

Against Ecclesiastical Christianity and Religious Dogmatism



Ageless Wisdom is the only religion of reason and free thought, of truth and impartiality, not authority. Paganism was modified by Christianity, and vice versa. Either Pagan worship and Neo-platonic theurgy must be crushed out forever, or the Christians become Neo-Platonists. The only thing absolutely necessary for man is truth; and to that, and that alone, must our moral consciousness adapt itself.

Dedicated to those whose life reflects the teachings of Jesus Chrēstos, a virtuous man in his trial of life, reborn Christos, a Nirmanakaya.

Abstract and train of thoughts¹

Preface to Isis Unveiled, Part II, a critical dissection of ecclesiastical theology. 17

Part 1. Every Christian dogma has its origin in a heathen rite

What is truth? Where is it to be searched for amid this multitude of warring sects? Each claims to be based upon divine revelation, and each to have the keys of the celestial gates. 19

Society seems to have been ever balancing itself upon one leg, on an unseen tightrope stretched from our visible universe into the invisible one; uncertain whether the end hooked on faith in the latter might not suddenly break, and hurl it into final annihilation. 19

Christian symbols pervaded by heathen phallicism.

Neither Catholics nor Protestants have a right to talk of the “indecent forms” of heathen monuments so long as they ornament their own churches with the symbols of the Lingam and Yoni, and even write the laws of their God upon them. 22

The torrents of human blood shed by the Vatican are unparalleled in the annals of Paganism. 22

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¹ Cardinals by the Belgian academic painter Georges Croegaert.

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There has never been a religion in the annals of the world with such a bloody record as Christianity. 66

How a saint was butchered and butchers sainted. 66

Part 2. Christian crimes and Heathen virtues

Poor fools, hysterical women, and idiots were roasted alive, without mercy, for the crime of so-called “magic.” 69

Magic and sorcery are rife among popes, bishops, and priests.

Benedict IX, John XX, and Gregories VI and VII, are known magicians. 70

In the latter part of the sixteenth century there was hardly a parish to be found in which the priests did not study magic and alchemy. 71

The practice of exorcism to cast out devils “in imitation of Christ,” who by the way never used exorcism at all, led the clergy to devote themselves openly to “sacred” magic in contradistinction to black art, of which latter crime were accused all those who were neither priests nor monks. 71

Torquemada burned over 10,000 persons, and sentenced to torture 80,000 more. 73

Nowhere, during the middle ages, were the arts of magic and sorcery more practiced by the clergy than in Spain and Portugal. 75

Witch-burning at Bamberg and Würzburg. 76

The papal government realized much money by selling to the rich dispensations to secure them from the Inquisition. 77

A horrible record of fiendish cruelty.

One horrid total: 162 persons in nineteen months. 80

What room is there in a theology which exacts such holocausts as these to appease the bloody appetites of its priests?

In the twenty-nine burnings catalogued here we find the names of twelve vicars, four canons, and two doctors of divinity burnt alive. 81

What the exorcist-priest most yearned after was to release miserable spirits which haunt spots where hidden treasures lie. 81

For this purpose he entered a circle at midnight, clad in a new surplice. A consecrated band hanging from the neck was covered with sacred characters. He wore on the head a tall pointed cap, on the front of which was written in Hebrew the “Holy Word,” the Tetragrammaton (which is not holy). 81

The seven abominations of Solomon.

It has been admitted that the elimination of devil from theology would be fatal to the perpetuity of the Church. But this is only partially true. The Prince of Sin would be gone, but the sin itself would survive. If the devil were annihilated, the Articles of Faith and the Bible would remain. 82

A papal bull against Spiritualism. 83

Vulgar magic in India is the work of the lowest clergy; in Rome, that of the highest Pontiffs. It is designed to hold the populace in a perpetual state of fear.

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Fake relics and false legends galore. 86

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Pope fraternizing with Islam.

For his Church feels more sympathy for the Moslem than the schismatic. 97

A letter from Mary Virgin. 98

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 100

Pagan origin of Catholic ritual.

Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and some Fathers drank deeply from the fountains of philosophy. 100

The identical evocations and incantations of the Pagan and Jewish Kabbalist are now repeated by the Christian exorcist, and the theurgy of Iamblichus is adopted word for word. 100

The Latin Church despoiled Kabbalists and Theurgists of their magical rites and ceremonies, and hurled anathemas upon their devoted heads. 101

Long before the sign of the Cross was adopted as a Christian symbol, it was employed as a secret sign of recognition among neophytes and adepts. 103

The sign is absolutely and magnificently kabbalistic: it represents the perpetual opposition and quaternary equilibrium of the elements. 103

The Augustinian productions are a rhapsodical conversation with “god,” an incoherent dream. 104

Paul and Peter compared and contrasted.

By Simon Magus we must understand apostle Paul, whose Epistles were secretly as well as openly calumniated by Peter, and charged with containing dysnoëtic learning. 105

The Apostle of the Gentiles was brave, outspoken, sincere, and very learned; the Apostle of Circumcision, cowardly, cautious, insincere, and very ignorant. 106

The Nazars were a class of Chaldæan Theurgists. Jesus belonged to that class. 107

Why Paul was so persecuted and hated by Peter, John, and James? 108

A mysterious Egyptian inscription explained. 109

Pythagoras never allowed his neophytes to see him during the years of probation, but instructed them from behind a curtain in his cave. He was the real deus ex machina. 110

The ceremonial dress of the Christian clergy is identical with that of the old Babylonians, Assyrians, Phœnicians, Egyptians, and other Pagans of the hoary antiquity.	112
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The “Black Virgins,” so highly revered in certain French cathedrals during the Middle Ages, were basalt figures of Isis.	113
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Donned in the despoiled garments of the victim, the Christian priest anathematizes the latter with rites and ceremonies learned from the Theurgists themselves.	115
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Unable to deny the evident superiority of their enemies’ powers, the Fathers slandered what they feared.	116
No one who has not practiced the ten virtues, which the divine Manu makes incumbent as a duty, can be initiated into the Mysteries.	
Underlying every ancient popular religion was the same Wisdom-doctrine, one and identical, professed and practiced by the initiates of every country, who alone were aware of its existence and importance.	118
The whispered secrets of initiation, when divulged, were punished with death.	118
The Mysteries were instituted pure, and proposed the noblest ends by the worthiest means.	119
Clemens Alexandrinus, with a rancorous bigotry that one might expect from a renegade Neo-Platonist but is astonished to find such enmity in this generally honest and learned Father, stigmatized the Mysteries as indecent and diabolical.	119
The final part of the mystic rites reveals the friendship and interior communion with God.	120
The apocalypse of Proclus is no longer understood by the Christians and is rejected as a “vagary” by the materialists who, in their negation, are less blasphemous and atheistical than many of the reverends and members of the Churches.	121
There is a pervading tone of conscious superiority, a ring of contempt in the treatment of Hindu metaphysics, as though the European mind is alone enlightened enough to polish the rough diamond of the old Sanskrit writers, and separate right from wrong for the benefit of their descendants.	
The Lunar Pitris are our progenitors. They are identical with the Seven Elohim of the Hebrew Bible. They are not the ancestors of the present living men but those of the primitive races of mankind, the spirits of the early human races which preceded ours but which were physically, as well as spiritually, far superior to the modern pigmies.	123
Awesome is the living spectre of a Brahman.	123
The average fakir can never rid himself entirely of the psychological influence exercised on him by his guru.	124
Why the fakir is confined to the lowest degree of initiation.	126
The Pitris must be included with the good genii, the daimons of the Greeks, or the inferior gods of the invisible world.	126
The splendid imagery employed by Proclus and Apuleius in narrating the small portion of the final initiation, throws completely into the shade the plagiaristic tales of the Christian ascetics.	127

Deserved praise of Thomas Taylor, the English Platonist, staunch defender of the ancient faith.

His memory must be dear to every true Platonist, who seeks rather to learn the inner thought of the great philosopher than enjoy the mere external mechanism of his writings. 127

The Virgin Mary paraded on the car of Juggernaut. 129

The body is the prison of the soul, and many Christian Fathers held with Plato the view that the soul is punished through its union with the body. 130

Matron Baubo is the physical body; and the intellectual, as yet pure astral soul, can be ensnared into its new terrestrial prison only by the display of innocent babyhood. 131

Such was the chief object of the Mysteries represented as diabolical by theology, and ridiculed by modern symbologists. 131

Insights to the sublimest part of epopteia.

The Desatir shows the identity of esoteric doctrines with those of the Greek philosophers. 132

The doctrine of the planetary and terrestrial Pitris was revealed entirely in ancient India, as well as now, only at the last moment of initiation, and to the adepts of superior degrees. 133

AUM is the trinity of mortal man on his way to become immortal through the union of his outer self with his inner triune Self. When this trinity, in anticipation of the final triumphant reunion beyond the gates of corporeal death becomes a Unity, then the candidate is allowed, at the moment of initiation, to behold his future Self. 133

Subjective communication with the god-like spirits of those who have preceded us to the silent land of bliss. 134

Man's highest duty (religion) is to acquire the knowledge of his universal self (paramatman) and then, by the annihilation of his worldly self (atman), to experience the infinity of happiness prevalent in Unconscious Immateriality. 135

Man cannot perceive, touch, and converse with pure spirit through any of his bodily senses. Only spirit alone can talk to and see spirit. 135

The visions of seers cannot be induced by drugs. 136

The eccentricities of Socrates and his untimely demise were some of the consequences of untrained mediumship and unguarded moments of "spiritual inspiration."

A deep longing toward our true and real home is legitimate; abuse of it is sorcery, witchcraft, black magic. 137

He who fully recognizes the power of his immortal spirit, and never doubted for one moment its omnipotent protection, has naught to fear. 137

Why initiation has always been shrouded in mystery and secrecy? 137

The four ancient Israeli Initiates (Tanna'im) enter into "the garden of delights." They responsible for part of the Gospel story. 138

It is ignorance which leads to profanation. Men ridicule what they do not understand. 138

It is not alone for the esoteric philosophy that we fight; nor for any modern system of moral philosophy, but for the inalienable right of private judgment, and especially for the ennobling idea of a future life of activity and accountability.

Learned authors are useless because, lacking the true key of interpretation, they see symbols only in their lowest, physical aspect. They have no password to cause the gates of mystery to swing open and, therefore, ancient spiritual philosophy is to them a closed book. 139

Self-doomed is the Romish Church.

True philosophy and divine truth are convertible terms. 140

A religion which dreads the light cannot be a religion based on either truth or philosophy, hence, it must be false. As the dogmas of every religion and sect often differ radically, they cannot be true. And if untrue, what are they? 140

Part 3. The only thing absolutely necessary for man is Truth; and to that, and that alone, must our moral consciousness adapt itself.

Gnostic Basilides was a philosopher devoted to the contemplation of divine things.

On the other hand, the unintelligible dogmas, enforced by Irenæus, Tertullian, and others, are far more heretical than those they accused of apostasy. 142

The fiction and fraud of apostolic succession.

The Church of Rome was consistent in choosing as her titular founder the apostle who thrice denied his master at the moment of danger; and the only one, except Judas, who provoked Christ in such a way as to be addressed as the "Enemy." 144

When frightened at the accusation of the servant of the high priest, Peter thrice denied his master. 145

The only thing absolutely necessary for man is Truth; and to that, and that alone, must our moral consciousness adapt itself.

Some of the extraordinary forgeries of the Fathers of the early centuries are here unmasked for everyone to see. 145

Of whatever else the Christian world can boast, it can hardly claim logic and consistency as its chief virtues. 146

Whosoever else might have built the Church of Rome it was not Peter.

He invented a burning hell and threatened everyone with it; promised miracles, but worked none. 147

The term nazar means to vow or consecrate one's self to the service of God. 148

Zoro-Aster was the Nazar of Ishtar. There is another hypothesis possible, which is that Zoro-Ishtar was the high priest of the Chaldæan worship, a Magian hierophant. 148

The Jewish Scriptures indicate two distinct religions: that of Bacchus-worship under the mask of Jehovah; and that of the Chaldæan initiates to whom belonged some of the Nazars, the Theurgists, and a few of the prophets. 148

The nazars or prophets, as well as the Nazarenes, were an anti-Bacchus caste. 148

Moses was an initiate.

The fable of Aristæus pursuing Eurydice into the woods explained: 149

Aristæus is brutal power pursuing Eurydice, the esoteric doctrine, into the woods where the serpent (emblem of every sun-god, and worshipped under its grosser aspect even by the Jews) kills her; i.e., forces truth to become still more esoteric, and to seek shelter in the underworld (which is not the hell of the theologians). 149

Nazarenes, a term nearly synonymous with Galileans, were a class of Chaldæan Theurgists that existed long ages before Christ. Jesus was a true reforming Nazarene. 151

The Essenes were the converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judæa at one time, since the reign of Ashoka. 152

Jesus cannot strictly be called an Essene, for reasons which we will indicate further on. Neither was he a Nazar, or Nazaria of the older sect. 152

Jesus was inspired by the genius of Mercury. 152

The blunders of the Old Testament are nothing to those of the Gospels.

Jesus preached the philosophy of Buddha-Shakyamuni. 153

His motive was evidently like that of Gautama-Buddha: to benefit humanity at large by producing a religious reform which should give it a religion of pure ethics. 153

Modes and manners of baptism “imported” from India.

The early plebeian Israelites were Canaanites and Phœnicians, with the same worship of the Phallic gods: Bacchus, Baal or Adon, Iacchos — Iao or Jehovah; but even among them there had always been a class of initiated adepts. 155

Baptismal water, fire, and spirit, or Holy Ghost, have all their origin in India. 156

If baptism is the sign of regeneration, and an ordinance instituted by Jesus, why do not Christians now baptize as Jesus did, with the Holy Ghost and with fire, instead of following the custom of the Nazarenes? 157

From time immemorial the prophets of old had been thundering against the baptism of fire as practiced by their neighbours, which imparted the “spirit of prophecy,” or the Holy Ghost. 157

The true, original Christianity, such as was preached by Jesus, is to be found only in the so-called Syrian heresies. Such also was the faith of Paul. 157

The confession of Paul, who worshipped the God of his fathers, is a revelation in itself.

At Byblos, the neophytes as well as the hierophants were, after participating in the Mysteries, obliged to fast and remain in solitude for some time. 158

One orphic hymn calls water the greatest purifier of men and gods. 159

The Essenes were most undoubtedly Buddhist monks. 159

The term Galilean is nearly synonymous with that of Nazarene. 159

A Roman Emperor established the Mysteries of Adonis at the Sacred Cave in Bethlehem. 160

Zoroaster is not a name but a generic term.

Apuleius maintains that it was Zoroaster who instructed Pythagoras. 161

Aristotle states that Zoroaster lived 6,000 years before Plato. 162

Additional notes on the Nazars.

In Hindustani nazar is sight, internal or supernatural vision. 163

The word Zeruana is nowhere to be found in the Avesta, but only in the later Parsi books. It came from the Magians, who composed the Persian sacred caste in the Sassanian period, but were originally Assyrians. 163

The secret doctrines of the Magi, of the pre-Vedic Buddhists, of the hierophants of the Egyptian Thoth or Hermes, and of the adepts of whatever age and nationality, including the Chaldæan Kabbalists and the Jewish Nazars, were identical from the beginning. 163

Zarathustra and his followers had been settled in India before they immigrated into Persia. 163

The old gods, whether Zoroastrian or Vedic, are personifications of the occult powers of nature, the faithful servants of the adepts of secret wisdom.

Buddhism is the doctrine of wisdom-religion, which by many ages antedates the metaphysical philosophy of Siddhartha Shakyamuni. 164

By analogy and a close study of the hidden meaning of their rites and customs, we can now trace the kinship of the Pagan worshippers of Adonis, their neighbours, the Nazarenes, and the Pythagorean Essenes, the healing Therapeutai, the Ebionites, and other followers of the ancient theurgic Mysteries.	165
The chiefs of the Essene communities were Kabbalists and Theurgists.	165
The Essenes were Pythagoreans in all their doctrine and habits.	166
Jesus expressed his thoughts in purely Pythagorean sentences.	166
The descent to Hades signified the inevitable fate of each soul to be united for a time with a terrestrial body. This union, a dark prospect for the soul to find itself imprisoned within the bleak tenement of a body, was considered by all the ancient philosophers, and even by the modern Buddhists, as a punishment.	167
In common with Pythagoras and other hierophant reformers, Jesus divided his teachings into exoteric and esoteric. He also divided his followers into “neophytes,” “brethren,” and the “perfect.”	168
Apocalypse is the production of an initiated Kabbalist.	
The accusations against Jesus of practicing the magic of Egypt were numerous and at one time universal. But we believe that it was the Sadducees and not the Pharisees who crucified him.	169
Like Apuleius, Jesus was accused of witchcraft by the profane.	169
Had posterity been enabled to have several representations of Jesus executed during the first century when the figure, dress, and everyday habits of the Reformer were still fresh in the memory of his contemporaries, perhaps the Christian world would be more Christ-like.	170
The civilized portion of the Pagans, who knew of Jesus and honoured him as a philosopher-adept, placed him on the same level with Pythagoras and Apollonius.	172
If Jesus did wear his hair long, like Samson, parted in the middle of the forehead after the fashion of the Nazarenes, he must have belonged to the sect of the Nazarenes and been called Nazaria for this reason, and not because he was an inhabitant of Nazareth.	172
Permutation, transmigration, metempsychosis.	
The expression “Ye are gods,” which to biblical students is a mere abstraction, has for the Kabbalists a vital significance.	174
The disembodied spirits of the heroes and sages were termed gods by the ancients. Hence, the accusation of polytheism and idolatry on the part of those who were the first to anthropomorphize the holiest and purest abstractions of their forefathers.	175
The hierophants of the Tannaïm could prove the legitimacy of their claims and the plausibility of their doctrines, whereas now, believers must be content with blind faith.	175
The full significance of Christos and its mystic meaning revealed.	
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Basilides, the bright sun of Gnosticism, on Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis.	178
Gnosticism is highly reverential toward deity.	179
We all live under the powerful dominion of phantasy. Everything that is finite is illusion, all that which is infinite is reality, and the only reality.	179
Nature, then, is the infinite illusion of our senses.	180
Christos suffered spiritually for us, and far more acutely than did the illusionary Jesus while his body was being tortured on the cross.	180

Hence, the meaning of the Gnostics who, by saying that “Christos” suffered spiritually for humanity, implied that his Divine Spirit suffered mostly. 181

The ideas of Marcion, the noble Heresiarch.

His high and irreproachable character, his pure religious aspirations and elevated views, were vilified by the Patristic Cerberus. 181

Tertullian and Epiphanius vehemently reproach Marcion by erasing passages from the Gospel of Luke, which never were in Luke at all. 182

What the Fathers fought for was not truth, but their own interpretations and unwarranted assertions. 183

In the days of Marcion two factions divided the primitive Church: The one considering Christianity a mere continuation of the Law, and dwarfing it into an Israelitish institution, a narrow sect of Judaism; the other, representing the glad tidings as the introduction of a new system, applicable to all, and supplanting the Mosaic dispensation of the Law by a universal dispensation of grace. 183

Marcion maintained that the mission of Jesus was to abrogate the Jewish “Lord,” who was opposed to the God and Father of Jesus Christ as matter is to spirit, and impurity to purity. 184

In what particular does the jealous, wrathful, revengeful God of Israel resemble the unknown deity, the God of mercy preached by Jesus? 185

The “Father who is in secret” alone is the God of spirit and purity. To compare Him with the subordinate and capricious Sinaitic Deity is an error. 185

The divine injunctions of Matthew, the living up to which would purify and exalt humanity, are identical with the Ordinances of Manu.

The Hindus taught to return good for evil, but the Jehovistic command was “an eye for an eye” and “a tooth for a tooth.” 188

Jehovah and Bacchus are one the same.

Would Christians still maintain the identity of the “Father” of Jesus and Jehovah, if evidence sufficiently clear could be adduced that the “Lord God” was no other than the Pagan Bacchus, Dionysos? 189

Part 4. Ageless Wisdom is the only religion of reason and free thought, of truth and impartiality, not authority.

The sorely-abused communities compared with the Christian sects, and the Secret Science, its students and champions defended against unjust imputation.

To term them Christians is wholly unwarranted. 191

We will begin with a quick glance at the Ophites and Nazareans, their scions in Syria and Palestine that still exist today under the name of Druzes of Mount Lebanon, and near Basra under that of Mandæans or Disciples of St. John. And we will conclude with a brief survey of the Jesuits, and of that venerable nightmare of the Roman Catholic Church, modern Freemasonry. 191

The encircled cross in Ireland came from the far East with the Phœnician colonists, who erected the Round Towers as symbols of the life-giving and preserving power of man and nature, and of universal life that is produced through suffering and death. For Ireland, like every other nation, once listened to the proponents of Siddhartha-Buddha. 193

As Messenger and Messiah stood in the Jordan, and the elder John was consecrating the younger, the heavens opened and God Himself, in the shape of a dove, descended in a glory upon his Beloved Son. 194

Christianity is on trial, and has been, ever since science felt strong enough to act as Public Prosecutor. 195

Let us begin with the Ophites, the Nazareans, and the modern Druzes of Mount Lebanon.

The scheme of the Ophites varies from the description given by the Fathers, inasmuch as it makes Bythos or depth a female emanation, and assigns her a place answering to that of Pleroma, only in a far superior region; whereas, the Fathers assure us that the Gnostics gave the name of Bythos to the First Cause. 196

The Ophite Serpent, emblem of wisdom and eternity, is androgyne manifesting itself as the double Principle of Good and Evil. 196

The Serpent, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree of Life, are all symbols transplanted from the soil of India. 197

The Nazarene and Gnostic-Ophite Cosmogonies are one and the same. 199

Neither King David nor Solomon recognized either Moses or the law of Moses.

IAΩ is a title of the Supreme Being and belongs partially to the Ineffable Name; but it neither originated with, nor was it the sole property, of the Jews. 201

The Veda bears witness to the early Aryan worship of Dyaus, the Greek Zeus. 202

The First Cause is manifesting itself in its creatures as a hermaphrodite deity: the male principle is the vivifying invisible spirit; the female, mother nature. The two are the Alpha and Omega, moved by the Hierarchy of Compassion, making IAΩ the trilateral name of the mystery-God, a breath of life. 204

But Yaho IAΩ, the supreme deity of the Semites, is not the Lord God of other nations. 204

The numerals of Pythagoras are hieroglyphical symbols, by means whereof he explained ideas concerning the nature of things. The first is I, and the final Ω-mega. 205

The holiest of the pyramidal temples among the Hindus are those of Jagannath, the Lord of the World. 206

It is only by associating Yaho with the Masoretic points that the later Rabbins succeeded in making Jehovah read Adonai, or "Lord." 206

The future Deity of the sons of Israel calls out from the burning bush, gives His name as "I am that I am," and specifies carefully that He is the "Lord God of the Hebrews," not of the other nations. 206

The scapegoat of Israel was a sacrificial martyr, symbol of the greatest mystery in heaven and on earth, the "fall" into generation. 208

Death to the Life-giver and life to the Death-dealer, are the two opposing forces of Evil and Good. 208

Is it an act of virtue to deceive and lie, particularly when by such means the interests of the Church might be promoted?

Eusebius, Irenæus, Theophilus, Cyril, Athanasius, and a host of other canonized "saints," were followed by an army of pious assassins who had improved upon the system of deceit by proclaiming that it was lawful even to kill, when by murder they could enforce the new religion. 209

Constantine, the Emperor of Darkness, drowned his wife in boiling water, butchered his little nephew, murdered with his own pious hand two of his brothers-in-law, killed his own son Crispus, bled to death several men and women, and smothered in a well an old monk. What a record! 209

How determined Irenæus was to crush Truth and build up a Church of his own on the mangled remains of the seven primitive churches mentioned in the Revelation, may be

inferred from his quarrel with Ptolemæus. Neither falsehood, nor sophistry, was too much for the bishop of Lugdunum. 210

The origins of Christianity and the sources from which Jesus derived his own ideas of God and Humanity.

The mystic Magian religion, also known as Machagistia, is the most uncorrupted form of worship in things divine. Later, the mysteries of the Chaldæan sanctuaries were added to it by one of the Zoroasters and Darius Hystaspes, a hierophant and initiated Magian himself. 211

Secrecy was preserved by the one and supreme great lodge as well as other sub-lodges. The mysterious Druzes of Mount Lebanon are the descendants of all these. 212

Whether its affiliates are called by an Egyptian, Hindu, or Persian name, it matters not. Persons belonging to one of these sub-brotherhoods have been met by trustworthy, and not unknown persons, besides the present writer. 213

Kenneth Mackenzie on the self-effacing Hermetic Brothers of Egypt. 213

The sub-brotherhood of the Pitris in India is even more arcane than the Hermetic Brothers. 214

Who are the Druzes of Mount Lebanon?

Well over 80,000 Syrian Druzes are scattered from the plain east of Damascus to the western coast. There never was a case of an initiated Druze becoming a Christian. 214

These people do not accept the name of Druzes but regard the appellation as an insult. They call themselves the “disciples of H’amsa,” their Messiah, who came to them in the eleventh century from the “Land of the Word of God.” 214

The characteristic dogma of the Druzes is absolute unity with God. He is the essence of life and, although incomprehensible and invisible, He is to be known through occasional manifestations in human form. 215

Chastity, honesty, meekness, and mercy, are the four theological virtues of every Druze.

Murder, theft, cruelty, covetousness, and slander are the five main sins. 217

H’amsa, like Jesus, was a mortal man, and yet H’amsa and Christos are synonymous terms as to their inner meaning: they stand for Nous, the divine and higher soul of man, his Spirit. 218

An American Initiate writes about the Druzes of Mount Lebanon.

The great “Mother Lodge” and its branches. 222

Initiation among the Baktashi Dervishes, who often initiated the Janizaries. 223

The first self-made adept initiated but a select few, and kept silence with the multitudes. 224

We cannot attain the Kingdom of Heaven unless we unite ourselves indissolubly with our Rex Lucis, the Lord of Splendour and Light, our Immortal God.

Buddhistic philosophy does not teach annihilation. Nirvana implies impersonal life-eternal in Spirit, not in Soul. But even this actionless state is maya-illusion. 225

It was the Christian missionaries in China and India, who first started this falsehood about Nirvana. 225

Students of Esoteric Philosophy see in the Nazarene Sage a Bodhisattva with the spirit of Buddha Himself in Him.

Gautama Buddha was moved by that generous feeling which locks the whole humanity within one embrace, inviting the poor, the lame, and the blind to the King’s festival table, from which he excluded those who had hitherto sat alone, in haughty seclusion. 226

All this he did six centuries before another reformer, as noble and as loving, though less favoured by opportunity, in another land. If both, aware of the great danger of furnishing an uncultivated populace with the double-edged weapon of knowledge which gives power, left the innermost corner of the sanctuary in the profoundest shade, who that is acquainted with human nature can blame them for it? But while one was actuated by prudence, the other was forced into such a course.	226
Why did the Master recommended to his mendicants the cultivation of the four degrees of Dhyana?	227
Eastern mystics abide by strict rules of chastity.	
Except a few impartial archæologists, who trace a direct Buddhistic element in Gnosticism, as in all those early short-lived sects, we know of very few authors who, in writing upon primitive Christianity, have accorded to the question its due importance.	228
Philanthropist by nature, Gautama-Buddha's ideas were developed and matured while under the tuition of Tirthankara, the famous guru of the Jaina sect.	229
It is curious that three dissenting and inimical religions, Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Jainism, should agree so perfectly in their traditions and chronology, as to Buddhism.	229
There is a perfect identity of philosophical thought and popular rites between the Jainas and the Buddhists.	229
If there were no Christians, there were Chrēstians long before the era of Christianity; and the Essenes belonged to the latter as well as to all other initiated brotherhoods, without even mentioning the Krishna-ites of India.	230
The esoteric significance of the Greek letter Iota, demonstrates to a Kabbalist that Jesus belonged to the Freemasonry of those days.	231
Christianity is fraudulent through and through.	
The myths of "miraculous," immaculate conception debunked.	232
Even the annunciation by an angel to Joseph "in a dream," the Christians copied from the message of Apollo to Ariston, Perictione's husband, that the child to be born from her was the offspring of that god.	232
Times have changed now, and even the once all-powerful clergy have to either bridle their tongues, or prove their slanderous accusations.	232
Irenæus did not furnish one single valid proof of the claims that he so audaciously advanced against every Gnostic sect which had the temerity to claim the right to think for itself, and who resorted to endless forgeries. He gives authority neither for his dates nor his assertions.	233
This Smyrniote worthy has not even the brutal but sincere faith of Tertullian, for he contradicts himself at every step, and supports his claims solely on acute sophistry.	233
Eusebius, another champion for the propagation of Apostolic Succession, was attacked by George Syncellus for falsifying the Egyptian chronology.	234
Nine reasons for rejecting a preposterous incongruity by Josephus, supported by Renan.	235
Rough, rude, and brutal was Tertullian, the patristic firebrand.	236
Thus the whole pyramid of Roman Catholic dogmas rests not upon proof, but upon assumption.	236
What is the difference between a wife and a virgin? — other than the obvious one?	237
Men never forgive or relent toward those whom they injure. We hate our victims in proportion to the harm we do them.	
If the Templars were accused of applying the "holy kiss" to the root of Baphomet's tail, St. Augustine allowed his community to go somewhat astray from the primitive way of administering the "holy kiss" at the feast of the Eucharist.	238

Wherever there lurks a true and sincere religious feeling, there is no room for worldly details!	238
The so-called heretics are accused of crimes in which the Church has more or less openly indulged.	239
Just look at the obscene bas-reliefs on the doors of St. Peter's Cathedral!	240
There never was a great religious reform that was not pure at the beginning.	
Nearly everything in Christianity is mere baggage brought from the Pagan Mysteries.	241
But the Church can claim one invention as thoroughly original with her, namely, the doctrine of eternal damnation, and one custom — that of the anathema.	241
Even primitive Christian art is nothing but Pagan art in its decay, or in its lower departments.	242
And, were Christianity not composed of "secret communities" from the start, history would have more facts to record of its founder and disciples than it has.	242
Jesus was totally unknown to his century.	
Forcing upon Jesus four gospels, in which there is not a single narrative, sentence, or peculiar expression, whose parallel may not be found in some older doctrine or philosophy, is a poor compliment paid to the Supreme.	244
We need not be frightened, if we discover traces of truth, traces even of Christian truth, among the sages and lawgivers of other nations.	245
After reading the following philosophical aphorisms, who can believe that Jesus and Paul had never read the Grecian and Indian philosophers?	245
Drop out from Christianity the personality of Jesus, so sublime, because of its unparalleled simplicity, and what remains? History and comparative theology echo back the melancholy answer, "A crumbling skeleton formed of the oldest Pagan myths!"	246
While the mythical birth and life of Jesus are a faithful copy of those of the Brahmanical Krishna, his historical character of a religious reformer in Palestine is the true type of Buddha in India.	
What the Nazarene did as a consequence of his humble birth and position, Buddha did as a voluntary penance.	247
The most important element of Buddhist reform has always been its social and moral code, one of the most perfect which the world has ever known, not just its metaphysical theories.	247
The similar lives of Apollonius, Jesus, and Buddha.	
Apollonius was the friend of kings and moved with the aristocracy, while Jesus, representing the people, "had nowhere to lay his head."	249
But like Buddha and Jesus, Apollonius was the uncompromising enemy of all outward show of piety, all display of useless religious ceremonies and hypocrisy.	249
The calumnies set afloat against Apollonius, were as numerous as they were false.	250
The groundwork of the Eclectic School was identical with the doctrines of the Yogins, the Hindu mystics, and the earlier Buddhism of the disciples of Gautama.	250
Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire on the two Christs.	251
Gautama Buddha is the perfect model of all the virtues he preaches: his abnegation, his charity, his unalterable sweetness of disposition, do not fail him for one instant.	251
He who lives for humanity does even more than him who dies for it.	252

It is only through the doctrines of Pythagoras, Confucius, and Plato, that we can comprehend the idea which underlies the term “Father” in the New Testament.

Plato on Humanity’s First Root-Race, the Astral Sons of Yoga, self-existent and self-born. 253

Neither flood nor fire could destroy them. They disappeared in the Second Race without either begetting it, procreating it, or dying. 253

Abbé Huc was struck off the list of missionaries at Rome after his book of travels was published, for pointing out the similarities between the Buddhist and Roman Catholic ceremonials. 254

Indian ascetics have no sin of the flesh to be conscious of and, therefore, are not ashamed of their nakedness. 255

A priest knows himself to be an impostor, unless he be a fool, or have been taught to lie from boyhood. 255



Preface to *Isis Unveiled*, Part II, a critical dissection of ecclesiastical theology.¹

From H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, PREFACE, pp. ii-iii.

Were it possible, we would keep this work out of the hands of many Christians whom its perusal would not benefit, and for whom it was not written. We allude to those whose faith in their respective churches is pure and sincere, and those whose sinless lives reflect the glorious example of that Prophet of Nazareth, by whose mouth the spirit of truth spake loudly to humanity. Such there have been at all times. History preserves the names of many as heroes, philosophers, philanthropists, martyrs, and holy men and women; but how many more have lived and died, unknown but to their intimate acquaintance, unblessed but by their humble beneficiaries! These have ennobled Christianity, but would have shed the same lustre upon any other faith they might have professed — for they were higher than their creed. The benevolence of Peter Cooper and Elizabeth Thompson, of America, who are not orthodox Christians, is no less Christ-like than that of the Baroness Angela Burdett-Coutts, of England, who is one. And yet, in comparison with the millions who have been accounted Christians, such have always formed a small minority. They are to be found at this day, in pulpit and pew, in palace and cottage; but the increasing materialism, worldliness and hypocrisy are fast diminishing their proportionate number. Their charity, and simple, child-like faith in the infallibility of their *Bible*, their dogmas, and their clergy, bring into full activity all the virtues that are implanted in our common nature. We have personally known such God-fearing priests and clergymen, and we have always avoided debate with them, lest we might be guilty of the cruelty of hurting their feelings; nor would we rob a single layman of his blind confidence, if it alone made possible for him holy living and serene dying.

An analysis of religious beliefs in general, this volume is in particular directed against theological Christianity, the chief opponent of free thought. It contains not one word against the pure teachings of Jesus, but unsparingly denounces their debasement into pernicious ecclesiastical systems that are ruinous to man's faith in his immortality and his God, and subversive of all moral restraint.

We cast our gauntlet at the dogmatic theologians who would enslave both history and science; and especially at the Vatican, whose despotic pretensions have become hateful to the greater portion of enlightened Christendom. The clergy apart, none but the logician, the investigator, the dauntless explorer should meddle with books like this. Such delvers after truth have the courage of their opinions.

¹ [Note 1 by Boris de Zirkoff: There exists some evidence that this brief Preface to Vol. II of *Isis Unveiled* was, possibly, partly written by Dr. Alexander Wilder, and most likely corrected or altered by H.P. Blavatsky herself. In her letter to Dr. Wilder, dated December 6th, 1876, she says:

My dear Doctor, can you do me a favour to write me half a page or so of a "Profession of Faith," to insert in the first page or pages of Part II? Just to say briefly and eloquently that it is not against Christ or the *Christ*-religion, that I battle. Neither do I battle against any *sincere, true* religion, but against theology and Pagan Catholicism. If you write me this I will know how to make variations on this theme without becoming guilty of false notes in your eyes and the sight of Bouton. Please do; you can do in three minutes . . .

Part 1.

Every Christian dogma has its origin in a heathen rite

From H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, ch. 1: THE CHURCH: WHERE IS IT?, pp. 1-54. Edited and typographically enhanced by Philaletheians UK.

Yea, the time cometh, that whomsoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service.

— *John* xvi, 2

Let him be ANATHEMA . . . who shall say that human Sciences ought to be pursued in such a spirit of freedom that one may be allowed to hold as true their assertions even when opposed to revealed doctrines.

— Ecumenical Council of 1870

Gloucester: The Church! Where is it?

— SHAKESPEARE, *King Henry VI*, Part I, Act 1, Scene i, line 33

In the United States of America, sixty thousand (60,428) men are paid salaries to teach the Science of God and His relations to His creatures.

These men contract to impart to us the knowledge which treats of the existence, character, and attributes of our Creator; His laws and government; the doctrines we are to believe and the duties we are to practice. Five thousand (5,141) of them,¹ with the prospect of 1273 theological students to help them in time, teach this science according to a formula prescribed by the Bishop of Rome, to five million people. Fifty-five thousand (55,287) local and travelling ministers, representing fifteen different denominations,² each contradicting the other upon more or less vital theological questions, instruct, in their respective doctrines, thirty-three million (33,500,000) other persons. Many of these teach according to the canons of the cis-Atlantic branch of an establishment which acknowledges a daughter of the late Duke of Kent as its spiritual [2] head. There are many hundred thousand Jews; some thousands of Orientals of all kinds; and a very few who belong to the Greek Church. A man at Salt Lake City, with nineteen wives and more than one hundred children and grandchildren, is the supreme spiritual ruler over ninety thousand people, who believe that he is in frequent intercourse with the gods — for the Mormons are Polytheists as well as Polygamists, and their chief god is represented as living in a planet they call Kolob.

The God of the Unitarians is a bachelor; the Deity of the Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, and the other orthodox Protestant sects, a spouseless Father with one Son, who is identical with Himself. In the attempt to outvie each other in

¹ These figures are copied from the *Religious Statistics of the United States for the year 1871*.

² These are: The *Baptists*, *Congregationalists*, *Episcopalians*, *Northern Methodists*, *Southern Methodists*, *Methodists* various, *Northern Presbyterians*, *Southern Presbyterians*, *United Presbyterians*, *United Brethren*, *Brethren in Christ*, *Reformed Dutch*, *Reformed German*, *Reformed Presbyterians*, *Cumberland Presbyterians*.

the erection of their sixty-two thousand and odd churches, prayer-houses, and meeting-halls in which to teach these conflicting theological doctrines, \$354,485,581 have been spent. The value of the Protestant parsonages alone, in which are sheltered the disputants and their families, is roughly calculated to approximate \$54,115,297. Sixteen million (\$16,179,387) dollars, are, moreover, contributed every year for current expenses of the Protestant denominations only. One Presbyterian church in New York cost a round million; a Catholic altar alone, one-fourth as much!

What is truth? Where is it to be searched for amid this multitude of warring sects? Each claims to be based upon divine revelation, and each to have the keys of the celestial gates.

We will not mention the multitude of smaller sects, communities, and extravagantly original little heresies in this country which spring up one year to die out the next, like so many spores of fungi after a rainy day. We will not even stop to consider the alleged millions of Spiritualists;¹ for the majority lack the courage to break away from their respective religious denominations. These are the backdoor Nicodemuses.

And now, with Pilate, let us inquire, “What is truth?” Where is it to be searched for amid this multitude of warring sects? Each claims to be based upon divine revelation, and each to have the keys of the celestial gates. Are any in possession of this rare truth? Or, must we exclaim with the Buddhist philosopher,

There is but one truth on earth, and it is unchangeable: and this is — that there is *no* truth on it!

Though we have no disposition whatever to trench upon the ground that has been so exhaustively gleaned by those learned scholars who have shown that every Christian dogma has its origin in a heathen rite, still the facts which they have exhumed, since the enfranchisement of science, will lose nothing by repetition. Besides, we propose to examine these facts from a different and perhaps rather novel point of view: that of the old philosophies as esoterically understood. These we have barely glanced at in our first volume. We will use them as the standard by which to compare Christian dogmas and miracles with the doctrines and phenomena of ancient magic, and the modern “New Dispensation,” as Spiritualism is called by its votaries. Since the materialists deny the [3] phenomena without investigation, and since the theologians in admitting them offer us the poor choice of two palpable absurdities — the Devil and miracles — we can lose little by applying to the Theurgists, and they may actually help us to throw a great light upon a very dark subject.

Society seems to have been ever balancing itself upon one leg, on an unseen tightrope stretched from our visible universe into the invisible one; uncertain whether the end hooked on faith in the latter might not suddenly break, and hurl it into final annihilation.

Professor A. Butleroff, of the Imperial University of St. Petersburg, remarks in a recent pamphlet, entitled *Mediumistic Manifestations*, as follows:

Let the facts [of modern spiritualism] belong if you will to the number of those which were more or less known by the ancients; let them be identical with

¹ [See “Spiritualism and Spiritism,” in our Confusing Words Series — ED. PHIL.]

those which in the dark ages gave importance to the office of Egyptian priest or Roman augur; let them even furnish the basis of the sorcery of our Siberian Shaman; . . . let them be all these, and, if they are *real facts*, it is no business of ours. All the facts in nature *belong to science*, and every addition to the store of science enriches instead of impoverishing her. If humanity has once admitted a truth, and then in the blindness of self-conceit denied it, to return to its realization is a step forward and not backward.

Since the day that modern science gave what may be considered the death-blow to dogmatic theology, by assuming the ground that religion was full of mystery, and mystery is unscientific, the mental state of the educated class has presented a curious aspect. Society seems from that time to have been ever balancing itself upon one leg, on an unseen tightrope stretched from our visible universe into the invisible one; uncertain whether the end hooked on faith in the latter might not suddenly break, and hurl it into final annihilation.

