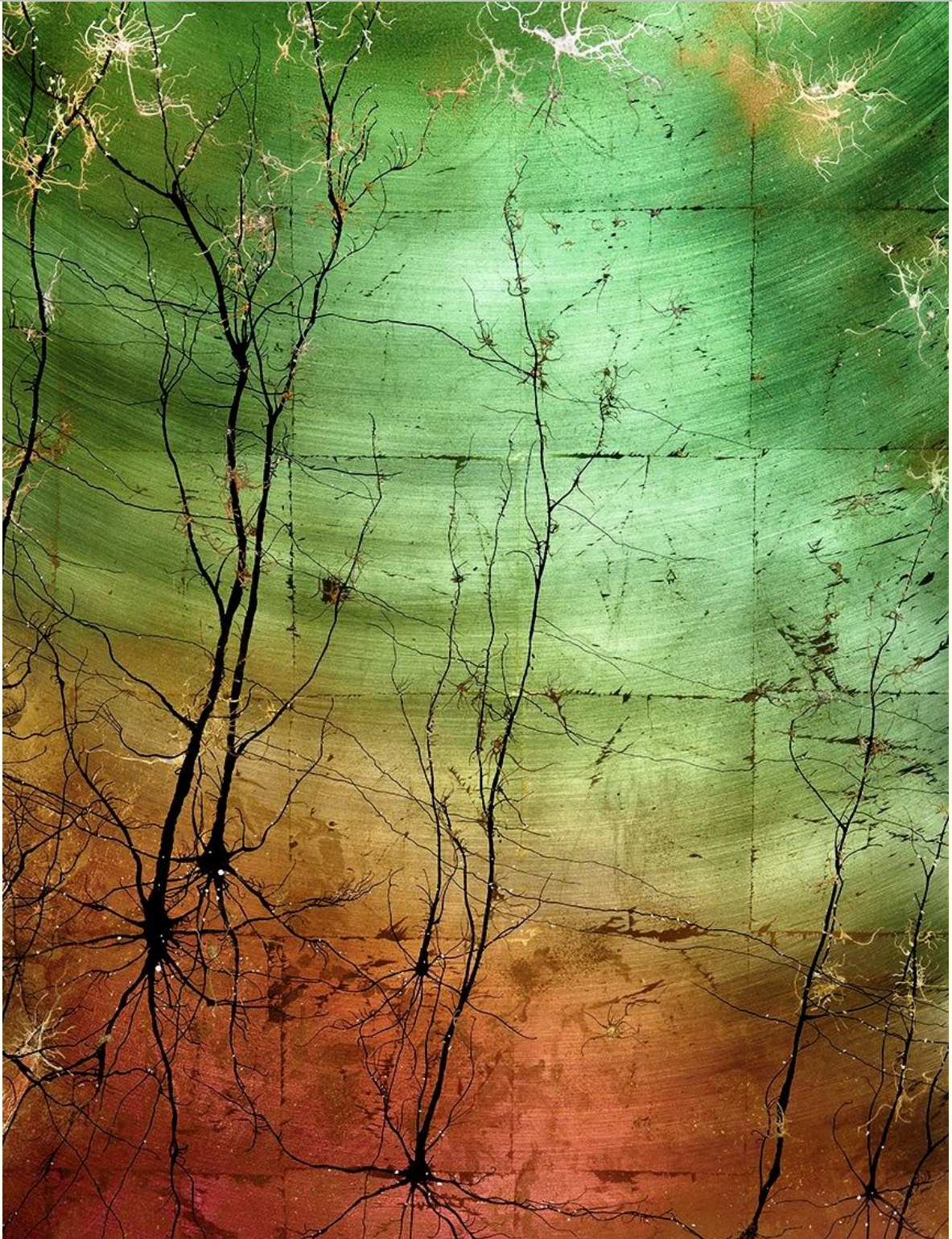


Hylo-Idealism is a fig leaf for Crass Materialism.



Abstract and train of thoughts¹

Part 1. Privileged man! Evolution-forsaken baboon!

Hylo-Idealism asserts that the origin of man has to be sought in the vesiculo-neurine of his hemispherical ganglia. 4

And that even ingratitude is a phenomenon of atavism. 4

Part 2. Psychical Research is a misnomer for Pseusmatical Research.

Part 3. Modern Idealism is the great ally of Materialism.

Their conclusions are so far stretched, that they both converge in their atheism and pessimism. 10

The “scientific” union of Materialism and Idealism takes place in grey matter, affirms Dr. Lewins. 13

Part 4. New philosophies are the spawn of overworked intellect.

They keep sprouting like mushrooms from their mycelium after a rainy morning — interminable, outlandish, multisyllabled, and multicapital. 15

While we tearfully beg Dr. Lewins, in the interests of humanity, to have pity on his poor readers, we shall fight the usurper “Solipsism” in favour of the legitimate King of the Universe — Egoism. 16

Hylo-Idealism is at odds with Hylo-Ideism.

Since Dr. Lewins regards consciousness as a function of the nerve-tissue, he is an uncompromising materialist. If apart from brain there is no Ego, no external world, what then is the brain itself — this solitary object in a void universe? 17

On the one hand, matter is asserted.

On the other, matter is denied.

The Vedantins symbolise Cosmic Duality by Logos and Mulaprakriti, i.e., Universal Spirit and Noumenon of Matter. The latter is the metaphysical basis of the intelligent operations in Nature. 18

The orthodox concept of God is not, as Dr. Lewins contends, a myth or phantasm of the brain; it is an individualised ray of the all-pervading Logos, the inner light of which is blurred by the fog of lower minds. 19

Modern Idealism is based upon gigantic paradoxes and even contradictions in terms.

Venus, the morning star, was created before the sun and the moon — metaphorically, not astronomically. 20

¹ *Illustrations:* Frontispiece and page 9, “Neural Migration in Metallic Pastels” and “Hippocampal Formations,” by Greg Dunn Neuro Art. | Pages 14 and 33, “Modern Goddesses of Materialism” by Bela Borsodi.

Venus-Aphrodite is one with Astarte-Astoreth, the moon-goddess of generation presiding at human birth, just as Jehovah is the god of generation, foremost of all.	22
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On the brutal foot of materialism.	41



Part 1.

Privileged man! Evolution-forsaken baboon!

Hylo-Idealism asserts that the origin of man has to be sought in the vesiculo-neurine of his hemispherical ganglia.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. I (1), September 1887, pp. 71-75. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (LITERARY JOTTINGS) VIII pp. 33-37.

The Latest Romance of Science,¹ summarized by a Frenchman.

If the Atomo-mechanical Theory of the Universe has caused considerable embarrassment to our materialists, and brought some of their much beloved scientific speculations to grief,² the layman must not be ungrateful to the great men for other boons received at their hands. Through the indefatigable labours of the most famous biologists and anthropologists of the day, the mystery which has hitherto enshrouded the origin of man is no more. It has vanished into thin air; thanks to the activity of the *officina*,³ in Hæckel's brain, or, as a Hylo-Idealist would say, in the *vesiculo-neurine of his hemispherical ganglia*⁴ — the origin of mankind has to be sought in *that* scientific region, and nowhere else.

And that even ingratitude is a phenomenon of atavism.

Religiously read by the “Animalists” in its English translation in Protestant and Monarchical England, *The Pedigree of Man*⁵ is now welcomed with shouts of joy in Roman Catholic Republican France. A summary has just been compiled of it by a French *savant*, who rejoices in the name of Topinard.⁶ The summary on that “question of questions” (as Mr. Huxley calls it), is more interesting in reality than the *Pedi-*

¹ [Summary of *The Pedigree of Man*.]

² See *The Concepts and Theories of Modern Physics*, by J.B. Stallo.

³ Workshop, in Queen's English.

⁴ Dr. Lewins, the Hylo-Idealist, in his appendices to *What is Religion? A Vindication of Freethought*, by C.N. [Constance Naden]: *The Brain Theory of Mind and Matter, the Creed of Physics, Physics and Philosophy*. W. Stewart and Co.

[Constance Caroline Woodhill Naden, 1858–1889, English writer, poet and philosopher. She studied, wrote and lectured on philosophy and science, alongside publishing two volumes of poetry. Several collected works were published following her death at the young age of 31. In her honour, Robert Lewins established the Constance Naden Medal and had a bust of her installed at Mason Science College (now the University of Birmingham). William Ewart Gladstone considered her one of the 19th century's foremost poets.]

⁵ [Ernst Heinrich Philipp August Hæckel, *The Pedigree of Man; and Other Essays*. Translated from the German by E.B. Aveling, 1883. International Library of Sciences and Freethought, Vol. 6. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

⁶ [Paul Topinard, 1830-1911, French physician and anthropologist who was a student of Paul Broca and whose views influenced the methodology adopted by Herbert Hope Risley in his ethnographic surveys of the people of India. He became director of the École d'Anthropologie and secretary-general of the Société d'Anthropologie de Paris, both in succession to Broca.]

gree of Man itself. It is so deliciously fantastic and original, that one comes almost to regret that our numerous and frolicsome ancestors in [34] the Zoological Gardens of Europe and America seem to show no intention of getting up a subscription list among themselves, for the raising of a lasting monument to the great Hæckel. Thus, ingratitude in man must surely be a phenomenon of *atavism*; another suggestive point being thus gained toward further proof of man's descent from the ingrate and heartless, as well as tailless, pithecoïd baboon.

Saith the learned Topinard:

At the commencement of what geologists call the *Laurentian period* of the earth, and the fortuitous union of certain elements of carbon, oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen, under conditions which probably only took place at that epoch, the first albuminoid clots were formed. From them, and by spontaneous generation,¹ the first cellules or *cleavage-masses* took their origin. These cellules were then subdivided and multiplied, and arranged themselves in the form of organs, and after a series of transformations, fixed by Mr. Hæckel at *nine* in number, gave origin to certain vertebrata of the genus *Amphioxus lanceolatus*. The division into sexes was marked out, the spinal marrow and *chorda dorsalis* became visible. At the *tenth* stage, the brain and skull made their appearance, as in the lamprey; at the *eleventh*, the limbs and jaws were developed . . . the earth was then only in the *Silurian* period. At the *sixteenth*, the adaptation to terrestrial life ceased. At the *seventeenth*, which corresponds to the *Jurassic* phase of the history of the globe, the genealogy of Man is raised to the kangaroo among the marsupials. At the *eighteenth*, he becomes a Lemurian: the *Tertiary period* commences. At the *nineteenth*, he becomes a Catarrhinian, that is to say an ape with a tail, a Pithecanthropus. At the *twentieth* he becomes an Anthropoid continuing so throughout the whole of the Miocene period. At the *twenty-first*, he is the man-ape, he does not yet possess language, nor, in consequence, the corresponding brain. Lastly, at the *twenty-second*, Man comes forth . . . in his inferior forms.² [35]

Happy, privileged man! Hapless evolution-forsaken baboon! We are not told by science the secret why, while man has had plenty of time to become, say a Plato, a Newton, a Napoleon, or *even* a Hæckel, his poor ancestor should have been arrested in his growth and development.

For, as far as is known, the rump of the cynocephalus seems as blue and as callous today, as it was during the reign of Psammetichus or Cheops; the *Macacus*³ must have made as ugly faces at Pliny 18 centuries back, as he does now at a Darwinian.

¹ [Mark well: when a theosophist or an occultist speaks of "spontaneous generation," because for him there exists no inorganic matter in Kosmos — he is forthwith set down as an *ignoramus*. To prove the descent of man from the animal, however, even spontaneous generation from dead or inorganic matter, becomes an axiomatic and scientific fact. — H.P. Blavatsky.]

² [Anthropology, by Dr. Paul Topinard, with Preface by Professor Paul Broca. Translated from the original French by Robert T.H. Bartley, November 29th, 1877. London: Chapman & Hall Ltd., 1894. Part III, "On the Origin of Man," ch. 1, pp. 532-33. — ED. PHIL.]

³ [A genus, now called *Macaca*, of Old World monkeys of the family Cercopithecidae, originally comprising a large number of African and Asian species, but later restricted to a smaller number of chiefly Asian species.]

We may be told that in the enormous period of time that must have elapsed since the beginning of evolution, 2,000 or even 10,000 years mean very little. But then, one does not find even the Moneron any better off for the millions of years that have rolled away. Yet, between the gelatinous and thoughtful hermit of the briny deep and man, there must have elapsed quite sufficient time for some trifling transformation. That primordial protoplasmic creature, however, seems to fare no better at the hands of evolution, which has well-nigh forgotten it.

