basis ! I am talking about the certain results of human psychology : and science can neither help nor hinder me.

True, when Huxley and Tyndall were alive, their miserable intelligences were always feeding us up with the idea that science might one day be able to answer some of the simpler questions which one can put : but that was because of their mystical leanings ; they are dead, and have left no successors. To-day we have the certitude, "Science never can tell," of the laborious Ray Lankester

"Whose zeal for knowledge mocks the curfew's call,
And after midnight, to make Lodge look silly,
Studies anatomy—in Piccadilly."

Really, we almost echo his despair. When, only too many years ago, I was learning chemistry, the text-books were content with some three pages on Camphor : to-day, a mere abstract of what is known occupies 400 closely printed pages : but Knowledge is in no wise advanced. It is no doubt more difficult to learn "Paradise Lost" by heart than "We are Seven" ; but when you have done it, you are no better at figure-skating.

I am not denying that the vast storehouses of fact do help us to a certain distillation (as it were) of their grain : but I may be allowed to complain with Maudsley that there is nobody competent to do it. Even when a genius does come along, his results will likely be as empirical as the facts they cover. Evolution is no better than creation to explain things, as Spencer showed.

The truth of the matter appears to be that as reason is incompetent to solve the problems of philosophy and religion, *a fortiori* science is incompetent. All that science can do is to present reason with new facts. To such good purpose has it done this, that no modern scientist can hope to do more than know a little about one bud on his pet twig of the particular branch he has

chosen to study, as it hangs temptingly from one bough of the Tree of Knowledge.

One of the most brilliant of the younger school of chemists remarks in the course of a stirring discourse upon malt analysis : "Of extremely complex organic bodies the constitution of some 250,000 is known with certainty, and the number grows daily. No one chemist pretends to an intimate acquaintance with more than a few of these . . ." Why not leave it alone, and try to be God ?

But even had we Maudsley's committee of geniuses, should we be in any real sense the better ? Not while the reason is, as at present, the best guide known to men, not until humanity has developed a mental power of an entirely different kind. For to the philosopher it soon becomes apparent that reason is a weapon inadequate to the task. Hume saw it, and became a sceptic in the widest sense of the term. Mansel saw it, and counsels us to try Faith, as if it was not the very fact that Faith was futile that bade us appeal to reason. Huxley saw it, and, no remedy presenting itself but a vague faith in the possibilities of human evolution, called himself an agnostic : Kant saw it for a moment, but it soon hid itself behind his terminology ; Spencer saw it, and tried to gloss it over by smooth talk, and to bury it beneath the ponderous tomes of his unwieldy erudition.

I see it, too, and the way out to Life.

But the labyrinth, if you please, before the clue : the Minotaur before the maiden !

Thank you, madam ; would you care to look at our new line in Minotaurs at 2s. 3d. ? This way, please.

I have taken a good deal of trouble lately to prove the proposition "All arguments are arguments in a circle." Without wearying my readers with the formal proof, which I hope to advance one day in an essay on the syllogism, I will take (as sketchily as you please !) the obvious and important case of the consciousness.

A. The consciousness is made up ex-

clusively of impressions (The tendency to certain impressions is itself a result of impressions on the ancestors of the conscious being). Locke, Hume, &c.

B. Without a consciousness no impression can exist. Berkeley, Fichte, &c.

Both A. and B. have been proved times without number, and quite irrefutably. Yet they are mutually exclusive. The "progress" of philosophy has consisted almost entirely of advances in accuracy of language by rival schools who emphasised A. and B. alternately.

It is easy to see that all propositions can, with a little ingenuity, be reduced to one form or the other.¹

Thus, if I say that grass is green, I mean that an external thing is an internal thing: for the grass is certainly not in my eye, and the green certainly *is* in it. As all will admit.

So, if you throw a material brick at your wife, and hit her (as may happen to all of us), there is a most serious difficulty in the question, "At what point did your (spiritual) affection for her transform into the (material) brick, and that again into her (spiritual) reformation?"

Similarly, we have Kant's clear proof that in studying the laws of nature we only study the laws of our own minds: since, for one thing, the language in which we announce a law is entirely the product of our mental conceptions.

While, on the other hand, it is clear enough that our minds depend upon the laws of nature, since, for one thing, the apprehension that six savages will rob and murder you is immediately allayed by the passage of a leaden bullet weighing 230 grains, and moving at the rate of 1200 feet per second, through the bodies of two of the ring-leaders.

¹ Compare the problems suggested to the logician by the various readings of propositions in connotation, denotation, and comprehension respectively; and the whole question of existential import.—A. C.

It would of course be simple to go on and show that after all we attach no meaning to weight and motion, lead and bullet, but a purely spiritual one: that they are mere phases of our thought, as interpreted by our senses: and on the other that apprehension is only a name for a certain group of chemical changes in certain of the contents of our very material skulls: but enough! the whole controversy is verbal, and no more.

Since therefore philosophy and *à fortiori* science are bankrupt, and the official receiver is highly unlikely to grant either a discharge; since the only aid we get from the Bishops is a friendly counsel to drink Beer—in place of the spiritual wine of Omar Khayyam and Abdullah el Haji (on whom be peace!)—we are compelled to fend for ourselves.

We have heard a good deal of late years about Oriental religions. I am myself the chief of sinners. Still, we may all freely confess that they are in many ways picturesque: and they do lead one to the Vision of God face to face, as one who hath so been led doth here solemnly lift up his voice and testify; but their method is incredibly tedious, and unsuited to most, if not all, Europeans. Let us never forget that no poetry of the higher sort, no art of the higher sort, has ever been produced by any Asiatic race. We are the poets! we are the children of wood and stream, of mist and mountain, of sun and wind! We adore the moon and the stars, and go into the London streets at midnight seeking Their kisses as our birthright. We are the Greeks—and God grant ye all, my brothers, to be as happy in your loves!—and to us the rites of Eleusis should open the doors of Heaven, and we shall enter in and see God face to face! Alas!

"None can read the text, not even I;
And none can read the comment but
myself."¹

¹ Tennyson must have stolen these lines; they are simple and expressive.

The comment is the Qabalah, and that I have indeed read as deeply as my poor powers allow: but the text is decipherable only under the stars by one who hath drunken of the dew of the moon.

Under the stars will I go forth, my brothers, and drink of that lustral dew: I will return, my brothers, when I have seen God face to face, and read within those eternal eyes the secret that shall make you free.

Then will I choose you and test you and instruct you in the Mysteries of Eleusis, oh ye brave hearts, and cool eyes, and trembling lips! I will put a live coal upon your lips, and flowers upon your eyes, and a sword in your hearts, and ye also shall see God face to face.

Thus shall we give back its youth to the world, for like tongues of triple flame we shall brood upon the Great Deep—Hail unto the Lords of the Groves of Eleusis!