The great body of nominal Christians may be divided into three unequal portions: materialists, spiritualists, and Christians proper. The materialists and spiritualists make common cause against the hierarchical pretensions of the clergy; who, in retaliation, denounce both with equal acerbity. The materialists are as little in harmony as the Christian sects themselves — the Comtists, or, as they call themselves, the positivists, being despised and hated to the last degree by the schools of thinkers, one of which Maudsley honourably represents in England. Positivism, be it remembered, is that “religion” of the future about whose founder even Huxley has made himself wrathful in his famous lecture, *The Physical Basis of Life*; and Maudsley felt obliged, in behalf of modern science, to express himself thus:

It is no wonder that scientific men should be anxious to disclaim Comte as their law-giver, and to protest against such a king being set up to reign over them. Not conscious of any personal obligation to his writings — conscious how much, in some respects, he has misrepresented the spirit and pretensions of science — they repudiate the allegiance which his enthusiastic disciples would force upon them, and which popular opinion is fast coming to think a natural one. They do [4] well in thus making a timely assertion of independence; for if it be not done soon, it will soon be too late to be done well.¹

When a materialistic doctrine is repudiated so strongly by two such materialists as Huxley and Maudsley, then we must think indeed that it is absurdity itself.

Among Christians there is nothing but dissension. Their various churches represent every degree of religious belief, from the omnivorous credulity of blind faith to a condescending and high-toned deference to the Deity which thinly masks an evident conviction of their own deific wisdom. All these sects believe more or less in the immortality of the soul. Some admit the intercourse between the two worlds as a fact; some entertain the opinion as a sentiment; some positively deny it; and only a few maintain an attitude of attention and expectancy.

¹ Henry Maudsley, *Body and Mind*; lecture on “The Limits of Philosophical Inquiry.”

Impatient of restraint, longing for the return of the dark ages, the Romish Church frowns at the *diabolical* manifestations, and indicates what she would do to their champions had she but the power of old. Were it not for the self-evident fact that she herself is placed by science on trial, and that she is handcuffed, she would be ready at a moment's notice to repeat in the nineteenth century the revolting scenes of former days. As to the Protestant clergy, so furious is their common hatred toward spiritualism, that as a secular paper very truly remarks:

They seem willing to undermine the public faith in all the spiritual phenomena of the past, as recorded in the *Bible*, if they can only see the pestilent modern heresy stabbed to the heart.¹

Christian symbols pervaded by heathen phallicism.

Summoning back the long-forgotten memories of the Mosaic laws, the Romish Church claims the monopoly of miracles, and of the right to sit in judgment over them, as being the sole heir thereto by direct inheritance. The Old Testament, exiled by Colenso, his predecessors and contemporaries, is recalled from its banishment. The prophets, whom his Holiness the Pope condescends at last to place, if not on the same level with himself, at least at a less respectful distance,² are dusted and cleaned. The memory of all the diabolical abracadabra is evoked anew. The blasphemous *horrors* perpetrated by Paganism, its [5] phallic worship, thaumaturgical wonders wrought by Satan, human sacrifices, incantations, witchcraft, magic, and sorcery are recalled and DEMONISM is confronted with *spiritualism* for mutual recognition and identification. Our modern demonologists conveniently overlook a few insignificant details, among which is the undeniable presence of heathen phallicism in the Christian symbols. A strong spiritual element of this worship may be easily demonstrated in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God; and a physical element equally proved in the fetish-worship of the holy *limbs* of Sts. Cosmo and Damiano, at Isernia, near Naples; a successful traffic in which *ex-voto* in wax was carried on by the clergy, annually, until barely a half century ago.³



¹ Boston *Sunday Herald*, November 5th, 1876

² See the self-glorification of the present Pope in the work entitled, *Speeches of Pope Pius IX*, by Don Pascale de Francis; and the famous pamphlet of that name by the Rt. Hon. W.E. Gladstone. The latter quotes from the work named the following sentence pronounced by the Pope:

“My wish is that all governments should know that I am speaking in this strain. . . . And I have *the right to speak, even more than Nathan the prophet to David the king, and a great deal more than Ambrose had to Theodosius*”!! [p. 146]

³ See Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, and other works.

Neither Catholics nor Protestants have a right to talk of the “indecent forms” of heathen monuments so long as they ornament their own churches with the symbols of the Lingam and Yoni, and even write the laws of their God upon them.

We find it rather unwise on the part of Catholic writers to pour out their vials of wrath in such sentences as these:

In a multitude of pagodas, the phallic stone, ever and always assuming, like the Grecian *baitylos*, the brutally indecent form of the *lingam* . . . the Mahā Deva.¹

Before casting slurs on a symbol whose profound metaphysical meaning is too much for the modern champions of that religion of sensualism *par excellence*, Roman Catholicism, to grasp, they are in duty bound to destroy their oldest churches, and change the form of the cupolas of their own temples. The Mahādeva of Elephanta, the Round Tower of Bhagalpur, the minarets of Islam — either rounded or pointed — are the originals of the *Campanile* column of San Marco, at Venice, of the Rochester Cathedral, and of the modern Duomo of Milan. All of these steeples, turrets, domes, and Christian temples, are the reproductions of the primitive idea of the *lithos*, the upright phallus. Says the author of *The Rosicrucians*,

The western tower of St. Paul’s Cathedral, London, is one of the double *lithoi* placed always in front of every temple, Christian as well as heathen.

Moreover, in all Christian Churches,

. . . particularly in Protestant churches, where they figure most conspicuously, the two tables of stone of the Mosaic Dispensation are placed over the altar, side by side, as a united stone, the tops of which are rounded. . . . The right stone is *masculine*, the left *feminine*.²

Therefore neither Catholics nor Protestants have a right to talk of the “indecent forms” of heathen monuments so long as they ornament their own churches with the symbols of the *Lingam* and *Yoni*, and even write the laws of their God upon them.

The torrents of human blood shed by the Vatican are unparalleled in the annals of Paganism.

Another detail not redounding very particularly to the honour of the Christian clergy might be recalled in the word Inquisition. The torrents [6] of human blood shed by this *Christian* institution, and the number of its human sacrifices, are unparalleled in the annals of Paganism. Another still more prominent feature in which the clergy surpassed their masters, the “heathen,” is *sorcery*. Certainly in no Pagan temple was black magic, in its real and true sense, more practiced than in the Vatican. While strongly supporting exorcism as an important source of revenue, they neglected magic as little as the ancient heathen. It is easy to prove that the *sortilegium*, or sorcery, was widely practiced among the clergy and monks so late as the last century, and is practiced occasionally even now.

¹ Henri Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *Les hauts phénomènes de la magie, précédés du spiritisme antique*, p. 24

² Hargrave Jennings, *The Rosicrucians*, 1870, pp. 231, 239

Anathematizing every manifestation of occult nature outside the precincts of the Church, the clergy — notwithstanding proofs to the contrary — call it “the work of Satan,” “the snares of the fallen angels,” who “rush in and out from the bottomless pit,” mentioned by John in his kabbalistic *Revelation*, “from whence arises a smoke as the smoke of a great furnace.” “*Intoxicated by its fumes, around this pit are daily gathering millions of Spiritualists, to worship at ‘the Abyss of Baal.’*”

More than ever arrogant, stubborn, and despotic, now that she has been nearly upset by modern research, not daring to interfere with the powerful champions of science, the Latin Church revenges herself upon the unpopular phenomena. A despot without a victim, is a word void of sense; a power which neglects to assert itself through outward, well-calculated effects, risks being doubted in the end. The Church has no intention to fall into the oblivion of the ancient myths, or to suffer her authority to be too closely questioned. Hence she pursues, as well as the times permit, her traditional policy. Lamenting the enforced extinction of her ally, the Holy Inquisition, she makes a virtue of necessity. The only victims now within reach are the Spiritists of France. Recent events have shown that the meek spouse of Christ never disdains to retaliate on helpless victims.

Examples of papal vituperation.

Having successfully performed her part of *deus ex machina* from behind the French Bench, which has not scrupled to disgrace itself for her, the Church of Rome sets to work and shows in the year 1876 what she can do. From the whirling tables and dancing pencils of profane Spiritualism, the Christian world is warned to turn to the divine “miracles” of Lourdes. Meanwhile, the ecclesiastical authorities utilize their time in arranging for other more easy triumphs, calculated to scare the superstitious out of their senses. So, acting under orders, the clergy hurl dramatic, if not very impressive anathemas from every Catholic diocese; threaten right and left; excommunicate and curse. [7] Perceiving, finally, that her thunderbolts directed even against crowned heads fall about as harmlessly as the Jupitorean lightnings of Offenbach’s *Calchas*, Rome turns about in powerless fury against the victimized *protégés* of the Emperor of Russia — the unfortunate Bulgarians and Serbians. Undisturbed by evidence and sarcasm, un baffled by proof, “the lamb of the Vatican” impartially divides his wrath between the liberals of Italy, “the impious whose breath has the stench of the sepulchre,”¹ the “schismatic Russian *Sarmates*,” and the heretics and spiritualists, “who worship at the bottomless pit where the great Dragon lies in wait.”

Mr. Gladstone went to the trouble of making a catalogue of what he terms the “flowers of speech,” disseminated through these Papal discourses. Let us cull a few of the chosen terms used by this vicegerent of Him who said that, “whosoever shall say *Thou fool*, shall be in danger of hell-fire.” They are selected from authentic discourses. Those who oppose the Pope are

. . . wolves, Pharisees, thieves, liars, hypocrites, dropsical children of Satan, sons of perdition, of sin, and corruption, satellites of Satan in human flesh,

¹ Don Pasquale di Franciscis, *Discorsi del Sommo Pontefice Pio IX*, Part I, p. 341

monsters of hell, demons incarnate, stinking corpses, men issued from the pits of hell, traitors and Judases led by the spirit of hell; children of the deepest pits of hell, etc., etc.

The whole piously collected and published by Don Pasquale di Franciscis, whom Gladstone has, with perfect propriety, termed, “an accomplished professor of *flunk-eyism* in things spiritual.”¹

Since his Holiness the Pope has such a rich vocabulary of invectives at his command, why wonder that the Bishop of Toulouse did not scruple to utter the most undignified falsehoods about the Protestants and Spiritualists of America — people doubly odious to a Catholic — in his address to his diocese. He remarks:

Nothing is more common in an era of unbelief than to see a *false revelation substitute itself for the true one*, and minds neglect the teachings of the Holy Church, to devote themselves to the study of divination and the occult sciences.

With a fine episcopal contempt for statistics, and strangely confounding in his memory the audiences of the revivalists, Moody and Sankey, and the patrons of darkened séance-rooms, he [the Bishop of Toulouse] utters the unwarranted and fallacious assertion that “it has been proven that Spiritualism, in the United States, has caused one-sixth of all the cases of suicide and insanity.” He says that it is not possible that the spirits “teach either an exact science, because they are lying demons, or a useful science, because the character [8] of the word of Satan, like Satan himself, is sterile.” He warns his dear *collaborateurs*, that “the writings in favour of Spiritualism are under the ban”; and he advises them to let it be known that “to frequent spiritual circles with the intention of accepting the doctrine, is to apostatize from the Holy Church, and assume the risk of excommunication”; finally, says he, “Publish the fact that the teaching of no spirit should prevail against that of the pulpit of Peter, which is the teaching of the Spirit of God Himself”!!

Aware of the many false teachings attributed by the Roman Church to the Creator, we prefer disbelieving the latter assertion. The famous Catholic theologian, Tillemont, assures us in his work that

. . . all the illustrious Pagans are condemned to the eternal torments of hell, *because* they lived before the time of Jesus, and, therefore, could not be benefited by the redemption!!²

He also assures us that the Virgin Mary personally testified to this truth over her own signature in a letter to a saint. Therefore, this is also a revelation — “the Spirit of God Himself” teaching such charitable doctrines.

We have also read with great advantage the topographical descriptions of *Hell and Purgatory* in the celebrated treatise under that name by a Jesuit, the Cardinal Bel-

¹ W.E. Gladstone, *Rome and the Newest Fashions in Religion*, p. 134 (Speeches of Pius IX), London 1875

² [Louis-Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles, justifiés par les citations des auteurs originaux avec une chronologie où l'on fait un abrégé de l'histoire ecclésiastique et avec des notes pour éclaircir les difficultés des faits et de la chronologie*, (16-vols.), 1693–1712]

larmine.¹ A critic found that the author, who gives the description from a *divine* vision with which he was favoured, “appears to possess all the knowledge of a land-measurer” about the secret tracts and formidable divisions of the “bottomless pit.” Justin Martyr having actually committed to paper the heretical thought that after all Socrates might not be altogether fixed in hell,² his Benedictine editor criticises this too benevolent father very severely. Whoever doubts the Christian charity of the Church of Rome in this direction is invited to peruse the *Censure* of the Sorbonne, on Marmontel’s *Bélisaire*. The *odium theologicum* blazes in it on the dark sky of orthodox theology like an aurora borealis — the precursor of God’s wrath, according to the teaching of certain mediæval divines.



Catholic blasphemy against heaven.

We have attempted in the first part of this work to show, by historical examples, how completely men of science have deserved the stinging sarcasm of the late Professor de Morgan, who remarked of them that “they wear the priest’s cast-off garb, dyed to escape detection.” The Christian clergy are, in like manner, attired in the cast-off garb of the *heathen* priesthood; acting diametrically in opposition to their *God’s* moral precepts, but nevertheless, sitting in judgment over the whole world.

When dying on the cross, the martyred Man of Sorrows forgave his enemies. His last words were a prayer in their behalf. He taught his disciples to curse not, but to bless, even their foes. [9] But the heirs of St. Peter, the self-constituted representatives on earth of that same meek Jesus, unhesitatingly curse whoever resists their despotic will. Besides, was not the “Son” long since crowded by them into the background? They make their obeisance only to the Dowager Mother, for — according to their teaching — again through “the direct Spirit of God,” she alone acts as a mediatrix. The Ecumenical Council of 1870 embodied the teaching into a dogma, to disbelieve which is to be doomed forever to the “bottomless pit.” The work of Don Pasquale di Franciscis is positive on that point; for he tells us that, as the Queen of Heaven owes to the present Pope “the finest gem in her coronet,” since he has conferred on her the unexpected honour of becoming suddenly immaculate, there is nothing she cannot obtain from her Son for “her Church.”³

Some years ago, certain travellers saw in Bari, Italy, a statue of the Madonna, arrayed in a flounced pink skirt over a swelling *crinoline!* Pious pilgrims who may be anxious to examine the regulation wardrobe of their God’s mother may do so by going to Southern Italy, Spain, and Catholic North and South America. The Madonna of Bari must still be there — between two vineyards and a *locanda* (gin-shop). When last seen, a half-successful attempt had been made to clothe the infant Jesus; they had covered his legs with a pair of dirty, scallop-edged pantaloons. An English travel-

¹ [De loco purgatorii, in his *Disputationes de Controversiis Christianæ Fidei adversus hujus temporis Hæreticos*. Cf. his *Opera Omnia*, Roan 1619.]

² [Cf. *1st Apology*, ch. xlvi.]

³ Vide Don Pasquale, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, pp. 325, 394; Gladstone, *op. cit.*, John William Draper, *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 1875, and other works.

ler having presented the “Mediatrrix” with a green silk parasol, the grateful population of the *contadini*,¹ accompanied by the village-priest, went in procession to the spot. They managed to stick the sunshade, opened, between the infant’s back and the arm of the Virgin which embraced him. The scene and ceremony were both solemn and highly refreshing to our religious feelings. For there stood the image of the goddess in its niche, surrounded with a row of ever-burning lamps, the flames of which, flickering in the breeze, infect God’s pure air with an offensive smell of olive oil. The Mother and Son truly represent the two most conspicuous idols of *Monotheistic* Christianity!

For a companion to the idol of the poor *contadini* of Bari, go to the rich city of Rio Janeiro. In the Church of the Duomo del Candelaria, in a long hall running along one side of the church, there might be seen, a few years ago, another Madonna. Along the walls of the hall there is a line of saints, each standing on a contribution-box, which thus forms a fit pedestal. In the centre of this line, under a gorgeously rich canopy of blue silk, is exhibited the Virgin Mary leaning on the arm of Christ. “Our Lady” is arrayed in a very *décolleté* blue satin dress with short [10] sleeves, showing, to great advantage, a snow-white, exquisitely-moulded neck, shoulders, and arms. The skirt equally of blue satin with an overskirt of rich lace and gauze puffs, is as short as that of a ballet-dancer; hardly reaching the knee, it exhibits a pair of finely-shaped legs covered with flesh coloured silk tights, and blue satin French boots with very high red heels! The blonde hair of this “Mother of God” is arranged in the latest fashion, with a voluminous *chignon* and curls. As she leans on her Son’s arm, her face is lovingly turned toward her Only-Begotten, whose dress and attitude are equally worthy of admiration. Christ wears an evening dress-coat, with swallow-tail, black trousers, and low cut white vest; varnished boots, and white kid gloves, *over one of which* sparkles a rich diamond ring, worth many thousands we must suppose — a precious Brazilian jewel. Above this body of a modern Portuguese dandy, is a head with the hair parted in the middle; a sad and solemn face, and eyes whose patient look seems to reflect all the bitterness of this last insult flung at the majesty of the Crucified.²

The Egyptian Isis was also represented as a Virgin Mother by her devotees, and as holding her infant son, Horus, in her arms. In some statues and *basso-relievos*, when she appears alone she is either completely nude or veiled from head to foot. But in the Mysteries, in common with nearly every other goddess, she is entirely veiled from head to foot, as a symbol of a mother’s chastity. It would not do us any harm were we to borrow from the ancients some of the poetic sentiment in their religions, and the innate veneration they entertained for *their* symbols.

It is but fair to say at once that the last of the *true* Christians died with the last of the direct apostles. Max Müller forcibly asks:

How can a missionary in such circumstances meet the surprise and questions of his pupils, unless he may point to that seed,³ and tell them what Christianity

¹ [Italian peasants]

² The fact is given to us by an eye-witness who has visited the church several times; a Roman Catholic, who felt perfectly *horrified*, as he expressed it.

³ Referring to the seed planted by Jesus and his Apostles.

was meant to be? unless he may show that, like all other religions, Christianity too, has had its history; that the Christianity of the nineteenth century is not the Christianity of the middle ages, and that the Christianity of the middle ages was not that of the early Councils; that the Christianity of the early Councils was not that of the Apostles, and “that what has been said by Christ, that alone was well said?”¹

The “hells” of various nations.

Thus we may infer that the only characteristic difference between modern Christianity and the old heathen faiths is the belief of the former in a personal devil and in hell. Says Max Müller:

The Aryan nations had no devil. Pluto, though of a sombre character, was a very [11] respectable personage; and Loki [the Scandinavian], though a mischievous person, was not a fiend. The German Goddess, Hel, too — like Proserpine — had once seen better days. Thus, when the Germans were indoctrinated with the idea of a real Devil, the Semitic Satan or Diabolus, they treated him in the most good-humoured manner.²

The same may be said of hell. Hades was quite a different place from our region of eternal damnation, and might be termed rather an intermediate state of purification. Neither does the Scandinavian *Hel* or *Hela*, imply either a state or a place of punishment; for when Frigga, the grief-stricken mother of Balder, the white god, who died and found himself in the dark abodes of the shadows (Hades) sent Hermod, a son of Thor, in quest of her beloved child, the messenger found him in the inexorable region — alas! but still comfortably seated on a rock, and reading a book.³ The Norse kingdom of the dead is moreover situated in the higher latitudes of the Polar regions; it is a cold and cheerless abode, and neither the gelid halls of *Hela*, nor the occupation of *Baldur* present the least similitude to the blazing hell of eternal fire and the miserable “damned” sinners with which the Church so generously peoples it. No more is it the Egyptian *Āmenti*, the region of judgment and purification; nor the *Andhera* — the abyss of darkness of the Hindus; for even the fallen angels hurled into it by *Śiva*, are allowed by *Parabrahman* to consider it as an intermediate state, in which an opportunity is afforded them to prepare for higher degrees of purification and redemption from their wretched condition. The *Gehenna* of the New Testament was a locality outside the walls of Jerusalem; and in mentioning it, Jesus used but an ordinary metaphor. Whence then came the dreary dogma of hell, that Archimedean lever of Christian theology, with which they have succeeded to hold in subjection the numberless millions of Christians for nineteen centuries? Assuredly not from the Jewish Scriptures, and we appeal for corroboration to any well-informed Hebrew scholar.

The only designation of something approaching hell in the *Bible* is *Gehenna* or *Hinnom*, a valley near Jerusalem, where was situated *Tophet*, a place where a fire was perpetually kept for sanitary purposes. The prophet *Jeremiah* informs us that

¹ *Chips from a German Workshop*, (1867–75, 5-vols.), Vol. I, Preface, p. xxvi

² *Chips*, etc., Vol. II, p. 245

³ *Mallet*, *Northern Antiquities*, p. 448

the Israelites used to sacrifice their children to Moloch-Hercules on that spot; and later we find Christians quietly replacing this divinity by their god of *mercy*, whose wrath will not be appeased, unless the Church sacrifices to him her unbaptized children and sinning sons on the altar of “eternal damnation”!

Whence then did the divine learn so well the conditions of hell, as [12] to actually divide its torments into two kinds, the *pœna damni* and *pœna sensus*, the former being the privation of the beatific vision; the latter the *eternal* pains *in a lake of fire and brimstone*? If they answer us that it is in the *Apocalypse*,¹ we are prepared to demonstrate whence the theologian John himself derived the idea. He says,

And *the devil* that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where *the beast* and the false prophet are and shall be tormented for ever and ever.

Laying aside the esoteric interpretation that the “devil” or tempting demon meant our own earthly body, which after death will surely dissolve in the *fiery* or ethereal elements,² the word “eternal” by which our theologians interpret the words “for ever and ever” does not exist in the Hebrew language, either as a word or meaning. There is no Hebrew word which properly expresses *eternity*; *olam*, according to Le Clerc, only imports a time whose beginning or end is not known.³ While showing that this word does not mean *infinite* duration, and that in the Old Testament the word *forever* only signifies a long time, Archbishop Tillotson has completely perverted its sense with respect to the idea of hell-torments. According to his doctrine, when Sodom and Gomorrah are said to be suffering “eternal fire,” we must understand it only in the sense of that fire not being extinguished till both cities were entirely consumed. But, as to hell-fire the words must be understood in the strictest sense of infinite duration. Such is the decree of the learned divine. For the duration of the punishment of the wicked must be proportionate to the eternal happiness of the righteous. So he says,

These [speaking of the wicked] shall go away into *eternal* punishment [*εις κολασιν αιωνιου*]; but the righteous into life eternal [*εις ζωην αιωνιου*].⁴

The Reverend T. Swinden,⁵ commenting on the speculations of his predecessors, fills a whole volume with unanswerable arguments, tending to show that the locality of *Hell is in the sun*. We suspect that the reverend speculator had read the *Apocalypse* in bed, and had the nightmare in consequence. There are two verses in the *Revelation of John* reading thus:

¹ xx, 10

² Æther is both *pure* and *impure* fire. The composition of the latter comprises all its visible forms, such as the “correlation of forces” — heat, flame, electricity, etc. The former is the *Spirit of Fire*. The difference is purely alchemical.

³ [Cf. Genesius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon*, s.v., *Olam*.]

⁴ [John Tillotson, *Works*, 3rd ed., 1701, Sermon XXXV, pp. 410-11, quoting *Matthew* xxv, 25.]

⁵ Cf. Tobias Swinden, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Place of Hell*, London 1714, 1727

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God.¹

This is simply Pythagorean and kabbalistic allegory. The idea is new neither with the above-mentioned author nor with John. Pythagoras placed the “sphere of purification in the sun,” which sun, with its sphere, [13]

. . . he moreover locates in the middle of the universe,² the allegory having a double meaning:

- 1 Symbolically, the central, spiritual sun, the Supreme Deity. Arrived at this region every soul becomes purified of its sins, and unites itself forever with its spirit, having previously suffered throughout all the lower spheres.
- 2 By placing the sphere of *visible* fire in the middle of the universe, he simply taught the heliocentric system which appertained to the Mysteries, and was imparted only in the higher degree of initiation.

John gives to his Word a purely kabbalistic significance, which no “Fathers,” except those who had belonged to the Neo-platonic school, were able to comprehend. Origen understood it well, having been a pupil of Ammonius Saccas; therefore we see him bravely denying the perpetuity of hell-torments. He maintains that not only men, but even devils (by which term he meant disembodied human sinners), after a certain duration of punishment shall be pardoned and finally restored to heaven.³ In consequence of this and other such heresies Origen was, as a matter of course, exiled.

The geocentric hell of Augustine.

Many have been the learned and truly inspired speculations as to the locality of hell. The most popular were those which placed it in the centre of the earth. At a certain time, however, sceptical doubts which disturbed the placidity of faith in this highly-refreshing doctrine arose in consequence of the meddling scientists of those days. As a Mr. Swinden in our own century observes, the theory was inadmissible because of two objections:

First, that a fund of fuel or sulphur sufficient to maintain so furious and constant a fire could not be there supposed; and,

Second, that it must want the nitrous particles in the air to sustain and keep it alive.

Says he:

And how can such fire be eternal, when, by degrees, the whole substance of the earth must be consumed thereby?⁴

¹ Revelation xvi, 8-9

² Aristotle mentions Pythagoreans who placed the sphere of fire in the sun, and named it *Jupiter's Prison*. See *De cælo*, lib. II, 293b.

³ Origen, *De principiis*, I, vi. Cf. Augustine, *De civitate dei*, xxi, xvii.

⁴ J.S. Forsyth, *Demonologia: or, Natural knowledge revealed: being an exposé of ancient and modern superstitions, credulity, fanaticism, enthusiasm, & imposture, as connected with the doctrine, caballa, and jargon, of amulets, apparitions, astrology, charms, demonology . . . witchcraft, &c.*, London 1827, p. 289

The sceptical gentleman had evidently forgotten that centuries ago St. Augustine solved the difficulty. Have we not the word of this learned divine that hell, nevertheless, is in the centre of the earth, for “God supplies the central fire with air *by a miracle*”? The argument is unanswerable, and so we will not seek to upset it.¹

Christians were the first to make the existence of a fictitious devil a dogma of their Church.

The Christians were the first to make the existence of Satan a dogma of the Church. And once that she had established it, she had to struggle for over 1,700 years for the repression of a mysterious force which it was her policy to make appear of diabolical origin. Unfortunately, in manifesting itself, this force invariably tends to upset such a belief by the ridiculous discrepancy it presents between the alleged cause and the effects. If the clergy [14] have not over-estimated the real power of the “Arch-Enemy of God,” it must be confessed that he takes mighty precautions against being recognized as the “Prince of Darkness” who aims at our souls. If modern “spirits” are devils at all, as preached by the clergy, then they can only be those “poor” or “stupid devils” whom Max Müller describes as appearing so often in the German and Norwegian tales.

But what is the use of a Pope, if there is no devil?

Notwithstanding this, the clergy fear above all to be forced to relinquish this hold on humanity. They are not willing to let us judge of the tree by its fruits, for that might sometimes force them into dangerous dilemmas. They refuse, likewise, to admit, with unprejudiced people, that the phenomena of Spiritualism has unquestionably spiritualized and reclaimed from evil courses many an indomitable atheist and sceptic. But, as they confess themselves, what is the use in a Pope, if there is no Devil?

And so Rome sends her ablest advocates and preachers to the rescue of those perishing in “the bottomless pit.” Rome employs her cleverest writers for this purpose — albeit they all indignantly deny the accusation — and in the preface to every book put forth by the prolific des Mousseaux, the French Tertullian of our century, we find undeniable proofs of the fact. Among other certificates of ecclesiastical approval, every volume is ornamented with the text of a certain original letter addressed to the very pious author by the world-known Father Ventura di Raulica, of Rome. Few are those who have not heard this famous name. It is the name of one of the chief pillars of the Latin Church, the ex-General of the Order of the Theatines, Consultor of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, Examiner of Bishops, and of the Roman Clergy, etc., etc., etc. This strikingly characteristic document will remain to astonish future generations by its spirit of unsophisticated demonolatry and unblushing sincerity. We translate a fragment *verbatim*, and by thus helping its circulation hope to merit the blessings of Mother Church:²

¹ [Swinden, *op. cit.*, p. 75]

² Henri Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *Les hauts phénomènes de la magie précédés du spiritisme antique*, p. iv; cf. *La Magie au dix-neuvième siècle, ses agents, ses vérités, ses mensonges, précédée d'une lettre adressée à l'auteur par le P. Ventura de Raulica*, p. i.

The biographers of the devil.

MONSIEUR AND EXCELLENT FRIEND:

. . . The greatest victory of Satan was gained on that day when he succeeded in making himself denied.

To demonstrate the existence of Satan, is to re-establish *one of the fundamental dogmas of the Church*, which serve as a basis for Christianity, and, without which, Satan would be but a name. . . .

Magic, mesmerism, magnetism, somnambulism, spiritualism, spiritism, hypnotism . . . are only other names for SATANISM.

To bring out such a truth and show it in its proper light, is to unmask the enemy; it is to unveil the immense danger of certain practices, *reputed innocent*; it is to deserve well in the eyes of humanity and of religion.

FATHER VENTURA DE RAULICA [15]

A – men!

This is an unexpected honour indeed, for our American “controls” in general, and the innocent “Indian guides” in particular. To be thus introduced in Rome as princes of the Empire of Eblis, is more than they could ever hope for in other lands.

Without in the least suspecting that she was working for the future welfare of her enemies — the spiritualists and spiritists — the Church, some twenty years since, in tolerating des Mousseaux and de Mirville as the biographers of the Devil, and giving her approbation thereto, tacitly confessed the literary co-partnership.

M. the Chevalier Gougenot des Mousseaux, and his friend and *collaborateur*, the Marquis Eudes de Mirville, to judge by their long titles, must be aristocrats *pur sang*, and they are, moreover, writers of no small erudition and talent. Were they to show themselves a little more parsimonious of double points of exclamation following every vituperation, and invective against Satan and his worshippers, their style would be faultless. As it is, the crusade against the enemy of mankind was fierce, and lasted for over twenty years.

What with the Catholics piling up their psychological phenomena to prove the existence of a personal devil, and the Count de Gasparin, an ancient minister of Louis Philippe, collecting volumes of other facts to prove the contrary, the spiritists of France have contracted an everlasting debt of gratitude toward the disputants. The existence of an unseen spiritual universe peopled with invisible beings has now been demonstrated beyond question. Ransacking the oldest libraries, they have distilled from the historical records the quintessence of evidence. All epochs, from the Homeric ages down to the present day, have supplied their choicest materials to these indefatigable authors. In trying to prove the authenticity of the miracles wrought by Satan in the days preceding the Christian era, as well as throughout the middle ages, they have simply laid a firm foundation for a study of the phenomena in our modern times.

Though an ardent, uncompromising enthusiast, des Mousseaux unwittingly transforms himself into the tempting demon, or — as he is fond of calling the Devil — the “serpent of *Genesis*.” In his desire to demonstrate in every manifestation the presence of the Evil One, he only succeeds in demonstrating that Spiritualism and magic are no new things in the world, but very ancient twin brothers, whose origin must be sought for in the earliest infancy of ancient India, Chaldæa, Babylonia, Egypt, Persia, and Greece.

He proves the existence of “spirits,” whether these be angels or devils, with such a clearness of argument and logic, and such an amount of evidence, historical, irrefutable, and strictly authenticated, that little is [16] left for spiritualist authors who may come after him. How unfortunate that the scientists, who believe neither in devil nor spirit, are more than likely to ridicule M. des Mousseaux’s books without reading them, for they really contain so many facts of profound scientific interest!

But what can we expect in our own age of unbelief, when we find Plato, over twenty-two centuries ago, complaining of the same? says he, in his *Euthyphron*,

Me, too, when I say anything in the public assembly concerning divine things, and predict to them what is going to happen, they ridicule as mad; and although *nothing that I have predicted has proved untrue*, yet they envy all such men as we are. However, we ought not to heed, but pursue our own way.¹

The literary resources of the Vatican and other Catholic repositories of learning must have been freely placed at the disposal of these modern authors. When one has such treasures at hand — original manuscripts, papyri, and books pillaged from the richest heathen libraries; old treatises on magic and alchemy; and records of all the trials for witchcraft, and sentences for the same to rack, stake, and torture, it is mighty easy to write volumes of accusations against the Devil. We affirm on good grounds that there are hundreds of the most valuable works on the occult sciences, which are sentenced to eternal concealment from the public, but are attentively read and studied by the privileged who have access to the Vatican Library. The laws of nature are the same for heathen sorcerer as for Catholic saint; and a “miracle” may be produced as well by one as by the other, without the slightest intervention of God or devil.

Hardly had the manifestations begun to attract attention in Europe, than the clergy commenced their outcry that their traditional enemy had reappeared under another name, and “divine miracles” also began to be heard of in isolated instances. First they were confined to humble individuals, some of whom claimed to have them produced through the intervention of the Virgin Mary, saints and angels; others — according to the clergy — began to suffer from *obsession* and *possession*; for the Devil must have his share of fame as well as the Deity. Finding that, notwithstanding the warning, the *independent*, or so-called spiritual phenomena went on increasing and multiplying, and that these manifestations threatened to upset the carefully-constructed dogmas of the Church, the world was suddenly startled by extraordinary intelligence. In 1864, a whole community became possessed of the Devil. Morzine, and the awful stories of its demoniacs; Valleyres, and the narratives of its well-

¹ [*Euthyphron*, st. 1, 3c]

authenticated exhibitions of sorcery; and those of the Presbytère de Cideville curdled the blood in Catholic veins.

Why there are no miracles in Russia.

Strange to say, the question has been asked over and over again, [17] why the “divine” miracles and most of the obsessions are so strictly confined to Roman Catholic dioceses and countries? Why is it that since the Reformation there has been scarcely one single divine “miracle” in a Protestant land? Of course, the answer we must expect from Catholics is, that the latter are peopled by *heretics*, and abandoned by God. Then why are there no more Church-miracles in Russia, a country whose religion differs from the Roman Catholic faith but in external forms of rites, its fundamental dogmas being identically the same, except as to the emanation of the Holy Ghost? Russia has her accepted saints and thaumaturgical relics, and miracle-working images. The St. Mitrophan of Voronezh is authenticated miracle-worker, but his miracles are limited to healing; and though hundreds upon hundreds have been healed *through faith*, and though the old cathedral is full of magnetic effluvia, and whole generations will go on *believing* in his power, and some persons will always be healed, still no such miracles are heard of in Russia as the Madonna-walking, and Madonna letter-writing, and statue-talking of Catholic countries. Why is this so? Simply because the emperors have strictly forbidden that sort of thing. The Czar, Peter the Great, stopped every spurious “divine” miracle with one frown of his mighty brow. He declared he would have *no false* miracles played by the holy *eicones* (images of saints), and they disappeared forever.¹

There are cases on record of isolated and independent phenomena exhibited by certain images in the last century; the latest was the bleeding of the cheek of an image of the Virgin, when a soldier of Napoleon cut her face in two. This miracle, alleged to have happened in 1812, in the days of the invasion by the “grand army,” was the final farewell.² [18] But since then, although the three successive emperors have been pious men, their will has been respected, and the images and saints have remained quiet, and hardly been spoken of except as connected with religious worship. In Poland, a land of furious ultramontanism, there were, at different times, desperate attempts at miracle-doing. They died at birth, however, for the argus-eyed police were there; a Catholic miracle in Poland, made public by the priests, generally meaning political revolution, bloodshed, and war.

¹ Dr. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church*, p. 407; lecture xii.

² In the government of Tambov, a gentleman, a rich landed proprietor, had a curious case happen in his family during the Hungarian campaign of 1848. His only and much-beloved nephew, whom, having no children, he had adopted as a son, was in the Russian army. The elderly couple had a portrait of his — a water-colour painting — constantly, during the meals, placed on the table in front of the young man’s usual seat. One evening as the family, with some friends, were at their early tea, the glass over the portrait, without any one touching it, was shattered to atoms with a loud explosion. As the aunt of the young soldier caught the picture in her hand she saw the forehead and head besmeared with blood. The guests, in order to quiet her, attributed the blood to her having cut her fingers with the broken glass. But, examine as they would, they could not find the vestige of a cut on her fingers, and no one had touched the picture but herself. Alarmed at her state of excitement the husband, pretending to examine the portrait more closely, cut his finger on purpose, and then tried to assure her that it was his blood and that, in the first excitement, he had touched the frame without any one remarking it. All was in vain, the old lady felt sure that Dimitry was killed. She began to have masses said for him daily at the village church, and arrayed the whole household in deep mourning. Several weeks later, an official communication was received from the colonel of the regiment, stating that their nephew was killed by a fragment of a shell which had carried off the upper part of his head.

Is it then, not permissible to at least suspect that if, in one country divine miracles may be arrested by civil and military law, and in another they *never occur*, we must search for the explanation of the two facts in some natural cause, instead of attributing them to either god or devil? In our opinion — if it is worth anything — the whole secret may be accounted for as follows. In Russia, the clergy know better than to bewilder their parishes, whose piety is sincere and faith strong without miracles; they know that nothing is better calculated than the latter to sow seeds of distrust, doubt, and finally of scepticism which leads directly to atheism. Moreover the climate is less propitious, and the magnetism of the average population too positive, *too healthy*, to call forth *independent* phenomena; and fraud would not answer. On the other hand, neither in Protestant Germany, nor England, nor yet in America, since the days of the Reformation, has the clergy had access to any of the Vatican secret libraries. Hence they are all but poor hands at the magic of Albertus Magnus.

America is run over with sensitives and mediums.

As for America being overflowed with sensitives and mediums, the reason for it is partially attributable to climatic influence and especially to the physiological condition of the population. Since the days of the Salem witchcraft, 200 years ago, when the comparatively few settlers had pure and unadulterated blood in their veins, nothing much had been heard of “spirits” or “mediums” until 1840.¹ The phenomena then first appeared among the ascetic and exalted Shakers, whose religious aspirations, peculiar mode of life, moral purity, and physical chastity all led to the production of independent phenomena of a psychological [19] as well as physical nature. Hundreds of thousands, and even millions of men from various climates and of different constitutions and habits, have, since 1692, invaded North America, and by intermarrying have substantially changed the physical type of the inhabitants. Of what country in the world do the women’s constitutions bear comparison with the delicate, nervous, and sensitive constitutions of the feminine portion of the population of the United States? We were struck on our arrival in the country with the semi-transparent delicacy of skin of the natives of both sexes. Compare a hard-working Irish factory girl or boy, with one from a genuine American family. Look at their hands. One works as hard as the other; they are of equal age, and both seemingly healthy; and still, while the hands of the one, after an hour’s soaping, will show a skin little softer than that of a young alligator, those of the other, notwithstanding constant use, will allow you to observe the circulation of the blood under the thin and delicate epidermis. No wonder, then, that while America is the conservatory of sensitives the majority of its clergy, unable to produce divine or any other miracles, stoutly deny the possibility of any phenomena except those produced by tricks and juggling. And no wonder also that the Catholic priesthood, who are practically aware of the existence of magic and spiritual phenomena, and believe in them while dreading their consequences, try to attribute the whole to the agency of the Devil.

¹ Executions for witchcraft took place, not much later than a century ago, in other of the American provinces. Notoriously there were negroes executed in New Jersey by burning at the stake — the penalty denounced in several States. Even in South Carolina, in 1865, when the State government was “reconstructed,” after the civil war, the statutes inflicting death for witchcraft were found to be still unrepealed. It is not a hundred years since they have been enforced to the murderous letter of their text.

“Divine miracles” flourished most in Catholic Spain and Pontifical Italy.

Let us adduce one more argument, if only for the sake of circumstantial evidence. In what countries have “divine miracles” flourished most, been most frequent and most stupendous? Catholic Spain, and Pontifical Italy, beyond question. And which more than these two, has had access to ancient literature? Spain was famous for her libraries; the Moors were celebrated for their profound learning in alchemy and other sciences. The Vatican is the storehouse of an immense number of ancient manuscripts. During the long interval of nearly 1,500 years they have been accumulating, from trial after trial, books and manuscripts confiscated from their sentenced victims, to their own profit. The Catholics may plead that the books were generally committed to the flames; that the treatises of famous sorcerers and enchanters perished with their accursed authors. But the Vatican, if it could speak, could tell a different story. It knows too well of the existence of certain closets and rooms, access to which is had but by the very few. It knows that the entrances to these secret hiding-places are so cleverly concealed from sight in the carved framework and under the profuse ornamentation of the library walls, that there have even been Popes who lived and died within the precincts of the palace without ever suspecting their existence. But these Popes were neither Sylvester II, Benedict IX, John XX, nor [20] the VIth and VIIth Gregory; nor yet the famous Borgia of toxicological memory. Neither were those who remained ignorant of the hidden lore friends of the sons of Loyola.