By this time, one should suppose that this ancestor of ours of stage *one*, ought to have reached, to say the least, a higher development; to have become, for instance, the amphibian “sozura”¹ of the “fourteenth stage,” so minutely and scientifically described by Mr. Hæckel, and of which de Quatrefages so wickedly says in *The Human Species*,² that it (the sozura) “is *equally unknown to science*.” But we see quite the reverse. The tender-bodied little one, has remained but a moneron to this very hour; so much so, that Mr. Huxley, fishing him out from the abysmal ocean depths, took pity upon him, and gave him a father. He baptized our archaic ancestor, and named him *Bathybius Hæckelii*.³ . . .

But all these are mysteries that will, no doubt, be easily explained to the full satisfaction of science, by [36] any biologist of Hæckel’s brain power. As all know, no acrobatic feats, from the top of one tree to another top, by the swiftest of chimpanzees, can ever approach, let alone equal, the rapid evolutions of fancy in his cerebral “officina,” whenever Hæckel is called upon to explain the inexplicable. . . .

There is one trifle, however, which seems to have the best of even his capacity for getting out of a scientific dilemma, and this is *the eighteenth stage* of his genealogy in *The Pedigree of Man*. Man’s evolution from the Monera, *alias Bathybius Hæckelii*, up to tailed and then tailless man, passes through the marsupials, the kangaroo, sarrigue, etc. Thus he writes:

Eighteenth stage — Prosimiæ, allied to the Loris (Stenops), and Makis (Lemur), without marsupial bones and cloaca, *with placenta*.⁴

Now it may be perhaps interesting to the profane and the innocent to learn that no such “prosimiæ,” with placenta, exist in nature. That it is, in short, another creation of the famous German Evolutionist, and a child of his own brain. For de Quatrefages has pointed out several years ago, that:

. . . the anatomical investigations of MM. Alphonse Milne-Edwards and Grandidier . . . place it beyond all doubt that the prosimiæ of Hæckel have *no decidua and a diffuse placenta*. They are *indeciduata*. Far from *any possibility of*

¹ [From Greek *sozein* save, and *auron* tail, *i.e.*, tail-keeping; a term coined by Hæckel, not generally recognized today, for a group of tailed batrachians, which lose their gills but not their tails when adult; in contrast to the anura, which have no tails, and the sozobranchia, which lose their gills.]

² p. 108. [New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1879; 2nd ed., London: Paul & Co., 1881. This is the English translation of the French work, *L’Espèce humaine*, by Jean L.A. de Quatrefages de Bréau, 3rd ed., Paris: G. Baillière et Cie., 1877. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

³ [A substance that British biologist Thomas Henry Huxley discovered and initially believed to be a form of matter, a source of all organic life. He later admitted his mistake when it proved to be just the product of a chemical process, *i.e.*, precipitation.]

⁴ *The Pedigree of Man and other Essays*, p. 77; [italics by H.P. Blavatsky]

their being the ancestors of the apes, according to the principle laid down by Hæckel himself, they cannot even be regarded as the ancestors of the zonoplacental mammals, the carnivora for instance, and ought to be connected with the pachydermata, the edentata and the cetacea.¹

But, as that great French *savant* shows, “Hæckel, without the least hesitation, adds his *prosimiæ*,” to the other groups in *The Pedigree of Man*, and “attributes to them a decidua and a discoidal placenta.”² Must the world of the too credulous innocents again accept on faith these two creatures unknown to Science or man, only because “the proof of their existence arises *from the necessity of an intermediate type*”? This necessity, however, [37] being one *only* for the greater success of their inventor, Hæckel, that Simian Homer must not bear us ill will, if we do not hesitate to call his “genealogy” of man a romance of Science of the wildest type.

One thing is very suggestive in this speculation. The discovery of the absence of the needed placenta in the so-called *prosimiæ* now dates several years back. Hæckel knows of it, of course. So does Mr. Ed. B. Aveling, D.Sc., his translator. Why is the error allowed to remain uncorrected, and even unnoticed, in the English translation of *The Pedigree of Man* of 1883? Do the “members of the International Library of Science and Freethought,” fear to lose some of Hæckel’s admirers were these to learn the truth?

Nevertheless Hæckel’s scientific *Pedigree of Man* ought to awake and stir up to action the spirit of private enterprise. What a charming *Féerie*³ could be made of it on the stage of a theatre! A *corps de ballet*, composed of antediluvian reptiles and giant lizards, gradually, and stage by stage, metamorphosing themselves into kangaroos, lemurs, tailless apes and anthropoid baboons, and finally into a chorus of German biologists!

Such a *Féerie* would have *The Black Crook*,⁴ and *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*,⁵ nowhere. An intelligent manager, alive to his interests, would make his fortune were he but to follow the happy thought.

Nota bene: The suggestion is copyright.



¹ *The Human Species*, p. 110

² *op. cit.*, p. 109

³ [A theatrical production, often opera or ballet, involving fairies and depicting fairy scenes and landscapes, popular in the 18th and 19th centuries.]

⁴ [A spectacular light opera, by Chas. M. Barra, music by T. Baller, first produced in 1886 and frequently revived. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

⁵ [A 1865 novel by English author Lewis Carroll, pseudonym of Charles Dodgson. It tells of a young girl named Alice, who falls through a rabbit hole into a subterranean fantasy world populated by peculiar, anthropomorphic creatures. It is considered to be one of the best examples of the literary nonsense genre. The tale plays with logic, giving the story lasting popularity with adults as well as with children.]

Part 2.

Psychical Research is a misnomer for Pseusmatical Research.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. I (1), September 1887, pp. 71-75. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (LITERARY JOTTINGS) VIII pp. 39-41.

Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research: These reports coming out *ad libitum*, without any definite date, cannot be regarded as periodical. Depending for their circulation chiefly on the consummation of what the learned editors offer as *bona fide* psychic and spiritualistic *exposés* — which the public accepts as most kind advertisements of the people so attacked — this publication occupies a position entirely *sui generis*. The *Proceedings* offer to the public a very useful *manual*, something between a text and [40] guidebook, with practical instructions in diplomatic policy in the domain of the Psychic, in the form of scientific letters and private detective information. Sensitives discern in the *Proceedings* (by *telepathic impact*) the Machiavellian spirit of aristocratic Bismarck, seasoned with an aura strongly impregnated with the plebeian perfumes of honest *mouchards* on duty, but then they are, perhaps, prejudiced. On the other hand, some Russian spiritualistically inclined members of the S.P.R. have been heard to say, that the *Proceedings* reminded them of those of the happily defunct Third Section of the St. Petersburg Police.¹ Thus, the tutelary “guides” of the learned association of the British Psychists, may one day turn out to be the departed spirits of Russian *gendarmes* after all?

Occasionally when the hunting grounds of this erudite body have afforded a specially successful chase — after mares’ nests — a *Supplement* is added to the *Proceedings*, the magnitude of the added volume being in inverse ratio to the illumination of its contents, which are generally offered as a premium to materialism.

Hence, the *Proceedings* may be better described as the fluctuating and occasional records of a society bent upon giving the lie to its own name. For “Psychical” research is surely a misnomer, besides being a delusion and a snare for the unwary. *Lucifer* would suggest as a truer title, “Society for Hylo-Pseusmatical Research.”

¹ [Third Department, Russian Tretye Otdeleniye, also called Third Section of His Imperial Majesty’s Own Chancery In Russia, was created by Emperor Nicholas I to conduct secret police operations. Designed by Count A. Kh. Benckendorff, who was also its first chief administrator, the department was responsible for political security.]

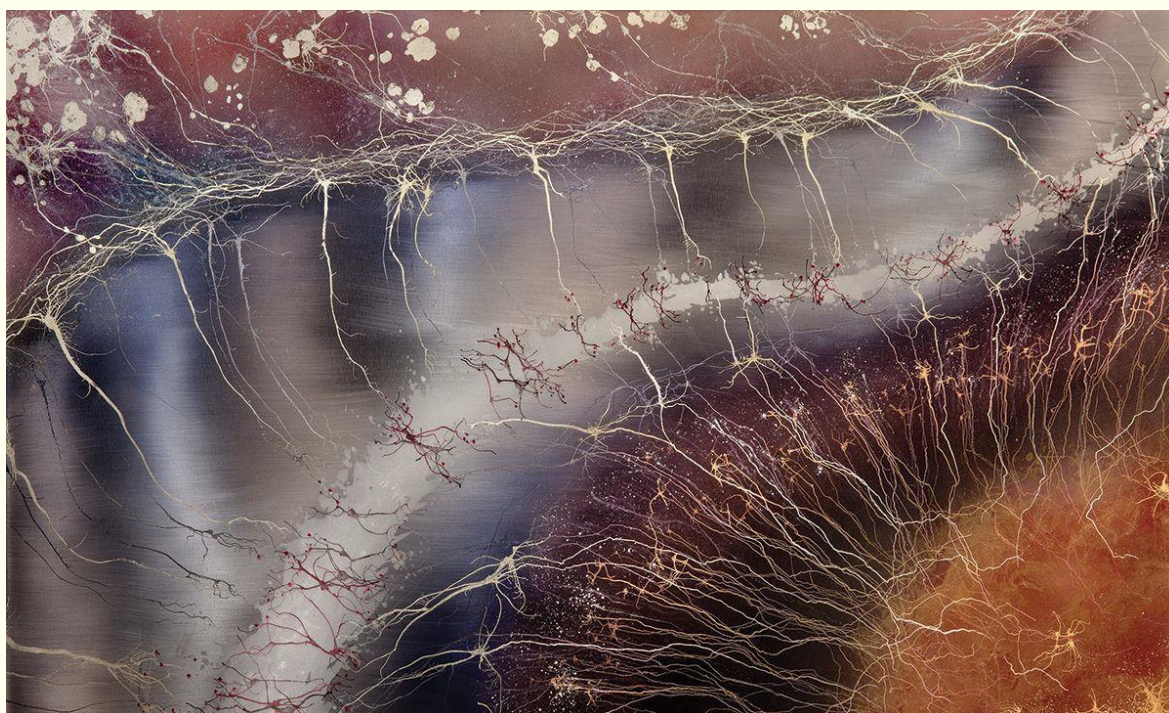
This would give the S.P.R., the benefit of an open connection with Dr. Lewins' unparalleled "Hylo-Idealism"¹ — while it would enable it to sail under its *true* colours.

Whether *Lucifer's* advice be accepted or not, the profound philosophy of the phenomenon baptized "telepathy" and telepathic impact can only be studied scientifically, in our spasmodic contemporary. This new Greek stranger is the crowning work of the Psychic Fathers of [41] our century. It is their "first" and "only" offspring, and is a *genuine* discovery as far as its Hellenic name goes. For, bereft of its Greek appellation, it becomes like America. The genius who *discovered* the phenomenon, is like Columbus on whom the Northmen, and even the Chinamen,² had stolen a march centuries before. This phenomenon can only seem *new* when thus disguised under a name solemn and scientific — because incomprehensible to the average profane. Its plain description in English — as transference of thought or sensation from a distance — could never hope to have the same ring of classical learning in it.

Nevertheless, the *Proceedings* with the two additional gigantic volumes of the psychic "Leviathan," called *Phantasms of the Living*, are strongly recommended to invalids. They are priceless in cases of obstinate *insomnia*, as the best soporific known.

Directions: The reader must be careful not to light a match in too close proximity to the said works.

"THE ADVERSARY"



¹ ὕλη, "matter as opposed to mind"; therefore *Material-Idealism* — a contradiction in terms exactly parallel to the name "Psychic," and the very "anti-psychic" work of the Society referred to as *Pseusma** should replace *Psyche*, as it seeks for *frauds* and not *soul-action*.

* [From Greek *ψεῦσμα*, a lie, a falsehood. Cognate with *ψυχω*, to blow air, from Proto-Indo-Āryan भस्त्रा. — ED. PHIL.]

² [A now-disused term for a Chinese person or a citizen of China.]

Part 3.

Modern Idealism is the great ally of Materialism.

Their conclusions are so far stretched, that they both converge in their atheism and pessimism.

First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. XVIII (1), October 1896, pp. 9-12. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MODERN IDEALISM, WORSE THAN MATERIALISM) VIII pp. 93-98.