Where, in the records of European Magic, can we find cleverer enchanters than in the mysterious solitudes of the cloister? Albert Magnus, the famous Bishop and conjurer of Ratisbon, was never surpassed in his art. Roger Bacon was a monk, and Thomas Aquinas one of the most learned pupils of Albertus. Trithemius, Abbott of the Sponheim Benedictines,¹ was the teacher, friend, and confidant of Cornelius Agrippa; and while the confederations of the Theosophists were scattered broadcast about Germany, where they first originated, assisting one another, and struggling for years for the acquirement of esoteric knowledge, any person who knew how to become the favoured pupil of certain monks, might very soon be proficient in all the important branches of occult learning.

This is all in history and cannot be easily denied. Magic, in all its aspects, was widely and nearly openly practiced by the clergy till the Reformation. And even he who was once called the “Father of the Reformation,” the famous John Reuchlin,² author of the *Mirific Word* and friend of Pico della Mirandola, the teacher and instructor of Erasmus, Luther, and Melanchthon, was a Kabbalist and occultist.

¹ [Note 2 by Boris de Zirkoff: Johannes Johannes Trithemius (born Johann Heidenberg) was born at Tritenheim, near Trier, Germany, February 1st, 1462, and died at Würzburg, December 13th, 1516. He was a Humanist and became in 1485 abbot of Sponheim, near Kreuznach. At a later date he was abbot of Schottenkloster St. Jacob, at Würzburg. This scholarly individual, known best by his Latinized name of Trithemius, was the author of a number of important works, such as: *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* (1494); *Steganographia* (1500, and later, ed. of 1606, 1621, 1635); *Annales Hirsangiensis* (1514); *Annales de origine Francorum* (unfinished); *Polygraphia* (1518).]

² Vide the title page on the English translation of Mayerhoff's *Johan Reuchlin und seine Zeit*, Berlin 1830. *The Life and Times of John Reuchlin, or Capnion, the Father of the German Reformation*, by F. Barham, London 1843.

The ancient *sortilegium*, or divination by means of *sortes* or lots — an art and practice now decried by the clergy as an abomination, designated by *Stat. 10 Jac.* as felony, and by *Stat. 12 Caroli II* excepted out of the general pardons, on the ground of being *sorcery*¹ — was widely practiced by the clergy and monks. Nay, it was sanctioned by St. Augustine himself, who does not “disapprove of this method of learning futurity, provided it be not used for worldly purposes.” More than that, he confesses having practiced it himself.²

Aye; but the clergy called it *sortes sanctorum*, when it was they who practiced it; while the *sortes prænestinæ*, succeeded by the *sortes Homericæ* and *sortes Virgilianæ*, were abominable *heathenism*, the worship of the Devil, when used by anyone else.

Episcopal divination by the “lot.”

Gregory of Tours informs us that when the clergy resorted to the *Sortes* their custom was to lay the *Bible* on the altar, and to pray the Lord that He would discover His will, and disclose to them futurity in one of the verses of the book.³ Guibert de Nogent writes that in his day [21] (about the twelfth century) the custom was, at the consecration of bishops, to consult the *Sortes Sanctorum*, to thereby learn the success and fate of the episcopate. On the other hand, we are told that the *Sortes Sanctorum* were condemned by the Council of Agde, in 506. In this case again we are left to inquire, in which instance has the infallibility of the Church failed? Was it when she prohibited that which was practiced by her greatest saint and patron, Augustine, or in the twelfth century, when it was openly and with the sanction of the same Church practiced by the clergy for the benefit of the bishop’s elections? Or, must we still believe that in both of these contradictory cases the Vatican was inspired by the direct “spirit of God”?

If any doubt that Gregory of Tours approved of a practice that prevails to this day, more or less, even among strict Protestants, let them read this:

Leudastus, Earl of Tours, who was for ruining me with Queen Fredegonde, coming to Tours, big with evil designs against me, I withdrew to my oratory under a deep concern, where I took the *Psalms* . . . My heart revived within me when I cast my eyes on this of the seventy-seventh *Psalms*:

“He caused them to go on with confidence, whilst the sea swallowed up their enemies.”

Accordingly, the count spoke not a word to my prejudice; and leaving Tours that very day, the boat in which he was, sunk in a storm, but his skill in swimming saved him.⁴

¹ Lord Coke, *The Third Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England; Concerning High Treason, and other Pleas of the Crown, and Criminal Causes*, fol. 44

² [Epistle II to Januarius, § 37]

³ *Histoire des François de S. Grégoire, évêque de Tours*, Paris 1668, II, 37; V 14, etc.

⁴ [J.S. Forsyth, *Demonologia: or, Natural knowledge revealed: being an exposé of ancient and modern superstitions, credulity, fanaticism, enthusiasm, & imposture, as connected with the doctrine, caballa, and jargon, of amulets, apparitions, astrology, charms, demonology . . . witchcraft, &c.*, London 1827, p. 76]

The sainted bishop simply confesses here to having practiced a bit of sorcery. *Every mesmerizer knows the power of will during an intense desire bent on any particular subject.* Whether in consequence of “co-incidents” or otherwise, the opened verse suggested to his mind revenge by drowning. Passing the remainder of the day in “deep concern,” and possessed by this all-absorbing thought, the saint — it may be unconsciously — exercises his will on the subject; and thus while imagining in the accident the hand of God, he simply becomes a sorcerer exercising his magnetic will which reacts on the person feared; and the count barely escapes with his life. Were the accident decreed by God, the culprit would have been drowned; for a simple bath could not have altered his malevolent resolution against St. Gregory had he been very intent on it.

Furthermore, we find anathemas fulminated against this lottery of fate, at the council of Vannes, which forbids

. . . all ecclesiastics, under pain of excommunication, to perform that kind of divination, or to pry into futurity, by looking into any book, or writing, whatsoever.

The same prohibition is pronounced at the councils of Agde in 506, of Orleans in 511, of Auxerre in 595, and finally at the council of Aenham in 1110;¹ the latter condemning

. . . sorcerers, witches, diviners, such as occasioned death by magical operations, and who practiced fortune-telling by the [22] holy book lots;

and the complaint of the joint clergy against de Garlande, their bishop at Orleans, and addressed to Pope Alexander III, concludes in this manner:

Let your apostolical hands put on strength to *strip naked* the iniquity of this man, that the curse prognosticated on the day of his consecration may overtake him; for the gospels being opened on the altar *according to custom*, the first words were: *and the young man, leaving his linen cloth, fled from them naked.*²

Why then roast the lay-magicians and consulters of books, and canonize the ecclesiastics? Simply because the mediaeval as well as the modern phenomena, manifested through laymen, whether produced through occult knowledge or happening independently, upset the claims of both the Catholic and Protestant Churches to divine miracles. In the face of reiterated and unimpeachable evidence it became impossible for the former to maintain successfully the assertion that seemingly miraculous manifestations by the “good angels” and God’s direct intervention could be produced exclusively by her chosen ministers and holy saints. Neither could the Protestant

¹ [Note 3 by Boris de Zirkoff: The Councils referred to in the text are at best minor convocations, concerning which there is scarcity of information. The Council of Agde was held in September, 506; the one at Orleans, known as the first Council in that city, was held in 511; the date of the one at Auxerre, known as the Synod of Auxerre, varies between 570 and 590, according to various authorities. The Council held at Aenham (or Enham), which was a village for disabled soldiers some two miles north of Andover, N.W. Hampshire, presents an even greater uncertainty as to date; according to Mansi, it was held between 1100 and 1116, while Hefele gives its date as 1009. The period during which Alexander III was Pope is 1159–1181. Vide Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Florence, 1759–98, t. XIX, col. 308; *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, III, 886; V, 2188; C.J. von Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte*, Freiburg, 1855–74, Vol. IV.]

² Translated from the original document in the Archives of Orléans, France; also see “Sortes: Sortilegium” in *Demonologia*, p. 279, and *Letters de Pierre de Blois*, Paris 1667.

well maintain on the same ground that miracles had ended with the apostolic ages. For, whether of the same nature or not, the modern phenomena claimed close kinship with the biblical ones. The magnetists and healers of our century came into direct and open competition with the apostles. The Zouave Jacob, of France, had out-ripped the prophet Elijah in recalling to life persons who were seemingly dead; and Alexis, the somnambulist, mentioned by Mr. Wallace in his work,¹ was, by his lucidity, putting to shame apostles, prophets, and the Sibyls of old. Since the burning of the last witch, the great Revolution of France, so elaborately prepared by the league of the secret societies and their clever emissaries, had blown over Europe and awakened terror in the bosom of the clergy. It had, like a destroying hurricane, swept away in its course those best allies of the Church, the Roman Catholic aristocracy. A sure foundation was now laid for the right of individual opinion. The world was freed from ecclesiastical tyranny by opening an unobstructed path to Napoleon the Great, who had given the deathblow to the Inquisition. This great slaughter-house of the Christian Church — wherein she butchered, in the name of the Lamb, all the sheep arbitrarily declared scurvy — was in ruins, and she found herself left to her own responsibility and resources.

“Miracles” performed by laity in full daylight.

So long as the phenomena had appeared only sporadically, she had always felt herself powerful enough to repress the consequences. [23] Superstition and belief in the Devil were as strong as ever, and Science had not yet dared to publicly measure her forces with those of supernatural Religion. Meanwhile the enemy had slowly but surely gained ground. All at once it broke out with an unexpected violence. “Miracles” began to appear in full daylight, and passed from their mystic seclusion into the domain of natural law, where the profane hand of Science was ready to strip off their sacerdotal mask. Still, for a time, the Church held her position, and with the powerful help of superstitious fear checked the progress of the intruding force. But, when in succession appeared mesmerists and somnambulists, reproducing the physical and mental phenomenon of ecstasy, hitherto believed to be the special gift of saints; when the passion for the turning tables had reached in France and elsewhere its climax of fury; when the psychography — alleged spiritual — from a simple curiosity had developed itself and settled into an unabated interest, and finally ebbed into religious mysticism; when the echoes aroused by the first raps of Rochester, crossing the oceans, spread until they were re-percussed from nearly every corner of the world — then, and only then, the Latin Church was fully awakened to a sense of danger. Wonder after wonder was reported to have occurred in the spiritual circles and the lecture-rooms of the mesmerists; the sick were healed, the blind made to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear. J.R. Newton in America, and Du Potet in France, were healing the multitude without the slightest claim to divine intervention. The great discovery of Mesmer, which reveals to the earnest inquirer the mechanism of nature, mastered, as if by magical power, organic and inorganic bodies.

¹ *On Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, p. 65

History of the Chair of Peter.

But this was not the worst. A more direful calamity for the Church occurred in the evocation from the upper and nether worlds of a multitude of “spirits,” whose private bearing and conversation gave the direct lie to the most cherished and profitable dogmas of the Church. These “spirits” claimed to be the identical entities, in a disembodied state, of fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters, friends and acquaintances of the persons viewing the weird phenomena. The Devil seemed to have no objective existence, and this struck at the very foundation upon which the chair of St. Peter rested.¹ Not a spirit except the mocking [24] manikins of Planchette would confess to

¹ There were two chairs of the titular apostle at Rome. The clergy, frightened at the uninterrupted evidence furnished by scientific research, at last decided to confront the enemy, and we find the *Chronique des Arts* giving the cleverest, and at the same time most *Jesuitical*, explanation of the fact. According to their story:

The *increase* in the number of the faithful decided Peter upon making Rome henceforth the centre of his action. The cemetery of Ostrianum was too distant and would *not suffice for the reunions of the Christians*. The motive which had induced the Apostle to confer on *Linus and Cletus* successively the episcopal character, in order to render them capable of sharing the solitudes of a church whose extent was to be without limits, led naturally to a multiplication of the places of meeting. The particular residence of Peter was therefore fixed at Viminal; and there was established that mysterious Chair, the symbol of power and truth. The august seat which was venerated at the Ostrian Catacombs was not, however, removed. Peter still visited this cradle of the Roman Church, and often, without doubt, exercised his holy functions there. A *second* Chair, expressing the same mystery as the first, was set up at Cornelia, and it is this which has come down to us through the ages. [*La fête de la chaire de saint Pierre*, pp. 47-48, 73]

Now, so far from it being possible that there ever were two genuine chairs of this kind, the majority of critics show that Peter never was at Rome at all; the reasons are many and unanswerable. Perhaps we had best begin by pointing to the works of Justin Martyr. This great champion of Christianity, writing in the early part of the second century *in Rome*, where he fixed his abode, eager to get hold of the least proof in favour of the truth for which he suffered, seems *perfectly unconscious of St. Peter's existence!!*

Neither does any other writer of any consequence mention him in connection with the Church of Rome, earlier than the days of Irenæus, when the latter set himself to invent a new religion, drawn from the depths of his imagination. We refer the reader anxious to learn more to the able work of Mr. George Reber, entitled *The Christ of Paul*. The arguments of this author are conclusive. The above article in the *Chronique des Arts*, speaks of the *increase* of the faithful to such an extent that Ostrianum could not contain the number of Christians. Now, if Peter was at Rome at all — runs Mr. Reber's argument — it must have been between the years A.D. 64 and 69; for at 64 he was at Babylon, from whence he wrote epistles and letters to Rome, and at some time between 64 and 68 (the reign of Nero) he either died a martyr or in his bed, for Irenæus makes him deliver the Church of Rome, together with Paul (!?) (whom he persecuted and quarrelled with all his life), into the hands of *Linus*, who became bishop in 69 (see Reber's *The Christ of Paul*, p. 122). We will treat of it more fully in chapter iii.

Now, we ask, in the name of common sense, how could the *faithful* of Peter's Church *increase* at such a rate, when Nero trapped and killed them like so many mice during his reign? History shows the few Christians fleeing from Rome, wherever they could, to avoid the persecution of the emperor, and the *Chronique des Arts* makes them increase and multiply! The article goes on to say,

Christ willed that this visible sign of the doctrinal authority of his vicar should also have its portion of immortality; one can follow it from age to age in the documents of the Roman Church.

Tertullian formally attests its existence in his book *De præscriptione hæreticorum*, xxxvi. Eager to learn everything concerning so interesting a subject, we would like to be shown when did *Christ* WILL anything of the kind? However:

Ornaments of ivory have been fitted to the front and back of the chair, but only on those parts repaired with acacia-wood. Those which cover the panel in front are divided into three superimposed rows, each containing six plaques of ivory, on which are engraved various subjects, among others the “Labours of Hercules.” Several of the plaques were wrongly placed, and seemed to have been affixed to the chair at a time when the remains of antiquity were employed as ornaments, without much regard to fitness.

This is the point. The article was written simply as a clever answer to several facts published during the present century. Bower, in his *History of the Popes* (Vol. I, p. 7), narrates that in the year 1662, while cleaning one of the chairs, “the Twelve Labours of Hercules unluckily appeared engraved upon it,” after which the chair was removed and another substituted. But in 1795, when Bonaparte's troops occupied Rome, the chair was again examined. This time there was found the Mohammedan confession of faith, in Arabic letters:

“There is no Deity but Allah, and Mohammed is his Apostle.” (See appendix, pp. 96-97, to *Ancient Symbol-Worship*, by H.M. Westropp and C. Staniland Wake.)

In the appendix, Prof. Alexander Wilder very justly remarks as follows:

We presume that the “apostle of the circumcision,” as Paul, his great rival, styles him, was never at the Imperial City, nor had a successor there, not even in the Ghetto. The “Chair of Peter,” therefore, is *sacred* rather than apostolical. Its sanctity proceeded, however, from the esoteric religion of the former times of Rome. The hierophant of the Mysteries probably occupied it on the day of initiations, when ex-

the most distant relationship with the Satanic majesty, or accredit him with the governorship of a single inch of territory. The clergy felt their prestige growing weaker every day, as they saw the people impatiently shaking off, in the broad daylight of truth, the dark veils with which they had been blindfolded for so many centuries. Then finally, fortune, which previously had been on their side in the long-waged conflict between theology and science, deserted to their adversary. The help of the latter to the study of the occult side of nature was truly precious and timely, and science has unwittingly widened the once narrow path of the phenomena into a broad highway. Had not [25] this conflict culminated at the nick of time, we might have seen reproduced on a miniature scale the disgraceful scenes of the episodes of Salem witchcraft and the Nuns of Loudun. As it was, the clergy were muzzled.

The voice of Truth is stronger than the voice of the mightiest thunder.

But if Science has unintentionally helped the progress of the occult phenomena, the latter have reciprocally aided science herself. Until the days when newly-reincarnated philosophy boldly claimed its place in the world, there had been but few scholars who had undertaken the difficult task of studying comparative theology. This science occupies a domain heretofore penetrated by few explorers. The necessity which it involved of being well acquainted with the dead languages, necessarily limited the number of students. Besides, there was less popular need for it so long as people could not replace the Christian orthodoxy by something more tangible. It is one of the most undeniable facts of psychology, that the average man can as little exist out of a religious element of some kind, as a fish out of the water. The voice of truth, “a voice stronger than the voice of the mightiest thunder,” speaks to the inner man in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, as it spoke in the corresponding century B.C. It is a useless and unprofitable task to offer to humanity the choice between a future life and annihilation. The only chance that remains for those friends of human progress who seek to establish for the good of mankind a faith, henceforth stripped entirely of superstition [26] and dogmatic fetters is to address them in the words of Joshua:

Choose ye this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell.¹

Wrote Max Müller, in 1860:

The science of religion is only just beginning. . . . During the last fifty years the authentic documents of the most important religions in the world *have been recovered in a most unexpected and almost miraculous manner.*² We have now be-

hibiting to the candidates the *petroma* [stone tablet containing the last revelation made by the hierophant to the neophyte for initiation].

¹ *Joshua* xxiv, 15

² One of the most surprising facts that have come under our observation, is that students of profound research should not couple the frequent recurrence of these “unexpected and almost miraculous” discoveries of important documents, at the most opportune moments, with a premeditated design. Is it so strange that the custodians of “Pagan” lore, seeing that the proper moment had arrived, should cause the needed document, book,

fore us the Canonical books of Buddhism; the *Zend-Avesta* of Zoroaster is no longer a sealed book; and the hymns of the *Rig-Veda* have revealed a state of religions anterior to the first beginnings of that mythology which in Homer and Hesiod stands before us as a mouldering ruin.¹

In their insatiable desire to extend the dominion of blind faith, the early architects of Christian theology had been forced to conceal, as much as it was possible, the true sources of the same. To this end they are said to have burned or otherwise destroyed all the original manuscripts on the *Kabbalah*, magic, and occult sciences upon which they could lay their hands. They ignorantly supposed that the most dangerous writings of this class had perished with the last Gnostic; but some day they may discover their mistake. Other authentic and as important documents will perhaps reappear in a “most unexpected and almost miraculous manner.” [27]

The fireproof parchment rolls of the Bruchion quarter of Alexandria.

There are strange traditions current in various parts of the East — on Mount Athos and in the Desert of Nitria, for instance — among certain monks, and with learned Rabbis in Palestine, who pass their lives in commenting upon the *Talmud*. They say that not all the rolls and manuscripts, reported in history to have been burned by Cæsar, by the Christian mob, in 389, and by the Arab General Amru, perished as it is commonly believed; and the story they tell is the following: At the time of the contest for the throne, in 51 B.C., between Cleopatra and her brother Dionysius Ptolemy, the Bruchion, which contained over seven hundred thousand rolls, all bound in wood and *fire-proof* parchment, was undergoing repairs, and a great portion of the original manuscripts, considered among the most precious, and which were not duplicated, were stored away in the house of one of the librarians. As the fire which consumed the rest was but the result of accident, no precautions had been taken at the time. But they add, that several hours passed between the burning of the fleet, set on fire by Cæsar’s order, and the moment when the first buildings situated near the harbour caught fire in their turn; and that all the librarians, aided by several hundred slaves attached to the museum, succeeded in saving the most precious of the rolls. So perfect and solid was the fabric of the parchment, that while in some rolls the inner pages and the wood-binding were reduced to ashes, of others the

or relic to fall as if by accident in the right man’s way? Geological surveyors and explorers even as competent as Humboldt and Tschuddi, have not discovered the hidden mines from which the Peruvian Incas dug their treasure, although the latter confesses that the present degenerate Indians have the secret. In 1839, Perring, the archæologist, proposed to the sheik of an Arab village two purses of gold, if he helped him to discover the entrance to the hidden passage leading to the sepulchral chambers in the North Pyramid of Doshoor. But though his men were out of employment and half-starved, the sheik proudly refused to “sell the secret of the dead,” promising to show it *gratis*, when *the time would come for it*. Is it, then, impossible that in some other regions of the earth are guarded the remains of that glorious literature of the past, which was the fruit of its majestic civilization? What is there so surprising in the idea? Who knows but that as the Christian Church has unconsciously begotten free thought by reaction against her own cruelty, rapacity, and dogmatism, the public mind may be glad to follow the lead of the Orientalists, away from Jerusalem and towards Ellora; and that then much more will be discovered that is now hidden?

[*Note 4 by Boris de Zirkoff*: As instances of *unexpected* discoveries along the line of ancient mystical traditions and writings, mention may be made of the Gnostic Coptic Manuscripts discovered in 1945 near the site of the ancient townlet Chenoboskion, in Egypt, at the foot of the mountain called Gebel et-Tarif; and the now famous texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls found in 1947 and later in several caves near the site of an ancient ruin called Khirbet Qumran.]

¹ *Chips from a German Workshop*, (1867–75, 5-vols.), Vol. I, “Semitic Monotheism,” pp. 377-78

parchment binding remained unscorched. These particulars were all written out in Greek, Latin, and the Chaldeo-Syriac dialect, by a learned youth named Theodas, one of the scribes employed in the museum. One of these manuscripts is alleged to be preserved till now in a Greek convent; and the person who narrated the tradition to us had seen it himself. He said that many more will see it and learn where to look for important documents, when a certain prophecy will be fulfilled; adding, that most of these works could be found in Tartary and India.¹ The monk showed us a copy of the original, which, of course, we could read but poorly, as we claim but little erudition in the matter of dead languages. But we were so particularly struck by the [28] the vivid and picturesque translation of the holy father, that we perfectly remember some curious paragraphs, which run, as far as we can recall them, as follows:

When the Queen of the Sun [Cleopatra] was brought back to the half-ruined city, after the fire had devoured the *Glory of the World*; and when she saw the mountains of books — or rolls — covering the half-consumed steps of the *estrada*; and when she perceived that the inside was gone and the indestructible covers alone remained, she wept in rage and fury, and cursed the meanness of her fathers who had grudged the cost of the real Pergamos for the inside as well as the outside of the precious rolls.

Further, our author, Theodas, indulges in a joke at the expense of the queen for believing that nearly all the library was burned; when, in fact, hundreds and thousands of the choicest books were safely stored in his own house and those of other scribes, librarians, students, and philosophers.

Subterranean libraries hidden from Europeans.

No more do sundry very learned Copts scattered all over the East in Asia Minor, Egypt, and Palestine believe in the total destruction of the subsequent libraries. For instance, they say that out of the library of Attalus III of Pergamum, presented by Antony to Cleopatra, not a volume was destroyed. At that time, according to their assertions, from the moment that the Christians began to gain power in Alexandria — about the end of the fourth century — and Anatolius, Bishop of Laodicea, began to insult the national gods, the Pagan philosophers and learned Theurgists adopted effective measures to preserve the repositories of their sacred learning. Theophilus, a bishop, who left behind him the reputation of a most rascally and mercenary villain, was accused by one named Antoninus, a famous Theurgist and eminent scholar of occult science of Alexandria,² with bribing the slaves of the Serapeion to steal books

¹ An after-thought has made us fancy that we can understand what is meant by the following sentences of *Moses of Chorene*:

The ancient Asiatics, five centuries before our era — and especially the Hindus, the Persians, and the Chaldæans, had in their possession a quantity of historical and scientific books. These works were partially borrowed, partially translated in the Greek language, mostly since the Ptolemies had established the Alexandrian library and encouraged the writers by their liberalities, so that the Greek language became the deposit of all the sciences. (*History of Armenia*, Bk. I, ii)

Therefore, the greater part of the literature included in the 700,000 volumes of the Alexandrian Library was due to India, and her next neighbours.

² [Note 5 by Boris de Zirkoff: Antoninus was a Neo-Platonist who lived early in the 4th century of our era and had a school at Canopus, near Alexandria in Egypt. He devoted himself wholly to those who sought his instruction. He could clearly see the end of the cycle as far as the so-called Pagan religions were concerned, and predicted that after his death all the temples of the gods would be changed into tombs. His moral conduct is said to have been exemplary. The only data we seem to have about Antoninus are to be found in the *Lives of Soph-*

which he sold to foreigners at great prices. History tells us how Theophilus had the best of the philosophers, in A.D. 389; and how his successor and nephew, the no less infamous Cyril, butchered Hypatia. Suidas gives us some details about Antoninus, whom he calls Antonius, and his eloquent friend Olympus, the defender of the Serapeion. But history is far from being complete in the miserable remnants of books, which, crossing so many ages, have reached our own learned century; it fails to give the facts relating to the first five centuries of Christianity which are preserved in the numerous traditions current in the East. Unauthenticated as these may appear, there is unquestionably in the heap of chaff much good grain. That these traditions are not oftener communicated to Europeans is not strange, when we consider how apt our travellers are to render themselves antagonistic to the natives by their sceptical bearing and, occasionally, dogmatic intolerance. When exceptional men like some archæologists, who knew how to win the [29] confidence and even friendship of certain Arabs, are favoured with precious documents, it is declared simply a “coincidence.” And yet there are widespread traditions of the existence of certain subterranean, and immense galleries, in the neighbourhood of Ishmonia — the “petrified City,” in which are stored numberless manuscripts and rolls.¹ For no amount of money would the Arabs go near it. At night, they say, from the crevices of the desolate ruins, sunk deep in the unwatered sands of the desert, stream the rays from lights carried to and fro in the galleries by no human hands. The Afrits study the literature of the antediluvian ages, according to their belief, and the Djinn learns from the magic rolls the lesson of the following day.

The *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in its article on Alexandria, says:

When the temple of Serapis was demolished . . . the valuable library was *pillaged* or destroyed; and *twenty* years afterwards the *empty shelves* excited the regret . . . etc.²

But it does not state the subsequent fate of the *pillaged* books.

Paganism was converted wholesale and applied to Popery.

In rivalry of the fierce Mary-worshippers of the fourth century, the modern clerical persecutors of liberalism and “heresy” would willingly shut up all the heretics and their books in some modern Serapeion and burn them alive.³ The cause of this hatred is natural. Modern research has more than ever unveiled the secret. Said Bishop Newton, years ago:

ists written by Eunapius, a Greek Sophist and historian of Sardis born in A.D. 347. He speaks of Antoninus in his “Life of Ædesius,” (p. 68, ed. Antwerp, 1568), a distinguished disciple of Iamblichus.]

¹ [Note 6 by Boris de Zirkoff: Extensive research by several competent scholars failed to identify Ishmonia, a locality which may be known today by some different name.]

² [8th edition, 1883, Vol. 1, p. 240] Cf. B.N. Bonamy, “Dissertation historique sur la Bibliothèque d’Alexandrie,” in the *Histoire de l’Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, 1796, Vol. 9, pp. 414 *et seq.* The Presbyter P. Orosius, who was an eyewitness, says “twenty years.” (*Historiarum adversus Paganus*, Bk. VI, § 15)

[Note 7 by Boris de Zirkoff: Paulus Orosius was a Spanish presbyter, a native of Tarragona who flourished in the later part of the fourth and in the fifth century of our era. He was the author of *Historiarum adversus Paganus Libri VII*, dedicated to St. Augustine, at whose suggestion the task was undertaken.]

³ Since the above was written, the spirit here described has been beautifully exemplified at Barcelona, Spain, where the Bishop Fray Joachim invited the local spiritualists to witness a formal burning of spiritual books. We find the account in a paper called “The Revelation,” published at Alicante, which sensibly adds that the performance was “a caricature of the memorable epoch of the Inquisition.”

Is not the worship of saints and angels now, in all respects the same that the worship of demons was in former times? The name only is different, the thing is identically the same . . . the very same temples, the very same images, which were once consecrated to Jupiter and the other demons, are now consecrated to the Virgin Mary and other saints . . . the whole of Paganism is converted and applied to *Popery*.

Why not be impartial and add that “a good portion of it was adopted by Protestant religions also”?

The very apostolic designation *Peter* is from the Mysteries. The hierophant or supreme pontiff bore the Chaldæan title *pether*, or interpreter. The names Ptah, Peth'r, the residence of Balaam, Patara, and Patras, the names of oracle-cities, *pateres* or *pateras* and, perhaps, [30] Buddha,¹ all come from the same root. Jesus says:

Upon this *petra* I will build my Church, and the gates, or rulers of Hades, shall not prevail against it;²

Meaning by *petra* the rock-temple, and by metaphor, the Christian Mysteries; the adversaries to which were the old mystery-gods of the underworld, who were worshipped in the rites of Isis, Adonis, Atys, Sabazius, Dionysus, and the Eleusinia. No *apostle* Peter was ever at Rome; but the Pope, seizing the sceptre of the *Pontifex Maximus*, the keys of Janus and Cybelē, and adorning his Christian head with the cap of the *Magna Mater*, copied from that of the tiara of Brahmātma, the Supreme Pontiff of the Initiates of old India, became the successor of the Pagan high priest, the real Peter-Roma, or *Petroma*.³

The Romish Church has two far mightier enemies than the “heretics” and the “infidels” — Comparative Mythology and Philology.

The Roman Catholic Church has two far mightier enemies than the “heretics” and the “infidels”; and these are — Comparative Mythology and Philology. When such eminent divines as the Rev. James Freeman Clarke go so much out of their way to prove to their readers that:

Critical Theology from the time of Origen and Jerome . . . and the Controversial Theology during fifteen centuries, has not consisted in accepting on authority the opinions of other people,

but has shown, on the contrary, much “acute and comprehensive reasoning,” we can but regret that so much scholarship should have been wasted in attempting to prove that which a fair survey of the history of theology upsets at every step. In these “controversies” and critical treatment of the doctrines of the Church one can certainly find any amount of “acute reasoning,” but far more of a still acuter sophistry.

Recently the mass of cumulative evidence has been reinforced to an extent which leaves little, if any, room for further controversy. A conclusive opinion is furnished by

¹ E. Pococke gives the variations of the name Buddha as: Bud'ha, Buddha, Booddha, Butta, Pout, Pote, Pto, Pte, Phte, Phtha, Phut, etc., etc. See *India in Greece*, Note, Appendix, 397. [Full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [Matthew xvi, 18]

³ The tiara of the Pope is also a perfect copy of that of the Taley-Lama of Thibet.

too many scholars to doubt the fact that India was the *Alma-Mater*, not only of the civilization, arts, and sciences, but also of all the great religions of antiquity; Judaism, and hence Christianity, included. Herder places the cradle of humanity in India, and shows Moses as a clever and relatively *modern* compiler of the ancient Brāhmanical traditions:

The river which encircles the country [India] is the sacred Ganges, which all Asia considers as the paradisiacal river. There, also, is the biblical Gihon, which is none else but the Indus. The Arabs call it so unto this day, and the names of the countries watered by it are yet existing among the Hindus.¹

Jaccoliot claims to have translated every ancient palm-leaf manuscript which he had the fortune of being allowed by the Brahmans of the pagodas to see. In one of his [31] translations, we found passages which reveal to us the *undoubted origin of the keys* of St. Peter, and account for the subsequent adoption of the symbol by their Holi-nesses, the Popes of Rome.

Origin of the papal tiara and keys.

He shows us, on the testimony of the *Agrushada Parikshai*, which he freely translates as “the *Book of Spirits*” (Pitris), that centuries before our era the *initiates* of the temple chose a Superior Council, presided over by the Brahmātma or supreme chief of all these *Initiates*. That this pontificate, which could be exercised only by a Brahman who had reached the age of eighty years;² that the Brahmātma was sole guardian of the mystic formula, *resumé* of every science, contained in the three mysterious letters,

A
U M

which signify *creation, conservation, and transformation*. He alone could expound its meaning in the presence of the initiates of the third and supreme degree. Whomsoever among these initiates revealed to a profane a single one of the truths, even the smallest of the secrets entrusted to his care, was put to death. He who received the confidence had to share his fate. Says Jaccoliot:

Finally, to crown this able system, there existed a word still more superior to the mysterious monosyllable — AUM, and which rendered him who came into the possession of its key nearly the equal of Brahmā himself. The Brahmātma alone possessed this key, and transmitted it in a sealed casket to his successor.

This unknown word,³ of which no human power could, even to-day, when the Brāhmanical authority has been crushed under the Mongolian and European invasions, today, when each pagoda has its *Brahmātma*⁴ *force the disclosure*, was engraved in a golden triangle and preserved in a sanctuary of the temple of

¹ [See his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Bk, X, ch. 6.]

² It is the traditional policy of the College of Cardinals to elect, whenever practicable, the new Pope among the oldest valetudinarians. The hierophant of the Eleusinia was likewise always an old man, and unmarried.

³ [Consult “The Ineffable Name,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁴ This is not correct.

Asgartha, whose *Brahmātma* alone held the keys.¹ He also bore upon his tiara *two crossed keys* supported by two kneeling Brahmans, symbol of the precious deposit of which he had the keeping. . . . This word and this triangle were engraved upon the tablet of the ring that this religious chief wore as one of the signs of his dignity; it was also framed in a golden sun on the altar, where every morning the Supreme Pontiff offered the sacrifice of the sarvamedha, or sacrifice to all the forces of nature.² [32]

Is this clear enough? And will the Catholics still maintain that it was the Brahmans of 4,000 years ago who copied the ritual, symbols, and dress of the Roman Pontiffs? We would not feel in the least surprised.

Without going very far back into antiquity for comparisons, if we only stop at the fourth and fifth centuries of our era, and contrast the so-called “heathenism” of the third Neo-platonic Eclectic School with the growing Christianity, the result may not be favourable to the latter. Even at that early period, when the new religion had hardly outlined its contradictory dogmas; when the champions of the bloodthirsty Cyril knew not themselves whether Mary was to become “the Mother of God,” or rank as a “demon” in company with Isis; when the memory of the meek and lowly Jesus still lingered lovingly in every Christian heart, and his words of mercy and charity vibrated still in the air, even then the Christians were outdoing the Pagans in every kind of ferocity and religious intolerance.

And if we look still farther back, and seek for examples of true *Christism*, in ages when Buddhism had hardly superseded Brahmanism in India, and the name of Jesus was only to be pronounced three centuries later, what do we find? Which of the holy pillars of the Church has ever elevated himself to the level of religious tolerance and noble simplicity of character of some heathen? Compare, for instance, the Hindu Asoka, who lived 300 B.C., and the Carthaginian St. Augustine, who flourished three centuries after Christ. According to Max Müller, this is what is found engraved on the rocks of Girnār, Dhauli, and Kapūrdigiri:

Piyadasi, the king beloved of the gods, desires that the ascetics *of all creeds* might reside in all places. All these ascetics profess alike the command which

¹ [Note 8 by Boris de Zirkoff: The term *Asgartha* or *Asgarta* occurs also in the XXVIIth Chapter of H.P. Blavatsky's story *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*, and is spoken of there as “the city of the Sun” supposedly located in ancient days on the site of the present city of Jājmau. She says that “according to the ancient *Purānas*” *Asgarta* “was built by the Sons of the Sun, two centuries after the conquest of the island *Lankā* by King *Rāma*, in other words 5,000 years B.C., according to the reckoning of the *Brāhmanas*.” She does not indicate what particular *Purāna* she has in mind. The original use of this term has, therefore, not been substantiated and demands further research. However, the most interesting aspect of it is that it bears such a remarkable resemblance to the Norse mythological term *Asgard* or *Asgarth*, properly *Asgarthr* (from *āss*, a divine being, and *garthr*, an enclosure), which occurs in both the Older and the Younger *Edda*. The *Aesir* (pl. of *āss*) were the chief gods of the Teutonic pantheon and included such figures as Odin, Thor, Balder and others. *Asgard* was the abode or citadel of the gods, situated at the zenith and which could be reached only by the bridge *Bifrost*, the rainbow. It is also represented as rising from the centre of *Midgard*. In *Asgard* is the *Ithavoll*, where the gods hold assembly at the base of the tree *Yggdrasil*. There are in *Asgard* *twelve* mansions or realms of the gods, a legend which contains an echo of an esoteric truth concerning the inner structure of the Universe. Whether this legend has its counterpart, or indeed origin, in any of the known *Purānas*, is something left to be ascertained by some competent scholar.]

² *Le spiritisme dans le monde: L'initiation et les sciences occultes dans l'inde et chez tous les peuples de l'antiquité*, pp. 27-28

people should exercise over themselves, and the purity of the soul. *But people have different opinions and different inclinations.*¹

And here is what Augustine wrote after his baptism:

Wondrous depth of thy words! whose surface, behold! is before us, inviting to little ones; yet are they a wondrous depth, O my God, a wondrous depth! It is awful to look therein; yes . . . and awfulness of honour, and a trembling of love. Thy enemies [read Pagans] thereof I *hate* vehemently; O *that thou wouldst slay them* with thy two-edged sword, that they might no longer be enemies to it; for *so do I love to have them slain.* . . .²

Wonderful spirit of Christianity; and that from a Manichean converted to the religion of one who even on his cross prayed for his enemies! [33]

“The Ancient of Days” of the Kabbalists is one with Brahmā in his triune form (Third Logos).

Who the enemies of the “Lord” were, according to the Christians, is not difficult to surmise; the few inside the Augustinian fold were His new children and favourites, who had supplanted in His affections the sons of Israel, His “chosen people.” The rest of mankind were His natural foes. The teeming multitudes of heathendom were proper food for the flames of hell; the handful within the Church communion, “heirs of salvation.”

But if such a proscriptive policy was just, and its enforcement was “sweet savour” in the nostrils of the “Lord,” why not scorn also the Pagan rites and philosophy? Why draw so deep from the wells of wisdom, dug and filled up to brim by the same heathen? Or did the fathers, in their desire to imitate the chosen people whose time-worn shoes they were trying to fit upon their feet, contemplate the re-enactment of the spoliation scene of the *Exodus*?³ Did they propose, in fleeing from heathendom as the Jews did from Egypt, to carry off the valuables of its religious allegories, as the “chosen ones” did the gold and silver ornaments?

It certainly does seem as if the events of the first centuries of Christianity were but the reflection of the images thrown upon the mirror of the future at the time of the *Exodus*. During the stormy days of Irenæus the Platonic philosophy, with its mystical submersion into Deity, was not so obnoxious after all to the new doctrine as to prevent the Christians from helping themselves to its abstruse metaphysics in every way and manner. Allying themselves with the ascetical Therapeutai — forefathers and models of the Christian monks and hermits, it was in Alexandria, let it be remembered, that they laid the first foundations of the purely Platonic Trinitarian doctrine. It became the Plato-Philonean doctrine later, and such as we find it now. Plato considered the divine nature under a threefold modification of the *First Cause*, the reason or *Logos*, and the soul or spirit of the universe. Says Gibbon,

¹ [*Chips*, etc., I, p. 236]

² Augustine, *Confessions*, Bk, XII, ch. xiv (17); quoted by Prof. John William Draper, *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 1975, ch. ii, pp. 60-61.

³ [xii, 35-36]

The three archical or original principles were represented in the Platonic system as three gods, united with each other by a mysterious and ineffable generation.¹

Blending this transcendental idea with the more hypostatic figure of the *Logos* of Philo, whose doctrine was that of the oldest Kabbalah, and who viewed the King Messiah, as the Metatron, or “the angel of the Lord,”² the *Legatus* descended in flesh, but not the *Ancient of Days* Himself;³ the Christians clothed with this mythical representation of the Mediator for the fallen race of Adam, Jesus, the son of Mary. Under this unexpected garb his personality was all but lost. In the modern Jesus of the Christian Church, we find the ideal of the imaginative Irenæus, not the adept [34] of the Essenes, the obscure reformer from Galilee. We see him under the disfigured Plato-Philonean mask, not as the disciples heard him on the mount.

When the Theurgists of the third Neo-platonic school, deprived of their ancient Mysteries, strove to blend the doctrines of Plato with those of Aristotle, and by combining the two philosophies added to their theosophy the primeval doctrines of the Oriental Kabbalah, then the Christians from rivals became persecutors.

For once the metaphysical allegories of Plato were to be discussed in public, all the elaborate system of the Christian trinity would be unravelled and the divine prestige completely upset.

So far then the heathen philosophy had helped them in the building of the principal dogma. But when the Theurgists of the third Neo-platonic school, deprived of their ancient Mysteries, strove to blend the doctrines of Plato with those of Aristotle, and by combining the two philosophies added to their theosophy the primeval doctrines of the Oriental Kabbalah, then the Christians from rivals became persecutors. Once that the metaphysical allegories of Plato were being prepared to be discussed in public in the form of Grecian dialectics, all the elaborate system of the Christian trinity would be unravelled and the divine prestige completely upset. The eclectic school, reversing the order, had adopted the inductive method; and this method became its death-knell. Of all things on earth, logic and reasonable explanations were the most hateful to the new religion of mystery; for they threatened to unveil the whole ground-work of the trinitarian conception; to apprise the multitude of the doctrine of emanations, and thus destroy the unity of the whole. It could not be permitted, and it was not. History records the *Christ*-like means that were resorted to.