At the time when this article was published, it was introduced by the Editor with a few words saying that “the following vigorous article, from the pen of Madame Blavatsky, has quite recently come into my hands and, like all her writings, will repay perusal.” No other information was given as to the possible date when it was written. Internal evidence, however, shows that it was penned at the time when considerable discussion took place in the pages of *Lucifer* on the subject of Hylo-Idealism. This was in the Fall of 1887, soon after the launching of *Lucifer*. In her *Literary Jottings* published in the September issue of that journal,¹ H.P. Blavatsky makes use of several expressions from the same pamphlet by “C.N.”² which is being quoted from in the present article. It is therefore fairly safe to assume that the latter was written at approximately the same time, which gives us sound reasons for inserting it in its present place.

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF

That which is herein presented will be, as a matter of course, Dead Sea fruit to blind materialism; withal it may prove still more distasteful to advocates of *Hylo-Idealism* — as that modern cross-breed between misunderstood Protagoras and Buchner is now named.

Theosophy has no bitterer enemy than *Hylo-Idealism*, the great ally of materialism, today. This is because, though repudiating the systems of both, we accept most [94] of the *physical* facts of science, rejecting their conclusions only; while we recognize a good deal of the Vedāntic doctrines in European Idealism, but none of its highly philosophical and consistent logic. The conclusions of Materialism and Idealism, in fact, are so far stretched, that in their final synthesis they almost meet in their atheism

¹ Vol. I, pp. 71-75

² [“C.N.” stands for Constance Caroline Woodhill Naden, 1858–1889, English writer, poet and philosopher. She studied, wrote and lectured on philosophy and science, alongside publishing two volumes of poetry. Several collected works were published following her death at the young age of 31. In her honour, Robert Lewins established the Constance Naden Medal and had a bust of her installed at Mason Science College (now the University of Birmingham). William Ewart Gladstone considered her one of the 19th century’s foremost poets.]

and pessimism. The last word of both — the Alpha and the Omega of Modern Thought, whether traced to the potencies of brute matter, or to the nihilism of idealistic speculation — is a dreary negation of any possible future existence in spirit. Apparently there is an abyss between the two in sober reality — a platform on which both shake hands. The materialism of today is only a shade more scientific than the crass fallacies of Büchner¹ and Moleschott.² It is the same Death's Head, with its stereotyped rictus grinning hideously, but now crowned with a wreath of rhetorical flowers woven by Mr. Tyndall's unparalleled oratory.

As to Idealism — of whatever school — it has become “a double caricature” on Kant and Schopenhauer. The “rigour and vigour” type of generalization is prevalent; witness the attitude of Materialists (or Realists) and Idealists toward what J.S. Mill³ terms the “battle-ground of metaphysics” — the question of an external world.

The Materialist asserts that matter — or the external Universe — exists independently of a perceiving mind; that the object in short has evolved the subject, which latter in its turn mirrors its author in its consciousness.

The (pure) Idealist, on the contrary will say:

Not so; so far from Mind being the resultant of an evolutionary process from Matter, the latter exists only in consciousness. All we know, or can know, are states of our own consciousness; objects are such only by and through a perceiving Ego — *its sensations*, and as such, are necessarily phenomenal; with the destruction of Mind, the whole fabric of seeming objectivity collapses.

In what respect is such an *idealist* more “ideal” than the Materialist? One denies point blank anything existing outside of matter; the other, that anything is — no more matter than Spirit — that these two positions do not [95] exhaust the alternatives. While it is clear that the Realist is unable to postulate the independent existence of the *External World*, except by *projecting into space the visions of his own subjectivity*, the (*pure!*) Idealist is brought face to face with the assertion of science, that the objective universe existed æons before the first dawn of human consciousness.

It is from this predicament that we might be rescued by the compromise between the two opposing systems, known variously as *Transfigured Realism*, *Transcendental Realism* or, better, objective (as opposed to pure) Idealism — if only that transfigured Realism were to conceive of Object and Subject in the way Vedāntic occultists do. According to this system, the external world of this our present consciousness is the joint product of Object and Subject. While non-existent *per se* — it is said, the creation of the individual mind — matter is equally the *sensible manifestation of the objectivity of an unknown Substance* (unknown to the profane only). Mind *translates*

¹ [Friedrich Karl Christian Ludwig Büchner, 1824–1899, German philosopher, physiologist, and physician who became one of the exponents of 19th century scientific materialism.]

² [Jacob Moleschott, 1822–1893, Dutch physiologist and writer on dietetics. He is known for his philosophical views in regard to scientific materialism. He was a member of German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina.]

³ [John Stuart Mill, 1806–1873, English philosopher, political economist, and civil servant. One of the most influential thinkers in the history of classical liberalism, he contributed widely to social theory, political theory, and political economy. Dubbed “the most influential English-speaking philosopher of the nineteenth century,” he conceived of liberty as justifying the freedom of the individual in opposition to unlimited state and social control.]

the impressions received from without — impressions radiating from the world of *Noumena* into panorama of purely subjective ideation. The object as it is given in consciousness is phenomenal, but the primary stimulus comes from *without*. Subject and Object — as *Noumena* — are equally real, but the SENSE-OBJECT is a subjective creation. Take, for example, the case of the Sun. To the Realist the glorious orb exists outside of, and independently of Mind, *just as it appears in consciousness*. To the Idealist it is the creation of Mind and perishes with it. To the *objective* Idealist, with Mind perishes the phenomenal Sun, but an *unknown Substance* — *removed beyond the possibility of human conception as to its nature* — remains.

This — except the “Unknown Substance” — the Occultist will deny. For him, the subject as much as the object, *Ego*, Sun, Mind and the Universe itself is — a *Māyā*, a huge illusion. But, as both the Perceiver and the Object perceived belong to the same plane of illusion, they are mutual and reciprocal Realities for *such time as the Manvantaric illusion lasts*. In Reality, and outside and beyond Space and Time, it is all the effect and result of [96] Ignorance. Nevertheless, reverting to the conclusion of one of the greatest thinkers of the day — Mr. Herbert Spencer,¹ where he argues that

If, then, the object perceived is self, what is the subject that perceives?

And concludes that such a process is only conceivable on “the annihilation of both”² — we say that according to the views of the Occultist he is entirely wrong. Mr. Herbert Spencer knows, it appears, of but one grade of subjectivity, and has no idea of the occult (*Yogic*) teaching, of the existence of other and higher planes of consciousness, vision or perception, than those of Mind; of the existence, in short, of the “Transcendental Ego” or true *self* (*Buddhi*) — a spark from the radiant essence of the Universal Spirit. Consequently, to the query of Mr. Spencer, we reply:

If it is the true self which thinks, what other self can it be that is thought of?³

The *true Self* is *per se*, impersonal; the *personal* or brain-consciousness being but an illusory reflection in incarnated existence. Western Psychology errs in regarding this *personal* ego as the only factor to be considered in its researches. The argument, therefore, as to the inconceivability of the Subject perceiving itself — which, *if we limit subject to Mind* (*Manas*) is absolutely valid — collapses the moment we assert with Kant and his modern exponents, the existence of a Higher Self or “Transcendental subject.” For, in the act of self-analysis, the *Mind* becomes in its turn an object to the spiritual consciousness. It is the overshadowing of the Mind by *Buddhi* which results in the ultimate *realization of existence* — *i.e.*, self-consciousness in its purest form. But it must at the same time be borne in mind that the *full* realization of the spiritual Self is impossible for an incarnated 4th Rounder. The Spiritual ego reflects no varying states of consciousness; is independent of all sensation (experience); it does not *think* — it KNOWS, by an intuitive process only faintly conceivable by the average man. “The

¹ [Herbert Spencer, 1820–1903, English philosopher, biologist, anthropologist, and sociologist famous for his theory of social Darwinism whereby superior physical force shapes history. Spencer coined the expression “survival of the fittest,” in *Principles of Biology* (1864) after reading Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species*. The term strongly suggests natural selection, yet Spencer saw evolution as extending into realms of sociology and ethics, so he also supported Lamarckism.]

² *First Principles*, p. 66, [p. 55 in the 6th edition, 1927. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

³ *ibid.*

subject that perceives” Mind, as an [97] attribute of itself, is this Transcendental or spiritual Ego (Buddhi). He who would know more, let him study *Vedanta* and Patañjali’s *Yoga Philosophy* — *esoterically*. Let him understand the real meaning of these sentences:

“The knower of SELF passes beyond sorrow.”¹

“He who knows the Supreme Brahman, becomes Brahman.”²

The “scientific” union of Materialism and Idealism takes place in grey matter, affirms Dr. Lewins.

It is the “collective aggregate of *Ignorance*,” as the *Vedāntasāra* puts it, that led to *scientific* definitions by opponents; as one for instance that we find among the many pearls scattered by Dr. Lewins’ *What is Religion*.³ For the beauty and clearness of language, we recommend it; and though its critic⁴ recommends likewise the reader to remember that “Dr. Lewins’ philosophy does not lie on the surface”⁵ yet one may be excused, for insisting on a close scrutiny of a system which aims at supplanting every philosophy, archaic, ancient or non-existent, by *Hylo-Idealism*, which, it is claimed, is the *scientific* union of Materialism and Idealism — or that of oil and water; as says the reviewer — “matter, matter, everywhere,” and justly adds of the pure Materialistic and Idealistic hypotheses that “both positions lead to gross — nay *un-thinkable* — absurdities of thought.”⁶ But what does Dr. Lewins say?

. . . by Hylo-Idealism I mean nothing else than a less ambiguous and self-explanatory form of the term “Psychology” [which term] . . . is the accredited creed of all rational human knowledge, *in contradistinction to the occult and morbid mysticism of ontology or metaphysics* . . . Psychology is thus relative and phenomenal, the doctrine of life . . . and *human* knowledge, beginning and ending as anthropomorphosis, and *automorphosis, which is quite one with Hylo-Idealism, the rational or cerebral theory of mind and matter*. . . Without further preamble, let me [98] state that the Hylozoic theorem of life and the world may be formulated as the utter and self-evident impossibility, in the nature of things, *to transcend or escape in any way from the limits of our own anatomy, our own conscious Ego* [which is thus made one with *anatomy*!], the Non-Ego — or, falsely so-called, “external universe” — being but the objective or projective image of our own *egoity*, not the *vera effigies*, or absolute substance, of any “thing” external to self . . . entities, or non-entities, abstract or concrete, from Divinity downwards, are merely ideal or phenomenal imagery . . . the essential physical basis, protoplasm, *or officina of which is THE VESICULO-NEURINE or grey tissue of the hemispherical ganglia* . . . the function, namely, of a somatic

¹ *Chhândogya Upanishad* VII, i, 3

² *Mundaka Upanishad* III, ii, 9

³ [*What is Religion? A Vindication of Freethought*. By C.N. (Constance Naden); with Appendices by Dr. R. Lewins. London: Wm. Stewart & Co., 1883; 8-vo. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

⁴ *An Examination and Popular Exposition of the Hylo-Idealistic Philosophy*, by Wm. Bell McTaggart. [London: Wm. Stewart & Co., 1884. 8-vo. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

⁵ Preface

⁶ p. 3

organism, itself *fons et origo* of all cognition . . . it seems perfectly clear that, as now mirrored in modern thought, the objective can have no other than a relative existence. . . . This is only, in other words, formulating the *solidarité* of the Ego and Non-Ego, as *psychosis is now diagnosed by medico-psychological symptomatology*, as VESICULO NEUROSIS IN ACTIVITY . . . [!]¹

This is the *clear* and forcible rendering of the last conclusions arrived at by *modern thought*.

H.P. BLAVATSKY



¹ [Dr. R. Lewins' Appendices in C.N.'s *What is Religion?* etc., pp. 35-36, 39, 40-41. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

Part 4.

New philosophies are the spawn of overworked intellect.

They keep sprouting like mushrooms from their mycelium after a rainy morning — interminable, outlandish, multisyllabled, and multicipital.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. I (4), December 1887, pp. 329-34. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (LITERARY JOTTINGS – HYLO-IDEALISM VERSUS “LUCIFER,” AND THE “ADVERSARY”) VIII pp. 299-310.

Hylo-Idealism versus “Lucifer,” and the “Adversary.”

Under the head of “Correspondence,” in the present number, two remarkable letters are published.¹ Both come from fervent Hylo-Idealists — a Master and Disciple, if we mistake not — and both charge the “Adversary,” one, of a “slighting,” the other, of a “hostile [300] notice” of Hylo-Idealism, in the September number of *Lucifer*.