The universal doctrine of emanations, adopted from time immemorial by the greatest schools which taught the Kabbalistic, Alexandrian, and Oriental philosophers, gives the key to that panic among the Christian fathers. That spirit of Jesuitism and clerical craft, which prompted Parkhurst, many centuries later, to suppress in his *Hebrew Lexicon* the true meaning of the first word of *Genesis*, originated in those days

¹ *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. xxi

² [Metatron is the Angel of the Jewish Kabbalists, the mediator between spirit and matter, or god and man. Cf. “Among other absurdities, the Kabbalists maintain that the word metatron being divided into *μετα* and *θρονος*, means *near the throne*. It means quite the reverse, as *meta* means “beyond” and not “near.” *Secret Doctrine*, II, p. 479]

³ *Zohar*, Commentary on *Genesis*, xl, 10; *Kabbala denudata*, Vol. I, p. 528

of war against the expiring Neo-platonic and eclectic school. The fathers had decided to pervert the meaning of the word “*daimōn*,”¹ and they dreaded above all to have the esoteric and true meaning of the word *Rēshīht* unveiled to the multitudes; for if once the true sense of this sentence, as well as that of the Hebrew word *ashdoth* (translated in the Septuagint “*angels*,” while it means emanations),² were understood rightly, the mystery of the Christian trinity would have crumbled, carrying in its downfall the new religion into the same heap of ruins with the ancient Mysteries. This is the true reason why dialecticians, as well as Aristotle himself, the “prying philosopher,” were ever obnoxious to Christian theology. Even Luther, while on his work of reform, feeling the ground insecure under his feet, notwithstanding that the dogmas had been reduced by him to their simplest expression, gave full vent to his fear and hatred for Aristotle. The amount of abuse he heaped upon the [35] memory of the great logician can only be equalled — never surpassed — by the Pope’s anathemas and invectives against the liberals of the Italian government. Compiled together, they might easily fill a copy of a new encyclopædia with models for monkish diatribes.

Orphean views of Æther.

Of course the Christian clergy can never get reconciled with a doctrine based on the application of strict logic to discursive reasoning? The number of those who have abandoned theology on this account has never been made known. They have asked questions and been forbidden to ask them; hence, separation, disgust, and often a despairing plunge into the abyss of atheism. The Orphean views of æther as chief *medium between* God and created matter were likewise denounced. The Orphic Æther recalled too vividly the *Archæus*, the Soul of the World, and the latter was in its metaphysical sense as closely related to the emanations, being the first manifestation — Sēphīrah, or Divine Light. And when could the latter be more feared than at that critical moment?

Origen,³ Clemens Alexandrinus,⁴ Chalcidius,⁵ Methodius,⁶ and Maimonides,⁷ on the authority of the *Targum of Jerusalem*, the orthodox and greatest authority of the Jews, held that the first two words in the book of *Genesis* — BE-RĒSHĪTH, mean *Wisdom*, or the *Principle*. And that the idea of these words meaning “*in the beginning*” was never shared but by the profane, who were not allowed to penetrate any deeper into the esoteric sense of the sentence. Beausobre, and after him Godfrey Higgins, have demonstrated the fact. Says the *Kabbalah*:

All things are derived from one principle; and this principle is [the *unknown* and *invisible*] God. From Him a substantial power immediately proceeds, which

¹ Says Philo Judæus:

The beings which the philosophers of other peoples distinguish by the name “Dæmons,” Moses names “Angels.” — *De gigantibus*, § 2; *De opificio mundi*, § 3.

² *Deuteronomy* xxxii, 2. *Ashdoth* is translated “fiery law” in the English Bible.

³ [*De principiis*, III, v]

⁴ [*Stromata*, VI, vii]

⁵ [*Commentarius in Platonis Timæum*]

⁶ [Fragment on “Things Created,” § 8, ap. Photius, *Bibliotheca*, Cod. ccxxxv]

⁷ [*Moreh Nevūkhim* (Guide for the Perplexed), II, ch. xxx]

is the *image of God*, and the source of all subsequent emanations. This second principle sends forth, by the *energy* [or *will* and *force*] of emanation, other natures, which are more or less perfect, according to their different degrees of distance, in the scale of emanation, from the First Source of existence, and which constitute different worlds, or orders of being, all united to the eternal power from which they proceed. *Matter is nothing more than the most remote effect of the emanative energy* of the Deity. The material world receives its form from the immediate agency of powers far beneath the First Source of Being¹ . . . Beausobre makes St. Augustine the Manichean say thus:

And if by *Rēshīth* we understand the *active Principle* of the creation, instead of its *beginning*, in such a case we will clearly perceive that Moses never meant to say [36] that heaven and earth were the first works of God. He only said that God created heaven and earth *through the Principle*, who is His Son. It is not the *time* he points to, but to the immediate author of the creation.²

Angels, according to Augustine, were created *before* the firmament, and according to the esoteric interpretation, the heaven and earth were created after that, evolving from the *second* Principle or the Logos — the creative Deity. Says Beausobre,

The word *principle* does not mean that the heaven and earth were created before anything else, for, to begin with, the *angels* were created before that; but that God did everything through His Wisdom, which is His *Verbum*, and which the Christian *Bible* named the *Beginning*,³

thus adopting the exoteric meaning of the word abandoned to the multitudes. The *Kabbalah* — the Oriental as well as the Jewish — shows that a number of *emanations* (the Jewish Sēphīrōth) issued from the *First* Principle, the chief of which was *Wisdom*. This *Wisdom* is the Logos of Philo, and Michael, the chief of the Gnostic Aīōns; it is the Ormazd of the Persians; *Minerva*, goddess of wisdom, of the Greeks, who emanated from the head of Jupiter; and the second Person of the Christian Trinity. The early Fathers of the Church had not much to exert their imagination; they found a ready-made doctrine that had existed in every theogony for thousands of years before the Christian era. Their trinity is but the trio of Sēphīrōth, the first three kabbalistic *lights* of which Moses Nachmanides says, that

. . . *they have never been seen by any one*; there is not any defect in them, nor any disunion.

The first eternal number is the Father, or the Chaldæan primeval, invisible, and incomprehensible *chaos*, out of which proceeded the *Intelligible* one. The Egyptian Ptah, or “the *Principle of Light* — not the light itself, and the Principle of Life, though himself *no life*.” The *Wisdom* by which the Father created the heavens is the *Son*, or

¹ See Rees, *Cyclopædia*, art. “Cabala.” [Cf. Godfrey Higgins, *Anacalypsis: An Attempt to Draw Aside the Veil of the Saitic Isis or an Inquiry into the Origin of Languages, Nations and Religions*, Vol. I, pp. 72-73.]

² *Histoire critique de Manichée et du manichéisme*, Vol. II, Bk. VI, ch. I, pp. 290-91. [Cf. Higgins, *op. cit.*, I, p. 74.]

³ [*ibid.*, quoting St. Augustine, *De civitate dei*, XI, xxxiii.]

the kabbalistic androgynous Adam Kadmon.¹ The Son is at once the male *Rā*, or Light of Wisdom, Prudence or *Intelligence*, Sephīrāh, the female part of Himself; while from this dual being proceeds the third emanation, the Binah or Reason, the second Intelligence — the Holy Ghost of the Christians. Therefore, strictly speaking, there is a TTRACTYS or quaternary, consisting of the Unintelligible First Monad,² and its triple emanation, which properly constitute our Trinity.

How then avoid perceiving at once, that had not the Christians purposely disfigured in their interpretation and translation the Mosaic *Genesis* to fit their own views, their religion, with its present dogmas, would have been impossible? The word *Rēshīth*, once taught in its new sense of the *Principle* and not the *Beginning*, and the anathematized doctrine of emanations accepted, the position of the second trinitarian personage [37] becomes untenable. For, if the angels are the *first* divine emanations from the Divine Substance, and were in existence *before* the Second Principle, then the anthropomorphized *Son* is at best an emanation like themselves, and cannot be God *hypostatically* any more than our visible works are ourselves. That these metaphysical subtleties never entered into the head of the honest-minded, sincere Paul, is evident; as it is furthermore evident, that like all learned Jews he was well acquainted with the doctrine of emanations and never thought of corrupting it. How can anyone imagine that Paul identified the *Son* with the *Father*, when he tells us that God made Jesus “a *little lower* than the angels,”³ and a *little higher* than Moses! “For this MAN was counted worthy of more glory than Moses.”⁴ Of whatever, or how many forgeries, interlined later in the *Acts*, the Fathers are guilty we know not; but that Paul never considered Christ more than a man “full of the Spirit of God” is but too evident:

In the *archē* was the *Logos*, and the *Logos* was adnate to the *Theos*.⁵

Wisdom is the first emanation of Parabrahman.

Wisdom, the first emanation of Ain-Soph; the Prōtōgonos, the Hypostasis; the Adam Kadmon of the Kabbalist, the Brahmā of the Hindu; the *Logos* of Plato, and the “*Beginning*” of St. John — is the *Rēshīth* — of the *Book of Genesis*. If rightly interpreted it overturns, as we have remarked, the whole elaborate system of Christian theology, for it proves that behind the *creative* Deity, there was a HIGHER god; a planner, an architect; and that the former was but His executive agent — a simple POWER!

¹ [Note to Students: There are four variants of Adam, one for each of the preceding Root-Races:

Adam 1, (Kadmon) or Heavenly Man (Second *Logos*) in the context of the above passage.

Adam 2, of *Genesis*, the ethereal, Self-born Astral Sons of Yoga (First Root-Race, Self-Existent).

Adam 3 plus Eve, the sweat-born, asexual, Sons of Passive Yoga (early Third Root-Race, Lemurian).

Adam 4, of *Genesis*, the womb-born men and women (Fourth Root-Race, Atlantean).]

² [Note to Students: Monad (*μοναδων*, in Greek) is the accusative case of *μονας*. However, as the term is here used in the nominative case (*μονας*), *i.e.*, the subject of the verb, it should be transliterated as monas (*pl.* monases), *i.e.*, the object of the verb, and not as monad (*pl.* monads). The same grammatical rule applies to duad, triad, tetrad, pentad, hexad, heptad, ogdoad, hebdomad, decad, etc. — ED. PHIL.]

³ *Hebrews* ii, 9

⁴ *Hebrews* iii, 3

⁵ [*John* i, 1]

They persecuted the Gnostics, murdered the philosophers, and burned the Kabbalists and the masons; and when the day of the great reckoning arrives, and the light shines in darkness, what will they have to offer in the place of the departed, expired religion? What will they answer, these pretended monotheists, these worshippers and *pseudo*-servants of the one living God, to their Creator? How will they account for this long persecution of them who were the true followers of the grand Megalistor, the supreme great master of the Rosicrucians, the FIRST of masons.

For he is the Builder and Architect of the Temple of the universe; He is the *Verbum Sapienti*.¹

Wrote the great Manichean of the third century, Faustus:

Everyone knows that the Evangeliums were written neither by Jesus Christ, [38] nor his apostles, but long after their time by some unknown persons, who, judging well that they would hardly be believed when telling of things they had not seen themselves, headed their narratives with the names of the apostles or of disciples contemporaneous with the latter.²

Commenting upon the subject, A. Franck, the learned Hebrew scholar of the Institute³ and translator of the *Kabbalah*, expresses the same idea. He asks:

Are we not authorized to view the *Cabala* as a precious remnant of religious philosophy of the Orient, which, transported into Alexandria, got mixed to the doctrine of Plato, and under the usurped name of Dionysius the Areopagite, bishop of Athens, converted and consecrated by St. Paul, was thus enabled to penetrate into the mysticism of the mediæval ages?⁴

Says Jacolliot:

What is then this religious philosophy of the Orient, which has penetrated into the mystic symbolism of Christianity?

We answer: This philosophy, the traces of which we find among the Magians, the Chaldæans, the Egyptians, the Hebrew Kabbalists and the Christians, is none other than that of the Hindu Brahmans, the sectarians of the *pitris*, or the spirits of the invisible worlds which surround us.⁵

But if the Gnostics were destroyed, the *Gnosis*, based on the secret science of sciences, still lives. It is the earth which helps the woman, and which is destined to open her mouth to swallow up mediæval Christianity, the usurper and assassin of the great master's doctrine. The ancient *Kabbalah*, the *Gnosis*, or traditional *secret* knowledge, was never without its representatives in any age or country. The trinities

¹ "The altogether mystical colouring of Christianity harmonized with the Essene rules of life and opinions, and it is not improbable that Jesus and John the Baptist were initiated into the Essene Mysteries, to which Christianity may be indebted for many a form of expression; as indeed the community of Therapeutai, an offspring of the Essene order, soon belonged wholly to Christianity." (Isaak Markus Jost, *The Israelite Indeed*, I, p. 411; quoted by Dunlap in *Söd, the Son of Man*, p. 62.)

² [Faustus, *apud August*, xxxii, 2; xxxiii, 3; cf. Isaac Beausobre, *Histoire critique de Manichée et du manichéisme*, I, p. 287.]

³ [de France]

⁴ *La Kabbale*, Paris 1843, Pt. III, ch. iv, p. 341

⁵ *Le Spiritisme*, etc., p. 215

of initiates, whether passed into history or concealed under the impenetrable veil of mystery, are preserved and impressed throughout the ages. They are known as Moses, Aholiab, and Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, as Plato, Philo, and Pythagoras, etc. At the Transfiguration we see them as Jesus, Moses, and Elias, the three Trismegistoi; and three Kabbalists, Peter, James, and John — whose *revelation* is the key to all wisdom. We found them in the twilight of Jewish history as Zoroaster, Abraham and Terah, and later as Henoah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

Plato's prudent reserve.

Who, of those who ever studied the ancient philosophies, who understand intuitively the grandeur of their conceptions, the boundless sublimity of their views of the Unknown Deity, can hesitate for a moment to give the preference to their doctrines over the incomprehensible dogmatic and contradictory theology of the hundreds of Christian sects? Who that ever read Plato and fathomed his *to ov*, “whom no person has seen except the Son,” can doubt that Jesus was a disciple of the same [39] secret doctrine which had instructed the great philosopher? For, as we have shown before now, Plato never claimed to be the inventor of all that he wrote, but gave credit for it to Pythagoras, who, in his turn, pointed to the remote East as the source whence he derived his information and his philosophy. Colebrooke shows that Plato confesses it in his epistles, and says that he has taken his teachings from ancient and sacred doctrines!¹ Moreover, it is undeniable that the theologies of all the great nations dovetail together and show that each is a part of “one stupendous whole.” Like the rest of the initiates we see Plato taking great pains to conceal the true meaning of his allegories. Every time the subject touches the greater secrets of the Oriental *Kabbalah*, secret of the true cosmogony of the universe and of the *ideal*, pre-existing world, Plato shrouds his philosophy in the profoundest darkness. His *Timæus* is so confused that no one but an *initiate* can understand the secret meaning. And Mosheim² thinks that Philo has filled his works with passages directly contradicting each other for the sole purpose of concealing the true doctrine. For once we see a critic on the right track.

A secret that gives death.

And this very trinitarian idea, as well as the so bitterly denounced doctrine of emanations, whence their remotest origin? The answer is easy, and every proof is now at hand. In the sublime and profoundest of all philosophies, that of the universal “Wisdom-Religion,” the first traces of which, historical research now finds in the old pre-Vedic religion of India. As the much-abused Jacolliot well remarks,

It is not in the religious works of antiquity, such as the *Vedas*, the *Zend Avesta*, the *Bible*, that we have to search for the exact expression of the ennobling and sublime beliefs of those epochs.³

Says *Manu*, in Book XI, śloka 266:⁴

¹ *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, London 1827, Vol. I, pp. 578-79.

² [Note in Ralph Cudworth, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, II, p. 324; London 1845]

³ *Le Spiritism*, etc., p. 13

⁴ [Consult “The Ineffable Name,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

The holy primitive syllable, composed of the three letters [AUM], in which is contained the Vedic Trimurti [Trinity], must be kept secret, like another triple Veda.

Svayambhū is the unrevealed Deity; it is the Being existent through and of itself; he is the central and immortal germ of all that exists in the universe. Three trinities emanate and are confounded in him, forming a Supreme *unity*. These trinities, or the triple *Trimūrti*, are: the Nara, Nārī, and Virāj — the *initial* triad; the Agni, Vāyu, and Sūrya — the *manifested* triad; Brahmā, Vishnu, and Śiva, the *creative* triad. Each of these triads becomes less metaphysical and more adapted to the vulgar intelligence as it descends. Thus the last becomes but the symbol in its concrete expression; the necessarianism of a purely metaphysical conception. [40] Together with Svāyambhuva, they are the ten *Sephīrōth* of the Hebrew Kabbalists, the ten Hindu Prajāpatis — the Ain-Soph of the former, answering to the great *Unknown*, expressed by the mystic AUM of the latter.

Says Franck, the translator of the *Kabbalah*:

The ten Sephīrōth are divided into *three classes*, each of them presenting to us the divinity *under a different aspect*, the whole still remaining an *indivisible Trinity*.

The first three Sephīrōth are purely intellectual in metaphysics, they express the absolute identity of existence and thought, and form what the modern Kabbalists called the intelligible world — which is the first manifestation of God.

The three that follow, make us conceive God in one of their aspects, as the identity of goodness and wisdom; in the other they show to us, in the Supreme good, the origin of beauty and magnificence (in the creation). Therefore, they are named the *virtues*, or the *sensible world*.

Finally, we learn, by the last three Sephīrōth, that the Universal Providence, that the Supreme artist is also *absolute Force*, the all-powerful cause, and that, at the same time, this cause *is the generative element of all that is*. It is these last Sephīrōth that constitute the *natural world*, or nature in its essence and in its *active principle*. *Natura naturans*.¹

This kabbalistic conception is thus proved identical with that of the Hindu philosophy. Whoever reads Plato and his Dialogue *Timæus*, will find these ideas as faithfully re-echoed by the Greek philosopher. Moreover, the injunction of secrecy was as strict with the Kabbalists, as with the initiates of the Adyta and the Hindu Yogis.

Close thy mouth, lest thou should'st speak of *this* [the mystery], and thy heart, lest thou should'st think aloud; and if thy heart has escaped thee, bring it back to its place, for such is the object of our alliance.²

¹ Adolphe Franck, *La Kabbale ou la philosophie religieuse des Hébreux*, Paris 1843, Pt. II, ch. iii, pp. 197-98

² *Sēpher Yetzirāh* (Book of Creation), I, § 7

This is a secret which gives death: close thy mouth lest thou should'st reveal to the vulgar; compress thy brain lest something should escape from it and fall outside.¹

Never did the Neo-platonic school reach such a height of philosophy as when nearest its end.

Truly the fate of many a future generation hung on a gossamer thread, in the days of the third and fourth centuries. Had not the Emperor sent in 389 to Alexandria a rescript — which was forced from him by the Christians — for the destruction of every idol, our own century would never have had a Christian mythological Pantheon of its own. Never did the Neo-platonic school reach such a height of philosophy as when [41] nearest its end. Uniting the mystic theosophy of old Egypt with the refined philosophy of the Greeks; nearer to the ancient Mysteries of Thebes and Memphis than they had been for centuries; versed in the science of soothsaying and divination, as in the art of the Therapeutists; friendly with the acutest men of the Jewish nation, who were deeply imbued with the Zoroastrian ideas, the Neo-Platonists tended to amalgamate the old wisdom of the Oriental *Kabbalah* with the more refined conceptions of the Occidental Theosophists. Notwithstanding the treason of the Christians, who saw fit, for political reasons, after the days of Constantine, to repudiate their tutors, the influence of the new Platonic philosophy is conspicuous in the subsequent adoption of dogmas, the origin of which can be traced but too easily to that remarkable school. Though mutilated and disfigured, they still preserve a strong family likeness, which nothing can obliterate.

But, if the knowledge of the occult powers of nature opens the spiritual sight of man, enlarges his intellectual faculties, and leads him unerringly to a profounder veneration for the Creator, on the other hand ignorance, dogmatic narrow-mindedness, and a childish fear of looking to the bottom of things, invariably leads to fetish-worship and superstition.

Mary-Virgin is only Isis re-christened.

When Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria, had openly embraced the cause of Isis, the Egyptian goddess, and had anthropomorphized her into Mary, the mother of God; and the trinitarian controversy had taken place; from that moment the Egyptian doctrine of the emanation of the creative God out of Emepht² began to be tortured in a thousand ways, until the Councils had agreed upon the adoption of it as it now stands — the disfigured Ternary of the kabbalistic Solomon and Philo! But as its origin was yet too evident, the *Word* was no longer called the “Heavenly man,” the *primal* Adam Kadmon, but became the Logos — Christ, and was made as old as the “Ancient of the Ancient,” his father. The *concealed* WISDOM became identical with its emanation, the DIVINE THOUGHT, and made to be regarded coequal and coeternal with its first manifestation.

If we now stop to consider another of the fundamental dogmas of Christianity, the doctrine of atonement, we may trace it as easily back to heathendom. This corner-

¹ *Agrushada-Parikshai*

² [Cf. Athanasius Kircher, *Sphinx mystagoga*, Amstelodami 1676, Pt. III, ch. iii, p. 52]

stone of a Church which had believed herself built on a firm rock for long centuries, is now excavated by science and proved to come from the Gnostics. Professor Draper shows it as hardly known in the days of Tertullian, and as having “*originated* among the Gnostic heretics.”¹ We will not permit ourselves to contradict such a [42] learned authority, farther than to state that it *originated* among them no more than their “anointed” Christos and Sophia. The former they modelled on the original of the “King Messiah,” the male principle of wisdom, and the latter on the third Sephīrōth, from the Chaldæan *Kabbalah*,² and even from the Hindu Brahmā and Sarasvatī,³ and the Pagan Dionysus and Demeter. And here we are on firm ground, if it were only because it is now proved that the New Testament never appeared in its complete form, such as we find it now, till 300 years after the period of apostles,⁴ and the *Zohar* and other kabbalistic books are found to belong to the first century before our era, if not to be far older still.

The sorcerer’s terrifying deathbed.

The Gnostics entertained many of the Essenean ideas; and the Essenes had their “greater” and “minor” Mysteries at least two centuries before our era. They were the *Ozarim* or *Initiates*, the descendants of the Egyptian hierophants, in whose country they had been settled for several centuries before they were converted to Buddhistic monasticism by the missionaries of King Asoka, and amalgamated later with the earliest Christians; and they existed, probably, before the old Egyptian temples were desecrated and ruined in the incessant invasions of Persians, Greeks, and other conquering hordes. The hierophants had their *atonement* enacted in the Mystery of Initiation ages before the Gnostics, or even the Essenes, had appeared. It was known among hierophants as the BAPTISM OF BLOOD, and was considered not as an atonement for the “fall of man” in Eden, but simply as an expiation for the past, present, and future sins of ignorant but nevertheless polluted mankind. The hierophant had the option of either offering his pure and sinless life as a sacrifice for his race to the gods whom he hoped to rejoin, or an animal victim. The former depended entirely on their own will. At the last moment of the solemn “new birth,” the initiator passed “the word” to the initiated, and immediately after that the latter had a weapon placed in his right hand, and was ordered *to strike*.⁵ This is the true origin of the Christian dogma of atonement. [43]

¹ John William Draper, *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 1875, p. 224

² See *Zohar, Kabbala denudata; Siphra Dtzeniuthah*, the oldest book of the Kabbalists; and Henry Hart Milman, *The history of Christianity from the birth of Christ to the abolition of paganism in the Roman empire*, 1840, pp. 212-15.

³ H.M. Milman, *op. cit.*, p. 280. The *Kurios* and *Kora* are mentioned repeatedly in Justin Martyr. See *First Apology*, ch. 64, etc.

⁴ See Hermann Olshausen, *Biblischer Commentar über sämtliche Schriften des neuen Testaments*, p. 11.

⁵ There is a wide-spread *superstition* (?), especially among the Slavonians and Russians, that the *magician* or *wizard* cannot die before he has passed the “word” to a successor. So deeply is it rooted among the popular beliefs, that we do not imagine there is a person in Russia who has not heard of it. It is but too easy to trace the origin of this superstition to the old Mysteries which had been for ages spread all over the globe. The ancient *Variago-Russ* had his Mysteries in the North as well as in the South of Russia; and there are many relics of the bygone faith scattered in the lands watered by the sacred Dnieper, the baptismal Jordan of all Russia. No *Znachar*’ (the knowing one) or *Koldun* (sorcerer), male or female, can die in fact before he has passed the mysterious word to someone. The popular belief is that unless he does that he will linger and suffer for weeks and months, and were he even finally to get liberated, it would be only to wander on earth, unable to quit its region unless he finds a successor even after death. How far the belief may be verified by others, we do not know, but

Verily the “Christs” of the pre-Christian ages were many. But they died unknown to the world, and disappeared as silently and as mysteriously from the sight of man as Moses from the top of Pisgah, the mountain of Nebo (oracular wisdom), after he had laid his hands upon Joshua, who thus became “full of the spirit of wisdom” (*i.e.*, *initiate*).

Nor does the Mystery of the Eucharist pertain to Christians alone. Godfrey Higgins proves that it was instituted many hundreds of years before the “Paschal Supper,” and says that

. . . the sacrifice of bread and [44] wine was common to many ancient nations.¹

Cicero mentions it in his works, and wonders at the strangeness of the rite. There had been an esoteric meaning attached to it from the first establishment of the Mysteries, and the Eucharistia is one of the oldest rites of antiquity. With the hierophants it had nearly the same significance as with the Christians. Ceres was *bread*, and Bacchus was *wine*;² the former meaning regeneration of life from the seed, and the latter — the grape — the emblem of wisdom and knowledge; the accumulation of the spirit of things, and the fermentation and subsequent strength of that esoteric knowledge being justly symbolized by wine. The mystery related to the drama of Eden; it is said to have been first taught by Janus, who was also the first to intro-

we have seen a case which, for its tragical and mysterious *dénouement*, deserves to be given here as an illustration of the subject in hand. An old man, of over one hundred years of age, a peasant-serf in the government of S * * * , having a wide reputation as a sorcerer and healer, was said to be dying for several days, and still unable to die. The report spread like lightning, and the poor old fellow was shunned by even the members of his own family, as the latter were afraid of receiving the unwelcome inheritance. At last the public rumour in the village was that he had sent a message to a colleague less versed than himself in the art, and who, although he lived in a distant district, was nevertheless coming at the call, and would be on hand early on the following morning. There was at that time on a visit to the proprietor of the village a young physician who, belonging to the famous school of *Nihilism* of that day, laughed outrageously at the idea. The master of the house, being a very pious man, and but half inclined to make so cheap of the “superstition,” smiled — as the saying goes — but with one corner of his mouth. Meanwhile the young sceptic, to gratify his curiosity, had made a visit to the dying man, had found that he could not live twenty-four hours longer, and, determined to prove the absurdity of the “superstition,” had taken means to detain the coming “successor” at a neighbouring village.

Early in the morning a company of four persons, comprising the physician, the master of the place, his daughter, and the writer of the present lines, went to the hut in which was to be achieved the triumph of scepticism. The dying man was expecting his liberator every moment, and his agony at the delay became extreme. We tried to persuade the physician to humour the patient, were it for humanity’s sake. He only laughed. Getting hold with one hand of the old wizard’s pulse, he took out his watch with the other, and remarking in French that all would be over in a few moments, remained absorbed in his professional experiment. The scene was solemn and appalling. Suddenly the door opened, and a young boy entered with the intelligence, addressed to the doctor, that the *kum* was lying dead drunk at a neighbouring village, and, according to *his orders*, could not be with “grandfather” till the next day. The young doctor felt confused, and was just going to address the old man, when, as quick as lightning, the *Znachar* snatched his hand from his grasp and raised himself in bed. His deep-sunken eyes flashed; his yellow-white beard and hair streaming round his livid face made him a dreadful sight. One instant more, and his long, sinewy arms were clasped round the physician’s neck, as with a supernatural force he drew the doctor’s head closer and closer to his own face, where he held him as in a vice, while *whispering* words inaudible to us in his ear. The sceptic struggled to free himself, but before he had time to make one effective motion the work had evidently been done; the hands relaxed their grasp, and the old sorcerer fell on his back — a corpse! A strange and ghostly smile had settled on the stony lips — a smile of fiendish triumph and satisfied revenge; but the doctor looked paler and more ghastly than the dead man himself. He stared round with an expression of terror difficult to describe, and without answering our inquiries rushed out wildly from the hut, in the direction of the woods. Messengers were sent after him, but he was nowhere to be found. About sunset a report was heard in the forest. An hour later his body was brought home, with a bullet through his head, for the sceptic had blown out his brains!

What made him commit suicide? What magic spell of sorcery had the “word” of the dying wizard left on his mind? Who can tell?

¹ *Anacalypsis*, II, 58 *et seq.*, 253; also Tertullian, *De præscriptione hæreticorum*, xl.

² [Cicero, *De natura deorum*, iii, 16]

duce in the temples the sacrifices of “bread” and “wine” in commemoration of the “fall into generation” as the symbol of the “seed.”

I am the vine, and my Father is the husbandman,¹

says Jesus, alluding to the secret knowledge that could be imparted by him.

I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.²

The festival of the Eleusinian Mysteries began in the month of Boëdromion, which corresponds with the month of September, the time of grape-gathering, and lasted from the 15th to the 22nd of the month, *seven* days.³ The Hebrew festival of the Feast of Tabernacles began on the 15th and ended on the 22nd of the month of Ethanim, which Dunlap shows as derived from Adonim, Adonia, Attenim, Ethanim;⁴ and this feast is named in *Exodus*⁵ the feast of *ingathering*.

All the men of Israel assembled unto King Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the *seventh*.⁶ [45]

The Hebrew Kadeshim are identical with the Hindu female nautches.

Plutarch thinks the Feast of the Booths to be the Bacchic rites, not the Eleusinian. Thus “Bacchus was directly called upon,” he says. The *Sabazian* worship was *Sabbatic*; the names Evius, or Hevius, and Luaios are identical with *Hivite* and *Lévite*. The French name Louis is the Hebrew *Lévi*; Iacchus again is Iaō or Jehovah; and Baal or Adon, like Bacchus, was a phallic god. “Who shall ascend into the hill [the high place] of the Lord?” asks the holy king David, “who shall stand in the place of his *Kadesh*”?⁷ *Kadesh* may mean in one sense to *devote*, *hallow*, *sanctify*, and even to initiate or to set apart; but it also means the ministers of lascivious rites (the Venus-worship) and the true interpretation of the word *Kadesh* is bluntly rendered in *Deuteronomy* xxiii, 17; *Hosea* iv, 14; and *Genesis* xxxviii, from verses 15 to 22. The “holy” *Kadeshuth* of the *Bible* were identical, as to the duties of their office, with the Nautch-girls of the later Hindu pagodas. The Hebrew *Kadeshim* or galli lived “by the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the grove,” or bust of Venus-Astartē, says verse the seventh in the twenty-third chapter of *2 Kings*.

The dance performed by David round the ark was the “circle-dance” said to have been prescribed by the Amazons for the Mysteries. Such was the dance of the daughters of Shiloh,⁸ and the leaping of the prophets of Baal.⁹ It was simply a characteris-

¹ [John xv, i]

² [Mark xiv, 25]

³ Charles Anthon, *A dictionary of Greek and Roman antiquities*, art. “Eleusinia”

⁴ Samuel Fales Dunlap, *Söd, the Mysteries of Adoni*, p. 71

⁵ xxiii, 16

⁶ *Kings* viii, 2

⁷ *Psalms* xxiv, 3

⁸ *Judges* xxi, 21, 23 *et passim*

⁹ *1 Kings* xviii, 26

tic of the Sabæan worship, for it denoted the motion of the planets round the sun. That the dance was a Bacchic frenzy is apparent. Sistra were used on the occasion, and the taunt of Michael and the king's reply are very expressive.

The king of Israel uncovered himself before his maidservants as one of the *vain* [or debauched] fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself.

And he retorts:

I will play [act wantonly] before יהוה, and I will be yet more vile than this, and I will be base in my own sight.¹

When we remember that David had sojourned among the Tyrians and Philistines, where their rites were common; and that indeed he had conquered that land away from the house of Saul, by the aid of mercenaries from their country, the countenancing and even, perhaps, the introduction of such a Pagan-like worship by the weak “psalmist” seems very natural. David knew nothing of Moses, it seems, and if he introduced the Jehovah-worship it was not in its monotheistic character, but simply as that of one of the many gods of the neighbouring nations — a tutelary deity to whom he had given the preference, and chosen among “all other gods.”

Following the Christian dogmas *seriatim*, if we concentrate our attention upon one which provoked the fiercest battles until its recognition, that of the Trinity, what do we find? We meet it, as we have shown, northeast of the Indus; and tracing it to Asia Minor and Europe, recognize it among every [46] people who had anything like an established religion. It was taught in the oldest Chaldæan, Egyptian, and Mithraic schools. The Chaldæan Sun-god, Mithra, was called “Triple,” and the trinitarian idea of the Chaldæans was a doctrine of the Akkadians, who, themselves, belonged to a race which was the first to conceive a metaphysical trinity. The Chaldæans are a tribe of the Akkadians, according to Rawlinson, who lived in Babylonia from the earliest times. They were Turanians, according to others, and instructed the Babylonians into the first notions of religion. But these same Akkadians, who were they? Those scientists who would ascribe to them a Turanian origin, make of them the inventors of the cuneiform characters; others call them Sumerians; others again, respectively, make their language, of which (for very good reasons) no traces whatever remain — Kasdean, Chaldaic, Proto-Chaldæan, Kasdo-Scythic, and so on. The only tradition worthy of credence is that these Akkadians instructed the Babylonians in the Mysteries, and taught them the sacerdotal or *Mystery-language*.² These Akkadians were then simply a tribe of the Hindu-Brahmans, now called Āryans — their vernacular language, the Sanskrit³ of the *Vedas*; and the sacred or *Mystery-language*,

¹ [2 *Samuel* vi, 20-22]

² [Consult “Keys to the Mystery Language,” in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ Let us remember in this connection that Col. Vans Kennedy has long ago declared his opinion that Babylonia was once the seat of the Sanskrit language and of Brāhmanical influence.

[*Note 9 by Boris de Zirkoff*: Reference here is to Major-General Vans Kennedy (1784–1846), a very remarkable man and scholar, author of two important works: *Researches into the Origin and Affinity of the principal Languages of Asia and Europe*, London, 1828, 4to.; and *Researches into the Nature and Affinity of Ancient and Hindu Mythology*, London, 1831, 4to. Kennedy's ideas concerning early Buddhist influence on nascent Christianity are strongly supported by Gen. J.G.R. Forlong in his essay “Through what Historical Channels did Buddhism Influence Early Christianity,” published in *The Open Court* for August 18th and September 1st and 18th, 1887.

At the turn of the century, Dr. Heinrich Zimmer, famous professor of Indology at the Universities of Heidelberg, Oxford and Columbia, and other scholars, such as G. Bühler and Vincent A. Smith, had the opportunity, dur-

that which, even in our own age, is used by the Hindu fakirs and initiated Brahmans in their magical evocations.¹ It has been, from time immemorial, and still is employed by the initiates of all countries, and the Thibetan lamas claim that it is in this tongue that appear the mysterious characters on the leaves and bark of the sacred Kum-bum.

Is Jacolliot an unmitigated humbug?

Jacolliot, who took such pains to penetrate the mysteries of the Brahmanical initiation in translating and commenting upon the *Agrushada-Parikshai*, confesses the following:

It is pretended also, without our being able to verify the assertion, that the magical evocations were pronounced in a particular language, and that it was forbidden, under pain of death, to translate them into vulgar dialects. The rare expressions that we have been able to catch like — *L'rhom, h'hom, sh'krum, sho'rhim*, are in fact most curious, and do not seem to belong to any known idiom.²

Those who have seen a fakir or a lama reciting his mantras and conjurations, know that he never pronounces the words audibly when preparing for [47] a phenomenon. His lips move, and none will ever hear the terrible formula pronounced, except in the interior of the temples, and then in a cautious whisper. This, then, was the language now respectively baptized by every scientist, and, according to his imaginative and philological propensities, Kasdeo-Semitic, Scythic, Proto-Chaldæan, and the like.

Scarcely two of even the most learned Sanskrit philologists are agreed as to the true interpretation of Vedic words. Let one put forth an essay, a lecture, a treatise, a translation, a dictionary, and straightway all the others fall to quarrelling with each other and with him as to his sins of omission and commission. Professor Whitney, greatest of American Orientalists, says that Professor Müller's notes on the *Rig-Veda-Samhitā* "are far from showing that sound and thoughtful judgment, that moderation and economy which are among the most precious qualities of an exegete."³ Professor Müller angrily retorts upon his critics that "not only is the joy embittered which is the inherent reward of all *bona fide* work, but selfishness, malignity, aye, even *untruthfulness*, gain the upper hand, and the healthy growth of science is stunted." He differs "in many cases from the explanations of Vedic words given by Professor R. Roth" in his *Sanskrit Dictionary*, and Professor Whitney shampoos both their heads

ing their studies in India, to visit an old monastery in the Barabar and Nagarjuni Hills. They were allowed to enter a sacred cave where they saw — probably as the first Western scholars — the *Edict XIII* of Emperor Aśoka cut into the rock. Pertinent information on this may be had by consulting Bühler's article, "The Barabar and Nagarjuni Hill Cave Inscriptions of Aśoka and Daśaratha," in *The Indian Antiquary*, XX (1891), pp. 361 *et seq.*; *The Edicts of Aśoka* by V.A. Smith (London, 1909), p. 20; and Zimmer's two works: *Aśoka, the Buddhist Emperor of India* (Oxford, 1909), and *Philosophies of India* (published posthumously in 1951), chapter on "The Great Buddhist Kings."]

¹ "The *Agrushada-Parikshai*, which discloses, to a certain extent, the order of initiation, does not give the formula of evocation," says Jacolliot, and he adds that, according to some Brahmans, "these formulæ were never written, they were and still are imparted in a whisper in the ear of the adepts" ("*mouth to ear, and the word at low breath*," say the Masons).

² Louis Jacolliot, *Le spiritisme dans le monde: L'initiation et les sciences occultes dans l'inde et chez tous les peuples de l'antiquité*, p. 108

³ [Oriental and Linguistic Studies, p. 138]

by saying that there are, unquestionably, words and phrases “as to which both alike will hereafter be set right.”

In Volume I of his *Chips*, Professor Müller stigmatizes all the *Vedas* except the *Rig*, the *Atharva-Veda* included, as “theological twaddle,” while Professor Whitney regards the latter as “the most comprehensive and valuable of the four collections, next after the *Rig*.”¹

To return to the case of Jaccoliot. Professor Whitney brands him as a “bungler and a humbug,” and, as we remarked above, this is the very general verdict. But when the *Bible dans l’Inde* appeared, the Société Académique de Saint Quentin requested Textor de Ravisi, a learned Indianist, ten years Governor of Karaikal, India, to report upon its merits. He was an ardent Catholic, and bitterly opposed Jaccoliot’s conclusions where they discredited the Mosaic and Catholic revelations; but he was forced to say:

Written with good faith, in an easy, vigorous, and passionate style, of an easy and varied argumentation, the work of M. Jaccoliot is of absorbing interest . . . a learned work on known facts and with familiar arguments.²

Enough. Let Jaccoliot have the benefit of the doubt when such very imposing authorities are doing their best to show up each other as incompetents and literary journeymen. We quite agree with Professor Whitney that

. . . the truism, that [for European critics?] it is far easier to [48] pull to pieces than to build up, is nowhere truer than in matters affecting the archæology and history of India.³

Babylonia happened to be situated on the way of the great stream of the earliest Hindu emigration, and the Babylonians were one of the first peoples benefited thereby.⁴ These Khaldi were the worshippers of the Moon-god, Deus Lunus, from which fact we may infer that the Akkadians — if such must be their name — belonged to the race of the Kings of the Moon, whom tradition shows as having reigned in Prayāga — now Allāhābād. With them the trinity of Deus-Lunus was manifested in the three lunar phases, completing the quaternary with the fourth, and typifying the death of the Moon-god in its gradual waning and final disappearance. This death was allegorized by them, and attributed to the triumph of the genius of evil over the light-giving deity; as the later nations allegorized the death of their Sun-gods, Osiris and Apollo, at the hands of Typhon and the great Dragon Python, when the sun entered

¹ *Oriental and Linguistic Studies*, p. 147]

² [Louis Jaccoliot, *Christna et le Christ*, 1876, p. 339]

³ W.D. Whitney, *Oriental and Linguistic Studies*, p. 98

⁴ Jaccoliot seems to have very logically demonstrated the absurd contradictions of some philologists, anthropologists, and Orientalists, in regard to their *Akkado- and Semito-*mania. He writes:

There is not, perhaps, much of good faith in their negations. The scientists who invent Turanian peoples know very well that in *Manu* alone, there is more of veritable science and philosophy than in all that this pretended Semitism has hitherto furnished us with; but they are the slaves of a path which some of them are following the last fifteen, twenty, or even thirty years. . . . We expect, therefore, nothing of the present. India will owe its reconstitution to the scientists of the next generation. (*La genèse de l’humanité: Fétichisme, Polythéisme, Monothéisme*, pp. 60-61)

the winter solstice. Babel, Arach, and Akkad are names of the sun. The *Zoroastrian Oracles* are full and explicit upon the subject of the Divine Triad.¹

A triad of Deity shines forth throughout the whole world, of which a Monad is the head,

admits the Reverend Dr. Maurice.

The trinities of various religions.

All things governed in the bosoms of this triad, in the bosoms, says a Chaldæan oracle.² The Phōs, Pyr, and Phlox, of Sanchoniathon,³ are Light, Fire, and Flame, three manifestations of the Sun who is *one*. Bel-Saturn, Jupiter-Bel, and Bel or Baal-Chom are the Chaldæan trinity;⁴

The Babylonian Bel was regarded in the Triune aspect of Belitan, Zeus-Belus (the mediator) and Baal-Chom who is Apollo Chomæus. This was the Triune aspect of the “Highest God,” who is, according to Berosus, either El [the Hebrew], Bel, Belitan, Mithra, or Zervana, and has the name *πατηρ*, “the Father.”⁵

The Brahmā, Vishnu, and Śiva,⁶ corresponding to Power, Wisdom, and Justice, [49] which answer in their turn to Spirit, Matter, Time, and the Past, Present, and Future, can be found in the temple of Gharapuri; thousands of dogmatic Brahmans worship these attributes of the Vedic Deity, while the severe monks and nuns of Buddhistic Thibet recognize but the sacred trinity of the three cardinal virtues: *Pov-erty*, *Chastity*, and *Obedience*, professed by the Christians, practiced by the Buddhists and some Hindus alone.

The Persian triplicate Deity also consists of three persons, Ormazd, Mithra, and Ahriman.⁷ It is that principle, of which the author of the *Chaldaic Summary* says, “*They conceive there is one principle of all things, and declare that is one and good.*”⁸ The Chinese idol Sanpao, consists of three equal in all respects;⁹ and the Peruvians “supposed their Tanga-tanga to be one in three, and three in one,” says Faber.¹⁰ The Egyptians have their Emept, Eikton, and Ptah;¹¹ and the triple god seated on the

¹ [Isaac Preston Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, p. 6. Full text in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [John Lydus, *De mensibus*, 20; cf. Cory, *op. cit.*, p. 245.]

³ [Cory, *op. cit.*, p. 6]

⁴ Franz Carl Movers, *Die Phönizier*, Vol. I, p. 263

⁵ Samuel Fales Dunlap, *Vestiges of the Spirit-history of Man*, p. 281

⁶ Śiva is not a god of the *Vedas*, strictly speaking. When the *Vedas* were written, he held the rank of Mahā-Deva or Bel among the gods of aboriginal India.

⁷ [Plutarch, *On Isis and Osiris*, § 46]

⁸ [S. Gallæus (Servatius Gallé), *Summ. Chald.* (Pselli expos.), in App. (p. 111) to *Sibyllina oracula*, Amsterdam 1689]

⁹ Domingo Fernández Navarrete, *Tratados históricos, políticos, éticos y religiosos de la monarquía de China*, Madrid 1676., Bk. II, ch. x

¹⁰ *On the Origin of Heathen Idolatry*, Vol. I, p. 269; ed. 1816

¹¹ [Iamblichus, *De mysteriis*, VIII, 3]

Lotos can be seen in the St. Petersburg Museum, on a medal of the Northern Tartars.¹

Paganism was modified by Christianity, and vice versa.

Among the Church dogmas which have most seriously suffered of late at the hands of the Orientalists, the last in question stands conspicuous. The reputation of each of the three personages of the anthropomorphic godhead as an original revelation to the Christians through Divine will, has been badly compromised by inquiry into its predecessors and origin. Orientalists have published more about the similarity between Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Christianity than was strictly agreeable to the Vatican. Draper's assertion that "Paganism was modified by Christianity, Christianity by Paganism,"² is being daily verified. "Olympus was restored but the divinities passed under other names," he says, treating of the Constantine period:

The more powerful provinces insisted on the adoption of their time-honoured conceptions. Views of the trinity in accordance with the Egyptian traditions were established. Not only was the adoration of Isis under a new name restored, but even her image, standing on the crescent moon, reappeared. The well-known effigy of that goddess with the infant Horus in her arms has descended to our days, in the beautiful artistic creations of the Madonna and child.³

But a still earlier origin than the Egyptian and Chaldæan can be assigned to the Virgin "Mother of God," Queen of Heaven. Though Isis [50] is also by right the Queen of Heaven, and is generally represented carrying in her hand the Crux Ansata composed of the mundane cross, and of the Stauros of the Gnostics, she is a great deal younger than the celestial virgin, Neith. In one of the tombs of the Pharaohs — [that of] Rameses — in the valley of Bibān al-Molūk in Thebes, Champollion Jr. discovered a picture, according to his opinion the most ancient ever yet found. It represents the heavens symbolized by the figure of a woman bedecked with stars. The birth of the Sun is figured by the form of a little child, issuing from the bosom of its "Divine Mother."⁴

In the *Book of Hermes*, "Poimandrēs" is enunciated in distinct and unequivocal sentences, the whole trinitarian dogma accepted by the Christians. "The light is me," says Poimandrēs, the DIVINE THOUGHT.

I am the *nous* or intelligence, and I am thy god, and I am far older than the human principle which escapes from the shadow. I am the germ of thought, the resplendent WORD, the SON of GOD. Think that what thus sees and hears in

¹ [George Stanley Faber, *A dissertation on the mysteries of the Cabiri; or, The great gods of Phœnicia, Samothrace, Egypt, Troas, Greece, Italy, and Crete; being an attempt to deduce the several orgies of Isis, Ceres, Mithras, Bacchus, Rhea, Adonis, and Hecate, from a union of the rites commemorative of the deluge with the adoration of the hosts of heaven*, I, p. 315, note]

² Isis and Osiris are said, in the Egyptian sacred books, to have appeared (*i.e.*, been worshipped), on earth, later than Thot, the first Hermes, called Trismegistus, who wrote all their sacred books according to the command of God or by "divine revelation." The companion and instructor of Isis and Osiris was Thot, or Hermes II, who was an incarnation of the celestial Hermes.

³ [John William Draper, *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 1875, pp. 47-48]

⁴ [Jacques Joseph Champollion-Figeac, *Égypte ancienne*, p. 104]

thee, is the *Verbum* of the Master, it is the Thought, which is God the Father. . . . The celestial ocean, the ÆTHER, which flows from east to west, is the Breath of the Father, the life-giving Principle, the HOLY GHOST!

For they are not at all separated and their union is LIFE.¹

Ancient as may be the origin of Hermes, lost in the unknown days of Egyptian colonization, there is yet a far older prophecy, directly relating to the Hindu Krishna, according to the Brahmans. It is, to say the least, strange that the Christians claim to base their religion upon a prophecy of the *Bible*, which exists nowhere in that book. In what chapter or verse does Jehovah, the “Lord God,” promise Adam and Eve to send them a Redeemer who will save humanity? Says the Lord God to the serpent:

I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.²

In these words there is not the slightest allusion to a Redeemer, and the subtlest of intellects could not extract from them, as they stand in the third chapter of *Genesis*, anything like that which the Christians have contrived to find. On the other hand, in the traditions and *Manu*, Brahmā promises directly to the first couple to send them a Saviour who will teach them the way to salvation. Says *Manu*:

It is from the lips of a messenger of Brahmā, who will be born in Kurukshetra, Matsya, and the land of Panchāla, also called Kanya-Kubja [mountain of the Virgin], that all men on earth will learn their duty.³

The Mexicans call the Father of their Trinity Izamma, the Son Bacab, and the Holy Ghost Echuak, “and say they received it [the doctrine] [51] from their ancestors.”⁴ Among the Semitic nations we can trace the trinity to the prehistorical days of the fabled Sesostrius, who is identified by more than one critic with Nimrod, “the mighty hunter.” Manetho makes the oracle rebuke the king, when the latter asks,

Tell me, O thou strong in fire, who before me could subjugate all things? and who shall after me?

And the oracle saith thus:

First God, then the Word, and then “the Spirit.”⁵



¹ [L. Ménard, *Hermès Trismégiste*, Paris 1867, livre 1^{er}, ch. 1]

² [*Genesis* iii, 15]

³ Book II, ślokas 19 and 20

⁴ Lord Kingsborough, *The Antiquities of Mexico*, London 1830–48, p. 165

⁵ Joannes Malala, *Historia Chronica*, Oxford 1691, Bk. I, cap. iv

Either the Pagan worship and the Neo-platonic theurgy, with all ceremonial of magic, must be crushed out forever, or the Christians become Neo-Platonists.

In the foregoing lies the foundation of the fierce hatred of the Christians toward the “Pagans” and the Theurgists. Too much had been *borrowed*; the ancient religions and the Neo-Platonists had been laid by them under contribution sufficiently to perplex the world for several thousand years. Had not the ancient creeds been speedily obliterated, it would have been found impossible to preach the Christian religion as a New Dispensation, or the direct Revelation from God the Father, through God the Son, and under the influence of God the Holy Ghost. As a political exigence the Fathers had — to gratify the wishes of their rich converts — instituted even the festivals of Pan. They went so far as to accept the ceremonies hitherto celebrated by the Pagan world in honour of the *God of the gardens*, in all their primitive *sincerity*.¹ It was time to sever the connection. Either the Pagan worship and the Neo-platonic theurgy, with all ceremonial of magic, must be crushed out forever, or the Christians become Neo-Platonists.

The original and pure forms of the most important ecclesiastical doctrines of Christianity are to be found only in the teachings of Plato.

The fierce polemics and single-handed battles between Irenæus and the Gnostics are too well known to need repetition. They were carried on for over two centuries after the unscrupulous Bishop of Lyons had uttered his last religious paradox. Celsus, the Neo-Platonist, and a disciple of the school of Ammonius Saccas, had thrown the Christians into perturbation, and even had arrested for a time the progress of proselytism by successfully proving that the original and purer forms of the most important dogmas of Christianity were to be found only in the teachings of Plato. Celsus accused them of accepting the worst superstitions of Paganism, and of interpolating passages from the books of the Sibyls, without rightly understanding their meaning. The accusations were so plausible, and the facts so patent, that for a long time no Christian writer had ventured to answer the challenge. Origen, at the fervent request of his friend, Ambrosius, was the first to take the defence in hand, for, having belonged to the same Platonic school of Ammonius, he was considered the most competent man to refute the well-founded charges. But his eloquence failed, and the only remedy that could be found was to destroy the writings of [52] Celsus themselves.² This could be achieved only in the fifth century, when copies had been taken from this work, and many were those who had read and studied them. If no copy of it has descended to our present generation of scientists, it is not because there is none extant at present, but for the simple reason that the monks of a certain Oriental church on Mount Athos will neither show nor confess they have one in their posses-

¹ Richard Payne Knight, *A discourse on the worship of Priapus, and its connection with the mystic theology of the ancients*, London 1865, pp. 171 et seq.

² The Celsus above mentioned, who lived between the second and third centuries, is not Celsus the Epicurean. The latter wrote several works against Magic, and lived earlier, during the reign of Hadrian.

sion.¹ Perhaps they do not even know themselves the value of the contents of their manuscripts, on account of their great ignorance.

The dispersion of the Eclectic school had become the fondest hope of the Christians.

During the lifetime of the youthful Hypatia her friendship and influence with Orestes, the governor of the city, had assured the philosophers' security and protection against their murderous enemies. With her death they had lost their strongest friend.

The dispersion of the Eclectic school had become the fondest hope of the Christians. It had been looked for and contemplated with intense anxiety. It was finally achieved. The members were scattered by the [53] hand of the monsters Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, and his nephew Cyril — the murderer of the young, the learned, and the innocent Hypatia!²

There has never been a religion in the annals of the world with such a bloody record as Christianity.

How a saint was butchered and butchers sainted.

With the death of the martyred daughter of Theon, the mathematician, there remained no possibility for the Neo-Platonists to continue their school at Alexandria. During the lifetime of the youthful Hypatia her friendship and influence with Orestes, the governor of the city, had assured the philosophers' security and protection against their murderous enemies. With her death they had lost their strongest friend. How much she was revered by all who knew her for her erudition, noble virtues, and character, we can infer from the letters addressed to her by Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais, fragments of which have reached us. "My heart yearns for the presence of your divine spirit," he wrote in 413 A.D., "which more than anything else could alleviate the bitterness of my fortunes." At another time he says:

¹ We have the facts from a trustworthy witness, having no interest to invent such a story. Having injured his leg in a fall from the steamer into the boat in which he was to land at the Mount, he was taken care of by these monks, and during his convalescence, through gifts of money and presents, became their greatest friend, and finally won their entire confidence. Having asked for the loan of some books, he was taken by the Superior to a large cellar in which they keep their sacred vessels and other property. Opening a great trunk, full of old musty manuscripts and rolls, he was invited by the Superior to "amuse himself." The gentleman was a scholar, and well versed in Greek and Latin text. "I was amazed," he says, in a private letter, "and had my breath taken away, on finding among these old parchments, so unceremoniously treated, some of the most valuable relics of the first centuries, hitherto believed to have been lost." Among others he found a half-destroyed manuscript, which he is perfectly sure must be a copy of the "True Doctrine," the *λογος αληθης* of Celsus, out of which Origen quoted whole pages. The traveller took as many notes as he could on that day, but when he came to offer to the Superior to purchase some of these writings he found, to his great surprise, that no amount of money would tempt the monks. They did not know what the manuscripts contained, nor "did they care," they said. But the "heap of writing," they added, was transmitted to them from one generation to another, and there was a tradition among them that these papers would one day become the means of crushing the "Great Beast of the Apocalypse," their hereditary enemy, the Church of Rome. They were constantly quarrelling and fighting with the Catholic monks, and among the whole "heap" they *knew* that there was a "holy" relic which protected them. They did not know which, and so in their doubt abstained. It appears that the Superior, a shrewd Greek, understood his *bévue* [blunder] and repented of his kindness, for first of all he made the traveller give him his most sacred word of honour, strengthened by an oath he made him take on the image of the Holy Patroness of the Island, never to betray their secret, and never mention, at least, the name of their convent. And finally, when the anxious student who had passed a fortnight in reading all sorts of antiquated trash before he happened to stumble over some precious manuscript, expressed the desire to have the key, to "amuse himself" with the writings once more, he was very *naively* informed that the "key had been lost," and that they did not know where to look for it. And thus he was left to the few notes he had taken.

² See the historical romance of Canon Kingsley, *Hypatia*, for a highly picturesque account of the tragical fate of this young martyr.

Oh, my mother, my sister, my teacher, my benefactor! My soul is very sad. The recollection of my children I have lost is killing me. . . . When I have news of you and learn, as I hope, that you are more fortunate than myself, I am at least only half-unhappy.¹

What would have been the feelings of this most noble and worthy of Christian bishops, who had surrendered family and children and happiness for the faith into which he had been attracted, had a prophetic vision disclosed to him that the only friend that had been left to him, his “mother, sister, benefactor,” would soon become an unrecognizable mass of flesh and blood, pounded to jelly under the blows of the club of Peter the Reader — that her youthful, innocent body would be cut to pieces, “the flesh scraped from the bones,” by oyster-shells and the rest of her cast into the fire, by order of the same Bishop Cyril he knew so well — Cyril, the CANONIZED Saint!!²

There has never been a religion in the annals of the world with such a bloody record as Christianity. All the rest, including the traditional fierce fights of the “chosen people” with their next of kin, the idolatrous tribes of Israel, pale before the murderous fanaticism of the alleged followers of Christ! Even the rapid spread of Mohammedanism before the conquering sword of the Islam prophet, is a direct consequence of the [54] bloody riots and fights among Christians. It was the intestine war between the Nestorians and Cyrilians that engendered Islamism; and it is in the convent of Basra that the prolific seed was first sown by Bahira, the Nestorian monk. Freely watered by rivers of blood, the tree of Mecca has grown till we find it in the present century overshadowing nearly two hundred millions of people. The recent Bulgarian atrocities are but the natural outgrowth of the triumph of Cyril and the Mariolaters.

The cruel, crafty politician, the plotting monk, glorified by ecclesiastical history with the aureole of a martyred saint. The despoiled philosophers, the Neo-Platonists, and the Gnostics, daily anathematized by the Church all over the world for long and dreary centuries. The curse of the unconcerned Deity hourly invoked on the magian rites and theurgic practice, and the Christian clergy themselves using *sorcery* for ages. Hypatia, the glorious maiden-philosopher, torn to pieces by the Christian mob.

¹ [Epistolæ, X and XVI]

² We beg the reader to bear in mind that it is the same Cyril who was accused and proved guilty of having sold the gold and silver ornaments of his church, and spent the money. He pleaded guilty, but tried to excuse himself on the ground that he had used the money for the poor, but could not give evidence of it. His duplicity with Arius and his party is well known. Thus one of the first Christian saints, and the founder of the Trinity, appears on the pages of history as a murderer and a thief!

[Note 10 by Boris de Zirkoff: This footnote embodies an unfortunate error. Either H.P. Blavatsky herself or someone else who may have been helping her editorially at the time, confused Bishop Cyril of Alexandria with Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem. The former, whose year of birth is not known, after having been a presbyter of the church at Alexandria, succeeded to the episcopal chair on the death of Theophilus, A.D. 412. Cyril of Jerusalem, on the other hand, was probably born around A.D. 315, and was chosen to fill the episcopal chair in A.D. 351, in the reign of Constantius. The accusations against Cyril, as they appear in Blavatsky’s footnote, apply to Cyril of Jerusalem and not to Cyril of Alexandria. However, the latter was a man whose character was anything but “saintly.” He was openly accused of simony, dishonesty, and the prostitution of his office to personal ends, and August Neander (*General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, IV, 133ff.) pictures him as violent, tyrannical, a hypocrite and a liar. Isidor, Bishop of Pelusium, in a letter addressed to Cyril himself (*Epistles*, No. 370) wrote:

Let not the punishment, which you deem it necessary to inflict on mortal men on account of personal grievances, fall upon the living church. Prepare not the way for perpetual division of the church under the pretence of piety.

It follows, therefore, that the last sentence of Blavatsky’s footnote is partially warranted, though the footnote as a whole is not.]

And such as Catherine of Medici, Lucrezia Borgia, Joanna of Naples, and the Isabelas of Spain, presented to the world as the faithful daughters of the Church — some even decorated by the Pope with the order of the “Immaculate Rose,” the highest emblem of womanly purity and virtue, a symbol sacred to the Virgin-mother of God! Such are the examples of human justice! How far less blasphemous appears a total rejection of Mary as an immaculate goddess, than an idolatrous worship of her, accompanied by such practices.

In the next chapter we will present a few illustrations of sorcery, as practiced under the patronage of the Roman Church.



Part 2.

Christian crimes and Heathen virtues

From H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, ch. 2: CHRISTIAN CRIMES AND HEATHEN VIRTUES, pp. 55-122.
Edited and typographically enhanced by Philaletheians UK.

One undertakes by scales of miles to tell
The bounds, dimensions, and extent of hell;

* * * * *

Where bloated souls in smoky durance hung
Like a Westphalia gammon or neat's tongue,
To be redeemed with masses and a song.

— J. OLDHAM, *Satires upon the Jesuits*, 1968

York: But you are more inhuman, more inexorable
O! ten times more, than tigers of Hyrcania.

— SHAKESPEARE, *King Henry VI*, Part III, Act I, scene iv, lines
154-55

Warwick: And hark ye, sirs; because she is a maid,
Spare for no faggots, let there be enow;
Place barrels of pitch upon the fatal stake:
That so her torture may be shortened.

— SHAKESPEARE, *ibid.*, Part I, Act V, scene iv, lines 55-57

Poor fools, hysterical women, and idiots were roasted alive, without mercy, for the crime of so-called “magic.”

In that famous work of Bodin, on sorcery,¹ a frightful story is told about Catherine of Medici. The author was a learned publicist, who, during twenty years of his life, collected authentic documents from the archives of nearly every important city of France, to make up a complete work on sorcery, magic, and the power of various “demons.” To use an expression of Éliphas Lévi, his book offers a most remarkable collection of

. . . bloody and hideous facts; acts of revolting superstition, arrests, and executions of stupid ferocity. Burn everybody! the Inquisition seemed to say — God will easily sort out His own! Poor fools, hysterical women, and idiots were roasted alive, without mercy, for the crime of magic. But, at the same time, how many great culprits escaped this unjust and sanguinary *justice!* This is what Bodin makes us fully appreciate.²

Catherine, the pious Christian — who has so well deserved in the eyes of the Church of Christ for the atrocious and never-to-be-forgotten massacre of St. Bartholomew — the Queen Catherine, kept in her service an apostate Jacobin priest. Well versed in the “black art,” so fully patronized by the Medici family, he had won the gratitude and protection of his pious mistress, by his unparalleled skill in killing people at a

¹ *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, Paris 1587, Bk. II, ch. iii, pp. 78-79

² [*Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*, etc., II, ch. xv]

distance, by torturing with various incantations their wax simulacra. The process has been described over and over again, and we scarcely need repeat it. [56]

Charles was lying sick of an incurable disease. The queen-mother, had everything to lose in case of his death, resorted to necromancy, consulted the oracle of the “bleeding head.” This infernal operation required the decapitation of a child who must be possessed of great beauty and purity. He had been prepared in secret for his first communion, by *the chaplain* of the palace, who was apprised of the plot, and at midnight of the appointed day, in the chamber of the sick man, and in presence only of Catherine and a few of her confederates, the “devil’s mass” was celebrated. Let us give the rest of the story as we find it in one of Lévi’s works:

At this mass, celebrated before the image of the demon, having under his feet a reversed cross, the sorcerer consecrated two wafers, one black and one white. The white was given to the child, whom they brought clothed as for baptism, and who was murdered upon the very steps of the altar, immediately after his communion. His head, separated from the trunk by a single blow, was placed, all palpitating, upon the great black wafer which covered the bottom of the paten, then placed upon a table where some mysterious lamps were burning. The exorcism then began, and the demon was charged to pronounce an oracle, and reply by the mouth of this head to a secret question that the king dared not speak aloud, and that had been confided to no one. Then a feeble voice, a strange voice, which had nothing of human character about it, made itself audible in this poor little martyr’s head.¹

The sorcery availed nothing; the king died, and Catherine remained the faithful daughter of Rome!

How strange, that des Mousseaux, who makes such free use of Bodin’s materials to construct his formidable indictment against Spiritualists and other sorcerers, should have overlooked this interesting episode!

Magic and sorcery are rife among popes, bishops, and priests.

Benedict IX, John XX, and Gregories VI and VII, are known magicians.

It is a well-attested fact that Pope Sylvester II was publicly accused by Cardinal Beno with being a sorcerer and an enchanter. The brazen “oracular head” made by his Holiness was of the same kind as the one fabricated by Albertus Magnus. The latter was smashed to pieces by Thomas Aquinas, not because it was the work of or inhabited by a “demon,” but because the spook who was fixed inside, by mesmeric power, talked incessantly, and his verbiage prevented the eloquent saint from working out his mathematical problems. These heads and other talking statues, trophies of the magical skill of monks and bishops, were facsimiles of the “animated” gods of the ancient temples. The accusation against the Pope was proved at the time. It was also demonstrated that he was constantly attended by “demons” or spirits. In the preced-

¹ [É. Lévi, I, pp. 219 *et seq.*]

ing chapter we have mentioned Benedict IX, John XX, and the VIth and VIIth Gregory, who were all known as magicians. The latter Pope, moreover, was the famous Hildebrand, who was said to have [57] been so expert at “shaking lightning out of his sleeve.” An expression which makes the venerable spiritualistic writer, Mr. Howitt, think that “it was the origin of the celebrated thunder of the Vatican.”¹

The magical achievements of the Bishop of Ratisbon and those of the “angelic doctor,” Thomas Aquinas, are too well known to need repetition; but we may explain farther how the “illusions” of the former were produced. If the Catholic bishop was so clever in making people believe on a bitter winter night that they were enjoying the delights of a splendid summer day, and cause the icicles hanging from the boughs of the trees in the garden to seem like so many tropical fruits, the Hindu magicians also practice such biological powers unto this very day, and claim the assistance of neither god nor devil. Such “miracles” are all produced by the same human power that is inherent in every man, if he only knew how to develop it.

About the time of the Reformation, the study of alchemy and magic had become so prevalent among the clergy as to produce great scandal. Cardinal Wolsey was openly accused before the court and the privy-council of confederacy with a man named Wood, a sorcerer, who said that:

*“My Lord Cardinale had suche a ryngte that whatsomevere he askyd of the Kynges grace that he hadd yt”; adding that “Master Cromwell, when he . . . was servaunt in my lord cardynales housse . . . rede many bokes and specyally the boke of Salamon . . . and studied mettells and what vertues they had after the canon of Salamon.”*²

This case, with several others equally curious, is to be found among the Cromwell papers in the Record Office of the Rolls House.³

In the latter part of the sixteenth century there was hardly a parish to be found in which the priests did not study magic and alchemy.

The practice of exorcism to cast out devils “in imitation of Christ,” who by the way never used exorcism at all, led the clergy to devote themselves openly to “sacred” magic in contradistinction to black art, of which latter crime were accused all those who were neither priests nor monks.

A priest named William Stapleton was arrested as a conjurer, during the reign of Henry VIII, and an account of his adventures is still preserved in the Rolls House records. The Sicilian priest whom Benvenuto Cellini calls a necromancer, became famous through his successful conjurations, and was never molested. The remarkable adventure of Cellini with him in the Colosseum, where the priest conjured up a

¹ [William Howitt, *The History of the Supernatural*, 1863, 2-vols, I, p. 483]

² [Note 11 by Boris de Zirkoff: For the sake of accuracy, it would be preferable to alter this passage to read thus: . . . a man named Wood, a sorcerer, who said [on the authority of one William Neville, an inmate of the Cardinal’s house] that “*My Lord Cardinale had suche a ryngte that whatsomevere he askyd of the Kynges grace that he hadd yt*”; adding that “*Master Cromwell, when he . . . was servaunt in my lord cardynales housse,*” [was reported to owe his advancement to such arts and his association with Wood, who further acknowledged himself to have] “*rede many bokes, and specyally the boke of Salomon . . . and studied mettells and what vertues they had after the canon of Salomon.*” . . .

³ [Thomas Wright, *Narratives of Sorcery and Magic, from the Most Authentic Sources*, Vol. I, pp. 203-4]

whole host of devils, is well known to the reading public. The subsequent meeting of Cellini with his mistress, as predicted and brought about by the conjurer, at the precise time fixed by him, is to be considered, as a matter of course, a “curious coincidence.”¹ In the latter part of the sixteenth century there was hardly a parish to be found in which the priests did not study magic and alchemy. The practice of exorcism to cast out devils “in imitation of Christ,” who by the way never used exorcism at all, led the clergy to devote themselves openly to “sacred” magic in contradistinction to black art, of which latter crime were accused all those who were neither priests nor monks. [58]

The occult knowledge gleaned by the Roman Church from the once fat fields of theurgy she sedulously guarded for her own use, and sent to the stake only those practitioners who “poached” on her lands of the *Scientia Scientiarum*, and those whose sins could not be concealed by the friar’s frock. The proof of it lies in the records of history.

In the course only of fifteen years, between 1580 to 1595, and only in the single province of Lorraine, the President Remigius burned 900 witches, says Thomas Wright, in his *Sorcery and Magic*.² It was during these days, prolific in ecclesiastical murder and unrivalled for cruelty and ferocity, that Jean Bodin wrote.

While the orthodox clergy called forth whole legions of “demons” through magical incantations, unmolested by the authorities, provided they held fast to the established dogmas and taught no heresy, on the other hand, acts of unparalleled atrocity were perpetrated on poor, unfortunate fools. Gabriel Malagrida, an old man of eighty, was burnt by these evangelical Jack Ketches³ in 1761. In the Amsterdam library there is a copy of the report of his famous trial, translated from the Lisbon edition. He was accused of sorcery and illicit intercourse with the Devil, who had “disclosed to him *futurity*.” (?) The prophecy imparted by the Arch-Enemy to the poor visionary Jesuit is reported in the following terms:

The culprit hath confessed that the demon, under the form of the blessed Virgin, having commanded him to write the life of Antichrist [?], told him that he, Malagrida, was a second John, but more clear than John the Evangelist; that there were to be three Antichrists, and that the last should be born at Milan, of a monk and a nun, in the year 1920; that he would marry Proserpine, one of the infernal furies, etc.⁴

¹ [Wright, *Narratives of Sorcery and Magic*, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 219 et seq.]

² [Vol. I, p. 300]

³ [After John Ketch, generally known as Jack Ketch, an infamous English executioner employed by King Charles II. He became famous through the way he performed his duties during the tumults of the 1680s, when he was often mentioned in broadsheet accounts that circulated throughout the Kingdom of England. He is thought to have been appointed in 1663. He executed the death sentences against William Russell, Lord Russell, in Lincoln’s Inn Fields on 21st July 1683, and James Scott, 1st Duke of Monmouth, on 15th July 1685, after the Monmouth Rebellion. Ketch’s notoriety stems from “barbarity at the execution of Lord Russell, the Duke of Monmouth, and other political offenders.” — Wikipedia]

⁴ [*The proceedings and sentence of the spiritual court of inquisition of Portugal, against Gabriel Malagrida, Jesuit, for heresy, hypocrisy, false prophecies, Impostures, and various other heinous Crimes: Together with the Sen-*

The prophecy is to be verified forty-three years hence. Even were all the children born of monks and nuns really to become antichrists if allowed to grow up to maturity, the fact would seem far less deplorable than the discoveries made in so many convents when the foundations have been removed for some reason. If the assertion of Luther is to be disbelieved on account of his hatred for popery, then we may name discoveries of the same character made quite recently in Austrian and Russian Poland. Luther¹ speaks of a fish-pond at Rome, situated near a convent of nuns, which, having been cleared out by order of Pope Gregory, disclosed, at the bottom, over six thousand infant skulls; and of a nunnery at Neuburg, in Austria, whose foundations, when searched, disclosed the same relics of celibacy and chastity!

“*Ecclesia non novit sanguinem!*”² meekly repeated the scarlet-robed cardinals. And to avoid the spilling of blood which horrified them, they instituted the Holy Inquisition. If, as the occultists maintain, and science half confirms, our most trifling acts and thoughts are indelibly impressed [59] upon the eternal mirror of the astral æther, there must be somewhere, in the boundless realm of the unseen universe, the imprint of a curious picture. It is that of a gorgeous standard waving in the heavenly breeze at the foot of the great “white throne” of the Almighty. On its crimson damask face a cross, symbol of “the Son of God who died for mankind,” with an *olive* branch on one side, and a sword, stained to the hilt with human gore, on the other. A legend selected from the *Psalms* emblazoned in golden letters, reading thus:

*Exurge, Domine, et judica causam meam.*³

For such appears the standard of the Inquisition, on a photograph in our possession, from an original procured at the Escorial of Madrid.

Torquemada burned over 10,000 persons, and sentenced to torture 80,000 more.

Under this Christian standard, in the brief space of fourteen years, Tomas de Torquemada, the confessor of Queen Isabella, burned over ten thousand persons, and sentenced to the torture eighty thousand more. Orobio, the well-known writer, who was detained so long in prison, and who hardly escaped the flames of the Inquisition, immortalized this institution in his works when once at liberty in Holland. He found no better argument against the Holy Church than to embrace the Judaic faith and submit even to circumcision. Says a writer on the Inquisition:

In the cathedral of Saragossa is the tomb of a famous inquisitor. Six pillars surround the tomb; *to each is chained a Moor*, as preparatory to being burnt. On this St. Foix ingenuously observes:

tence of the Lay Court of Justice, passed on him the 20th Day of September 1761, and published in Lisbon by Authority. Faithfully translated from the original Portuguese, London 1762]

¹ [Tischreden, ch. xxxiii, p. 590b, ed. of Andreas Zeidler, Leipzig 1700]

² [i.e., the church knows not blood; formula used by the Inquisition when it handed over its culprits to the secular arm for punishment, ignoring another maxim of ancient legal jurisprudence *qui facit per alium, facit per se*, i.e., who does something through another, does it himself.]

³ [i.e., Arise O Lord, and judge my cause. The cry of the martyrs who have been murdered, *Revelation* vi, 9, 10]

“If ever the Jack Ketch of any country should be rich enough to have a splendid tomb, this might serve as an excellent model!”¹

To make it complete, however, the builders of the tomb ought not to have omitted a bas-relief of the famous horse which was burnt for sorcery and witchcraft. Granger tells the story, describing it as having occurred in his time. The poor animal,

. . . had been taught to tell the spots upon cards, and the hour of the day by the watch. Horse and owner were both indicted by the sacred office for dealing with the Devil, and both were burned, with a great ceremony of *auto-da-fé*, at Lisbon, in 1601, as wizards!²



¹ [J.S. Forsyth, *Demonologia: or, Natural knowledge revealed: being an exposé of ancient and modern superstitions, credulity, fanaticism, enthusiasm, & imposture, as connected with the doctrine, caballa, and jargon, of amulets, apparitions, astrology, charms, demonology . . . witchcraft, &c.*, London 1827, p. 302]

² [James Granger, *Biographical History of England, from Egbert the Great to the Revolution, consisting of Characters dispersed in different Classes, and adapted to a Methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads. Intended as an Essay towards reducing our Biography to System, and a help to the knowledge of Portraits; with a variety of Anecdotes and Memoirs of a great number of persons not to be found in any other Biographical Work*, 1769]

This immortal institution of Christianity did not remain without its Dante to sing its praise. Says the author of *Demonologia*:

Macedo, a Portuguese Jesuit, has discovered the “Origin of the *Inquisition*,” in the terrestrial Paradise, and presumes to allege that God was the first who began the functions of an inquisitor over Cain and the workmen of Babel!¹

Nowhere, during the middle ages, were the arts of magic and sorcery more practiced by the clergy than in Spain and Portugal.

Nowhere, during the middle ages, were the arts of magic and sorcery more practiced by the clergy than in Spain and Portugal. The Moors were profoundly versed in the occult sciences, and at Toledo, Seville, and Salamanca, were, once upon a time, the great schools of magic. The Kabbalists of the latter town were skilled in all the abstruse sciences; they [60] knew the virtues of precious stones and other minerals, and had extracted from alchemy its most profound secrets.

The authentic documents pertaining to the great trial of the Maréchale d’Ancre, during the regency of Marie de Medici, disclose that the unfortunate woman perished through the fault of the priests with whom, like a true Italian, she surrounded herself. She was accused by the people of Paris of sorcery, because it had been asserted that she had used, after the ceremony of exorcism, newly-killed white cocks. Believing herself constantly bewitched, and being in very delicate health, the Maréchale had the ceremony of exorcism publicly applied to herself in the Church of the Augustinians; as to the birds, she used them as an application to the forehead on account of dreadful pains in the head, and had been advised to do so by Montalto, the Jew physician of the queen, and the Italian priests.

In the sixteenth century, the Cure de Barga, of the diocese of Calahorra, Spain, became the world’s wonder for his magical powers. His most extraordinary feat consisted, it was said, in transporting himself to any distant country, witnessing political and other events, and then returning home to predict them in his own country. He had a familiar demon, who served him faithfully for long years, says the *Chronicle*, but the cure turned ungrateful and cheated him. Having been apprised by his demon of a conspiracy against the Pope’s life, in consequence of an intrigue of the latter with a fair lady, the cure transported himself to Rome (in his double, of course) and thus saved his Holiness’ life. After which he repented, confessed his sins to the gallant Pope, and *got absolution*. “On his return he was delivered, as a matter of form, into the custody of the inquisitors of Logrono, but was acquitted and restored to his liberty very soon.”²

Friar Pietro, a Dominican monk of the fourteenth century — the magician who presented the famous Dr. Eugenio Torralva, a physician attached to the house of the admiral of Castile, with a *demon* named Zequiel — won his fame through the subsequent trial of Torralva. The procedure and circumstances attendant upon the extraordinary trial are described in the original papers preserved in the Archives of the Inquisition. The Cardinal of Volterra, and the Cardinal of Santa Cruz, both saw and

¹ [*Demonologia*, *op. cit.*, p. 304, 306]

² [Thomas Wright, *Narratives of Sorcery and Magic, from the Most Authentic Sources*, Vol. II, pp. xx, xviii]

communicated with Zequiel, who proved, during the whole of Torralva's life, to be a pure, kind, elemental spirit, doing many beneficent actions, and remaining faithful to the physician to the last hour of his life. Even the Inquisition acquitted Torralva, on that account; and, although an immortality of fame was insured to him by the satire of Cervantes, neither Torralva nor the monk Pietro are fictitious heroes, but historical personages, recorded in ecclesiastical documents of Rome and Cuenca, [61] in which town the trial of the physician took place, January the 29th, 1530.¹

Witch-burning at Bamberg and Würzburg.

The book of Dr. W.G. Soldan, of Stuttgart, has become as famous in Germany, as Bodin's book on *Demonomania* in France. It is the most complete German treatise on witchcraft of the sixteenth century. One interested to learn the secret machinery underlying these thousands of legal murders, perpetrated by a clergy who pretended to believe in the Devil, and succeeded in making others believe in him, will find it divulged in the above-mentioned work.² The true origin of the daily accusations and death-sentences for sorcery are cleverly traced to personal and political enmities, and, above all, to the hatred of the Catholics toward the Protestants. The crafty work of the Jesuits is seen at every page of the bloody tragedies; and it is in Bamberg and Würzburg, where these worthy sons of Loyola were most powerful at that time, that the cases of witchcraft were most numerous. On the next page we give a curious list of some victims, many of whom were children between the ages of seven and eight years, and Protestants.

Says T. Wright:

Of the multitudes of persons who perished at the stake in Germany during the first half of the seventeenth century for sorcery, the only crime of many was their attachment to the religion of Luther. . . . and the petty princes were not unwilling to seize upon any pretence to fill their coffers . . . the persons most persecuted were . . . those whose property was a matter of consideration . . . At Bamberg, as well as at Würzburg, the bishop was a sovereign prince in his dominions . . . The Prince-Bishop, John George II, who ruled Bamberg . . . after several unsuccessful attempts to root out Lutheranism . . . distinguished his reign by a series of sanguinary witch trials which disgrace the annals of that city . . . We may form some notion of the proceedings of his worthy [agent],³ from the statement of the most authentic historians . . . that between 1625 and 1630, not less than 900 trials took place in the two courts of Bamberg and Zeil; and a pamphlet published at Bamberg by authority, in 1659, states the num-

¹ [Rather in the years 1528 to 1530. Cf. Thomas Wright, *op. cit.*, II, xviii]

² Dr. von Wilhelm Gottlieb Soldan, *Geschichte Der Hexenprozesse: Aus Den Quellen Dargestellt*, Stuttgart 1843

³ Friedrich Forner, Suffragan of Bamberg, author of a treatise against heretics and sorcerers, under the title of *Panoplia armorum Dei, adversus omnem superstitionum, divinationum, excantationum, dæmonolatricam, et universas magorum, venesicorum, & sagarum, & ipsiusmet sathanæ insidias, præstigias & infestationes, Concionibus Bambergæ habitis, instructa et adornata . . . a Friderico Fornero.*

ber of persons whom Bishop John George had caused to be burned for sorcery, to have been 600.¹

The papal government realized much money by selling to the rich dispensations to secure them from the Inquisition.

Regretting that space should prevent our giving one of the most curious lists in the world of burned witches, we will nevertheless make a few extracts from the original record as printed in Hauber's *Bibliotheca* [62] *Magica*.² One glance at this horrible catalogue of murders in Christ's name, is sufficient to discover that out of 162 persons burned, more than one-half of them are designated as *strangers* (i.e., Protestants) in this hospitable town; and of the other half we find *thirty-four children*, the oldest of whom was fourteen, the youngest *an infant* child of Dr. Schutz. To make the catalogue shorter we will present of each of the twenty-nine *burnings*, but the most remarkable.³

A horrible record of fiendish cruelty.

IN THE FIRST BURNING, FOUR PERSONS

The wife of Liebler.
Old Ancker's widow.
The wife of Gutbrodt.
The wife of Höcker.

IN THE SECOND BURNING, FOUR PERSONS

The old wife of Beutler.
Two strange women (names unknown).

IN THE THIRD BURNING, FIVE PERSONS

Tungersleber, a minstrel.
Four wives of citizens.

IN THE FOURTH BURNING, FIVE PERSONS

A strange man.

¹ *Narratives of sorcery and magic, from the most authentic sources*, by Thomas Wright, M.A., F.S.A., etc., Corresponding Member of the National Institute of France; Vol. II, pp. 183-85.