Such an accusation is better met, and answered in all sincerity; and, therefore, the reply is a flat denial of the charge. No *slight* — nor *hostility* either, could be shown to “Hylo-Idealism,” as the “little stranger” in the happy family of philosophies was hitherto as good as unknown to *Lucifer*’s household gods. It was *chaff*, if anything, but surely no hostility; and even that was concerned with only some dreadful words and sentences, with reference to the new teaching, and had nothing whatever to do with Hylo-Idealism proper — a *terra incognita* for the writer at the time. But now that three pamphlets from the pens of our two correspondents have been received in our office, for review, and carefully read, Hylo-Idealism begins to assume a more tangible form before the reviewer’s eye. It becomes easier to separate the grain from the chaff, the theory from the (no doubt) scientific, nevertheless, most irritating, words in which it is presented to the reader.

¹ See text.

This is meant in all truth and sincerity. The remarks which our two correspondents have mistaken for expressions of hostility, were as justified *then*, as they are *now*. What ordinary mortal, we ask, before he had time (to use Dr. Lewins'¹ happiest expressions) to “*asself*”² or *cognose*”³ — let alone *intercranialise*”⁴ (!!) — the hylo-idealistic theories, however profound and philosophical these may be who, having so far come into direct contact with only the *images* thereof “subjected by his own *ego-ity*” (i.e., as words and sentences), who could avoid feeling his hair standing on end, over “*his organs of mentation*,” while [301] spelling out such terrible words as “*vesiculo-neurosis* in conjunction with *medico-psychological symptomatology*,” “*autocentrism*,” and the like? Such interminable, outlandish, multisyllabled and multicipital, newly-coined compound terms and whole sentences, maybe, and no doubt, are, highly learned and scientific. They may be most expressive of true, real meaning, to a specialist of Dr. Lewins’ powers of thought; nevertheless, I make bold to say, that they are far more calculated to obscure than to enlighten the ordinary reader. In our modern day, when new philosophies spring out from the spawn of human overworked intellect like mushrooms from their mycelium after a rainy morning, the human brain and its capacities ought to be taken into a certain thoughtful consideration, and spared useless labour. Notwithstanding Dr. Lewins’ praiseworthy efforts to prove that brain (as far as we understand his aspirations and teachings) is the only reality in the whole kosmos, its limitations are painfully evident, on the whole. As philanthropists and theosophists, we entreat the founder of Hylo-Idealism and his disciples to be merciful to their new god, the “Ego-Brain,” and not tax too heavily its powers, if they would see it happily reign. For otherwise, it is sure to collapse before the new theory — or, let us call it philosophy — is even half appreciated by that “Ego-Brain.”

While we tearfully beg Dr. Lewins, in the interests of humanity, to have pity on his poor readers, we shall fight the usurper “Solipsism” in favour of the legitimate King of the Universe — Egoism.

By speaking as we do, we are only pursuing a life-long policy. We have criticized and opposed the coinage of hard Greek and Latin words by the New York Pantarchists;⁵ laughed at Hæckel’s pompous tendency to invent thirty-three syllabled terms, and speak of the *perigenesis* of *plastidules*, instead of honest whirling atoms — or what-

¹ [Robert Lewins, 1817–1895, British army surgeon and philosopher. He is best known for his collaboration with Constance Caroline Woodhill Naden on their philosophical theory called hylo-idealism. Constance Naden, 1858–1889, was an English writer, poet and philosopher. She studied, wrote and lectured on philosophy and science, alongside publishing two volumes of poetry. Several collected works were published following her death at the young age of 31. In her honour, Robert Lewins established the Constance Naden Medal and had a bust of her installed at Mason Science College (now the University of Birmingham). William Ewart Gladstone considered her one of the 19th century’s foremost poets.]

² [To take to one’s self, to assimilate, to appropriate.]

³ [Misspelling of *cognise*.]

⁴ *Auto-Centricism; or the Brain Theory of Life and Mind* [London 1888], p. 41; [also, *Humanism versus Theism; or Solipsism (Egoism) = Atheism*, A series of letters by Robert Lewins, M.D. (London: W. Stewart & Co., 1887)]

⁵ [Pantarchism, a word devised to mean the ultimate and artistic reconciliation of aristocratic inequality (in the sense of genuine superiorities) with democratic equality (in essential rights), is the artismus (or the beautiful) in this sphere of the application of these three idealogical aspections — the real (including the good), the true, and the beautiful. — Definition excerpted from Stephen Pearl Andrews, *The basic outline of universology. An introduction to the newly discovered science of the universe; its elementary principles; and the first stages of their development in the special sciences. Together with preliminary notices of aluwato (ahl-wah-to), the newly discovered scientific universal language, resulting from the principles of universology*, XXV. New York: D. Thomas, 1872]

ever he means; and derided the modern psychists for calling simple thought transference “telepathic impact.” And now, we tearfully beg Dr. Lewins, in the interests of humanity, to have pity on his poor readers: for, unless he hearkens to our advice, we shall be compelled, in dire self-defence, to declare an open war to his newly-coined [302] words. We shall fight the usurper “Solipsism” in favour of the legitimate king of the Universe — EGOISM — to our last breath.

Hylo-Idealism is at odds with Hylo-Ideaism.

At the same time, as we have hitherto been ignorant of the latest philosophy, described by Mr. Herbert L. Courtney¹ as “the greatest change in human thought,” may we be permitted to enquire whether it is spelt as its Founder spells it, namely, “Hylo-Idealism,” or as his disciple, Mr. Courtney does, who writes Hylo-Ideaism? Is the latter a *schism*, an improvement on the original name, a *lapsus calami*, or what? And now, having disburdened our heart of a heavy weight, we may proceed to give an opinion (so far very superficial), on the three Hylo-Idealistic (or *Ideaistic*) pamphlets.

Since Dr. Lewins regards consciousness as a function of the nerve-tissue, he is an uncompromising materialist. If apart from brain there is no Ego, no external world, what then is the brain itself — this solitary object in a void universe?

Under the extraordinary title of *Auto-Centricism and Humanism versus Theism*, or “Solipsism (Egoism) = Atheism,”² Dr. Lewins publishes a series of letters on the subject of the philosophy of which he is the founder. It is impossible not to feel admiration for the manner in which these letters are written. They show a great deal of sincere conviction and deep thought, and give evidence of a most wide and varied reading. However his readers may dissent from the writer’s conclusions, the research with which he has strengthened his theory, cannot fail to attract their attention, and smooth their way through the somewhat tortuous labyrinth of arguments before them. But, Dr. Lewins is among those who regard consciousness as a function of the nerve-tissue; and in this aspect, he is an uncompromising materialist. Yet, on the other hand, he holds that the Universe, God, and thought, have no reality whatever, apart from the individual Ego. The [303] Ego is again resolvable into brain-process. We thus arrive at the doctrine that Brain is the workshop in which all our ideas of external things are originated. Apart from brain there is no Ego, no external world. What, then, is the Brain itself — this solitary object in a void universe? Hylo-Idealism does not say. Thus, the author cannot escape the confusion of thought which his unique working-union of materialism and idealism involves. The *oscillation* between these two poles is strikingly apparent in the subjoined quotations. At one point Matter is discussed as if it were an objective reality; at another, it is regarded as a mere “phantasm of the Ego.” The Brain alone survives throughout in solitary state. We quote from the two pamphlets:

¹ [The New Gospel of Hylo-Idealism or Positive Agnosticism, Reprinted from “Our Corner.” London: Freethought Publishing Co., 1888]

² W. Stewart & Co., 41, Farringdon Street, E.C.; and Freethought Publishing Co., 63, Fleet Street, E.C.

On the one hand, matter is asserted.

“Matter, organic and inorganic . . . is now fully known . . . to perform . . . all material operations.”¹

“ . . . man is *all body or matter*. . . . ”²

“Abstract . . . thought [is] *neuropathy* . . . disease of the *nervous centres*.”³

“What we call mind . . . is a function of certain *nerve structures in the organism*.”⁴

On the other, matter is denied.

“All discovery is . . . a *subjective phenomenon*.”⁵

“All things are for us but *modes of perception* [mental figments].” The “celestial vault and garniture of Earth [are] a *mere projection or extension of our own inner consciousness*.”⁶

“We get rid of Matter altogether.”⁷ [304]

“The whole objective world . . . [is] *phenomenal or ideal*. . . . ”⁸

“Everything is spectral,” *i.e.*, unreal.⁹

Matter is at one time credited with a real being, and again resolved into a mere mental figment *as circumstances demand*. If Matter is, as the author frequently states, unreal, it is at least clear that the brain, one of its many phases, goes with it!!

The Vedantins symbolise Cosmic Duality by Logos and Mulaprakriti, i.e., Universal Spirit and Noumenon of Matter. The latter is the metaphysical basis of the intelligent operations in Nature.

As to the learned doctor’s assertion that perception is relative, a theory which runs through his whole work, we have but one answer. This conception is, in no sense whatever, a monopoly of Hylo-Idealists, as Dr. Lewins appears to think. The illusory nature of the phenomenal world — of the things of sense — is not only a belief common to the old Brāhmanical metaphysics, and to the majority of modern psychologists, but it is also a vital tenet of Theosophy. The latter distinctly realises matter as a “bundle of attributes,” ultimately resolvable into the subjective sensations of a “percipient.” The connection of this simple truth with the hylo-idealistic denial of

¹ *Auto-Centricism*, p. 40

² *ibid.*, p. 40

³ *Humanism versus Theism*, p. 25

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 24

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 17

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *Auto-Centricism*, p. 9

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 13

soul is not apparent. Its acceptance has, also, no bearing on the problem as to whether there may not exist a duality — *within the limits of manifested being* — or contrast between Mind and the Substance of matter. This Cosmic Duality is symbolised by the Vedāntins in the relations between the Logos and Mūlaprakriti — *i.e.*, the Universal Spirit and the “material” basis (or root) of the objective planes of nature. The *Monism*, then, of Dr. Lewins and other negative thinkers of the day, is evidently at fault, when applied to unify the contrast of mental and material facts in the conditioned universe. Beyond the latter, it is indeed valid, but that is scarcely a question for practical philosophy.

The orthodox concept of God is not, as Dr. Lewins contends, a myth or phantasm of the brain; it is an individualised ray of the all-pervading Logos, the inner light of which is blurred by the fog of lower minds.

To close with a reference this once to Dr. Lewins’ letter,¹ in which he makes his subsequent assertion to the effect that God is the “functional [*sic*] image,” of the Ego, we should prefer [305] to suggest that all individual “selves” are but dim reflections of the universal soul of the Kosmos. The orthodox concept of God is not, as he contends, a myth or phantasm of the brain; it is rather an expression of a vague consciousness of the universal, all-pervading Logos. It is because SELF pinions man within a narrow sphere “beyond which mortal mind can never range,” that the destruction of the personal sense of separateness is indispensable to the Occultist.

Modern Idealism is based upon gigantic paradoxes and even contradictions in terms.

The New Gospel of Hylo-Idealism or Positive Agnosticism,² is another pamphlet on the same subject, in which Mr. Herbert L. Courtney contributes his quota to the discussion of the “Brain Theory of mind and matter.” He is, if we mistake not, an avowed disciple of Dr. Lewins, and, perhaps, identical, with the “C.N.,” who watched over the cradle of the “new philosophy.”³ The whole gist of the latter may be summed up as an attempt to frame a working-union of Materialism and Idealism. This result is effected on two lines:

- 1 In the acceptance of the idealistic theorem, that the so-called external world only exists in our consciousness; and
- 2 In the designation of that consciousness, in its turn, as a mere function of Brain.

The first of these contentions is unquestionably valid, in so far as it concerns the world of appearances, or *Māyā*; it is, however, as “old as the hills,” and incorporated

¹ See “Correspondence” in the text.

² Freethought Publishing Co., 73, Fleet Street, E.C. Price 3d.

³ [“C.N.” stands for Constance Caroline Woodhill Naden, 1858–1889, English writer, poet and philosopher. She studied, wrote and lectured on philosophy and science, alongside publishing two volumes of poetry. Several collected works were published following her death at the young age of 31. In her honour, Robert Lewins established the Constance Naden Medal and had a bust of her installed at Mason Science College (now the University of Birmingham). William Ewart Gladstone considered her one of the 19th century’s foremost poets.]

into the Hylo-Ideal argument from anterior sources. The second is untenable, for the simple reason that on the premises of the new creed itself, the brain, as an object of perception, can possess no reality outside of the Ego. Hegelians might reply that Brain is but an *idea* of the Ego, and cannot hence determine the existence of the latter — its creator. [306]

Metaphysicism will, however, find much to interest them in Mr. Courtney's brochure, representative, as it is, of the new and more subtle phase into which modern scepticism is entering. Some expressions we may demur to — *e.g.*, "That which we see is not Sirius, but the light-wave." So far from the light-wave being "seen," it is a mere working hypothesis of Science. All we experience is the retinal sensation, the objective counterpart to which is a matter of pure inference. So far as we can learn, Hylo-Idealism is chiefly based upon gigantic paradoxes, and even contradictions in terms. For, with regard to the speculations anent¹ the Noumenon² what justification can be found for terming it "MATTER," especially as it is said to be "unknowable"? Obviously it may be of the nature of mind, or — *something* HIGHER. How is the Hylo-Idealist to know?