² [Cf. T. Wright, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 187-94]

³ Besides these burnings in Germany, which amount to many thousands, we find some very interesting statements in Prof. John William Draper's *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 1875. On page 146, he says:

"The families of the convicted were plunged into irretrievable ruin. Llorente, the historian of the Inquisition, computes that Torquemada and his collaborators, in the course of eighteen years, burned at the stake 10,220 persons, 6,860 in effigy, and otherwise punished 97,321! . . . With unutterable disgust and indignation, we learn that the papal government realized much money by selling to the rich dispensations to secure them from the Inquisition."

IN THE FIFTH BURNING, NINE PERSONS

Lutz, an eminent shop-keeper.
The wife of Baunach, a senator.

IN THE SIXTH BURNING, SIX PERSONS

The fat tailor's wife.
A strange man.
A strange woman. [63]

IN THE SEVENTH BURNING, SEVEN PERSONS

A strange girl of twelve years old.
A strange man, a strange woman.
A strange bailiff (Schultheiss).
Three strange women.

IN THE EIGHTH BURNING, SEVEN PERSONS

Baunach, a senator, the fattest citizen in Würzburg.
A strange man.
Two strange women.

IN THE NINTH BURNING, FIVE PERSONS

A strange man.
A mother and daughter.

IN THE TENTH BURNING, THREE PERSONS

Steinacher, a very rich man.
A strange man, a strange woman.

IN THE ELEVENTH BURNING, FOUR PERSONS

Two women and two men.

IN THE TWELFTH BURNING, TWO PERSONS

Two strange women.

IN THE THIRTEENTH BURNING, FOUR PERSONS

A little girl nine or ten years old.
A younger girl, her little sister.

IN THE FOURTEENTH BURNING, TWO PERSONS

The mother of the two little girls before mentioned.
A girl twenty-four years old.

IN THE FIFTEENTH BURNING, TWO PERSONS

A boy twelve years of age, in the first school.
A woman.

IN THE SIXTEENTH BURNING, SIX PERSONS

A boy of ten years of age.

IN THE SEVENTEENTH BURNING, FOUR PERSONS

A boy eleven years old.
A mother and daughter. [64]

IN THE EIGHTEENTH BURNING, SIX PERSONS

Two boys, twelve years old.
The daughter of Dr. Junge.
A girl of fifteen years of age.
A strange woman.

IN THE NINETEENTH BURNING, SIX PERSONS

A boy of ten years of age.
Another boy, twelve years old.

IN THE TWENTIETH BURNING, SIX PERSONS

Göbel's child, the most beautiful girl in Würzburg.
Two boys, each twelve years old.
Stepper's little daughter.

IN THE TWENTY-FIRST BURNING, SIX PERSONS

A boy fourteen years old.
The little son of Senator Stolzenberger.
Two alumni.

IN THE TWENTY-SECOND BURNING, SIX PERSONS

Stürman, a rich cooper.
A strange boy.

IN THE TWENTY-THIRD BURNING, NINE PERSONS

David Croten's boy, nine years old.
The two sons of the prince's cook, one fourteen, the other ten years old.

IN THE TWENTY-FOURTH BURNING, SEVEN PERSONS

Two boys in the hospital.
A rich cooper.

IN THE TWENTY-FIFTH BURNING, SIX PERSONS

A strange boy.

IN THE TWENTY-SIXTH BURNING, SEVEN PERSONS

Weydenbush, a senator.
The little daughter of Valkenberger.
The little son of the town council bailiff.

IN THE TWENTY-SEVENTH BURNING, SEVEN PERSONS

A strange boy.
A strange woman.
Another boy. [65]

IN THE TWENTY-EIGHTH BURNING, SIX PERSONS

The infant daughter of Dr. Schütz.
A blind girl.

IN THE TWENTY-NINTH BURNING, SEVEN PERSONS

The fat noble lady (Edelfrau).
A doctor of divinity.

One horrid total: 162 persons in nineteen months.

Item

Summary

“Strange” men and women, *i.e.*, Protestants, 28

Citizens, apparently all WEALTHY people, 100

Boys, girls, and little children, 34

In nineteen months, 162 persons.

What room is there in a theology which exacts such holocausts as these to appease the bloody appetites of its priests?

“There were,” says Wright, “little girls of from seven to ten years of age among the witches, and *seven and twenty* of them were convicted and burnt,” at some of the other *brände*, or burnings.

The numbers brought to trial in these terrible proceedings were so great, and they were treated with so little consideration, that it was usual not even to take the trouble of setting down their names, but they were cited as the accused No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and so on. The Jesuits took their confessions in private.¹

What room is there in a theology which exacts such holocausts as these to appease the bloody appetites of its priests for the following gentle words:

“Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven.”

“Even so it is not the will of your Father . . . that one of these little ones should perish.”



¹ *Narratives of Sorcery and Magic*, etc., “The Burnings at Würzburg,” p. 186

“But whoso shall offend one of these little ones¹ which believe in me, it *were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea.*”²

We sincerely hope that the above words have proved no vain threat to these child-burners.

In the twenty-nine burnings catalogued here we find the names of twelve vicars, four canons, and two doctors of divinity burnt alive.

Did this butchery in the name of their Moloch-god prevent these treasure-hunters from resorting to the black art themselves? Not in the least; for in no class were such consulters of “familiar” spirits more numerous than among the clergy during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. True, there were some Catholic priests among the victims, but though these were generally accused of having “been [66] led into practices too dreadful to be described,” it was not so. In the twenty-nine burnings above catalogued we find the names of *twelve vicars, four canons, and two doctors of divinity burnt alive*. But we have only to turn to such works as were published at the time to assure ourselves that each popish priest executed was accused of “damnable heresy,” *i.e.*, a tendency to reformation — a crime more heinous far than sorcery.

What the exorcist-priest most yearned after was to release miserable spirits which haunt spots where hidden treasures lie.

For this purpose he entered a circle at midnight, clad in a new surplice. A consecrated band hanging from the neck was covered with sacred characters. He wore on the head a tall pointed cap, on the front of which was written in Hebrew the “Holy Word,” the Tetragrammaton (which is not holy).³

We refer those who would learn how the Catholic clergy united duty with pleasure in the matter of exorcisms, revenge, and treasure-hunting, to volume II, chapter i, of W. Howitt’s *History of the Supernatural*. “In what came to be called Pneumatologia Occulta et Vera, all the forms of adjuration and conjuration were laid down,” says this veteran writer. He then proceeds to give a long description of the favourite *modus operandi*. The *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie* of the late Éliphas Lévi, treated with so much abuse and contempt by des Mousseaux, tells nothing of the weird ceremonies and practices but what was practiced legally and with the tacit if not open consent of the Church, by the priests of the middle ages. The exorcist-priest entered a circle at midnight; he was clad in a new surplice, and had a consecrated band hang-

¹ [Note to Students: However, the “little ones” were Perfect Initiates. Cf.

Such was the name given in ancient Judæa to the Initiates, called also the “Innocents” and the “Infants,” *i.e.*, once more reborn. This *key* opens a vista into one of the New Testament mysteries; the slaughter by Herod of the 40,000 “Innocents.” There is a legend to this effect, and the event which took place almost a century B.C., shows the origin of the tradition blended at the same time with that of Krishna and his uncle Kamsa. In the case of the N.T., Herod stands for Alexander Jannæus (of Lyda), whose persecution and murder of hundreds and thousands of Initiates led to the adoption of the *Bible* story. — *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 504 *fn*.

² [Matthew xix, 14; xviii, 14, 6]

³ [Consult “Tetragrammaton is the Key to Occult Theogony,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

ing from the neck, covered with sacred characters. He wore on the head a tall pointed cap, on the front of which was written in Hebrew the holy word, Tetragrammaton — the ineffable name. It was written with a new pen dipped in the blood of a white dove. What the exorcists most yearned after, was to release miserable spirits *which haunt spots where hidden treasures lie*. The exorcist sprinkles the circle with the blood of a black lamb and a white pigeon. The priest had to adjure the evil spirits of hell — Acheront, Magoth, Asmodi, Beelzebub, Belial, and all the damned souls, in the mighty names of Jehovah, Adonai, Elohah, and Tsebāōth, which latter was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who dwelt in the Urim and Thummim. When the damned souls flung in the face of the exorcist that he was a sinner, and could not get the treasure from them, the priest-sorcerer had to reply that

. . . all his sins were washed out in the blood of Christ,¹ and he bid them depart as cursed ghosts and damned flies.

When the exorcist dislodged them at last, the poor soul was “comforted in the name of the Saviour, and *consigned to the care of good angels*,” who were less powerful, we must think, than the exorcising Catholic worthies,

. . . and the rescued treasure, of course, was secured for the Church.

Adds Howitt,

Certain days are laid down in the calendar of the Church as most favourable for the practice of exorcism; and, if the devils [67] are difficult to drive, a fume of sulphur, asafœtida, bear’s gall, and rue is recommended, which, it was presumed, would outstench even devils.²

This is the Church, and this the priesthood, which, in the nineteenth century, pays 5,000 priests to teach the people of the United States the infidelity of science and the infallibility of the Bishop of Rome!

The seven abominations of Solomon.

It has been admitted that the elimination of devil from theology would be fatal to the perpetuity of the Church. But this is only partially true. The Prince of Sin would be gone, but the sin itself would survive. If the devil were annihilated, the Articles of Faith and the Bible would remain.

We have already noticed the confession of an eminent prelate that the elimination of Satan from theology would be fatal to the perpetuity of the Church. But this is only partially true. The Prince of Sin would be gone, but sin itself would survive. If the Devil were annihilated, the *Articles of Faith* and the *Bible* would remain. In short there would still be a pretended divine revelation, and the necessity for self-assumed inspired interpreters. We must, therefore, consider the authenticity of the *Bible* itself. We must study its pages, and see if they, indeed, contain the commands of the Deity, or but a compendium of ancient traditions and hoary myths. We must try to inter-

¹ And retinted in the blood of the millions murdered in his name — in the no less innocent blood than his own, of the little child-*witches!*

² [William Howitt, *The History of the Supernatural*, 1863, 2-vols., II, pp. 13-16]

pret them for ourselves — if possible. As to its pretended interpreters, the only possible assimilation we can find for them in the *Bible* is to compare them with the man described by the wise King Solomon in his *Proverbs*, with the perpetrator of these “six things . . . yea seven . . . which doth the Lord hate,” and which are an abomination unto Him, to wit:

*A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief; a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*¹

Of which of these accusations are the long line of men who have left the imprint of their feet in the Vatican guiltless? Says Augustine:

When the demons *insinuate* themselves in the creatures, they begin by conforming themselves *to the will of every one*. . . . In order to attract men, they begin by seducing them, by simulating obedience. . . . *How could one know, had he not been taught by the demons themselves*, what they like or what they hate; *the name which attracts, or that which forces them into obedience*; all this art, in short, of *magic*, the whole science of the magicians?”²

To this impressive dissertation of the “saint,” we will add that no magician has ever denied that he had learned the *art* from “spirits,” whether, being a medium, they acted independently on him, or he had been initiated into the science of “evocation” by his fathers who knew it before himself. But who was it then that taught the exorcist? The priest [68] who clothes himself with an authority not only over the magician, but even over all these “spirits,” whom he calls demons and *devils* as soon as he finds them obeying anyone but himself? He must have learned somewhere from someone that power which he pretends to possess. For, “*how could one know had he not been taught by the demons themselves . . . the name which attracts, or that which forces them into obedience?*” asks Augustine.

A papal bull against Spiritualism.

Useless to remark that we know the answer beforehand:

Revelation . . . *divine* gift . . . the Son of God; nay, God Himself, through His direct Spirit, who descended on the apostles as the Pentecostal fire,

and who is now alleged to overshadow every priest who sees fit to exorcise for either glory or a gift. Are we then to believe that the recent scandal of public exorcism, performed about the 14th of October, 1876, by the senior priest of the Church of the Holy Spirit, at Barcelona, Spain, was also done under the direct superintendence of the Holy Ghost?³ [69] It will be urged that the “bishop was not cognizant of this freak of

¹ *Proverbs* vi, 16, 17, 18, 19

² Augustine, *De civitate dei*, XXI, vi; Henri Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *Moeurs et pratiques des démons ou des esprits visiteurs, d'après les autorités de l'Église, les auteurs païens, les faits contemporains*, etc., p. 181

³ A correspondent of the *London Times* describes the Catalonian exorcist in the following lines:

About the 14th or 15th of this present month of October it was privately announced . . . that a young woman of seventeen or eighteen years of age, of the lower class, having long been afflicted with “a hatred of holy things” . . . the senior priest of the Church [of the Holy Spirit] would cure her of her disease.

The exhibition was to be held in a church frequented by the best part of the community.

the clergy”; but even if he were, how could he have protested against a rite considered since the days of the apostles, one of the most holy prerogatives of the Church of Rome? So late as in 1852, only twenty-five years ago, these rites received a public and solemn sanction from the Vatican, and a new *Ritual of Exorcism* was published in Rome, Paris, and other Catholic capitals. Des Mousseaux, writing under the immediate patronage of Father Ventura, the General of the Theatines of Rome,¹ even favours us with lengthy extracts from this famous ritual, and explains the reason *why* it was enforced again. It was in consequence of the revival of Magic under the name of Modern Spiritualism.² The bull of Pope Innocent VIII is exhumed, and translated for the benefit of des Mousseaux’s readers. “We have heard,” exclaims the Sovereign Pontiff, “that a great number of persons of both sexes have feared not to enter into relations with the spirits of hell; and that, by their practice of sorcery . . . they strike with sterility the conjugal bed, destroy the germs of humanity in the bosom of the mother, and throw spells on them, and set a barrier to the multiplication of animals . . . etc., etc.”; then follow curses and anathemas against the practice.³

This belief of the Sovereign Pontiffs of an enlightened Christian country is a direct inheritance by the most ignorant multitudes from the southern Hindu rabble — the

The church was dark, but a sickly light was shed by wax lights on the sable forms of some eighty or a hundred persons who clustered round the *presbiterio*, or sanctuary, in front of the altar. Within the little enclosure or sanctuary, separated from the crowd by a light railing, lay on a common bench, with a little pillow for her head to recline upon, a poorly-clad girl, probably of the peasant or artisan class; her brother or husband stood at her feet to restrain her (at times) frantic kicking by holding her legs. The door of the vestry opened; the exhibitor — I mean the priest — came in. The poor girl, not without just reason, “had an aversion to holy things,” or, at least, the 400 devils within her distorted body had such an aversion, and in the confusion of the moment, thinking that the father was “a holy thing,” she doubled up her legs, screamed out with twitching mouth, her breast having the whole body writhing, and threw herself nearly off the bench. The male attendant seized her legs, the women supported her head and swept out her dishevelled hair. The priest advanced and, mingling familiarly with the shuddering and horror-struck crowd, said, pointing at the suffering child, now sobbing and twitching on the bench, “Promise me, my children, that you will be prudent (*prudentes*), and of a truth, sons and daughters mine, you shall see marvels.” The promise was given. The exhibitor went to procure stole and short surplice (*estola y roquete*), and returned in a moment, taking his stand at the side of the “possessed with the devils,” with his face toward the group of students. The order of the day’s proceedings was a lecture to the bystanders, and the operation of exorcising the devils. “You know, [said the priest], that so great is this girl’s aversion to holy things, myself included, that she goes into convulsions, kicks, screams, and distorts her body the moment she arrives at the corner of this street, and her convulsive struggles reach their climax when she enters the sacred house of the Most High.” . . . Turning to the prostrate, shuddering, most unhappy object of his attack, the priest commenced: [69] “In the name of God, of the saints, of the blessed Host, of every holy sacrament of our Church, I adjure thee, Rusbel, come out of her.” (N.B. “Rusbel” is the name of a devil, the devil having 257 names in Catalonia.) Thus adjured, the girl threw herself in an agony of convulsion, till her distorted face, foam-bespattered lips and writhing limbs grew well-nigh stiff, at full length upon the floor, and, in language semi-obscene, semi-violent, screamed out, “I don’t choose to come out, you thieves, scamps, robbers.” . . . At last, from the quivering lips of the girl, came the words, “I will”; but the devil added, with traditional perversity, “I will cast the 100 out, but by the mouth of the girl.” The priest objected. The exit, he said, of 100 devils out of the small Spanish mouth of the woman would “leave her suffocated.” Then the maddened girl said she must undress herself for the devils to escape. This petition the holy father refused. “Then I will come out through the right foot, but first” — the girl had on a hempen sandal, she was obviously of the poorest class — “you must take off her sandal.” The sandal was untied; the foot gave a convulsive plunge; the devil and his myrmidons (so the *cura* said, looking round triumphantly) had gone to their own place. And, assured of this, the wretched dupe of a girl lay quite still. The Bishop . . . was not cognizant . . . of this freak on the part of the clergy . . . [and] the moment it came to the ears of the civil authorities, the sharpest means were taken to admonish the priest and prevent a repetition of a scandal which had shamed and sickened the whole city of Barcelona. [*The Times*, London, November 2nd, 1876]

¹ [Or the Congregation of Clerics Regular of the Divine Providence, a religious order of the Catholic Church.]

² Henri Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *La Magie au dix-neuvième siècle, ses agents, ses vérités, ses men-songes, précédée d’une lettre adressée à l’auteur par le P. Ventura de Raulica*, pp. 138 et seq.

³ [*Mœurs et pratiques des démons ou des esprits visiteurs, d’après les autorités de l’Église, les auteurs païens, les faits contemporains*, p. 185]

“heathen.” The diabolical arts of certain *kangālin*s (witches)¹ and *jādūgars* (sorcerers) are firmly believed in by these people. The following are among their most dreaded powers:

- To inspire love and hatred at will;
- To send a devil to take possession of a person and torture [70] him;
- To expel him; to cause sudden death or an incurable disease;
- To either strike cattle with or protect them from epidemics;
- To compose philtres that will either strike with sterility or provoke unbounded passions in men and women, etc., etc.

The sight alone of a man said to be such a sorcerer excites in a Hindu profound terror.

Vulgar magic in India is the work of the lowest clergy; in Rome, that of the highest Pontiffs. It is designed to hold the populace in a perpetual state of fear.

And now we will quote in this connection the truthful remark of a writer who passed years in India in the study of the origin of such superstitions:

Vulgar magic in India, like a degenerated infiltration, goes hand-in-hand with the most ennobling beliefs of the sectarians of the *Pitris*. It was the *work of the lowest clergy*, and designed to hold the populace in a perpetual state of fear. It is thus that in all ages and under every latitude, side by side with philosophical speculations of the highest character, one always finds *the religion of the rabble*.²

In India it was the work of the *lowest clergy*; in Rome, that of the *highest Pontiffs*. But then, have they not as authority their greatest saint, Augustine, who declares that

. . . whoever believes not in the evil spirits, refuses to believe in Holy Writ?³

The devil, asserts a Jesuit Father,⁴ is forced to submission before the holy minister of God — he dares not lie.

Therefore, in the second half of the nineteenth century, we find the counsel for the Sacred Congregation of Rites (exorcism of demons included), Father Ventura di Raulica, writing thus, in a letter published by des Mousseaux, in 1865:

¹ [Note 12 by Boris de Zirkoff: Strictly speaking, *kangālin* in Hindi means a pauper. It could be also the name of a person or of a local goddess. H.P. Blavatsky uses the same term in her story *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*.]

² Louis Jacolliot, *Le spiritisme dans le monde: L'initiation et les sciences occultes dans l'inde et chez tous les peuples de l'antiquité*, p. 162

³ St. Augustine, *De civitate dei*, XXI, vi

⁴ [Giacchino Ventura (dei Baroni) di Raulica, appointed by Leo XII as professor of canon law at the Sapienza University of Rome, founded in 1303.]

We are in full magic! and under false names; the Spirit of lies and impudicity goes on perpetrating his horrible deprecations. . . . The most grievous feature in this is that among the most serious persons they do not attach the importance to the strange phenomena which they deserve, these manifestations that we witness, and which become with every day more weird, striking, as well as most fatal.

I cannot sufficiently admire and praise, from this standpoint, the zeal and courage displayed by you in your work. The facts which you have collected are calculated to throw light and conviction into the most sceptical minds; and after reading this remarkable work, written with so much learnedness and consciousness, blindness is no longer possible.

If anything could surprise us, it would be the indifference with which these phenomena have been treated by *false* Science, endeavouring as she has, to turn into ridicule so grave a subject; the childish simplicity exhibited by her in the desire to explain the facts by absurd and contradictory hypotheses . . .

[Signed] *The Father Ventura di Raulica*, etc., etc.¹

Thus encouraged by the greatest authorities of the Church of Rome, ancient and modern, the Chevalier argues the necessity and the efficacy of exorcism by the priests. He tries to demonstrate — *on faith*, as usual — [71] that the power of the spirits of hell is closely related to certain rites, words, and formal signs. “In the diabolical Catholicism,” he says, “as well as in the *divine* Catholicism, potential grace is *bound* (*liée*) to certain signs.” While the power of the Catholic priest proceeds from God, that of the Pagan priest proceeds from the Devil. The Devil, he adds, “is forced to submission” before the holy minister of God — “*he dares not LIE.*”²

Fake relics and false legends galore.

We beg the reader to note well the underlined sentence, as we mean to test its truth impartially. We are prepared to adduce proofs, undeniable and undenied even by the Popish Church — forced, as she was, into the confession — proofs of hundreds of cases in relation to the most solemn of her dogmas, wherein the “spirits” lied from beginning to end. How about certain holy relics authenticated by visions of the blessed Virgin, and a host of saints? We have at hand a treatise by a pious Catholic, Guibert de Nogent, on the relics of saints. With honest despair he acknowledges the “great number of false relics, as well as false legends,” and severely censures the inventors of these lying miracles. Writes the author of *Demonologia*:

It was on the occasion of *one of our Saviour’s teeth*, that de Nogent took up his pen on this subject, by which the monks of St. Médard de Soissons pretended to work miracles; a pretension which he asserted to be as chimerical as that of

¹ Henri Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *Mœurs et pratiques des démons ou des esprits visiteurs, d’après les autorités de l’Église, les auteurs païens, les faits contemporains*, p. ii

² *ibid.*, p. 431; also ch. xv, etc.

several persons who believed they possessed the navel, and other parts less comely, of the body of Christ.¹

Says Stephanus:²

A monk of St. Antony, having been at Jerusalem, saw there several relics, among which was a bit of *the finger of the Holy Ghost*, as sound and entire as it had ever been; the snout of the seraphim that appeared to St. Francis; one of the nails of a cherubim; one of the ribs of the *Verbum caro factum est* (the Word made flesh); some rays of the star that appeared to the three kings of the east; a phial of St. Michael's sweat [that exuded] when he was fighting against the devil . . . "All which things," observes the monkish treasurer of relics, "I have brought with me home very devoutly."

And if the foregoing is set aside as the invention of a Protestant enemy, may we not be allowed to refer the reader to the History of England and authentic documents which state the existence of a relic not less extraordinary than the best of the others? Henry III received from the Grand Master of the Templars a phial containing a small portion of the sacred blood of Christ which he had shed upon the cross. It was attested to be genuine by the seals of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and others. [72] The procession bearing the sacred phial from St. Paul's to Westminster Abbey is described by the historian:

Two monks received the phial, and deposited it in the Abbey . . . which made all England shine with glory, dedicating it to God and St. Edward.³

The story of the Prince Radzivil is well known. It was the undeniable deception of the monks and nuns surrounding him and his own confessor which made the Polish nobleman become a Lutheran. He felt at first so indignant at the "heresy" of the Reformation spreading in Lithuania, that he travelled all the way to Rome to pay his homage of sympathy and veneration to the Pope. The latter presented him with a precious box of relics. On his return home, his confessor saw the Virgin, who descended from her glorious abode for the sole purpose of blessing these relics and authenticating them. The superior of the neighbouring convent and the mother-abbess of a nunnery both saw the same vision, with a reinforcement of several saints and martyrs; they prophesied and "felt the Holy Ghost" ascending from the box of relics and overshadowing the prince. A demoniac provided for the purpose by the clergy was exorcised in full ceremony, and upon being touched by the box immediately recovered, and rendered thanks on the spot to the Pope and the Holy Ghost. After the ceremony was over the guardian of the treasury in which the relics were kept, threw himself at the feet of the prince, and confessed that on their way back from Rome he had lost the box of relics. Dreading the wrath of his master, he had procured a similar box, "which he had filled with the small bones of dogs and cats"; but seeing how the prince was deceived, he preferred confessing his guilt to such blasphemous

¹ J.S. Forsyth, *Demonologia: or, Natural knowledge revealed: being an exposé of ancient and modern superstitions, credulity, fanaticism, enthusiasm, & imposture, as connected with the doctrine, caballa, and jargon, of amulets, apparitions, astrology, charms, demonology . . . witchcraft, &c.*, London 1827, p. 432

² *Traité préparatif à l'apologie pour Hérodote*, c. 39. Cf. *Demonologia*, p. 436

³ [*Demonologia*, p. 436]

tricks. The prince said nothing, but continued for some time testing — not the relics, but his confessor and the vision-seers. Their mock raptures made him discover so thoroughly the gross impositions of the monks and nuns that he joined the Reformed Church.

When the Roman Church is no longer able to deny that there have been fake relics, she resorts to sophistry, and replies that if false relics have wrought miracles it is “because of the good intentions of the believers, who thus obtained from God a reward of their good faith!”

This is history. P. Bayle¹ shows that when the Roman Church is no longer able to deny that there have been false relics, she resorts to sophistry, and replies that if false relics have wrought miracles it is “because of the good intentions of the believers, who thus obtained from God a reward of their good faith!” The same Bayle shows, by numerous instances, that whenever it was proved that several bodies of the same saint, or three heads of him, or three arms (as in the case of Augustine) were said to exist in different places, and that they could not well be all authentic, the cool and invariable answer of the Church was that they were all genuine; for

God had multiplied and miraculously reproduced them for the greater glory of His Holy Church!

In other words they would have the faithful believe that the body of a deceased saint may, through divine miracle, acquire the physiological peculiarities of a crawfish! [73]

Deceiving clergy and lying spirits.

We fancy that it would be hard to demonstrate to satisfaction that the visions of Catholic saints, are, in any one particular instance, better or more trustworthy than the average visions and prophecies of our modern “mediums.” The visions of Andrew Jackson Davis — however our critics may sneer at them — are by long odds more philosophical and more compatible with modern science than the Augustinian speculations. Whenever the visions of Swedenborg, the greatest among the modern seers, run astray from philosophy and scientific truth, it is when they most run parallel with theology. Nor are these visions any more useless to either science or humanity than those of the great orthodox saints. In the life of St. Bernard it is narrated that as he was once in church, upon a Christmas eve, he prayed that the very hour in which Christ was born might be revealed to him; and when the “true and correct hour came, he saw the divine babe appear in his manger.” What a pity that the divine babe did not embrace so favourable an opportunity to fix the correct day and year of his death, and thereby reconcile the controversies of his putative historians. The Tischendorfs, Lardners, and Colensos, as well as many a Catholic divine, who have vainly squeezed the marrow out of historical records and their own brains, in the useless search, would at least have had something for which to thank the saint.

¹ [*Dictionnaire historique et critique*, London & Rotterdam, 1697]

As it is, we are hopelessly left to infer that most of the beatific and divine visions of *The Golden Legend*, and those to be found in the more complete biographies of the most important “saints,” as well as most of the visions of our own persecuted seers and seeresses, were produced by ignorant and undeveloped “spirits” passionately fond of personating great historical characters. We are quite ready to agree with the Chevalier des Mousseaux, and other unrelenting persecutors of magic and spiritualism in the name of the Church, that modern spirits are often “lying spirits”; that they are ever on hand to humour the respective hobbies of the persons who communicate with them at “circles”; that they *deceive* them and, therefore, are not *always* good “spirits.”

But, having conceded so much, we will now ask of any impartial person: is it possible to believe at the same time that the *power* given to the exorcist-priest, that supreme and *divine* power of which he boasts, has been given to him by God for the purpose of deceiving people? That the prayer pronounced by him *in the name of Christ*, and which, forcing the *demon* into submission, makes him reveal himself, is calculated at the same time to make the devil confess *not the truth*, but that only which it is the *interest of the church to which the exorcist belongs*, should *pass for truth*? And this is what invariably happens. Compare, for instance, the responses given by the demon to Luther, with those obtained from the devils by St. Dominic. The one argues against the [74] private mass, and upbraids Luther with placing the Virgin Mary and saints before Christ, and thus dishonouring the Son of God;¹ while the demons exorcised by St. Dominic, upon seeing the Virgin whom the holy father had also evoked to help him, roar out:

Oh! our enemy! oh! our damner! . . . why didst thou descend from heaven to torment us? Why art thou so powerful an intercessor for sinners! Oh! *thou most certain and secure way to heaven* . . . thou commandest us *and we are forced to confess* that nobody is damned who only perseveres in thy holy worship, etc., etc.²

Proofs of an undeniable confederacy between exorcisers and demons.

The devils of all the Catholic saints promise eternal damnation to whomsoever disbelieves, or even so much as doubts the dogma.

Luther’s “Saint Satan” assures him that while believing in the transubstantiation of Christ’s body and blood he had been worshipping merely bread and wine; and the *devils* of all the Catholic saints promise *eternal damnation* to whomsoever disbelieves or even so much as doubts the dogma!

Before leaving the subject, let us give one or two more instances from the *Chronicles of the Lives of the Saints*, selected from such narratives as are fully accepted by the Church. We might fill volumes with proofs of undeniable confederacy between the exorcisers and the demons. Their very nature betrays them. Instead of being independent, crafty entities bent on the destruction of men’s souls and spirits, the major-

¹ [Told by Luther in] *De missa privata et unctione sacerdotum libellus D. Mart. Luth. e Germanico in Latinum translatus, per Iust. Ion. Anno 1534*

² See *The Life of St. Dominic* and the story about the miraculous Rosary; also *The Golden Legend*.

ity of them are simply the elementals of the Kabbalists; creatures with no intellect of their own, but faithful mirrors of the WILL which evokes, controls, and guides them. We will not waste our time in drawing the reader's attention to doubtful or obscure thaumaturgists and exorcisers, but take as our standard one of the greatest saints of Catholicism, and select a bouquet from that same prolific conservatory of pious lies, *The Golden Legend*, of Jacobus de Voragine.¹

St. Dominic's dialogue with devils.

St. Dominic, the founder of the famous order of that name, is one of the mightiest saints on the calendar. His order was the first that received a solemn confirmation from the Pope,² and he is well known in history as the associate and counsellor of the infamous Simon de Montfort, the papal general, whom he helped to butcher the unfortunate Albigenes in and near Toulouse. The story goes that this saint and the Church after him, claim that he received from the Virgin, *in propria persona*, a rosary, whose virtues produced such stupendous miracles that they throw entirely into the shade those of the apostles, and even of Jesus himself. A man, says the biographer, an abandoned sinner, was bold enough to doubt the [75] virtue of the Dominican rosary; and for this unparalleled blasphemy was punished on the spot by having 15,000 devils take possession of him. Seeing the great suffering of the tortured demoniac, St. Dominic forgot the insult and called the devils to account.³

A colloquy between the "blessed exorcist" and the demons.

Question — How did you take possession of this man, and how many are you?

Answer of the Devils — We came into him for having spoken disrespectfully of the rosary. We are 15,000.

Question — Why did so many as 15,000 enter him?

Answer — Because there are fifteen decades in the rosary which he derided, etc.

Dominic — Is not all true I have said of the virtues of the rosary?

Devils — Yes! Yes! (*they emit flames through the nostrils of the demoniac*). Know all ye Christians that Dominic never said one word concerning the rosary that is not most true; and know ye further, that if you do not believe him, great calamities will befall you.

Dominic — Who is the man in the world the Devil hates the most?

¹ James de Varasse, known by the Latin name of James de Voragine, was Vicar-General of the Dominicans and Bishop of Genoa in 1292.

[*Note 13 by Boris de Zirkoff*: Giacomo da Varaggio (c. 1230–1298) was an Italian chronicler born at Varazze, near Genoa, who joined the Dominicans in 1244. He was provincial of Lombardy from 1267 to 1286, and represented his own province at the Councils of Lucca (1288) and Ferrara (1290). Early in 1292 he was consecrated archbishop of Genoa where he distinguished himself by his effort to appease the civil discords in that city. Apart from his *Chronicle* of the history of Genoa, he wrote the *Golden Legend* — one of the most popular religious works of the middle ages, which is a collection of the legendary lives of the greater saints, ornamented with much curious information of rather doubtful authenticity.

Vide also J. Bollandus, S.J., *Acta Sanctorum*, Augusti, tom. XXXV, pp. 409, 410.]

² Thirteenth century.

³ [Cf. Jean Martin, *La Légende de Saint Dominique*, printed by Jean Trepperel in Paris, 1520]

Devils — (*In chorus.*) Thou art the very man (*here follow verbose compliments*).

Dominic. — Of which state of Christians are there the most damned?

Devils — In hell we have merchants, pawnbrokers, fraudulent bankers, grocers, Jews, apothecaries, etc., etc.

Dominic — Are there any priests or monks in hell?

Devils — There are a great number of priests, but *no monks*, with the exception of such as have transgressed the rule of their order.

Dominic — Have you any Dominicans?

Devils — Alas! alas! we have not one yet, but we expect a great number of them after their devotion is a little cooled.

We do not pretend to give the questions and answers literally, for they occupy twenty-three pages; but the substance is here, as may be seen by anyone who cares to read *The Golden Legend*. The full description of the hideous bellowings of the demons, their enforced glorification of the saint, and so on, is too long for this chapter. Suffice it to say that as we read the numerous questions offered by Dominic and the answers of the demons, we become fully convinced that they corroborate in every detail the unwarranted assertions and support the interests of the Church. The narrative is suggestive. The legend graphically describes the battle of the exorcist with the legion from the bottomless pit. The sulphurous flames which burst forth from the nose, mouth, eyes, and ears, of the demoniac; the sudden appearance of over [76] a hundred angels, clad in golden armour; and, finally, the descent of the blessed Virgin herself, in person, bearing a golden rod, with which she administers a sound thrashing to the demoniac, to force the devils to confess that of herself which we scarcely need repeat. The whole catalogue of theological truths uttered by Dominic's devils were embodied in so many articles of faith by his Holiness, the present Pope, in 1870, at the last Ecumenical Council.

From the foregoing it is easy to see that the only substantial difference between infidel "mediums" and orthodox saints lies in the relative usefulness of the *demons*, if demons we must call them. While the Devil faithfully supports the Christian exorcist in his *orthodox* (?) views, the modern spook generally leaves his medium in the lurch. For, by lying, he acts *against* his or her interests rather than otherwise, and thereby too often casts foul suspicion on the genuineness of the mediumship. Were modern "spirits" *devils*, they would evidently display a little more discrimination and cunning than they do. They would act as the *demons* of the saint which, compelled by the ecclesiastical magician and by the power of "the name . . . which forces them into submission," *lie in accordance with the direct interest* of the exorcist and his church. The moral of the parallel we leave to the sagacity of the reader.

"Observe well," exclaims des Mousseaux, "that there are *demons* which sometimes will speak the truth." "The exorcist," he adds, quoting the *Ritual*, "must command the demon to tell him whether he is detained in the body of the demoniac through some magic art, or by *signs*, or any objects which usually serve for this evil practice. In case the exorcised person has swallowed the latter, he must vomit them back; and if

they are not in his body, the demon must indicate the proper place where they are to be found; and having found them they must be burned.”¹ Thus some demons reveal the existence of the bewitchment, tell who is its author, and indicate the means to destroy the *malefice*. But beware to ever resort, in such a case, to magicians, sorcerers, or mediums. You must call to help you but the minister of your Church! “The Church believes in magic, as you well see,” he adds, “since she expresses it so formally. And those who *disbelieve in magic*, can they still hope to share the faith of their own Church? And who can teach them better? To whom did Christ say: ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world?’”²

Half-converted dragons and wolves.

Are we to believe that he said this but to those who wear these black [77] or scarlet liveries of Rome? Must we then credit the story that this power was given by Christ to Simon Stylites, the saint who sanctified himself by perching on a pillar (*stylos*) sixty feet high, for thirty-six years of his life, without ever descending from it, in order that, among other miracles stated in *The Golden Legend*, he might cure a *dragon* of a sore eye? “Near Simon’s pillar was the dwelling of a dragon, so very venomous that the stench was spread for miles round his cave.” This ophidian-hermit met with an accident; he got a thorn in his eye, and, becoming blind, crept to the saint’s pillar, and pressed his eye against it for three days, without touching any one. Then the blessed saint, from his ærial seat, “*three feet in diameter*,” ordered earth and water to be placed on the dragon’s eye, out of which suddenly emerged a thorn (or stake), a cubit in length; when the people saw the “miracle” they glorified the Creator. As to the grateful dragon, he arose and, “having adored God for two hours, returned to his cave”³ — a half-converted ophidian, we must suppose.

A horse turned sorcerer, a wolf and a dragon turned Christians.

And what are we to think of that other narrative, to disbelieve in which is “*to risk one’s salvation*,” as we were informed by a Pope’s missionary, of the Order of the Franciscans? When St. Francis preached a sermon in the wilderness, the birds assembled from the four cardinal points of the world. They warbled and applauded every sentence; they sang a holy mass in chorus; finally they dispersed to carry the glad tidings all over the universe. A grasshopper, profiting by the absence of the Holy Virgin, who generally kept company with the saint, remained perched on the head of the “blessed one” for a whole week. Attacked by a ferocious wolf, the saint, who had no other weapon but the sign of the cross which he made upon himself, instead of running away from his rabid assailant, began arguing with the beast. Having imparted to him the benefit to be derived from the holy religion, St. Francis never ceased talking until the wolf became as meek as a lamb, and even shed tears of repentance over his past sins. Finally, he “stretched his paws in the hands of the saint, followed him like a dog through all the towns in which he preached, and became half a Chris-

¹ *Rituale Romanum*, Paris, 1851–52, p. 478

² *Moeurs et pratiques des démons*, p. 177

³ See the narrative selected from *The Golden Legend*, by Rev. Alban Butler’s *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and other Principal Saints: compiled from Original Monuments and other Authentic Records: Illustrated with the Remarks of Judicious Modern Critics and Historians*.

tian”!¹ Wonders of zoology! a horse turned sorcerer, a wolf and a dragon turned Christians!



These two anecdotes, chosen at random from among hundreds, if rivalled are not surpassed by the wildest romances of the Pagan thaumaturgists, magicians, and spiritualists! And yet, when Pythagoras is said to have subdued animals, even wild beasts, merely through a [78] powerful mesmeric influence, he is pronounced by one-half of the Catholics a bare-faced impostor, and by the rest a sorcerer, who worked magic in confederacy with the Devil. Neither the she-bear, nor the eagle, nor yet the bull that Pythagoras is said to have persuaded to give up eating beans, were alleged to have answered with human voices; while St. Benedict’s “black raven,” whom he called “brother,” argues with him, and croaks his answers like a born casuist. When the saint offers him one-half of a poisoned loaf, the raven grows indignant and reproaches him in Latin as though he had just graduated at the Propaganda!

¹ See *The Golden Legend* (a collection of hagiographies translated by William Caxton* from the Latin of Jacobus de Voragine), “Life of St. Francis”; and *Demonologia*, pp. 398, 428.

* William Caxton, English merchant, diplomat, and writer, was the first to introduce a printing press in England in 1476.

The indecency of “The Golden Legend.”

If it be objected that *The Golden Legend* is now but half supported by the Church; and that it is known to have been compiled by the writer from a collection of the lives of the saints, for the most part unauthenticated, we can show that, at least in one instance, the biography is no legendary compilation, but the history of one man, by another one who was his contemporary. John Jortin and Gibbon¹ demonstrated years ago, that the early fathers used to select narratives, wherewith to ornament the lives of their apocryphal saints, from Ovid, Homer, Livy, and even from the unwritten popular legends of Pagan nations. But such is not the case in the above instances. St. Bernard lived in the twelfth century, and St. Dominic was nearly contemporaneous with the author of *The Golden Legend*. De Voragine died in 1298, and Dominic, whose exorcisms and life he describes so minutely, instituted his order in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Moreover, de Voragine was Vicar-General of the Dominicans himself, in the middle of the same century, and therefore described the miracles wrought by his hero and patron but a few years after they were alleged to have happened. He wrote them in the same convent; and while narrating these wonders he had probably fifty persons at hand who had been eye-witnesses to the saint's mode of living. What must we think, in such a case, of a biographer who seriously describes the following:

One day, as the blessed saint [Dominic] was occupied in his study, the Devil began pestering him, in the shape of a flea. He frisked and jumped about the pages of his book until the harassed saint, unwilling as he was to act unkindly, even toward a devil, felt compelled to punish him by fixing the troublesome devil on the very sentence on which he stopped, by clasping the book. At another time the same devil appeared under the shape of a monkey. He grinned so horribly that Dominic, in order to get rid of him, ordered the devil-monkey to take the candle and hold it for him until he had done reading. The poor imp did so, and held it until it was consumed to the very end of the wick; and, notwithstanding his pitiful cries for mercy, the saint compelled him to hold it till his fingers were burned to the bones!