Venus, the morning star, was created before the sun and the moon — metaphorically, not astronomically.

*The Jewish World*³ enters bravely enough⁴ on its new character of professor of symbology and History. It accuses in no measured terms one of the editors of *Lucifer* of ignorance; and criticises certain expressions used in our October number, in a foot-note inserted to explain why the "Son of the Morning," LUCIFER, is called in Mr. G. Massey's little poem, "Lady of Light."⁵ The writer objects, we see, to Lucifer-Venus being called in one of its aspects "the Jewish Astōreth"; or to her having ever been offered cakes by the Jews. As explained in a somewhat confused sentence:

There *was no Jewish Astōreth*, though the Syrian goddess, Ashtoreth, or Astarte, often appears in Biblical literature, the moon goddess, the complement of Baal, the Sun God.

This, no doubt, is extremely learned and conveys quite *new* information. Yet such an astounding statement as that the whole of the foot-note in *Lucifer* is "pure imagination and bad history" is very risky indeed. For it requires no more than a stroke or two of our pen to make the whole edifice of this denial tumble on the [307] *Jewish World* and mangle it very badly. Our contemporary has evidently forgotten the wise proverb that bids one to let "sleeping dogs lie," and therefore, it is with the lofty airs of superiority that he informs his readers that though the Jews in Palestine lived surrounded with (?sic) this pagan form of worship, and *may, at times* (?!), have

¹ [concerning; in respect to]

² *p.* 8

³ [English Jewish weekly newspaper published in London from 1873 to 1934. It was founded by George Lewis Lyon, a financial journalist, 1828–1904, and its first editor was Myer Davis, 1830–1912.]

⁴ In its issue of the 11th November, 1887.

⁵ [Consult "Lucifer is Christos, Inner Light," in our Secret Doctrine's Third Proposition Series, and "Boris de Zirkoff on Gerald Massey," in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

wandered towards it, they HAD NOTHING IN THEIR WORSHIP IN COMMON WITH CHALDEAN OR SYRIAN BELIEFS IN MULTIPLICITY OF DEITIES. (!!)

This is what any impartial reader might really term “bad history,” and every Bible worshipper describe as a *direct lie* given to the Lord God of Israel. It is more than *suppressio veri, suggestio falsi*,¹ for it is simply a cool denial of facts in the face of both Bible and History. We advise our critic of the *Jewish World* to turn to his own prophets, to Jeremiah, foremost of all. We open “Scripture” and find in it: “the Lord God” while accusing *his* “backsliding Israel and treacherous Judah” of following in “the ways of Egypt and of Assyria,” of drinking the waters of Sihor, and “serving strange Gods,” enumerating his grievances in this wise:

. . . according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.²

They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them.³

. . . according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal.⁴

So much for Jewish *monotheism*. And is it any more “pure imagination” to say that the Jews offered cakes to their Astōreth and called her “Queen of Heaven”? Then the “Lord God” must, indeed, be guilty of more than “a delicate expansion of facts” when thundering to, and through, Jeremiah:

Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, TO MAKE CAKES to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods.⁵ [308]

“The Jews *may* AT TIMES” only (?) have wandered towards pagan forms of worship but “had *nothing in common* in it with Syrian beliefs in multiplicity of deities.” Had they not? Then the ancestors of the editors of the *Jewish World* must have been the victims of “suggestion,” when, snubbing Jeremiah (and not entirely without good reason), they declared to him:

As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.

But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven⁶ as we have done, we, AND OUR FATHERS, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.

¹ [The suppression of truth is the suggestion of falsehood.]

² Jeremiah ii, 28

³ *ibid.*, xi, 10

⁴ *ibid.*, xi, 13

⁵ *ibid.*, vii, 17-18

⁶ [Astōreth-Diana, Isis, Melita, Venus, *etc.*, *etc.* — H.P. Blavatsky.]

But *since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.*¹

Thus, according to their own confession, it is not “at times” that the Jews made cakes for, and worshipped Astōreth and the strange gods, but constantly: doing, moreover, *as their forefathers, kings and princes did.*

“Bad history”? And what was the “golden calf” but the sacred heifer, the symbol of the “Great Mother,” first the planet Venus, and then the moon? For the esoteric doctrine holds (as the Mexicans held) that Venus, the morning star, was *created before the sun and moon; metaphorically*, of course, not astronomically,² the assumption being based upon, and meaning that which the *Nazars* and the Initiates alone understood among the Jews, but that the writers of the *Jewish World* are not supposed to know. For the same reason the Chaldeans [309] maintained that the moon was produced before the sun.³ The morning star, Lucifer-Venus was dedicated to that Great Mother symbolized by the heifer or the “Golden Calf.” For, as says Mr. G. Massey in his lecture on “The Hebrew and other Creations Fundamentally Explained”:

This [the Golden Calf] being of either sex, it supplied a twin type for Venus, as Hathor or Ishtar [Astōreth], the double Star, that was male at rising and female at sunset, and therefore the Twin-Stars of the “First Day.”⁴

She is the “Celestial Aphrodite,” *Venus Victrix*, *Νικηφορος*, associated with *Ares*.⁵

Venus-Aphrodite⁶ is one with Astarte-Astoreth, the moon-goddess of generation presiding at human birth, just as Jehovah is the god of generation, foremost of all.

Astoreth, as a planet, is one with Lucifer, the Morning Star.

We are told that “happily for them [the Jews] there was no Jewish Astōreth.” The *Jewish World* has yet to learn, we see, that there would have been no Greek Venus Aphrodite; no *Ourania*, her earlier appellation; nor would she have been confounded with the Assyrian Mylitta;⁷ Hesychius,⁸ *Μυληταν, την Ουρανιαν Ασσυριοι* had it not been for the Phœnicians and other Semites. We say the “Jewish Astōreth,” and we maintain what we say, on the authority of the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, of Renan, and many others. Venus Aphrodite is one with the Astarte, Astōreth, etc. of the Phœnicians, and she is one (as a planet) with “Lucifer” the “Morning Star.” So far back as

¹ *Jeremiah* xlv, 16-18

² Because the stars and planets are the symbols and houses of Angels and Elohim, who were, of course, “created,” or evolved before the physical or cosmic sun or moon. “Hence the sun-god was called the child of the moon-god Sin, in Assyria, and the lunar god, Taht, or Tehuti, is called the father of Osiris, the sun-god, in Egypt.” (G. Massey, “The Hebrew and other Creations Fundamentally Explained,” pp. 15-16)

³ See *Babylon: Account of Creation, by George Smith*. [This is most likely *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*, by George Smith. Chapter V, “Babylonian Legend of the Creation,” p. 65, new and rev. ed., 1880. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

⁴ [p. 16]

⁵ See Pausanias, *Periēgēsis*, I, viii, 4; II, xxv, 1.

⁶ [Consult “Plotinus on the Dual Aphrodite,” in our *Mystic Verse and Insights Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

⁷ Herodotus, *History*, I, 199; Pausanias, *Periēgēsis*, I, xiv, 7.

⁸ [Herodas I, 131]

the days of Homer, she was confounded with *Kypri*s, an Oriental goddess brought by the Phœnician Semites from their Asiatic travels.¹ Her worship appears first at Cythera, a Phœnician settlement depôt or trade-establishment.² Herodotus shows that the sanctuary of Ascalon, in Syria, was the most ancient of the fanes of Aphrodite [310] Ourania;³ and Decharme tells us in his *Mythologie de la Grèce Antique*,⁴ that whenever the Greeks alluded to the origin of Aphrodite they designated her as *Oourania*, an epithet translated from a *Semitic word*, as Jupiter *Epouranios* of the Phœnician inscriptions, was the *Samemroum* of Philo of Byblos, according to Renan.⁵ Astôreth was a goddess of generation, presiding at human birth (as Jehovah was *god of generation*, foremost of all). She was the moon-goddess, and a planet at the same time, whose worship originated with the Phœnicians and Semites. It flourished most in the Phœnician settlements and colonies in Sicily, at Eryx. There hosts of *Hetæraë*⁶ were attached to her temples, as hosts of *Kadeshim*, called by a more sincere name in the Bible, were, to the house of the Lord, “where the women wove hangings for the grove.”⁷ All this shows well the Semitic provenance of Astôreth-Venus in her capacity of “great Mother.”

Let us pause. We advise sincerely the *Jewish World* to abstain from throwing stones at other peoples’ beliefs, so long as its own faith is but a house of glass. And though Jeremy Taylor⁸ may think that

To be proud of one’s learning is the greatest ignorance,

yet, in this case it is but simple justice to say that it is really desirable for our friends the Jews that the writer in *Lucifer* of the criticised note about Astôreth *should know* less of history and the Bible, and her unlucky critic in the *Jewish World* learn a little more about it.

“THE ADVERSARY”



¹ *Iliad* V, 330, 422, 458

² *Odyssey* VIII, 362; F.G. Welcker, *Griechische Götterlehre*, I, 666.

³ I, 105

⁴ p. 195

⁵ *Mission de Phénicie*

⁶ [In ancient Greece hetaira. Latinised as hetæra, was a “companion,” a class of prostitute. Historians have distinguished between hetairai and pornai, another class of prostitute. In contrast to pornai, who provided sex for numerous clients in brothels or on the street, hetairai were thought to have had only a few men as clients at any one time, to have had long-term relationships with them, and to have provided companionship and intellectual stimulation as well as sex. Charles Seltman wrote in 1953 that “hetairai were certainly in a very different class, often highly educated women.”]

⁷ *2 Kings* xxiii, 7

⁸ [Jeremy Taylor, 1613–1667, cleric in the Church of England who achieved fame as an author during the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. He is sometimes known as the “Shakespeare of Divines” for his poetic style of expression, and he is frequently cited as one of the greatest prose writers in the English language.]

Part 5.

Like modern Spiritualism, Hylo-Idealism is transcendental Materialism.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. I (6), February 1888, pp. 507-12. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (CORRESPONDENCE) IX pp. 51-62.

The editors have received the two following letters — one from the learned Founder of Hylo-Idealism, the other from a gentleman, a casual correspondent, of whom they know *absolutely nothing* except his most extraordinary way of expressing his thoughts in words and terms hitherto unheard by ordinary mortals. Both take the editors to task for using their undeniable right of criticism and editorial judgment. As *Lucifer*, however, is a magazine *sui generis*, and as its policy is the greatest possible tolerance and fairness to all parties concerned, it will abstain from its legal prerogative of leaving the letters without reply or notice. *Lucifer* hands them over, therefore, to the “ADVERSARY,” to be dealt with according to their respective merits. The editors have never pretended to an “understanding of Hylo-Idealism,” nor do they entertain any such rash hope for the future. They belong to that humble class of mortals who labour to their dying day under the belief that $2 \times 2 = 4$, and can by no means, even hylo-idealistic, make 5. “C.N.”’s letter placed the new “philosophy” in an entirely different light; firstly, because it is written in good English, and because the style of the writer is extremely attractive; and secondly, because at least one point has now been made clear to the editors: “Hylo-Idealism” is, like modern spiritualism, the *essence of transcendental materialism*. If in Mr. Huxley’s opinion Comte’s Positivism is, in practice, “Catholicism *minus* Christianity,” in the views of the editors of *Lucifer* Hylo-Idealism is “Metaphysics *minus* psychology and — *physics*.” Let its apostles explain away its flagrant contradictions, and then *Lucifer* will be the first to render justice to it as a philosophy. Meanwhile, it can only acknowledge a number of remarkably profound thoughts that are to be found scattered in independent solitude throughout the letters of Dr. Lewins¹ and others, and — no more. [52]



¹ *Humanism versus Theism*

A Letter on Hylo-Idealism, by Dr. Robert Lewins.

To the Editors of *Lucifer*.