Enough! The approbation with which this book was received by the [79] Church, and the peculiar sanctity attributed to it, is sufficient to show the estimation in which veracity was held by its patrons. We may add, in conclusion, that the finest quintessence of Boccaccio's *Decameron* appears prudery itself by comparison with the filthy realism of *The Golden Legend*.

We cannot regard with too much astonishment the pretensions of the Catholic Church in seeking to convert Hindus and Buddhists to Christianity. While the “heathen” keeps to the faith of his fathers, he has at least the one redeeming quality — that of not having apostatized for the mere pleasure of exchanging one set of idols for another. There may be for him some novelty in his embracing Protestantism; for in that he gains the advantage, at least, of limiting his religious views to their simplest

¹ [*The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. xxviii]

expression. But when a Buddhist has been enticed into exchanging his Shwedagon¹ for the Slipper of the Vatican, or the eight hairs from the head of Gautama and Buddha's tooth, which work miracles, for the locks of a Christian saint, and a tooth of Jesus, which work far less clever miracles, he has no cause to boast of his choice. In his address to the Literary Society of Java, Sir T.S. Raffles is said to have narrated the following characteristic anecdote:

On visiting the great temple on the hills of Nagasaki, the English commissioner was received with marked regard and respect by the venerable patriarch of the northern provinces, a man eighty years of age, who entertained him most sumptuously. On showing him round the courts of the temple, one of the English officers present heedlessly exclaimed, in surprise,

“Jasus Christus!”

The patriarch turning half round, with a placid smile, bowed significantly expressive of:

“We know your Jasus Christus! Well, don't obtrude him upon us in our temples, and we remain friends”;

and so, with a hearty shake of the hands, these two opposites parted.²

There is scarcely a report sent by the missionaries from India, Thibet, and China, but laments the diabolical “obscurity” of the heathen rites, their lamentable impudicity; all of which “are so strongly suggestive of devil-worship,” as des Mousseaux tells us. We can scarcely be assured that the morality of the Pagans would be in the least improved were they allowed a free inquiry into the life of say the psalmist-king, the author of those sweet *Psalms* which are so rapturously repeated by Christians. The difference between David performing a phallic dance before the holy ark — emblem of the female principle — and a Hindu Vishnavite bearing the same emblem on his forehead, favours the former only in the eyes of those who have studied neither the ancient faith nor their own. When a religion which compelled David to cut off and deliver two hundred foreskins of his enemies before he could become the king's son-in-law³ [80] is accepted as a standard by Christians, they would do well not to cast into the teeth of heathen the impudicities of their faiths. Remembering the suggestive parable of Jesus, they ought to cast the beam out of their own eye before plucking at the mote in their neighbour's. The sexual element is as marked in Christianity as in any one of the “heathen religions.” Certainly, nowhere in the *Vedas* can be found the coarseness and downright immodesty of language, that Hebraists now discover throughout the Mosaic *Bible*.



¹ [Also known as the Great Dagon Pagoda and the Golden Pagoda, is a gilded stupa located in Yangon, Myanmar. The 326-foot-tall pagoda is situated on Singuttara Hill, to the west of Kandawgyi Lake, and dominates the Yangon skyline.]

² Charles Coleman, *The Mythology of the Hindus*, p. 331

³ 1 *Samuel* xviii, 25-27

Christianity being pure heathenism, and Catholicism with its fetish-worshipping, are far worse and more pernicious than Hinduism in its most idolatrous aspect.

It would profit little were we to dwell much upon subjects which have been disposed of in such a masterly way by an anonymous author whose work electrified England and Germany last year;¹ while as regards the particular topic under notice, we cannot do better than recommend the scholarly writings of Dr. Inman. Albeit one-sided, and in many instances unjust to the ancient heathen, Pagan, and Jewish religions, the facts treated in the *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, are unimpeachable. Neither can we agree with some English critics who charge him with an intent to destroy Christianity. If by *Christianity* is meant the external religious forms of worship, then he certainly seeks to destroy it, for in his eyes, as well as in those of every truly religious man, who has studied ancient exoteric faiths, and their symbolism, Christianity is pure heathenism, and Catholicism, with its fetish-worshipping, is far worse and more pernicious than Hinduism in its most idolatrous aspect. But while denouncing the exoteric forms and unmasking the symbols, it is not the religion of Christ that the author attacks, but the artificial system of theology. We will allow him to illustrate the position in his own language, and quote from his preface:

When vampires were discovered by the acumen of any observer they were, we are told, ignominiously killed, by a stake being driven through the body; but experience showed them to have such tenacity of life that they rose again and again, notwithstanding renewed impalement, and were not ultimately laid to rest till wholly burned. In like manner, the regenerated Heathendom, which dominates over the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, has risen again and again, after being transfixed. Still cherished by the many, it is denounced by the few. Amongst other accusers, I raise my voice against the Paganism which exists so extensively in ecclesiastical Christianity, and will do my utmost to expose the imposture. . . . In a vampire story told in *Thalaba*, by Southey, the resuscitated being takes the form of a dearly-beloved maiden, and the hero is obliged to kill her with his own hand. He does so; but, whilst he strikes the form of the loved one, he feels sure that he slays [81] only a demon. In like manner, when I endeavour to destroy the current Heathenism, which has assumed the garb of Christianity, *I do not attack real religion.*² Few would accuse a workman of malignancy who cleanses from filth the surface of a noble statue. There may be

¹ *Supernatural Religion: An Inquiry into the Reality of Divine Revelation*, London 1874. [Published anonymously by W.R. Cassels.]

[Note 14 by Boris de Zirkoff: Walter Richard Cassels (1826–1907) was an English theological critic who published in 1874 an anonymous work in two volumes entitled *Supernatural Religion; an Inquiry into the Reality of Divine Revelation*, impugning the credibility of miracles and the authenticity of the New Testament; it was a work of high scholarship which aroused instant attention. By 1875, the work had gone through six editions. A third volume was added in 1877, and a revised edition of the complete work appeared in 1879. H.P. Blavatsky had a very high regard for Cassels' work and used its many arguments upon innumerable occasions.]

² Neither do we, if by *true religion* the world shall at last understand the adoration of one Supreme, invisible, and Unknown Deity, by works and acts, not by the profession of vain human dogmas. But our intention is to go farther. We desire to demonstrate that if we exclude ceremonial and fetish worship from being regarded as essential parts of religion, then the true Christ-like principles have been exemplified, and true Christianity practiced since the days of the apostles, exclusively among Buddhists and "heathens."

some who are too nice to touch a nasty subject, yet even they will rejoice when someone else removes the dirt. Such a scavenger is wanted.¹

But is it merely Pagans and heathen that the Catholics persecute, and about whom, like Augustine, they cry to the Deity, “Oh, my God! *so do I wish Thy enemies to be slain*”? Oh, no! their aspirations are more Mosaic and Cain-like than that. It is against their next of kin in faith, against their schismatic brothers that they are now intriguing within the walls which sheltered the murderous Borgias. The *larvæ* of the infanticidal, parricidal, and fratricidal Popes have proved themselves fit counsellors for the Cains of Castelfidardo and Mentana. It is now the turn of the Slavonian Christians, the Oriental Schismatics — the Philistines of the Greek Church!

Pope fraternizing with Islam.

For his Church feels more sympathy for the Moslem than the schismatic.

His Holiness the Pope, after exhausting, in a metaphor of self-laudation, every point of assimilation between the great biblical prophets and himself, has finally and truly compared himself with the Patriarch Jacob “wrestling against his God.” He now crowns the edifice of Catholic piety by openly sympathizing with the Turks! The vicegerent of God inaugurates his infallibility by encouraging, in a true Christian spirit, the acts of that Moslem David, the modern Bashi-Bazouk;² and it seems as if nothing would more please his Holiness than to be presented by the latter with several thousands of the Bulgarian or Servian “foreskins.” True to her policy to be all things to all men to promote her own interests, the Romish Church is, at this writing (1876), benevolently viewing the Bulgarian and Servian atrocities, and, probably, manoeuvring with Turkey against Russia.³ Better Islam, and the hitherto-hated Crescent over the sepulchre of the Christian god, than the Greek Church established at Constantinople and Jerusalem as the state religion. Like a decrepit and toothless ex-tyrant in exile, the Vatican is eager for any alliance that promises, if not a restoration of its own power, at least the weakening of its rival. The axe its inquisitors once swung, it now toys [82] with in secret, feeling its edge, and waiting, and hoping against hope. In her time, the Popish Church has lain with strange bedfellows, but never before now sunk to the degradation of giving her moral support to those who for over 1200 years spat in her face, called her adherents “infidel dogs,” repudiated her teachings, and denied godhood to her God!

The press of even Catholic France is fairly aroused at this indignity, and openly accuses the Ultramontane portion of the Catholic Church and the Vatican of siding,

¹ *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, p. xvi, Introduction

² [“One whose head is turned, damaged head, crazy-head,” *i.e.*, leaderless or disorderly, was an irregular soldier of the Ottoman army, raised in times of war. These were chiefly recruited from Albanians, Bulgarians, Kurds, Circassians, and other ethnic groups. They were known for their bravery, but also as undisciplined and notorious for savagery and looting. Unrestrained by the regulations that governed regular soldiers in the army, they became notorious for preying on civilians.]

³ [Note 15 by Boris de Zirkoff: The date of 1876, as given by H.P. Blavatsky, is confirmed by her letter to Dr. Alexander Wilder written December 6th, 1876, on the day when Col. Olcott was in the small town of Washington, Washington Co., Pennsylvania, attending the cremation of Baron de Palm’s body. See also *Old Diary Leaves*, I, 166 *et seq.*

during the present Eastern struggle, with the Mohammedan against the Christian. Says the French correspondent of a New York paper:

When the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the French Legislature spoke some mild words in favour of the Greek Christians, he was only applauded by the liberal Catholics, and received coldly by the Ultramontane party.

So pronounced was this, that Lemoinne, the well-known editor of the great liberal Catholic *Journal des Débats*, was moved to say that the Roman Church felt more sympathy for the Moslem than the schismatic, just as they preferred an infidel to the Protestant. Says this writer:

There is at bottom a great affinity between the *Syllabus* and the *Koran*, and between the two heads of the faithful. The two systems are of the same nature, and are united on the common ground of a one and unchangeable theory.

In Italy, in like manner, the King and Liberal Catholics are in warm sympathy with the unfortunate Christians, while the Pope and Ultramontane faction are believed to be inclining to the Mohammedans.

The civilized world may yet expect the apparition of the materialized Virgin Mary within the walls of the Vatican. The so often-repeated “miracle” of the Immaculate Visitor in the mediæval ages has recently been enacted at Lourdes, and why not once more, as a *coup de grace* to all heretics, schismatics, and infidels? The miraculous wax taper is yet seen at Arras, the chief city of Artois; and at every new calamity threatening her beloved Church, the “Blessed Lady” appears personally, and lights it with her own fair hands, in view of a whole “biologized” congregation. This sort of “miracle,” says E. Worsley, wrought by the Roman Catholic Church, “being most certain, and never doubted of by any.”¹ Neither has the private correspondence with which the most “Gracious Lady” honours her friends been doubted. There are two precious missives from her in the archives of the Church. The first purports to be a letter in answer to one addressed to her by Ignatius. She confirms all things learned by her correspondent from “her friend” [83] — meaning the Apostle John. She bids him hold fast to his vows, and adds as an inducement: “*I and John will come together and pay you a visit.*”²

A letter from Mary Virgin.

Nothing was known of this unblushing fraud till the letters were published at Paris, in 1495. By a curious accident it appeared at a time when threatening inquiries began to be made as to the genuineness of the fourth Synoptic. Who could doubt, after such a confirmation from headquarters! But the climax of effrontery was capped in 1534, when another letter was received from the “Mediatrice,” which sounds more like the report of a lobby-agent to a brother-politician. It was written in excellent Latin,

¹ *Discourses of Miracles wrought in the Roman Catholic Church; or a full Refutation of Dr. Stillingfleet's unjust Exceptions against Miracles*, Oxford 1676, p. 64

² After this, why should the Roman Catholics object to the claims of the Spiritualists? If, without proof, they believe in the “materialization” of Mary and John, for Ignatius, how can they logically deny the materialization of Katie and John (King), when it is attested by the careful experiments of Mr. Crookes, the English chemist, and the cumulative testimony of a large number of witnesses?

and was found in the Cathedral of Messina, together with the image to which it alludes. Its contents run as follows:

Mary Virgin, Mother of the Redeemer of the world, to the Bishop, Clergy, and the other faithful of Messina, sendeth health and benediction from *herself* and son:¹

Whereas ye have been mindful of establishing the worship of me; now this is to let you know that by so doing ye have found great favour in my sight. I have a long time reflected with pain upon your city, which is exposed to much danger from its contiguity to the fire of Etna, and I have often had words about it with my son, for he was vexed with you because of your guilty neglect of my worship, so that he would not care a pin about my intercession. Now, however, that you have come to your senses, and have happily begun to worship me, he has conferred upon me the right to become your everlasting protectress; but, at the same time, I warn you to mind what you are about, and give me no cause of repenting of my kindness to you. The prayers and festivals instituted in my honour please me tremendously (*vehementer*), and if you faithfully persevere in these things, and provided you oppose to the utmost of your power, the heretics which now-a-days are spreading through the world, by which both my worship and that of the other saints, male and female, are so endangered, you shall enjoy my perpetual protection.

In sign of this compact, I send you down from Heaven the image of myself, cast by celestial hands, and if ye hold it in the honour to which it is entitled, it will be an evidence to me of your obedience and your faith. Farewell. Dated in Heaven, whilst sitting near the throne of my son, in the month of December, of the 1534th year from his incarnation.

MARY VIRGIN

The reader should understand that this document is no anti-Catholic forgery. The author from whom it is taken,² says that the authenticity of the missive

. . . is attested by the Bishop himself, his Vicar-General, [84] Secretary, and six Canons of the Cathedral Church of Messina, all of whom have signed that attestation with their names, and confirmed it upon oath.

Both the epistle and image were found upon the high altar, where they had been placed by angels from heaven.

A Church must have reached the last stages of degradation, when such sacrilegious trickery as this could be resorted to by its clergy, and accepted with or without question by the people.

¹ The "Mother of God" takes precedence therefore of God?

² See "The New Era," New York, July 1875.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

No! far from the man who feels the workings of an immortal spirit within him, be such a religion! There never was nor ever will be a truly philosophical mind, whether of Pagan, heathen, Jew, or Christian, but has followed the same path of thought. Gautama-Buddha is mirrored in the precepts of Christ; Paul and Philo Judæus are faithful echoes of Plato; and Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus won their immortal fame by combining the teachings of all these grand masters of true philosophy.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good,

ought to be the motto of all brothers on earth. Not so is it with the interpreters of the *Bible*. The seed of the Reformation was sown on the day that the second chapter of *The Catholic Epistle of James*, jostled the eleventh chapter of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* in the same New Testament. One who believes in Paul cannot believe in James, Peter, and John. The Paulists, to remain Christians with their apostle, must withstand Peter “to the face”; and if Peter “was to be blamed” and *was wrong*, then he was not infallible. How then can his successor (?) boast of his infallibility? Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every house divided against itself must fall. A plurality of masters has proved as fatal in religions as in politics. What Paul preached, was preached by every other mystic philosopher. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and *be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage!*” exclaims the honest apostle-philosopher; and adds, as if prophetically inspired:

But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.¹

Pagan origin of Catholic ritual.

Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and some Fathers drank deeply from the fountains of philosophy.

The identical evocations and incantations of the Pagan and Jewish Kabbalist are now repeated by the Christian exorcist, and the theurgy of Iamblichus is adopted word for word.

That the Neo-Platonists were not always despised or accused of demonolatry is evidenced in the adoption by the Roman Church of their very rites and theurgy. The identical evocations and incantations of the Pagan and Jewish Kabbalist, are now repeated by the Christian exorcist, and the theurgy of Iamblichus was adopted word for word. Writes Professor A. Wilder:

Distinct as were the Platonists and Pauline Christians of the earlier centuries, many of the more distinguished teachers of the new faith were deeply tintured with the philosophical leaven. Synesius, the Bishop of Cyrene, was the disciple of Hypatia. *St. Anthony reiterated the theurgy of Iamblichus*. The *Logos*, or word of the *Gospel* [85] according to John, was a Gnostic personification. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and others of the fathers drank deeply from the fountains of philosophy. The ascetic idea which carried away the Church was like that

¹ [Galatians v, 1, 15]

which was practiced by Plotinus . . . all through the middle ages there rose up men who accepted the interior doctrines which were promulgated by the renowned teacher of the Academy.¹

The Latin Church despoiled Kabbalists and Theurgists of their magical rites and ceremonies, and hurled anathemas upon their devoted heads.

To substantiate our accusation that the Latin Church first despoiled the Kabbalists and Theurgists of their magical rites and ceremonies, before hurling anathemas upon their devoted heads, we will now translate for the reader fragments from the forms of *exorcism* employed by Kabbalists and Christians. The identity in phraseology, may, perhaps, disclose one of the reasons why the Romish Church has always desired to keep the faithful in ignorance of the meaning of her Latin prayers and ritual. Only those directly interested in the deception have had the opportunity to compare the rituals of the Church and the magicians. The best Latin scholars were, until a comparatively recent date, either churchmen, or dependent upon the Church. Common people could not read Latin, and even if they could, the reading of the books on magic was prohibited, under the penalty of anathema and excommunication. The cunning device of the confessional made it almost impossible to consult, even surreptitiously, what the priests call a *grimoire* (a devil's scrawl), or *Ritual of Magic*. To make assurance doubly sure, the Church began destroying or concealing everything of the kind she could lay her hands upon.

The following are translated from the *Kabbalistic Ritual*, and that generally known as the *Roman Ritual*. The latter was promulgated in 1851 and 1852, under the sanction of Cardinal Engelbert, Archbishop of Malines, and of the Archbishop of Paris. Speaking of it, the demonologist des Mousseaux says:

It is the ritual of Paul V, revised by the most learned of modern Popes, by the contemporary of Voltaire, Benedict XIV.²

Kabbalistic (Jewish and Pagan)

Exorcism of Salt

The Priest-Magician blesses the *Salt*, and says:

“*Creature of Salt*,⁴ in thee may remain the WISDOM [of God]; and may it preserve from all corruption *our minds and bodies*. Through *Hokhmael* [God of wisdom], and the power of *Ruah*

Roman Catholic

Exorcism of Salt³

The Priest blesses the *Salt* and says:

“*Creature of Salt*, I exorcise thee in the name of the living God . . . *become the health of the soul and of the body!* [86] Everywhere where thou art thrown *may the unclean spirit be put to flight*

¹ “Paul and Plato”

² See *La Magie au dix-neuvième siècle, ses agents, ses vérités, ses mensonges, précédée d’une lettre adressée à l’auteur par le P. Ventura de Raulica*, 1860, p. 130

³ *Ritual Romanum*, Paris 1851–52, pp. 291–96. Cf. Henri Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *Les hauts phénomènes de la magie, précédés du spiritisme antique*, 1860, p. 139

⁴ *Creature of salt, air, water, or of any object to be enchanted or blessed*, is a technical word in magic, adopted by the Christian clergy.

Hokhmael [Spirit of the Holy Ghost] may the Spirits of matter [bad spirits] before it recede . . . *Amen.*”

Exorcism of Water (and Ashes)

“Creature of the Water, I exorcise thee . . . by *the three names* which are Netzah, Hod, and Yesod [kabbalistic trinity], in the beginning and in the end, by Alpha and Omega, which are in the Spirit Azoth [Holy Ghost, or the *Universal Soul*], I exorcise and adjure thee . . . Wandering eagle, may the Lord command thee by the *wings of the bull and his flaming sword.*”

(The cherub placed at the east gate of Eden.)

Exorcism of an Elemental Spirit

“Serpent, in the name of the Tetragrammaton, the Lord; He commands thee, by the angel and the lion.”

“Angel of darkness, obey, and run away with this holy [exorcised] water. Eagle in chains, obey this sign, and retreat before the breath. Moving serpent, crawl at my feet, or be tortured by *this sacred fire*, and evaporate before this holy incense. Let water return to water [the elemental spirit of water]; let the fire burn, and the air circulate; let the earth return to earth by the virtue of the Pentagram, which is the Morning Star, and in the name of the Tetragrammaton which is traced in the centre of *the Cross of Light. Amen.*”

. . . *Amen.*”

Exorcism of Water

“Creature of the water, in the name of the Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost . . . *be exorcised* . . . I adjure thee in the name of the Lamb . . . [the magician says *bull* or ox — *per alas Tauri*] of the Lamb that trod upon the basilisk and the aspic, and who crushes under his foot the lion and the dragon.”

Exorcism of the Devil

.
“O Lord, let him who carries along with him the terror, flee, struck in his turn by terror and defeated. O thou, who art the Ancient Serpent . . . tremble before the hand of him who, having triumphed of the tortures of hell [?] — *devictis gemitibus inferni* — recalled the souls to light . . . The more whilst thou decay, the more terrible will be thy torture . . . by Him who reigns over the living and the dead . . . and who will judge the century by fire, *sæculum per ignem*, etc. In the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*”¹

It is unnecessary to try the patience of the reader any longer, although we might multiply examples. It must not be forgotten that we have quoted from the latest revision of the *Ritual*, that of 1851–52. If we were to go back to the former one we would find a far more striking identity, not merely of phraseology but of ceremonial form. For the purpose of comparison we have not even availed ourselves of the ritual of ceremonial magic of the *Christian Kabbalists* of the middle ages, wherein the lan-

¹ *Roman Ritual*, pp. 428-33. Cf. Henri Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *Les hauts phénomènes de la magie, précédés du spiritism antique*, pp. 139-43

guage modelled upon a belief in the divinity of Christ is, with the exception of a stray expression here and there, identical with the Catholic [87] Ritual.¹ The latter, however, makes one improvement, for the originality of which the Church should be allowed all credit. Certainly nothing so fantastical could be found in a ritual of magic. “Give place,” apostrophizing the “Demon,” it says,

. . . give place to Jesus Christ . . . thou *filthy, stinking, and ferocious beast* . . . dost thou rebel? Listen and tremble, Satan; enemy of the faith, enemy of the human race, introducer of death . . . root of all evil, promoter of vice, soul of envy, origin of avarice, cause of discord, prince of homicide, whom God curses; author of incest and sacrilege, inventor of all obscenity, *professor* of the most detestable actions, *and Grand Master of Heretics* [!!] — *doctor hæreticorum*. What! . . . dost thou still stand? Dost dare to resist, and thou knowest that Christ, our Lord, is coming? . . . Give place to Jesus Christ, give place to the Holy Ghost, which, by His blessed Apostle Peter, has flung thee down before the public, in the person of Simon the Magician (*te manifeste stravit in Simone mago*).²

After such a shower of abuse, no devil having the slightest feeling of self-respect could remain in such company; unless, indeed, he should chance to be an Italian Liberal, or King Victor Emmanuel himself both of whom, thanks to Pius IX, have become anathema-proof.

Long before the sign of the Cross was adopted as a Christian symbol, it was employed as a secret sign of recognition among neophytes and adepts.

The sign is absolutely and magnificently kabbalistic: it represents the perpetual opposition and quaternary equilibrium of the elements.

It really seems too bad to strip Rome of all her symbols at once; but justice must be done to the despoiled hierophants. Long before the sign of the Cross was adopted as a Christian symbol, it was employed as a secret sign of recognition among neophytes and adepts. Says Lévi:

The sign of the Cross adopted by the Christians does not belong exclusively to them. It is kabbalistic, and represents the oppositions and quaternary equilibrium of the elements. We see by the occult verse of the *Pater*, to which we have called attention in Vol. I of this work, that there were originally two ways of making it, or, at least, two very different formulas to express its meaning — one reserved for priests and initiates; the other given to neophytes and the profane. Thus, for example, the *initiate*, carrying his hand to his forehead, said: *To thee*; then he added, *belong*; and continued, while carrying his hand to the breast — *the kingdom*; then, to the left shoulder — *justice*; to the right shoulder — *and mercy*. Then he joined the two hands, adding: *throughout the generating cycles*:

¹ See William Britten, *Art Magic: or, Mundane, Sub-Mundane and Super-Mundane Spiritism. A Treatise in Three Parts and Twenty-Three Sections: Descriptive of Art Magic, Spiritism, the Different Orders of Spirits in the Universe Known to be Related to, or in Communication With Man; Together With Directions for Invoking, Controlling, and Discharging Spirits, and the Uses and Abuses, Dangers and Possibilities of Magical Art*, York, 1876. Pt. III, § xix, art. on Peter d’Abano, Philosopher [to whom the *Heptameron, or Magical Elements* is ascribed.]

² *Ritual Romanun*, pp. 429-33; see *La Magie au dix-neuvième siècle, ses agents, ses vérités, ses mensonges, précédée d’une lettre adressée à l’auteur par le P. Ventura de Raulica*, pp. 142-43

Tibi sunt Malkuth, et Geburah et Hesed, per Æonas

— a sign of the Cross, *absolutely* and magnificently kabbalistic, which the profanations of Gnosticism made the militant and official Church completely *lose*.¹

[88]

The Augustinian productions are a rhapsodical conversation with “god,” an incoherent dream.

How fantastical, therefore, is the assertion of Father Ventura, that, while Augustine was a Manichean, a philosopher, ignorant of and refusing to humble himself before the sublimity of the “grand Christian revelation,” he knew nothing, understood naught of God, man, or universe; “. . . he remained poor, small, obscure, sterile, and wrote nothing, did nothing really grand or useful.” But, hardly had he become a Christian “. . . when his reasoning powers and intellect, enlightened at the *luminary of faith*, elevated him to the most sublime heights of philosophy and theology.” And his other proposition that Augustine’s genius, as a consequence, “developed itself in all its grandeur and prodigious fecundity . . . his intellect radiated with that immense splendour which, reflecting itself in his immortal writings, has never ceased for one moment during fourteen centuries to illuminate the Church and the world!”²

Whatever Augustine was as a Manichean, we leave Father Ventura to discover; but that his accession to Christianity established an everlasting enmity between theology and science is beyond doubt. While forced to confess that “the Gentiles had possibly something *divine* and true in their doctrines,”³ he, nevertheless, declared that for their superstition, idolatry, and pride, they had “to be detested, and, unless they improved, to be punished by divine judgment.” This furnishes the clue to the subsequent policy of the Christian Church, even to our day. If the Gentiles did not choose to come into the Church, all that was divine in their philosophy should go for naught, and the divine wrath of God should be visited upon their heads. What effect this produced is succinctly stated by Draper:

No one did more than this Father [Augustine] to bring science and religion into antagonism; it was mainly he who diverted the *Bible* from its true office — a guide to purity of life — and placed it in the perilous position of being the arbiter of human knowledge, an audacious tyranny over the mind of man. The example once set, there was no want of followers; the works of the Greek philosophers were stigmatized as profane; the transcendently glorious achievements of the Museum of Alexandria were hidden from sight by a cloud of ignorance, mysticism, and unintelligible jargon, out of which there too often flashed the destroying lightnings of ecclesiastical vengeance.⁴

¹ *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*, Vol. II, ch. iv

² Gioacchino Ventura di Raulica, *La raison philosophique et la raison Catholique: conférences prêchées à Paris dans l'année 1851*, II, part I, p. lvi, Preface

³ [Cf. *De civitate dei*, VIII, ix; X, ii, etc.]

⁴ *History of the conflict between religion and science*, p. 62

Augustine¹ and Cyprian² admit that Hermes and Ostanēs³ believed in one true god; the first two maintaining, as well as the two Pagans, that he is invisible and incomprehensible, except spiritually. Moreover we invite any man of intelligence — provided he be not a religious fanatic — after reading fragments chosen at random from the works of Hermes [89] and Augustine on the Deity, to decide which of the two gives a more philosophical definition of the “unseen Father.” We have at least one writer of fame who is of our opinion. Draper calls the Augustinian productions a “rhapsodical conversation” with God; an “incoherent dream.”⁴

Father Ventura depicts the saint as attitudinizing before an astonished world upon “the most sublime heights of philosophy.” But here steps in again the same unprejudiced critic, who passes the following remarks on this colossus of Patristic philosophy. He asks,

Was it for this preposterous scheme, this product of ignorance and audacity, that the works of the Greek philosophers were to be given up? It was none too soon that the great critics who appeared at the Reformation, by comparing the works of these writers with one another, brought them to their proper level, and taught us to look upon them all with contempt.⁵

Paul and Peter compared and contrasted.

By Simon Magus we must understand apostle Paul, whose Epistles were secretly as well as openly calumniated by Peter, and charged with containing dyсноëtic learning.

For such men as Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Apollonius, and even Simon Magus, to be accused of having formed a pact with the Devil, whether the latter personage exist or not, is so absurd as to need but little refutation. If Simon Magus — the most problematical of all in an historical sense — ever existed otherwise than in the overheated fancy of Peter and the other apostles, he was evidently no worse than any of his adversaries. A difference in religious views, however great, is insufficient *per se* to send one person to heaven and the other to hell. Such uncharitable and peremptory doctrines might have been taught in the middle ages; but it is too late now for even the Church to put forward this traditional scarecrow. Research begins to suggest that which, if ever verified, will bring eternal disgrace on the Church of the Apostle Peter, whose very imposition of herself upon that disciple must be regarded as the most unverified and unverifiable of the assumptions of the Catholic clergy.

¹ [De baptismo contra Donatistas, lib. VI, c. xlv]

² [Sancti Cæcilii Cypriani opera, s.v. “De idolorum vanitate,” Treatise VI, § vi, p. 14; Oxoniæ 1682]

³ [Note 16 by Boris de Zirkoff: Ostanēs, Osthānēs or Hosthanēs, with varied spelling, was an ancient occultist and teacher regarding whom no reliable information is at hand. He may have been a Mede. The most comprehensive analysis of all known traditions about him may be found in the monumental *Real-Encyclopædie der Classischen Alterthumswissenschaft*, by Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. Ostanēs.]

⁴ John William Draper, *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 1875, *op. cit.*, p. 60

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 66

The Apostle of the Gentiles was brave, outspoken, sincere, and very learned; the Apostle of Circumcision, cowardly, cautious, insincere, and very ignorant.¹

The erudite author of *Supernatural Religion*² assiduously endeavours to prove that by *Simon Magus* we must understand the apostle Paul, whose Epistles were secretly as well as openly calumniated by Peter, and charged with containing “*dysnoëtic* learning.” The Apostle of the Gentiles was brave, outspoken, sincere, and very learned; the Apostle of Circumcision, cowardly, cautious, *insincere*, and very ignorant. That Paul had been, partially, at least, if not completely, initiated into the theurgic mysteries, admits of little doubt. His language, the phraseology so peculiar to the Greek philosophers, certain expressions used but by the initiates, are so many sure ear-marks to that supposition. Our suspicion has been strengthened by an able article in one of the New York [90] periodicals, entitled “Paul and Plato,” in which the author³ puts forward one remarkable and, for us, very precious observation. In his *Epistles to the Corinthians* he shows Paul abounding with

. . . expressions suggested by the initiations of Sabazius and Eleusis, and the lectures of the [Greek] philosophers. He [Paul] designates himself an *idiōtēs* — a person unskilful in the Word, but not in the *gnosis* or philosophical learning. “We speak wisdom among the perfect or initiated,” he writes; “not the wisdom of this world, nor of the Archons of this world, but divine wisdom in a mystery, secret — which *none of the Archons of this world knew.*”⁴



¹ [Consult “Paul an Initiate and founder of Christianity,” and “Peter not an Initiate and the enemy of Paul,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [Vol. II, Part II, ch. v]

³ Alexander Wilder, editor of *The Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries* of Thomas Taylor.

⁴ *1 Corinthians* ii, 6, 7, 8

Peter versus Paul

The Apostle of Circumcision

The Apostle of the Gentiles

Preaches circumcision.	Forbids circumcision.
Cautious.	Outspoken.
Cowardly.	Brave.
Insincere.	Sincere.
Ignorant.	Learned.
Uninitiated.	Initiated (Idiōtēs).
Holds fast to the old covenant.	Turns away from the old covenant.
Perpetuates bondage to everyday life and the Church.	Promises liberty from the yoke of sensual and ecclesiastical bondage.
Accepts the jealous, wrathful, revengeful, and anthropomorphic “Lord” of Israel. ¹	Rejects the Jewish God in favour of the God of Mercy, the Unknown Deity of the old Athenians.
Respects the lower angels of the Kabbalists, ² the inferior Elōhīm (i.e., the God of Israel), and denounces those who do not.	Warns against the lower angels of the Kabbalists.

What else can the apostle mean by these unequivocal words, but that he himself, as belonging to the *mystai* (initiated), spoke of things shown and explained only in the Mysteries? The “divine wisdom in a mystery which none of the *Archons of this world knew*,” has evidently some direct reference to the *Basileus* of the Eleusinian initiation who *did know*. The *Basileus* belonged to the staff of the great hierophant, and was an *archon* of Athens; and as such was one of the chief *mystai*, belonging to the *interior* Mysteries, to which a very select and small number obtained an entrance.³ The magistrates supervising the Eleusinians were called archons.⁴

The Nazars were a class of Chaldæan Theurgists. Jesus belonged to that class.

Another proof that Paul belonged to the circle of the “Initiates” lies in the following fact. The apostle had his head shorn at Cenchrea (where Lucius Apuleius, was initi-

¹ [Consult “The Holy of Holies and Its degradation” in our Black versus White Magic Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² Cf. Commentary on *physical* Nature’s unaided attempts to construct even a perfect *animal* — let alone man. “For the “Fathers,” the lower Angels, are all Nature-Spirits and the higher Elementals also possess an intelligence of their own; but this is not enough to construct a THINKING man. “Living Fire” was needed, that fire which gives the human mind its self-perception and self-consciousness, or *Manas*; . . . The first creators, then, were the Pygmalions of primeval man: they failed to animate the statue — *intellectually*.” *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 102; [on Stanza VI.15b; also cf. *ibid.*, p. 150.]

³ Thomas Taylor, *The Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, p. 14. [ed. by A. Wilder; 4th ed., New York, 1891]

⁴ [Consult “The holy rites of Eleusis were archaic Wisdom Religion dressed in Greek garb,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

ated) because “he had a vow.” The *nazars* — or set apart — as we see in the Jewish Scriptures, had to cut their hair which they wore long, and which “no razor touched” at any other time, and sacrifice it on the altar of initiation. And the nazars were a class of Chaldæan Theurgists. We will show further that Jesus belonged to this class.

Paul declares that:

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise *master-builder*, I have laid the foundation.¹

This expression, master-builder, used only *once* in the whole *Bible*, and by Paul, may be considered as a whole revelation. In the Mysteries, the third part of the sacred rites was called *Epopteia*, or revelation, reception into the secrets. In substance it means that stage of divine clairvoyance when everything pertaining to this earth disappears, and earthly sight is paralyzed, and the soul is united free and pure with its Spirit, or God. But the real significance of the word is “overseeing,” from *οπτομαι* — *I see myself*. In Sanskrit the word *avāpta* has the same meaning, as [91] well as *to obtain*.² The word *epopteia* is a compound one, from *επι* — upon, and *οπτομαι* — to look, or an overseer, an inspector — also used for a master-builder. The title of master-mason, in Freemasonry, is derived from this, in the sense used in the Mysteries. Therefore, when Paul entitles himself a “master-builder,” he is using a word pre-eminently kabbalistic, theurgic, and masonic, and one which no other apostle uses. He thus declares himself an *adept*, having the right to *initiate* others.

Why Paul was so persecuted and hated by Peter, John, and James?

If we search in this direction, with those sure guides, the Grecian Mysteries and the *Kabbalah*, before us, it will be easy to find the secret reason why Paul was so persecuted and hated by Peter, John, and James. The author of the *Revelation* was a Jewish Kabbalist *pur sang*, with all the hatred inherited by him from his forefathers toward the Mysteries.³ His jealousy during the life of Jesus extended even to Peter; and it is but after the death of their common master that we see the two apostles — the former of whom wore the Mitre and the Petalon of the Jewish Rabbis — preach so zealously the rite of circumcision. In the eyes of Peter, Paul, who had humiliated him, and whom he felt so much his superior in “Greek learning” and philosophy, must have naturally appeared as a magician, a man polluted with the “*Gnosis*,” with the “wisdom” of the Greek Mysteries — hence, perhaps, “Simon the Magician.”⁴

¹ *1 Corinthians* iii, 10

² In its most extensive meaning, the Sanskrit word has the same literal sense as the Greek term; both imply “revelation,” by no human agent, but through the “receiving of the sacred drink.” In India the initiated received the “Soma,” sacred drink, which helped to liberate his soul from the body; and in the Eleusinian Mysteries it was the sacred drink offered at the *Epopteia*. The Grecian Mysteries are wholly derived from the Brāhmanical Vedic rites, and the latter from the ante-Vedic religious Mysteries — primitive Buddhist philosophy.

³ It is needless to state that *the Gospel according to John* was not written by John but by a Platonist or a Gnostic belonging to the Neo-platonic school.

⁴ The fact that Peter persecuted the “Apostle to the Gentiles,” under that name, does not necessarily imply that there was no Simon Magus individually distinct from Paul. It may have become a generic name of abuse. Theodoret and Chrysostom, the earliest and most prolific commentators on the Gnosticism of those days, seem actually to make of Simon a rival of Paul, and to state that between them passed frequent messages. The former, as a diligent propagandist of what Paul terms the “antithesis of the Gnosis” (*1 Timothy* vi, 20), must have been a sore thorn in the side of the apostle. There are sufficient proofs of the actual existence of Simon Magus.

As to Peter, biblical criticism has shown before now that he had probably no more to do with the foundation of the Latin Church at Rome, than to furnish the pretext so readily seized upon by the cunning Irenæus to benefit this Church with the new name of the apostle — *Petra* or *Kēphas*, a name which allowed so readily, by an easy play upon words to connect it with *Petroma*, the double set of stone tablets used [92] by the hierophant at the initiations, during the final Mystery. In this, perhaps, lies concealed the whole secret of the claims of the Vatican. As Professor Wilder happily suggests:

In the Oriental countries the designation Pether [in Phœnician and Chaldaic, an interpreter] appears to have been the title of this personage [the hierophant] . . . There is in these facts some reminder of the peculiar circumstances of the Mosaic Law . . . and also of the claim of the Pope to be the successor of Peter, the hierophant or interpreter of the Christian religion.¹

As such, we must concede to him, to some extent, the right to be such an interpreter. The Latin Church has faithfully preserved in symbols, rites, ceremonies, architecture, and even in the very dress of her clergy, the tradition of the Pagan worship — of the public or exoteric ceremonies, we should add; otherwise her dogmas would embody more sense and contain less blasphemy against the majesty of the Supreme and Invisible God.

A mysterious Egyptian inscription explained.

An inscription found on the coffin of Queen Menthu-hetep, of the eleventh dynasty (2782 B.C.), now proved to have been transcribed from the seventeenth chapter of the *Book of the Dead* (dating not later than 4500 B.C.), is more than suggestive. This monumental text contains a group of hieroglyphics, which, when interpreted, read thus:

PTR. RF. SU.
Peter- ref- su.

Baron Bunsen shows this sacred formulary mixed up with a whole series of glosses and various interpretations on a monument forty centuries old.²

This is identical with saying that the record [the true interpretation] was at that time no longer intelligible. . . . We beg our readers to understand that a sacred

¹ Thomas Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18 (4th ed.). Had we not trustworthy kabbalistic tradition to rely upon, we might be, perhaps, forced to question whether the authorship of the *Revelation* is to be ascribed to the apostle of that name. He seems to be termed John the Theologist.

² [Note 17 by Boris de Zirkoff. PTR RF SU means “what (or who) is this?” The XVIIth Chapter of the Book of the Dead first appeared in the XIth Dynasty. It makes a statement at the end of which comes the question: “what (or who) is this?” Then comes the first explanation, often followed by the words KY DJED, “another saying,” followed by another explanation. There may be still another explanation for the same statement, etc. Budge, in his English translation of the *Book of the Dead* (Introduction, p. xcvi), says:

Like many sections of the *Book of the Dead* this chapter was composed by the Priests of Heliopolis, and it represented their views about the nature of the Gods and it proves that various opinions as to the meaning of passages in it existed among the learned.

text, a hymn, containing the words of a departed spirit, existed in such a state about 4,000 years ago . . . as to be all but unintelligible to royal scribes.¹

That it was unintelligible to the uninitiated among the latter is as well proved by the confused and contradictory glossaries, as that it was a “mystery”-word, known to the hierophants of the sanctuaries, and, moreover, a word chosen by Jesus, to designate the office assigned by him to one of his apostles. This word, PTR, was partially interpreted, owing to another word similarly written in another group of hieroglyphics, on a [93] stele, the sign used for it being an opened eye.² Bunsen mentions as another explanation of PTR — “to show.” He remarks,

It appears to me that our PTR is literally the old Aramaic and Hebrew “Patar,” which occurs in the history of Joseph as the specific word for *interpreting*; whence also *Pitrum* is the term for interpretation of a text, a dream.³

Pythagoras never allowed his neophytes to see him during the years of probation, but instructed them from behind a curtain in his cave. He was the real *deus ex machina*.