Perhaps space may be found in the February or other early issue of your interesting and suggestive serial for the present curt communication. In a footnote of your January number I am coupled with Mr. H. Spencer as being more Atheist than Moleschott and Büchner — to say nothing of such compromising and irresolute scientists as Darwin, Huxley, and Co. Now, that atheistic or non-animist standpoint is the pivot on which my whole synthesis revolves; and is, I contend, the burning problem at this epoch — ethical and intellectual — of the human mind — *thoroughly* to establish on certain concrete, rational and scientific *data*, that is to say — not on the Utopias of Speculation and Metaphysics. My principle is exactly that of Kant (*inter alia*) when he formulates the “Thing in Itself.” But we have only to study the short and handy *A Critique of Kant*, referred to in your columns — by Kuno Fischer, translated by Dr. Hough,¹ to see how fast and loose that “all-shattering” metaphysician played with his all-destructive theme. Not only does he entirely reverse it and its corollaries in his critique of the “Practical Reason,” and of “Judgment,” but also in the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* itself, in which originally, as its corollary, or rather concomitant, he, like myself, only on less sure premises, disposes of God, the Soul (*Anima* or Vital Principle), and Immortality — that is of another “personal” life after death. I hold with Lucretius, Epicurus, and others in ancient and modern times, of whom Shelley is a typical case, that no greater benefit can be bestowed on humanity than the elimination from sane thought of this ghastly and maddening Triune Spectre. God alone is quite “l’infâme” Voltaire dubs the Catholic Church.² Looking through Nature “red in tooth and claws” to its *pseudo*-Author, we must expect to find a *Pandemon*. For any omnipotent Being who, unconditioned and unfettered in all respects, “willed” such a world of pain and anguish for sentient creatures, must be a Demon *worse* than mythology has fabled of Satan, Moloch, Mammon, or other fiends. It must be noted that in the classic Pantheon, the Fates, or Fatal Sisters, are “above” all the Immortals of Olympus, including Jove himself — a saving provision quite inadmissible in modern Monotheism, which endows its Divinity³ with absolute omnipotence and fore-knowledge.

ROBERT LEWINS, M.D. [53]



¹ [London: Swan Sonnenschein, Lowrey, 1888]

² [Cf. Voltaire’s “écrasez l’infâme,” crush the loathsome thing — referring to the Roman Catholic Church.]

³ Deuce, *i.e.*, Devil, is the synonym of *Deus*.

Another Letter on Hylo-Idealism, by G.M. McC.

To the Editors of *Lucifer*.

I have to thank you for your kind insertion of my note on above in [the] January issue of the Magazine.

I have not the slightest desire to quarrel with your prefaced comments on my style of writing. It seems to you to be “turgid,” and you take advantage of some unkind epithets lately dealt out to Theosophy in the *Secular Review* to return the compliment to me with interest added. Be it so. It would seem but fair to, let me say, compliment those, and those only, who have directly complimented you; but I have no wish, as I have just said, to find fault with *any* comment on Hylo-Idealism or on the methods of its advocacy. *All* criticism is, I know, received by the excogitator of the system with thanks, and, save that both he and I think your note *re* “*Theobroma*” not a little at fault (for explanation I refer you to the well-known Messrs. Epps), I can say the same for myself.

I can see, however, in spite of the raillery with which you honour us, that a right understanding of Hylo-Idealism — I beg pardon, *High-Low* Idealism — is still very far from being yours. Why, in a recent issue of *Lucifer*, the old difficulty of, as I call it, the “Coincident assumption of Materiality” is started as if it had never before been thought of. It is, in point of fact, fully dealt with in my “Appendix” to the *Auto-Centricism* pamphlet, which has already passed under your review! It is not worthwhile to enter once more upon this point; suffice it then to say, in addition, that I explained it also, at full length, to a Theosophical writer — Mr. E.D. Fawcett¹ — in the *Secular Review*, some months ago. He had started the same venerable objection, but after my reply, he so far honoured me as not to return to the charge. Let him do so now, and then a Theosophical attack and a Hylo-Ideal defence will be before you. But, really, it is no argument against my position to extract some half-dozen lines of my writing from a contemporary and to follow this *soupeçon* with three printer’s “shrieks.”

I shall wait with interest the promised letter from “C.N.,” placing Hylo-Idealism in a “new and very different light,” as you say. This is something quite new. Dr. Lewins, C.N., and I have, none of us, been able, hitherto, to find any material difference between our several presentations of the system.

I have the honour to be, Mesdames,

Your most obedient servant,

G.M. McC. [54]

¹ [Consult “Boris de Zirkoff on E.D. Fawcett,” in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Madame Blavatsky responds to the Hylo-Idealists at large.

The several learned gentlemen of the above persuasion, who have honoured *Lucifer* with their letters and articles, will please to accept the present as a collective Reply. Life is too short to indulge very often in such lengthy explanations. But “une fois n’est pas coutume.”¹

In “coupling” Dr. Lewins’ name with those he mentions — especially with Mr. Herbert Spencer’s — the Editors had assuredly no intention of saying anything derogatory to the dignity of the founder of Hylo-Idealism. They have called the latter system — its qualification of *Idealistic* notwithstanding — “atheistical,” and to this Dr. Lewins himself does not demur. Quite the contrary. If his protest (against a casual remark made in a footnote of two lines!) means anything at all, it means that he feels hurt to find his name associated with the names of such “compromising and [in *atheism*] irresolute scientists as Darwin, Huxley, and Co.” What is it that our erudite correspondent demurs to, then? Just that, and nothing more. His prefixed adjectives refer to the half-heartedness of these gentlemen in the matter of atheism and materialism, not surely, to their scientific achievements. Indeed, these illustrious naturalists are timid enough to leave half-opened doors in their speculations for something to enter in which is not quite matter, and yet what it is they do not, or *do not wish* to know.

No man can be at once a Materialist and an Idealist, and remain consistent.

Indeed, they derive man, his origin and consciousness, *only* from the lower forms of animal creation and the brutes, instead of attributing life, mind and intellect — as the followers of the new System do — simply to the pranks played by *Prakriti* (the great Ignorance and Illusion) on our “diseased nervous centres” — *abstract thought* being synonymous with *Neuropathy* in the teachings of the Hylo-Idealists.² But all this has been already said and *better said* by Kapila, in his Sāṅkhya, and is very old philosophy indeed; so that Messrs. Darwin and Co. have been, perhaps, wise in their generation to adopt another theory. Our great Darwinists are practical men, and avoid running after the hare and the eagle at [55] the same time, as the hare in such case would be sure to run away, and the eagle to be lost in the clouds. They prefer to ignore the ideas and conceptions of the Universe, as held by such “loose,” and — as philosophically expressed by our *uncompromising* opponent — “all-shattering metaphysicians” as Kant was. Therefore letting all such “metaphysical crack-brained theories” severely alone, they made man and his thinking *Ego* the lineal descendant of the revered ancestor of the now tailless baboon, our beloved and esteemed first cousin. This is only logical *from the Darwinian standpoint*. What is, then, Dr. Lewins’ quarrel with these great men, or with us? They have their theory, the inventor of Hylo-Idealism has his theory, we, Metaphysicians, have our ideas and theories; and, the *Moon* shining with impartial and equal light on the respective occiputs of Hylo-Idealists, Animalists, and Metaphysicians, she pours material enough for everyone

¹ [Cf. One swallow doesn’t make a summer.]

² See *Auto-Centricism*, p. 40.

concerned to allow each of them to “live and let live.” No man can be at once a Materialist and an Idealist, and remain consistent. Eastern philosophy and occultism are based on the *absolute unity* of the Root Substance, and they recognise only one infinite and universal CAUSE. The Occultists are UNITARIANS *par excellence*. But there is such a thing as conventional, time-honoured terms with one and the same meaning attached to them all — at any rate on this plane of illusion. And if we want to understand each other, we are forced to use such terms in their generally-accepted sense, and avoid calling mind matter, and *vice versa*. The definition of a *materialised “Spirit”* as frozen whiskey is in its place in a humoristic pun: it becomes an absurdity in philosophy. It is Dr. Lewins’ argument that

. . . the very first principle of logic is, that two “causes” are not to be thought of when one is sufficient;

and though the first and the ultimate, the Alpha and the Omega in the existence of the Universe, is one absolute cause, yet, on the plane of manifestations and differentiations, matter, as phenomenon, and Spirit as noumenon, cannot be so loosely confused as to merge the latter into the former, under the pretext that one self-evident natural cause (however secondary in the sight [56] of logic and reason) is “sufficient for our purpose,” and we need not “transcend the proper conditions of thought” and fall back upon the lower level of “lawless and uncertain fancy” — *i.e.*, metaphysics.¹

We have nothing whatever, I say it again, against “Hylo-Idealism” with the exception of its compound and self-contradictory name. Nor do we oppose Dr. Lewins’ earlier thoughts, as embodied in “C.N.’s” *Humanism versus Theism*. That which we permit ourselves to object to and oppose is the later system grown into a *Bifrontian*, Janus-like monster, a hybrid *duality* notwithstanding its forced mask of Unity. Surely it is not because Dr. Lewins calls “Spirit — a *fiction*,” and attributes Mind, Thought, Genius, Intellect, and all the highest attributes of thinking man to simple effects or functions of Hylo-zoism, that the greatest problem of psychology, *the relation of mind to matter*, is solved? No one can accuse “The Adversary” of too much tenderness or even regard for the conclusions of such rank materialists as the Darwinians generally are. But surely no impartial man would attribute their constant failure to explain the relations of mind to matter, and the confessions of their ignorance of the ultimate constitution of that matter itself, to timidity and irresoluteness, but rather to the right cause: *i.e.*,

The *absolute impossibility of explaining spiritual effects by physical causes*, in the first case;

And the presence of that in matter which baffles and mocks the efforts of the physical senses to perceive or feel, and therefore to explain it, in the second case.

It is not, evidently, a desire to *compromise* that forced Mr. Huxley to confess that “in strictness we [the Scientists] know nothing about the composition of matter,” but the *honesty* of a man of science in not speculating upon what he did not believe in, and

¹ See *Humanism versus Theism*, pp. 14-15.

knew nothing about. Does J. Le Conte¹ insult the majesty of physical science by declaring that the creation or destruction, increase or diminution of matter, “*lies beyond the domain of science?*”² And to whose prejudices does [57] Mr. Tyndall pander, he, who once upon a time shocked the whole world of believers in spiritual existence, by declaring in his Belfast address that in matter alone was “the promise and potency of every form and quality of life” (just what Dr. Lewins does)³ when he maintains that “the passage *from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of CONSCIOUSNESS is unthinkable,*” and adds:

Granted that a definite thought and a molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously; we do not possess the intellectual organ nor apparently any rudiments of the organ, which would enable us to pass by a process of reasoning from one to the other. They appear together, but *we do not know why*. Were our minds and senses so expanded, strengthened and illuminated, as to enable us to see and feel the very molecules of the brain; were we capable of following all their motions, all their groupings, all their electric discharges, if such there be; and were we intimately acquainted with the corresponding states of thought and feeling, we should be as far as ever from the solution of the problems. “How are these physical processes connected with the facts of consciousness?” The chasm between the two classes of phenomena would still remain intellectually impassable.⁴

To our surprise, however, we find that our learned correspondent — Tyndall, Huxley & Co., notwithstanding — *has* passed the *intellectually impassable* chasm by modes of [58] perception, “anti-intellectual,” so to speak. I say this in no impertinent mood; but merely following Dr. Lewins on his own lines of thought. As his expressions seem absolutely antiphrastic in meaning to those generally accepted by the common herd, “anti-intellectual” would mean with the Hylo-Idealists “anti-spiritual” (spirit being a *fiction* with them). Thus their Founder must have crossed the impassable chasm — say, by a hylo-zoistic process of perception, “starting from the region of rational cogitation” and not from “that lower level of lawless and uncertain fancy,” as Theosophists, Mystics, and other *hoi polloi* of thought, do. He has done it to his own “mental satisfaction,” and this is all a Hylo-Idealist will ever aspire to, as Dr. Lewins himself

¹ [Joseph Le Conte, 1823–1901, physician, geologist, professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and early conservationist.]

² *Correlation of Vital with Chemical and Physical Forces*. Appendix. [*Popular Science Monthly*. Vol. IV, 4th December 1873].

³ [To alter Tyndall’s words, as quoted by H.P. Blavatsky, would only confuse the sentence and obscure the argument. So we have left them unaltered. However, the actual words of Tyndall in his “Belfast Address” delivered in 1874 (See his *Fragments of Science*, 5th ed., New York, D. Appleton, 1884, p. 524) are somewhat different, and run as follows:

“ . . . Believing as I do, in the continuity of nature, I cannot stop abruptly where our microscopes cease to be of use. Here the vision of the mind authoritatively supplements the vision of the eye. By an intellectual necessity I cross the boundary of the experimental evidence, and discern in that Matter which we, in our ignorance of its latent powers, and notwithstanding our professed reverence of its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the promise and potency of all terrestrial life.”

— Boris de Zirkoff.]

⁴ John Tyndall, *Scientific Addresses*, New Haven, Connecticut, 1871: “On the Methods and Tendencies of Physical Investigation,” pp. 16-17.

tells us. He “cannot deny that there may be *behind* [?] nature a ‘cause of causes,’¹ but if so, it is a god who hides himself, or itself, from mortal thought. Nature is at all events vice-regent plenipotentary, and with *her* thought has alone to deal.” Just so, and we say it too, for reasons given in the footnote. “There is a natural solution for everything,” he adds “Of course, if there be no ‘cause,’ this solution is the arrangement and co-ordination of invariable sequences in our own minds rather than an ‘explanation’ or ‘accounting for’ phenomena. Properly speaking we can ‘account for’ nothing. *Mental satisfaction* — unity between microcosm and macrocosm, not the search after ‘First Causes’ . . . *is the true chief end of man.*”²

This seems the backbone of Hylo-Idealistic philosophy, which thus appears as a cross breed between Epicureanism and the “Illusionism” of the Buddhist Yogachāryas. This stands proven by the contradictions of his system. Dr. Lewins seems to have achieved that to do which every mortal scientist has hitherto failed firstly, by declaring³ the [59] whole objective world — “*phenomenal* or *ideal*,”⁴ and “everything in it *spectral*,”⁵ and yet *admitting the reality of matter*. More than this. In the teeth of all the scientific luminaries, from Faraday to Huxley, who all confess to knowing NOTHING of matter, he declares that “Matter, organic or inorganic . . . *is now fully known*”!!⁶

The new school teaches that brain is the Creator of the Universe and originator of consciousness; that in it alone all our ideas are born, and that, apart from it, nothing has real existence, everything being illusion.

I humbly beg Dr. Lewins’ pardon for the rude question; but does he really mean to say what he does say? Does he want his readers to believe that up to his appearance in this world of matter, thinking men did not know what they were talking about, and that among all the “Ego Brains” of this globe his brain is the one omniscient *reality*, while all others are empty phantasms, or *spectral* balloons? Besides which, matter cannot surely be *real* and *unreal* at the same time.

If *unreal* — and he maintains it — then all Science can know about it is that it knows *nothing*, and this is precisely what Science confesses.

And if *real* — and Dr. Lewins, as shown, declares it likewise — then his *Idealism* goes upside down, and *Hylo* alone remains to mock him and his philosophy.

These may be trifling considerations in the consciousness of an *Ego* of Dr. Lewins’ power, but they are very serious contradictions, and also impediments in the way of such humble thinkers as Vedāntins, Logicians, and Theosophists, toward recognis-

¹ We Theosophists, who do not *limit* nature, do not see the “cause of causes” or the *unknowable* deity *behind* that which is limitless, but identify that abstract Nature with the deity itself, and explain its visible laws as secondary effects on the plane of Universal Illusion.

² *Humanism versus Theism*, p. 15

³ *ibid.*, p. 17

⁴ We call the *noumenal* — the “ideal.”

⁵ *Auto-Centricism*, p. 9

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 40

ing, let alone appreciating, “Hylo-Idealism.” Our learned correspondent pooh-poohs Metaphysics, and at the same time not only travels on purely metaphysical grounds, but adopts and sets forth the most metaphysical tenets, the very gist of the PARA-metaphysical Vedanta philosophy, tenets held also by the Buddhist “Illusionists” — the *Yogachāryas* and *Madhyamikas*. Both schools maintain that all is void (*sarva śūnya*), or that which Dr. Lewins calls spectral and phantasmal. Except internal sensation or intelligence (*viññāna*), the Yogachāryas regard everything else as illusion. Nothing that is material can have any but a *spectral* existence with them. So far, our “Bauddhas” are at one with the Hylo-Idealists, but they part at [60] the crucial moment. The New School teaches that the Brain (the originator of consciousness) is the only factor and Creator of the visible Universe; that in *it* alone all our ideas of external things are born, and that, apart from it, nothing has real existence, everything being illusion. Now what has that Brain, or rather the material its particles and cells are composed of, distinct in it from other matter that it should be rendered such honours? *Physically*, it differs very little indeed from the brain stuff and cranium of any anthropoid ape. Unless we divorce consciousness, or the EGO, from matter, one materialistic philosophy is as good as the other, and none is worth living for. What his Brain-Ego *is*, Dr. Lewins does not show anywhere. He urges that his “atheistic or *non-animist* (soulless) standpoint is the *pivot*” on which his “whole synthesis revolves.” But as that “pivot” is no higher than the physical brain with its hallucinations, then it must be a broken reed indeed. A philosophy that goes no further than superficial Agnosticism, and says that “what Tennyson says of Deity *may* be true, but it is not in the region of natural cogitation; for it transcends the logical *Encheiresis naturæ*”¹ — is no philosophy, but simply *unqualified negation*. And one who teaches that

. . . *savants*, or specialists, are the last to reach the *summa scientiæ*, for the constant *search* after knowledge must ever prevent its *fruition*,²

cuts the ground himself under his feet, and thus loses the right not only to be considered a man of science, but likewise his claim to the title of philosopher, for he rejects all knowledge. Dr. Lewins, quoting Schiller, to the effect that truth can never be reached while the mind is in its analytic throes, shows the poet-philosopher saying that:

To capture the fleeting phantom he (the analyst) must fetter it by rules, must anatomise its fair body into concepts, and imprison *its living spirit* into a bare skeleton of words

— and thus brings this as a prop and proof of his own arguments that we need not trouble ourselves with the “cause of causes.” But Schiller believed in spirit and immortality, while the Hylo-Idealists deny them *in toto*. What he says above is accepted by every Occultist and [61] Theosophist, simply because *he refers to the purely intel-*

¹ *Human. vs. Theism* [Demon Mephisto mocks academic learning by saying,
Encheiresis naturæ, Chemistry calls it,
Mocking itself, not knowing what befalls it.

This phrase was used by Professor J.K. Spielmann, Goethe’s teacher in Strasburg, to define life simply by “grasping nature with one’s hands.”]

² *ibid.*

lectual (not Spiritual) *analysis* on the physical plane, and according to the present scientific methods. Such analysis, of course, will never help man to reach the real *inner* soul-knowledge, but must ever leave him stranded in the bogs of fruitless speculation.

The truth is, that Hylo-Idealism is at best QUIETISM — only on the purely material plane. “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die,” seems its motto. Dr. Lewins tells us that he holds his views with Epicurus. I beg leave to contradict again. Epicurus insisted upon the necessity of making away with an unphilosophical, anthropomorphic deity — a bundle of contradictions — and so do we, the Theosophists. But Epicurus believed in gods, finite and conditioned in space and time, still *divine* when compared to objective ephemeral man: again, just as we, Theosophists, believe in them.

We feel sorry to have to say unpleasant truths. The Founder of Hylo-Idealism is evidently a marvellously well-read man, his learning is great and undeniable; and, we have always had an instinctive respect for, and sympathy with, thinkers of his calibre. But, we have been sent pamphlets and books on Hylo-Idealism for review, and one would be truant to his duty to conceal one’s honest and sincere views on anything. Therefore, we say that, contradictions and inconsistencies in the Hylo-Idealistic system apart, we find in it a mass of ideas and *arguments* which come forcibly home to us, because they are part and parcel of the Eastern Idealism. Our premises and propositions seem to be almost identical in some respects, but the conclusions we come to disagree in every point, the most important of which is the true nature of matter. Writes Dr. Lewins in 1878, [that] this, which

. . . has been *fabled* as “Spirit,” is really merely the “*vis insita*”¹ of matter or “nature” — the latter a misnomer if creation or birth is a delusion, as it must be on the hypothesis of the eternity of matter.

Here the Doctor speaks evidently of “Spirit” from the Christian stand-point, and criticises it from this aspect. And from this stand-point and aspect he is perfectly right; [62] but as wrong from those of Eastern philosophy. Did he but view Spirit, *as one with eternal matter*, which, though eternal *in esse* is but finite and conditioned during its periodical manifestations, he would not so materialise its *vis insita* — which is *vis vitæ*² but when applied to individual manifestations, the living subjects of illusion, or animated bodies. But this would lead us too far, and we must close the subject with one more protest. There is a casual remark in *Humanism versus Theism* to the effect (on the authority of Ueberweg)³ that “the early Greek thinkers and Sages were Hylo-Zoists.” Aye, learned Doctor; but the early Greek thinkers understood Hylo-Zoism (from “Hyle” *primordial* matter, or what the greatest chemist in England, Mr. Crookes, has called “protyle,” *undifferentiated matter*, and “Zoe,” life) in a way very different from yours. So are we, Theosophists and Eastern Occultists, “Hylo-Zoists”; but it is because with us “life” is the synonym both of Spirit and Matter, or the ONE eternal and infinite LIFE whether manifested or otherwise. That LIFE is both the eter-

¹ [*i.e.*, the innate force of matter, also termed by Newton as *vis inertiae*, the innate force of inactivity.]

² [vital force]

³ [Friedrich Ueberweg, 1826–1871, German philosopher and historian of philosophy.]

nal IDEA and its periodical LOGOS. He who has grasped and mastered this doctrine completely has thereby solved the mystery of BEING.

“THE ADVERSARY”



P.S. We have in type a very excellent article by Mr. L. Courtney, which could not find room in this present number, but will appear in March. In it, the writer says all that he *can* possibly say in favour of Hylo-Idealism, and that is all one can do. Thus, *Lucifer* will give one fair chance more to the new System; after which it will have gained a certain right to neither answer at such length, nor accept any article on Hylo-Idealism that will go beyond a page or so. — “A.”



Part 6.

Madame Blavatsky refutes the Brain Theorem of the Universe.

A second letter on Hylo-Idealism, by Dr. Robert Lewins.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. II (7), March 1888, p. 71. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE BRAIN THEOREM OF THE UNIVERSE) IX pp. 86-88.

To the Editors of *Lucifer*.

Kindly permit me to direct attention to the ADVERSARY'S garbled quotation of a sentence which quite distorts my meaning. At page 510, 2nd column, of *Lucifer* for February, is the following passage:

In the teeth of all the scientific luminaries, from Faraday to Huxley, who all confess to knowing NOTHING [which is surely rather too much of a negation] ① of matter, [Dr. Lewins] declares that "Matter organic and inorganic, is now fully known."¹

On turning to this reference, I find my declaration runs thus, and consequently gives quite a different complexion to my position than that implied by my critic.

[87]

Matter, organic and inorganic, between which no real veil of partition exists,² is now fully known by Medicine to perform, *unaided by* "Spiritual" agency, all material operations. ② That fact, though ignored by Newton, was the real outcome of his *mechanical* theory of the Universe. As soon as he demonstrated innate activity or attractive energy, the push and pull of every atom of matter, the intrusion of a "spiritual" agency was at once abrogated.

Indeed, it really is quite unthinkable to predicate the interaction of such incompatible elements (concepts) as corporeity and incorporeity. *Cui bono*³ nerves or other somatic structures, for the conduction of an *unsubstantial substance* (Archæus)? The idea is as inconceivable as inexpressible. The contradiction is quite a *reductio ad impossibile*. It runs on all fours with Descartes' Pineal Gland hypothesis of the "Soul." ③

¹ *Auto-Centricism*, p. 40

² Chemistry, as I have elsewhere stated, since Wöhler's laboratory manufacture of the organic compound *Urea*, has quite unified organic and inorganic "Nature." What used to figure in chemical text books as "Organic Chemistry," is now treated of as "Carbon Compounds."

The solution of continuity is formal and apparent only, not real. "Things" are indeed not as they seem.

³ [*i.e.*, to whom is it a benefit? Latin phrase expressing the view that crimes are often committed to benefit their perpetrators.]

Point-by-point response by Madame Blavatsky.

① Many passages from the most eminent physicists of the day could be quoted to prove that there can never be “*too much* of a negation” in such confessions of ignorance upon this subject. No one knows to this hour the ultimate structure or essence of matter. Hitherto, Science has never yet succeeded in decomposing a single one of the many simple bodies, *miscalled* “elementary substances.” So far do our materialists stray, *nolens volens*, into metaphysics, that they are not even sure if molecules *are realities*, or a simple fancy based on false perceptions! Writes Prof. J.P. Cooke, in his *New Chemistry*:

There may be no such things as molecules . . . the new chemistry *assumes as its fundamental postulate, that the magnitudes we call molecules are realities; but this is only a postulate.*

Can any critic assume, after this, “*too much* of a negation”? [88]

② How, then, does Medicine, or any other Science, *fully know* that matter performs *unaided by* “*Spiritual*” agency, all material operations? All they know is, that they are ignorant even of the *reality* of their molecules, let alone invisible primordial matter. And it is just with regard to the *natural functions of the grey matter in the brain*, and the action of the mind or consciousness, that Tyndall has declared that were we even enabled to *see and feel* the very molecules of the brain, still *the chasm between the two classes of phenomena would be “intellectually impassable.”* How, then, can Dr. Lewins say of that which all naturalists, biologists, psychologists (with the exception, perhaps, of Hæckel, who is undeniably mad on the question of his own omniscience) have proclaimed *unknowable* to human intellect, that it is “*fully known* to Medicine,” of all Sciences (with the exception of Surgery) the most tentative, hypothetical and uncertain?

③ Descartes showed some consistency at least, while putting forth his hypothesis about the *pineal gland*. He would not talk upon a subject and predicate of an organ that *which it is not* when entirely ignorant of what it may be. In this he was wiser in his generation than the philosophers and physicists who came after him. Now-adays, the Science of Physiology knows no more than Descartes did of the pineal gland, and the spleen, and a few more mysterious organs in the human body. Yet, even in their great ignorance they will deny point-blank any *spiritual* agency there, where they are unable to perceive and follow even the material operations. VANITY AND CONCEIT are thy names, oh, young Physiology! And a peacock’s feather in the tail of the XIXth century crow, is the fittest emblem that *Lucifer* can offer the present generation of “Subtle Doctors.”



Part 7.

The debate on hylo-idealism continues unabated

By denying the Vedantic idea of non-separateness, the Hylo-Idealists vitiate every one of their arguments.

Comments and footnotes by Madame Blavatsky to an article by Mr. H.L. Courtney.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. II (8), April 1888, pp. 136-41. Footnotes and closing Editorial Note appended by H.P. Blavatsky to an article of Herbert L. Courtney, on Hylo-Idealism. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (FOOTNOTES AND COMMENTS ON “ULTIMATE PHILOSOPHY”) IX pp. 138-41.

[Is there aught beyond consciousness?]

Most decidedly not. “There is naught *beyond consciousness*,” a Vedantīn and a Theosophist would say, because Absolute Consciousness is infinite and limitless, and there is nothing that can be said to be “beyond” that which is ALL, the self-container, containing all. But the Hylo-Idealists deny the Vedāntic idea of *non-separateness*, they deny that we are but parts of the whole; deny, in common parlance, “God,” Soul, and Spirit, and yet they will talk of “apprehension” and intuition — the function and attribute of man’s *immortal* Ego, and make of it a function *of matter*. Thus they vitiate every one of their arguments. [139]

[Let “I am” = consciousness — or “sensation” or any other word . . . so that it includes all thought . . . all connected with the *ego* in itself.]

The real “I” which thinks, feels, and acts is a ray of Absolute Consciousness, which is no “consciousness.”

In this paragraph we find the old crux of philosophy — the question as to whether there is any “external reality” in nature — cropping up again. The solution offered is a pure assumption, reached by ignoring one of the fundamental facts of *human* consciousness, the *feeling* that the *cause* of sensation, *etc.*, lies outside the limited, human self. Mr. Courtney, we believe, aims at expressing a conception identical with that of the Advaita Vedāntins of India. But his language is inaccurate and misleading to those who understand his words in their usual sense, *e.g.*, when he speaks of the “I am” outside of which nothing can exist, he is stating a purely Vedantīn tenet; but then the “I” in question is *not* the “I” which acts, feels or thinks, but that absolute consciousness which is no consciousness.

It is this confusion between the various ideas represented by “I” which lies at the root of the difficulty — the only philosophical explanation of which rests in the *esoteric* Vedantīn doctrine of “Māyā,” or Illusion.

[How can I be self and yet *not* self at the same time?]

Very easily. You have only to postulate that *self* is *one*, *eternal* and infinite, the *only* REALITY; and your little self a transient illusion, a reflected ray of the SELF, therefore a *not*-Self. If the Vedantīn idea is “meaningless” to the writer, his theory is still more so — to us.¹

Let Mr. Courtney study the doctrine of reflected centres of consciousness, and he will understand more clearly his own state-ment.

[Beyond consciousness all is (to me) a blank, and all that enters consciousness becomes part of myself thereby.]

This phrase is an admirable illustration in proof of the remarks made in the last footnote. “Things *enter* consciousness,” says Mr. Courtney, and it is no word-splitting to point out to him, that not only is it impossible for him to speak without these words or others equivalent to them, but further that he *cannot think* at all except in terms of these conceptions. It follows that, since he is not talking nonsense, he is trying to express in terms of the mind, what properly transcends mind — in other words we are brought back to the ancient doctrine of “Māyā” again. [140]

Daily experience shows him that things do *enter* consciousness and, in some sense, become part of himself — but where and what were they, before entering *his* consciousness? Let him study the doctrine of limitation and “reflected” centres of consciousness, and he will understand himself more clearly.

If by self-knowledge Mr. Courtney implies the analytical knowledge of his ephemeral personality, he is hopelessly at sea.

[Upon the fact of its own existence the ego cannot reason.]

A Mystic would take exception to this statement, at least if the word “reason” is used by Mr. Courtney in the sense of “know”: — for his great achievement is “Self”-knowledge, meaning not only the analytical knowledge of his own limited personality, but the synthetical knowledge of “ONE” EGO from which that passing personality sprang.

His world is supported by an elephant, which stands upon a tortoise wagging its tail in absolute void.

[O, light divine, thy reproduction is impossible.]

How are we to understand “light *divine*” in the thought of a Hylo-Idealist, who limits the whole universe to the phantasms of the grey matter of the brain — that matter and its productions being alike illusions? In our humble opinion this philosophy is twin sister to the cosmogony of the *orthodox* Brahmins, who teach that the world is supported by an elephant, which stands upon a tortoise, the tortoise wagging its tail

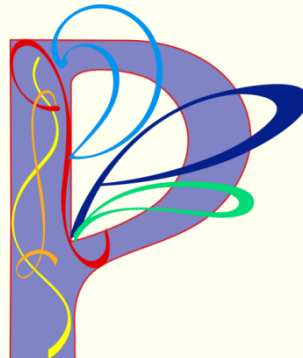
¹ [Consult “Higher Self and Higher Ego,” in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

in absolute Void. We beg our friends, the Hylo-Idealists', pardon; but, so long as such evident contradictions are not more satisfactorily explained, we can hardly take them seriously, or give them henceforth *so much* space.

Closing thoughts by Madame Blavatsky.

The sins of omission and commission by the great Anglo-German Sanskritist are not calculated to make of him a new Rishi in the eyes of Aryanophils.

The editors were kindly informed by Dr. Lewins that Miss C. Naden was on her way to India *via* Egypt (whence she sent us her excellent little letter published in the February *Lucifer*), well furnished with letters from Professor Max Müller to introduce her to sundry eminent "Sanskrit Pundits in the Three Presidencies for the purpose of studying Occultism on its native soil," as Dr. Lewins explains. We heartily wish Miss Naden success; but we feel as sure she will return not a whit wiser in Occultism than when she went. We lived in India for [141] many years, and have never yet met with a "Sanskrit Pundit" — officially recognised as such — who knew anything of Occultism. We met with several occultists in India who will not speak; and with but one who is a really learned Occultist (the most learned, perhaps, of all in India), who condescends occasionally to open his mouth and teach. This he never does, however, outside a very small group of Theosophists. Nor do we feel like concealing the sad fact, that a letter from Mr. Max Müller, asking the pundits to divulge occult matter to an English traveller, would rather produce the opposite effect to the one anticipated. The Oxford Professor is very much beloved by the orthodox Hindus, innocent of all knowledge of their esoteric philosophy. Those who are Occultists, however, feel less enthusiastic, for the sins of omission and commission by the great Anglo-German Sanskritist are many. His ridiculous dwarfing of the Hindu chronology, to pander to the Mosaic, probably, and his denying to the Ancient Āryans any knowledge of even Astronomy except through Greek channels — are not calculated to make of him a new Rishi in the eyes of Āryanophils. If learning about Occultism is Miss Naden's chief object in going to India, then, it is to be feared, she has started on a wild-goose's chase. Hindus and Brahmins are not such fools as we Europeans are, on the subject of the sacred sciences, and they will hardly desecrate that which is holy, by giving it unnecessary publicity.



Suggested reading for students.



On Black versus White Magic.

- “A Strange Story by Bulwer-Lytton”
- “Adoration of male gods led to phallicism and black magic”
- “Akhund Abdul Ghaffur of Swat”
- “Ancient Magic in Modern Science”
- “Animated statues, trophies of the Black Art”
- “Auras of mediums and adepts”
- “Between Black and White Magic there is but a cobweb thread”
- “Black Magic is in full sway amidst mankind”
- “Black versus White Magic, the two Opposing Powers”
- “Blavatsky on the author of Phallicism”
- “Blavatsky on the malignant fever of unsound scepticism”
- “Buddhist Feminism in Ceylon”
- “Capital punishment is a relic of Jewish barbarity”
- “Christian Lectures on Buddhism”
- “Christianity has retarded the Woman’s progress”
- “Confessions of Cyprianus, the Penitent Sorcerer of Antioch”
- “Does your mind elate with self-adoration”
- “Egyptian Magic, good and bad”
- “Evil is an illusion caused by the Circle of Necessity”
- “Evil is the infernal end of the polarity of spirit-matter”
- “Exact Science versus Archaic Philosophy”
- “Frightening crying children into silence”
- “How can a Black Magician be known”
- “Hugo's La Fin de Satan (1911)”
- “Insights to the high idealism and quaint wit of Eliphas Levi”

- “Insights to the Occult Arts”
- “Instead of Black and White Magic, read selfish and unselfish motive”
- “Magic is the Occult Knowledge of Natural Law”
- “Mediumship and Adeptship are poles apart”
- “No one has the right to control the mind of another”
- “Occultism and Kabbalah are only masks to hide the sacred truth from the profane”
- “On Astral Intoxication”
- “On malevolent bewitchments and venomous magic”
- “Ormuzd and Ahriman are ever opposing powers, yet inseparable and interdependent”
- “Papal dispensation for murder and mayhem”
- “Phallicism and Phallic Worship”
- “Presentiments of what lies in the bosom of future”
- “Psychological and conjuring tricks”
- “Reflections of an ardent apostle”
- “Religious conversion means absolute perversion”
- “Selfishness is the cause of all sin and suffering”
- “Selfishness is the hallmark of fakirs, hermits, and yogins”
- “Sin by cruel acquiescence in an unworthy fashion”
- “Soul-destroying sophistry is fake wisdom”
- “Spirit and Matter are dual aspects of One Cause”
- “Spiritual progress is not aided by watching the Astral Light”
- “Teraphim are the elemental spirits of ancient divination”
- “The Arabian Nights are echoes from of Lemuria and Atlantis”
- “The Astral Light reflects images of every thought and action”
- “The Ensouled Violin”
- “The Idyll of the White Lotus”
- “The Origin of Good and Evil”
- “The Original Sin is a Jewish Invention”
- “The Pernicious Sophistry of Hypocrisy”
- “The Pitfalls of Occult Arts and Metaphysical Healing”
- “The power of the magician is inversely related to his worldly interests”
- “The process of precipitating handwritten letters explained”

- “The Silent Brother”
- “The spiritual blindness of anthropomorphism”
- “The Theosophical Society’s position on hypnotism”
- “Theological anthropomorphism is the parent of materialism”
- “Theological malice is the root cause of Satanic Magic”
- “Trained imagination can produce occult phenomena”
- “True magic is the Gnosis of Pythagoras”
- “Warning to phenomena seekers”
- “When theological ethics speak no longer in man”
- “Why women should avoid the Church like a plague”
- “Yoga is a wolf in sheep’s clothing”



On the brutal foot of materialism.

- “Without the revival of Aryan philosophy, the West will fall to even grosser materialism”
— *in our Blavatsky Speaks Series.*
- “Materialism, Spiritualism, Monism”
— *in our Confusing Words Series.*
- “Blavatsky on the materialism of today”
— *in our Down to Earthy Series.*