In a manuscript of the first century, a combination of the Demotic and Greek texts,⁴ and most probably one of the few which miraculously escaped the Christian vandalism of the second and third centuries, when all such precious manuscripts were burned as magical, we find occurring in several places a phrase, which, perhaps, may throw some light upon this question. One of the principal heroes of the manuscript, who is constantly referred to as “the Judæan Illuminator” or Initiate, *Τελειωτης*, is made to communicate but with his *Patar*, the latter being written in Chaldaic characters. Once the latter word is coupled with the name *Shimeon*. Several times, the “Illuminator,” who rarely breaks his contemplative solitude, is shown inhabiting a *κρυπη* (cave), and teaching the multitudes of eager scholars standing outside, not orally, but through this *Patar*. The latter receives the words of wisdom by applying his ear to a circular hole in a partition which conceals the teacher from the listeners, and then conveys them, with explanations and glossaries, to the crowd. This, with a slight change, was the method used by Pythagoras, who, as we know, never allowed his neophytes to see him during the years of probation, but instructed them from behind a curtain in his cave.



¹ Christian Charles Josias von Bunsen, *Egypt's place in universal history: an historical investigation in five books*, Vol. V (1857), p. 90

² See Viscount Olivier Charles Camille Emmanuel de Rougé's, *Étude sur une stèle égyptienne appartenant à la Bibliothèque Impériale; lu dans la séance publique annuelle de l'académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres du 12 nov. 1858*, p. 44; PTAR (*videns*) is interpreted on it “to appear,” with a sign of interrogation after it — the usual mark of scientific perplexity. In Bunsen's fifth volume of *Egypt's Place*, etc., the interpretation following is “Illuminator,” which is more correct.

³ Bunsen, *op. cit.*, Vol V, p. 90

⁴ It is the property of a mystic whom we met in Syria.

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
2. CHRISTIAN CRIMES AND HEATHEN VIRTUES



Dalle funéraire de Simon de Gillans, Abbé de l'Île Barbe (situated in middle of the river Saône, Lyon), who died 6th September 1349. The tombstone of the “self-effacing” abbot is currently displayed at the Musée de Cluny, Paris. Note the abbot’s mitre, the crosier, and the pallium. The latter, representing the Egyptian cross (⊥, assuming the figure of the letter Y), is bedecked with crosses *pattée* and swastikas. This image is similar to the drawing in Dr. Inman’s book described by Madame Blavatsky overleaf. — ED. PHIL.

But, whether the “Illuminator” of the Græco-Demotic manuscript is identical with Jesus or not, the fact remains, that we find him selecting a “mystery”-appellation for one who is made to appear later by the Catholic Church as the janitor of the Kingdom of Heaven and the interpreter of Christ’s will. The word Patar or Peter locates both master and disciple in the circle of initiation, and connects them with the “Secret Doctrine.” The great hierophant of the ancient Mysteries never allowed the candidates to see or hear him personally. He was the *deus ex machina*, the presiding but invisible Deity, uttering his will and instructions through a second party; and 2,000 years later, we discover that the Taley-Lamas of Thibet had been following for centuries the same traditional programme during the most important religious mysteries of Lamaism. [94] If Jesus knew the secret meaning of the title bestowed by him on Simon, then he must have been initiated; otherwise he could not have learned it; and if he was an initiate of either the Pythagorean Essenes, the Chaldæan Magi, or the Egyptian Priests, then the doctrine taught by him was but a portion of the “Secret Doctrine” taught by the Pagan hierophants to the few select adepts admitted within the sacred adyta.

The ceremonial dress of the Christian clergy is identical with that of the old Babylonians, Assyrians, Phœnicians, Egyptians, and other Pagans of the hoary antiquity.

But we will discuss this question further on. For the present we will endeavour to briefly indicate the extraordinary similarity — or rather identity, we should say — of rites and ceremonial dress of the Christian clergy with that of the old Babylonians, Assyrians, Phœnicians, Egyptians, and other Pagans of the hoary antiquity.

If we would find the model of the Papal tiara, we must search the annals of the ancient Assyrian tablets. We invite the reader to give his attention to Dr. Inman’s illustrated work, *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*. On page sixty-four, he will readily recognize the head-gear of the successor of St. Peter in the coiffure worn by gods or angels in ancient Assyria, “where it appears crowned by an emblem of the *male trinity*” (the Christian Cross). Adds Dr. Inman:

We may mention, in passing, that, as the Romanists adopted the mitre and the tiara from “the cursed brood of Ham,” so they adopted the Episcopalian crook from the augurs of Etruria, and the artistic form with which they clothe their angels from the painters and urn-makers of Magna Græcia and Central Italy.

The nimbus and tonsure of the Catholic priest and monk are solar emblems.

Would we push our inquiries farther, and seek to ascertain as much in relation to the nimbus and the tonsure of the Catholic priest and monk?¹ We shall find undeniable proofs that they are solar emblems. Charles Knight, in his *Old England: a Pictorial Museum*, gives a drawing by St. Augustine, representing an ancient Christian bishop, in a dress probably identical with that worn by the great “saint” himself. The *pallium*, or the ancient stole of the bishop, is the feminine sign when worn by a priest in worship. On St. Augustine’s picture it is bedecked with Buddhistic crosses, and in

¹ The Priests of Isis were tonsured.

its whole appearance it is a representation of the Egyptian τ (tau), assuming slightly the figure of the letter Y. Says Inman:

Its lower end is . . . the mark of the masculine triad; the right hand [of the figure] has the forefinger extended, like the Assyrian priests while doing homage *to the grove* . . . When a male dons the pallium in worship, he becomes the representative of the trinity in the unity, the *arba*, or mystic four.¹

The “Black Virgins,” so highly revered in certain French cathedrals during the Middle Ages, were basalt figures of Isis.

“Immaculate is our Lady Isis,” is the legend around an engraving [95] of Serapis and Isis, described by King, in *The Gnostics and their Remains*,

H KYPIA EICIC AΓNH, “Immaculate is our lady Isis,” the very terms applied afterwards to that personage who succeeded to her form, titles, symbols, rites, and ceremonies . . . Thus her devotees carried into the new priesthood the former badges of their profession, the obligation to celibacy, the tonsure, and the surplice, omitting, unfortunately, the frequent ablutions prescribed by the ancient creed. — The “Black Virgins,” so highly revered in certain French cathedrals during the long night of the Middle Ages, proved, when at last examined critically, basalt figures of Isis!²

The Catholic bells were imported from Buddhist pagodas.

Before the shrine of Jupiter Ammon were suspended tinkling bells, from the sound of whose chiming the priests gathered the auguries; “A golden bell and a pomegranate . . . round about the hem of the robe,” was the result with the Mosaic Jews.³ But in the Buddhistic system, during the religious services, the gods of the Deva-Loka are always invoked and invited to descend upon the altars by the ringing of bells suspended in the pagodas. The bell of the sacred table of Śiva at Kuhama is described in Kailāsa, and every Buddhist *vihāra* and lamasery has its bells.

Beads and rosaries were imported directly from the Buddhist Thibetans and Chinese.

We thus see that the bells used by Christians come to them directly from the Buddhist Thibetans and Chinese. The beads and rosaries have the same origin, and have been used by Buddhist monks for over 2,300 years. The *lingas* in the Hindu temples are ornamented upon certain days with large berries, from a tree sacred to Mahādeva, which are strung into rosaries. The title of “nun” is an Egyptian word, and had with them the actual meaning; the Christians did not even take the trouble of translating the word *Nonna*. The aureole of the saints was used by the antediluvian artists of Babylonia, whenever they desired to honour or deify a mortal’s head. In a celebrated picture in Moore’s *Hindoo Pantheon*, entitled, “Khrisna nursed by Devakī, from a highly-finished picture,” the Hindu Virgin is represented as seated on a lounge and nursing Krishna. The hair brushed back, the long veil, and the golden aureole

¹ *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, pp. 51, 52. [See also his *Ancient Faiths Embodied in Ancient Names*, Vol. II, pp. 915-18.]

² Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 71 & fn. [2nd ed., pp. 173-74]

³ [Exodus xxxix, 25, 26]

around the Virgin's head, as well as around that of the Hindu Saviour, are striking. No Catholic, well versed as he might be in the mysterious symbolism of iconology, would hesitate for a moment to worship at that shrine the Virgin Mary, the mother of his God!¹ In Indra-Sabhā, the south entrance of the Caves of Ellora, may be seen to this day the figure of Indra's wife, Indrānī, sitting with her infant son-god, pointing the finger to heaven with the same gesture as the Italian Madonna and child.² In *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, the author gives a figure from a [96] mediæval woodcut — the like of which we have seen by dozens in old psalters — in which the Virgin Mary, with her infant, is represented as the Queen of Heaven, on the crescent moon, emblem of virginity.

Being before the sun, she almost eclipses its light. Than this, nothing could more completely identify the Christian mother and child with Isis and Horus, Ishtar, Venus, Juno, and a host of other Pagan goddesses, who have been called "Queen of Heaven," "Queen of the Universe," "Mother of God," "Spouse of God," "the Celestial Virgin," "the Heavenly Peace-Maker," etc.³



¹ Edward Moor, *The Hindoo Pantheon*, plate 59, pp. 197-98. Also Thomas Inman, *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, p. 27.]

² [Inman, *op. cit.*, p. 29]

³ *ibid.*, p. 76

Donned in the despoiled garments of the victim, the Christian priest anathematizes the latter with rites and ceremonies learned from the Theurgists themselves.

And so above, below, outside, and inside, the Christian Church, in the priestly garments, and the religious rites, we recognize the stamp of exoteric heathenism. On no subject within the wide range of human knowledge, has the world been more blinded or deceived with such persistent misrepresentation as on that of antiquity. Its hoary past and its religious faiths have been misrepresented and trampled under the feet of its successors. Its hierophants and prophets, *mystai* and *epoptai*,¹ of the once sacred adyta of the temple shown as demoniacs and devil-worshippers. Donned in the despoiled garments of the victim, the Christian priest now anathematizes the latter with rites and ceremonies which he has learned from the Theurgists themselves. The Mosaic *Bible* is used as a weapon against the people who furnished it. The heathen philosopher is cursed under the very roof which has witnessed his initiation; and the “monkey of God” (*i.e.*, the devil of Tertullian), “the originator and founder of magical theurgy, the science of illusions and lies, whose father and author is the demon,” is exorcised with holy water by the hand which holds the identical *lituus*² with which the ancient augur, after a solemn prayer, used to determine the regions of heaven, and evoke, in the name of the HIGHEST, the minor god (now termed the Devil), who unveiled to his eyes futurity, and enabled him to prophesy! On the part of the Christians and the clergy it is nothing but shameful ignorance, prejudice, and that contemptible pride so boldly denounced by one of their own reverend ministers, T. Gross,³ which rails against all investigation “as a useless or a criminal labour, when it must be feared that they will result in the overthrow of pre-established systems of faith.” On the part of the scholars it is the same apprehension of the possible necessity of having to [97] modify some of their erroneously-established theories of science.

Says Gross:

Nothing but such pitiable prejudice can have thus misrepresented the theology of heathenism, and distorted — nay, caricatured — its forms of religious worship. It is time that posterity should raise its voice in vindication of violated truth, and that the present age should learn to recognize in the hoary past at least a little of that common sense of which *it* boasts with as much self-complacency as if the prerogative of reason was the birthright only of modern times.⁴

Justin Martyr’s confession about theurgic amulets.

All this gives a sure clue to the real cause of the hatred felt by the early and mediæval Christian toward his Pagan brother and dangerous rival. We hate but what we fear. The Christian thaumaturgist once having broken all association with the Mysteries of the temples and with “these schools so renowned for magic,” described

¹ Initiates and seers.

² The augur’s, and now bishop’s, pastoral crook.

³ *The Heathen Religion*, Introduction

⁴ [*ibid.*]

by St. Hillarion,¹ could certainly expect but little to rival the Pagan wonder-workers. No apostle, with the exception perhaps of healing by mesmeric power, has ever equalled Apollonius of Tyana; and the scandal created among the apostles by the miracle-doing Simon Magus, is too notorious to be repeated here again. Asks Justin Martyr, in evident dismay:

How is it that the talismans of Apollonius [the *τελεσματα*] have power in certain members of creation, for they prevent, *as we see*, the fury of the waves, and the violence of the winds, and the attacks of wild beasts; and whilst our Lord's miracles are preserved by tradition alone, those of Apollonius *are most numerous*, and actually manifested in present facts, so as to lead astray all beholders?²

This perplexed martyr solves the problem by attributing very correctly the efficacy and potency of the charms used by Apollonius to his profound knowledge of the sympathies and antipathies (or repugnances) of nature.

Unable to deny the evident superiority of their enemies' powers, the Fathers slandered what they feared.

Unable to deny the evident superiority of their enemies' powers, the fathers had recourse to the old but ever successful method — that of slander. They honoured the Theurgists with the same insinuating calumny that had been resorted to by the Pharisees against Jesus. "Thou hast a dæmon," the elders of the Jewish Synagogue had said to him. "Thou hast the Devil," repeated the cunning fathers, with equal truth, addressing the Pagan thaumaturgist; and the widely-bruited charge, erected later into an article of faith, won the day.

No one who has not practiced the ten virtues, which the divine Manu makes incumbent as a duty, can be initiated into the Mysteries.

But the modern heirs of these ecclesiastical falsifiers, who charge magic, spiritualism, and even magnetism with being produced by a demon, forget or perhaps never read the classics. None of our bigots has ever looked with more scorn on the *abuses* of magic than did the true initiate of old. [98] No modern or even mediæval law could be more severe than that of the hierophant. True, he had more discrimination, charity, and justice, than the Christian clergy; for while banishing the "unconscious" sorcerer, the person troubled with a demon, from within the sacred precincts of the adyta, the priests, instead of mercilessly burning him, took care of the unfortunate "possessed one." Having hospitals expressly for that purpose in the neighbourhood of temples, the ancient "medium," if obsessed, was taken care of and restored to health. But with one who had, by conscious *witchcraft*, acquired powers dangerous to his fellow-creatures, the priests of old were as severe as justice herself.

¹ Michel Ange Marin, *Les Vies des Pères des déserts d'Orient*, Avignon 1761, tome II, pp. 283-84

² [Pseudo] Justin Martyr, *Quæstiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos*, xxiv

Any person *accidentally* guilty of homicide, or of any crime, or convicted of *witchcraft*, was excluded from the Eleusinian Mysteries.¹

And so were they from all others. This law, mentioned by all writers on the ancient initiation, speaks for itself. The claim of Augustine, that all the explanations given by the Neo-Platonists were invented by themselves is absurd. For nearly every ceremony in their true and successive order is given by Plato himself, in a more or less covered way. The Mysteries are as old as the world, and one well versed in the esoteric mythologies of various nations can trace them back to the days of the ante-Vedic period in India. A condition of the strictest virtue and purity is required from the *Vatu*, or candidate in India before he can become an initiate, whether he aims to be a simple fakir, a *Purohita* (public priest) or a *Sannyāsin*, a saint of the second degree of initiation, the most holy as the most revered of them all. After having conquered, in the terrible trials preliminary to admittance to the inner temple in the subterranean crypts of his pagoda, the sannyāsin passes the rest of his life in the temple, practicing the eighty-four rules and ten virtues prescribed to the Yogis.

Say the Hindu books of initiation:

No one who has not practiced, during his whole life, the ten virtues which the divine Manu makes incumbent as a duty, can be initiated into the Mysteries of the council.

These virtues are:

Resignation; the act of rendering good for evil; temperance; probity; purity; chastity; repression of the physical senses; the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; that of the *Superior* soul [spirit]; worship of truth; abstinence from anger.²

These virtues must alone direct the life of a true Yogi.

No unworthy adept ought to defile the ranks of the holy initiates by his presence for twenty-four hours.

The adept becomes guilty after having once broken any one of these vows. Surely the exercise of such virtues is inconsistent with the idea one has of *devil-worship* and lasciviousness of purpose!



¹ See Thomas Taylor's *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, ed. by A. Wilder, p. 19 (4th ed.); also Porphyry and others.

² [*Manu*, VI, śloka 92. Cf. two different translations of this śloka, by George Bühler and Arthur Coke Burnell:

Contentment, forgiveness, self-control, abstention from unrighteously appropriating anything, [obedience to the rules of] purification, coercion of the organs, wisdom, knowledge [of the supreme Soul], truthfulness, and abstention from anger, [form] the tenfold law. — G.B.

Resolution, patience, self-restraint, honesty, purity, restrain of the organs, devotion, knowledge [of the Veda], truth, absence of anger, are the tenfold law. — A.C.B.

Underlying every ancient popular religion was the same Wisdom-doctrine, one and identical, professed and practiced by the initiates of every country, who alone were aware of its existence and importance.

And now we will try to give a clear insight into one of the chief [99] objects of this work. What we desire to prove is, that underlying every ancient popular religion was the same ancient wisdom-doctrine, one and identical, professed and practiced by the initiates of every country, who alone were aware of its existence and importance. To ascertain its origin, and the precise age in which it was matured, is now beyond human possibility. A single glance, however, is enough to assure one that it could not have attained the marvellous perfection in which we find it pictured to us in the relics of the various esoteric systems, except after a succession of ages. A philosophy so profound, a moral code so ennobling, and practical results so conclusive and so uniformly demonstrable is not the growth of a generation, or even a single epoch. Fact must have been piled upon fact, deduction upon deduction, science have begotten science, and myriads of the brightest human intellects have reflected upon the laws of nature, before this ancient doctrine had taken concrete shape. The proofs of this identity of fundamental doctrine in the old religions are found in the prevalence of a system of initiation; in the secret sacerdotal castes who had the guardianship of mystical words of power, and a public display of a phenomenal control over natural forces, indicating association with preterhuman beings. Every approach to the Mysteries of all these nations was guarded with the same jealous care, and in all, the penalty of death was inflicted upon initiates of any degree who divulged the secrets entrusted to them. We have seen that such was the case in the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries, among the Chaldæan Magi, and the Egyptian hierophants; while with the Hindus, from whom they were all derived, the same rule has prevailed from time immemorial.

The whispered secrets of initiation, when divulged, were punished with death.

We are left in no doubt upon this point; for the *Agrushada Parikshai* says explicitly,

Every initiate, to whatever degree he may belong, who reveals the great sacred formula, must be put to death.

Naturally enough, this same extreme penalty was prescribed in all the multifarious sects and brotherhoods which at different periods have sprung from the ancient stock. We find it with the early Essenes, Gnostics, theurgic Neo-Platonists, and mediæval philosophers; and in our day, even the Masons perpetuate the memory of the old obligations in the penalties of throat-cutting, dismemberment, and disembowelling, with which the candidate is threatened. As the Masonic “master’s word” is communicated only at “low breath,” so the self-same precaution is prescribed in the Chaldæan *Book of Numbers* and the Jewish *Merkābāh*. When initiated, the neophyte was led by an *ancient* to a secluded spot, and there the latter whispered *in his ear* the great secret.¹ The Mason swears, under the most frightful penalties, that he will

¹ Adolphe Franck, *La Kabbale ou la philosophie religieuse des Hébreux*, ch. i

not communicate the secrets of [100] any degree “to a brother of an *inferior degree*”; and the *Agrushada Parikshai* says:

Any initiate of the third degree who reveals before the prescribed time, to the initiates of the second degree, the superior truths, must be put to death.

Again, the Masonic apprentice consents to have his “tongue torn out by the roots” if he divulge anything to a profane; and in the Hindu books of initiation, the same *Agrushada Parikshai*, we find that any initiate of the first degree (the lowest) who betrays the secrets of his initiation, to members of other castes, for whom the science should be a closed book, must have “his *tongue cut out*,” and suffer other mutilations.

As we proceed, we will point out the evidences of this identity of vows, formulas, rites, and doctrines, between the ancient faiths. We will also show that not only their memory is still preserved in India, but also that the Secret Association is still alive and as active as ever. That, after reading what we have to say, it may be inferred that the chief pontiff and hierophants, the *Brahmātma*, is still accessible to those “who know,” though perhaps recognized by another name; and that the ramifications of his influence extend throughout the world. But we will now return again to the early Christian period.

The Mysteries were instituted pure, and proposed the noblest ends by the worthiest means.

Clemens Alexandrinus, with a rancorous bigotry that one might expect from a renegade Neo-Platonist but is astonished to find such enmity in this generally honest and learned Father, stigmatized the Mysteries as indecent and diabolical.

As though he were not aware that there was any esoteric significance to the exoteric symbols, and that the Mysteries themselves were composed of two parts, the lesser at Agrai, and the higher ones at Eleusinia, Clemens Alexandrinus, with a rancorous bigotry that one might expect from a renegade Neo-Platonist, but is astonished to find in this generally honest and learned Father, stigmatized the Mysteries as indecent and diabolical. Whatever were the rites enacted among the neophytes before they passed to a higher form of instruction; however misunderstood were the trials of *catharsis* or purification, during which they were submitted to every kind of probation; and however much the immaterial or physical aspect might have led to calumny, it is but wicked prejudice which can compel a person to say that under this external meaning there was not a far deeper and spiritual significance.

It is positively absurd to judge the ancients from our own standpoint of propriety and virtue. And most assuredly it is not for the Church — which now stands accused by all the modern symbologists of having adopted precisely these same emblems in their coarsest aspect, and feels herself powerless to refute the accusations — to throw the stone at those who were her models. When men like Pythagoras, Plato, and Iamblichus, renowned for their severe morality, took part in the Mysteries, and spoke of them with veneration, it ill behoves our modern critics to judge them so rashly

upon their merely external aspects. Iamblichus explains the worst; and his explanation, for an unprejudiced mind, ought to be [101] perfectly plausible. He says:

Exhibitions of this kind in the Mysteries were designed to free us from licentious passions, by gratifying the sight, and at the same time vanquishing all evil thought, through *the awful sanctity* with which these rites were accompanied.¹

“The wisest and best men in the Pagan world,” adds Dr. Warburton, “are unanimous in this, that the Mysteries were instituted pure, and proposed the noblest ends by the worthiest means.”²

In these celebrated rites, although persons of both sexes and all classes were allowed to take a part, and a participation in them was even obligatory, very few indeed attained the higher and final initiation. The gradation of the Mysteries is given [to] us by Proclus in the fourth book of his *Theology of Plato*.³

The perfective rite [τελετη, teletē], precedes in order the initiation [μυησις, myēsis], and initiation, the final apocalypse, *epopteia*.

The final part of the mystic rites reveals the friendship and interior communion with God.

Theon of Smyrna, in *Mathematica*, also divides the mystic rites into five parts:

. . . the first of which is the previous purification; for *neither are the Mysteries communicated to all* who are willing to receive them; but there are certain persons who are prevented by the voice of the crier (κηρυξ) . . . since it is necessary that such as are not expelled from the Mysteries [they] should first be refined by certain purifications:

But after purification, the reception of the sacred rites succeeds.

The third part is denominated *epopteia* or reception.

And the fourth, which is the end and design of the revelation, is *the binding of the head and fixing of the crowns*⁴ . . . whether after this he [the initiated person] becomes . . . a torchbearer, or a hierophant of the mysteries, or sustains some other part of the sacerdotal office.

But the fifth, which is produced from all these, is *friendship and interior communion with God*.

And this was the last and most awful of all the Mysteries.⁵

¹ *De mysteriis*, etc., I, ch. xi

² *The divine legation of Moses demonstrated*, 1846, II, p. 172

³ *On the Theology of Plato: with the Elements of Theology*, Bk. IV, p. 220; Taylor's ed., London 1816

⁴ This expression must not be understood literally; for as in the initiation of certain Brotherhoods it has a secret meaning, hinted at by Pythagoras, when he describes his feelings after the initiation and tells that he was crowned by the gods in whose presence he had drunk “the waters of life” — in Hindōstānī, *ā-bi-hayāt*, fount of life.

⁵ [Cf. Thomas Taylor, *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, ed. by Alexander Wilder, pp. 82-86, 4th ed. Consult “The holy rites of Eleusis were archaic Wisdom Religion dressed in Greek garb,” in our *Buddhas and Initiates Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

There are writers who have often wondered at the meaning of this claim to a “friendship and interior communion with God.” Christian authors have denied the pretensions of the “Pagans” to such “communion,” affirming that only Christian saints were and are capable of enjoying it; materialistic sceptics have altogether scoffed at the idea of both. After long ages of religious materialism and spiritual stagnation, it has most certainly become difficult if not altogether impossible to substantiate the claims of either party. The old Greeks, who had once crowded [102] around the Agora of Athens, with its altar to the “Unknown God,”¹ are no more; and their descendants firmly believe that they have found the “Unknown” in the Jewish Jehovah. The divine ecstasies of the early Christians have made room for visions of a more modern character, in perfect keeping with progress and civilization. The “Son of man” appearing to the rapt vision of the ancient Christian as coming from the seventh heaven, in a cloud of glory, and surrounded with angels and winged seraphim, has made room for a more prosaic and at the same time more business-like Jesus. The latter is now shown as making morning calls upon Mary and Martha in Bethany; as seating himself on “the *ottoman*” with the younger sister, a lover of “ethics,” while Martha goes off to the kitchen to cook. Anon the heated fancy of a blasphemous Brooklyn preacher and harlequin, the Reverend Dr. Talmage, makes us see her rushing back “with besweated brow, a pitcher in one hand and the tongs in the other . . . into the presence of Christ,” and blowing him up for not caring that her sister hath left her “to serve alone.”²

The apocalypse of Proclus is no longer understood by the Christians and is rejected as a “vagary” by the materialists who, in their negation, are less blasphemous and atheistical than many of the reverends and members of the Churches.

From the birth of the solemn and majestic conception of the unrevealed Deity of the ancient adepts to such caricatured descriptions of him who died on the Cross for his philanthropic devotion to humanity, long centuries have intervened, and their heavy tread seems to have almost entirely obliterated all sense of a spiritual religion from the hearts of his professed followers. No wonder then, that the sentence of Proclus is no longer understood by the Christians, and is rejected as a “vagary” by the materialists, who, in their negation, are less blasphemous and atheistical than many of the reverends and members of the churches. But, although the Greek *epoptai* are no more, we have now, in our own age, a people far more ancient than the oldest Hellenes, who practice the so-called “preterhuman” gifts to the same extent as did their ancestors far earlier than the days of Troy. It is to this people that we draw the attention of the psychologist and philosopher.

¹ [i.e., First Logos or the “Father who is in Secret” of Matthew, not the “Father in Heaven” of the Christians.]

² This original and very long sermon was preached in a church at Brooklyn, N.Y., on the 15th day of April, 1877. On the following morning, the reverend orator was called in the *Sun* a gibbering charlatan; but this deserved epithet will not prevent other reverend buffoons doing the same and even worse. And this is the religion of Christ! Far better disbelieve in him altogether than caricature one’s God in such a manner. We heartily applaud the *Sun* for the following views:

And then when Talmage makes Christ say to Martha in the tantrums: “Don’t worry, but sit down on this ottoman,” he adds the climax to a scene that the inspired writers had nothing to say about. Talmage’s buffoonery is going too far. If he were the worst heretic in the land, instead of being straight in his orthodoxy, he would not do so much evil to religion as he does by his familiar blasphemies.

There is a pervading tone of conscious superiority, a ring of contempt in the treatment of Hindu metaphysics, as though the European mind is alone enlightened enough to polish the rough diamond of the old Sanskrit writers, and separate right from wrong for the benefit of their descendants.

One need not go very deep into the literature of the Orientalists to become convinced that in most cases they do not even suspect that in [103] the arcane philosophy of India there are depths which they have not sounded, and *cannot* sound, for they pass on without perceiving them. There is a pervading tone of conscious superiority, a ring of contempt in the treatment of Hindu metaphysics, as though the European mind is alone enlightened enough to polish the rough diamond of the old Sanskrit writers, and separate right from wrong for the benefit of their descendants. We see them disputing over the external forms of expression without a conception of the great vital truths these hide from the profane view. Says Jacolliot:

As a rule, the Brahmans, rarely go beyond the class of *grihastha* [priests of the vulgar castes] and *purohita* [exorcisers, divines, prophets, and evocators of spirits]. And yet, we shall see . . . once that we have touched upon the question and study of manifestations and phenomena, that these initiates of the *first* degree [the lowest] attribute to themselves, and in appearance possess faculties developed to a degree which has never been equalled in Europe. As to the initiates of the second and especially of the third category, they pretend to be enabled to ignore time, space, and to command life and death.¹

Such initiates as these M. Jacolliot *did not meet*; for, as he says himself, they only appear on the most solemn occasions, and when the faith of the multitudes has to be strengthened by phenomena of a superior order.

They are never seen, either in the neighbourhood of, or even inside the temples, except at the grand quinquennial festival of the fire. On that occasion, they appear about the middle of the night, on a platform erected in the centre of the sacred lake, like so many phantoms, and by their conjurations they illumine the space. A fiery column of light ascends from around them, rushing from earth to heaven. Unfamiliar sounds vibrate through the air, and five or six hundred thousand Hindus, gathered from every part of India to contemplate these demi-gods, throw themselves with their faces buried in the dust, invoking the souls of their ancestors.²

Let any impartial person read the *Spiritisme dans le monde*, and he cannot believe that this “implacable rationalist,” as Jacolliot takes pride in terming himself, said one word more than is warranted by what he had seen. His statements support and are corroborated by those of other sceptics. As a rule, the missionaries, even after pass-

¹ *Le spiritisme dans le monde: L'initiation et les sciences occultes dans l'inde et chez tous les peuples de l'antiquité*, p. 68

² *ibid.*, pp. 78, 79

ing half a lifetime in the country of “devil-worship,” as they call India, either disingenuously *deny* altogether what they cannot help knowing to be true, or ridiculously attribute phenomena to this power of the Devil, that outrival the “miracles” of the apostolic ages. And what do we see this French [104] author, notwithstanding his incorrigible rationalism, forced to admit, after having narrated the greatest wonders? Watch the fakirs as he would, he is compelled to bear the strongest testimony to their perfect honesty in the matter of their miraculous phenomena:

Never have we succeeded in detecting a single one in the act of deceit.

One fact should be noted by all who, without having been in India, still fancy they are clever enough to expose the fraud of *pretended* magicians. This skilled and cool observer, this redoubtable materialist, after his long sojourn in India, affirms,

. . . we unhesitatingly avow that we have not met, either in India or in Ceylon, a single European, even among the oldest residents, who has been able to indicate the means employed by these devotees for the production of these phenomena!

And how should they? Does not this zealous Orientalist confess to us that even he, who had every available means at hand to learn many of their rites and doctrines at first hand, failed in his attempts to make the Brahmins explain to him their secrets?

All that our most diligent inquiries of the *Purohitas* could elicit from them respecting the acts of their superiors (the invisible initiates of the temples), amounts to very little.

And again, speaking of one of the books, he confesses that, while purporting to reveal all that is desirable to know, it

. . . falls back into mysterious formulas, in combinations of magical and occult letters, the secret of which it has been impossible for us to penetrate, etc.

The Lunar Pitris are our progenitors. They are identical with the Seven Elohim of the Hebrew Bible. They are not the ancestors of the present living men but those of the primitive races of mankind, the spirits of the early human races which preceded ours but which were physically, as well as spiritually, far superior to the modern pigmies.

Awesome is the living spectre of a Brahman.

The fakirs, although they can never reach beyond the first degree of initiation, are, notwithstanding, the only agents between the living world and the “silent brothers,” or those initiates who never cross the thresholds of their sacred dwellings. The *Fukarā-Yogins* belong to the temples, and who knows but these cœnobites of the sanctuary have far more to do with the psychological phenomena which attend the fakirs, and have been so graphically described by Jacolliot, than the *Pitris* themselves? Who can tell but that the fluidic spectre of the ancient Brahman seen by Jacolliot was the *scīn-lāc*, the spiritual *double*, of one of these mysterious sannyāsins?

Although the story has been translated and commented upon by Professor Perty, of Geneva, still we will venture to give it in Jacolliot’s own words:

A moment after the disappearance of the hands, the fakir continuing his evocations (*mantras*) more earnestly than ever, a cloud like the first, but more opalescent and more opaque, began to hover near the small brazier, which, by request of the Hindu, I had constantly fed with live coals. Little by little it assumed a form entire human, and I distinguished the spectre — for I cannot call it otherwise — of an old Brahman sacrificator, kneeling near the little brazier.

He bore on his forehead the signs sacred to Vishnu, and around his [105] body the triple cord, sign of the initiates of the priestly caste. He joined his hands above his head, as during the sacrifices, and his lips moved as if they were reciting prayers. At a given moment, he took a pinch of perfumed powder, and threw it upon the coals; it must have been a strong compound, for a thick smoke arose on the instant, and filled the two chambers.

When it was dissipated, I perceived the spectre, which, two steps from me, was extending to me its fleshless hand; I took it in mine, making a salutation, and I was astonished to find it, although bony and hard, warm and living.

“Art thou, indeed,” said I at this moment, in a loud voice, “an ancient inhabitant of the earth?”

I had not finished the question, when the word AM, (yes) appeared and then disappeared in letters of fire, on the breast of the old Brahman, with an effect much like that which the word would produce if written in the dark with a stick of phosphorus.

“Will you leave me nothing in token of your visit?” I continued.

The spirit broke the triple cord, composed of three strands of cotton, which begirt his loins, gave it to me, and vanished at my feet.

“Oh Brahmā! what is this mystery which takes place every night? . . . When lying on the matting, with eyes closed, the body is lost sight of, and the soul escapes to enter into conversation with the Pitris . . . Watch over it, O Brahmā, when, forsaking the resting body, it goes away to hover over the waters, to wander in the immensity of heaven, and penetrate into the dark and mysterious nooks of the valleys and grand forests of the Himavat!” (*Agrushada Parikshai*)¹

The average fakir can never rid himself entirely of the psychological influence exercised on him by his guru.

The fakirs, when belonging to some particular temple, never act but under orders. Not one of them, unless he has reached a degree of extraordinary sanctity, is freed from the influence and guidance of his guru, his teacher, who first initiated and instructed him in the mysteries of the *occult* sciences. Like the *subject* of the European mesmerizer, the average fakir can never rid himself entirely of the psychological influence exercised on him by his guru. Having passed two or three hours in the silence and solitude of the inner temple in prayer and meditation, the fakir, when he

¹ Louis Jaccoliot, *Le spiritisme dans le monde: L'initiation et les sciences occultes dans l'inde et chez tous les peuples de l'antiquité*, pp. 319-20, 365

emerges thence, is mesmerically strengthened and prepared; he produces wonders far more varied and powerful than before he entered. The “master” has *laid his hands upon him*, and the fakir feels strong.

It may be shown, on the authority of many Brāhmanical and Buddhist sacred books, that there has ever existed a great difference between [106] adepts of the higher order, and purely psychological subjects — like many of these fakirs, who are mediums in a certain qualified sense. True, the fakir is ever talking of Pitris, and this is natural; for they are his protecting deities. But are the Pitris *disembodied human beings of our race*? This is the question, and we will discuss it in a moment.

We say that the fakir may be regarded in a degree as a medium; for he is — what is not generally known — under the direct mesmeric influence of a living adept, his *sannyāsin* or guru. When the latter dies, the power of the former, unless he has received the last transfer of spiritual forces, wanes and often even disappears. Why, if it were otherwise, should the fakirs have been excluded from the right of advancing to the second and third degree? The lives of many of them exemplify a degree of self-sacrifice and sanctity unknown and utterly incomprehensible to Europeans, who shudder at the bare thought of such self-inflicted tortures. But however shielded from control by vulgar and earth-bound spirits, however wide the chasm between a debasing influence and their self-controlled souls; and however well protected by the seven-knotted magical bamboo rod which he receives from the guru, still the fakir lives in the outer world of sin and matter, and it is possible that his soul may be tainted, perchance, by the magnetic emanations from profane objects and persons, and thereby open an access to strange spirits and *gods*. To admit one so situated, one not under any and all circumstances sure of the mastery over himself, to a knowledge of the awful mysteries and priceless secrets of initiation, would be impracticable. It would not only imperil the security of that which must, at all hazards, be guarded from profanation, but it would be consenting to admit behind the veil a fellow being, whose mediumistic irresponsibility might at any moment cause him to lose his life through an involuntary indiscretion. The same law which prevailed in the Eleusinian Mysteries before our era, holds good now in India.

Not only must the adept have mastery over himself, but he must be able to control the inferior grades of spiritual beings, nature-spirits, and earthbound souls, in short the very ones by whom, if by any, the fakir is liable to be affected.

For the objector to affirm that the Brahman-adepts and the fakirs admit that of themselves they are powerless, and can only act with the help of disembodied human spirits, is to state that these Hindus are unacquainted with the laws of their sacred books and even the meaning of the word *Pitris*. The *Laws of Manu*, the *Atharva-Veda*, and other books, prove what we now say. Says the *Atharva-Veda*:¹

All that exists is in the power of the gods. The gods are under the power of magical conjurations. The magical conjurations are under the control of the Brahmins. Hence [107] the gods are in the power of the Brahmins.

¹ [As quoted by L. Jacolliot, *Le Spiritism dans le monde*, etc., p. 25]

Why the fakir is confined to the lowest degree of initiation.

This is logical, albeit seemingly paradoxical, and it is the fact. And this fact will explain to those who have not hitherto had the clew (among whom Jaccoliot must be numbered, as will appear on reading his works), why the fakir should be confined to the first, or lowest degree of that course of initiation whose highest adepts, or hierophants, are the *sannyāsins*, or members of the ancient Supreme Council of Seventy.

The Pitris must be included with the good genii, the daimons of the Greeks, or the inferior gods of the invisible world.

Moreover, in Book I, of the Hindu *Genesis*, or *Book of Creation of Manu*, the *Pitris* are called the *lunar* ancestors of the human race. They belong to a race of beings different from ourselves, and cannot properly be called “human spirits” in the sense in which the spiritualists use this term. This is what is said of them:

Then they [the gods] created the Yakshas, the Rākshasas, the Piśāchas,¹ the Gandharvas,² the Apsarasas, and the Asuras, the Nāgas,³ the Sarpas, the Suparnas, and the Pitris — *lunar ancestors of the human race*.⁴

The Pitris are a distinct race of spirits belonging to the mythological hierarchy or rather to the kabbalistical nomenclature, and must be included with the good genii, the daimons of the Greeks, or the inferior gods of the invisible world; and when a fakir attributes his phenomena to the Pitris, he means only what the ancient philosophers and Theurgists meant when they maintained that all the “miracles” were obtained through the intervention of the gods, or the good and bad demons, who control the powers of nature, the *elementals*, who are subordinate to the power of him “who knows.” A ghost or human phantom would be termed by a fakir *palit*, or *bhūtnā*, as that of a female human spirit *pichalpāi*, not *pitri*. True, *pitarah* (plural) means fathers, ancestors; and *pitārāi* is a kinsman; but these words are used in quite a different sense from that of the Pitris invoked in the mantras.

To maintain before a devout Brahman or a fakir that anyone can converse with the spirits of the dead, would be to shock him with what would appear to him blasphemy. Does not the concluding verse of the *Bhāgavata-Purāna* state that this supreme felicity is alone reserved to the holy sannyāsins, the gurus, and yogis?

Long before they finally rid themselves of their mortal envelopes, the souls who have practiced only good, such as those of the sannyāsins and the vana-prasthas, acquire the faculty of conversing with the souls which preceded them to the svarga.⁵ [108]

In this case the Pitris instead of genii are the spirits, or rather souls, of the departed ones. But they will freely communicate only with those whose atmosphere is as pure as their own, and to whose prayerful *kalāśas* (invocation) they can respond without

¹ Piśāchas, demons of the race of the gnomes, the giants and the vampires.

² Gandharvas, good demons, celestial seraphs, singers.

³ Asuras and Nāgas are the Titanic spirits and the dragon or serpent-headed spirits.

⁴ See *Institutes of Manu*, Book I, śloka 37, where the Pitris are termed “progenitors of mankind.” [Latter also in *Manu*, III, 201]

⁵ [Louis Jaccoliot, *Christna et le Christ*, p. 139]

the risk of defiling their own celestial purity. When the soul of the invocator has reached the *sāyujya*, or perfect identity of essence with the Universal Soul, when matter is utterly conquered, then the adept can freely enter into daily and hourly communion with those who, though unburdened with their corporeal forms, are still themselves progressing through the endless series of transformations included in the gradual approach to the Paramātman, or the grand Universal Soul.

The splendid imagery employed by Proclus and Apuleius in narrating the small portion of the final initiation, throws completely into the shade the plagiaristic tales of the Christian ascetics.

Bearing in mind that the Christian fathers have always claimed for themselves and their saints the name of “friends of God,” and knowing that they borrowed this expression, with many others, from the technology of the Pagan temples, it is but natural to expect them to show an evil temper whenever alluding to these rites. Ignorant, as a rule, and having had biographers as ignorant as themselves, we could not well expect them to find in the accounts of their beatific visions a descriptive beauty such as we find in the Pagan classics. Whether the visions and objective phenomena claimed by both the fathers of the desert and the hierophants of the sanctuary are to be discredited, or accepted as facts, the splendid imagery employed by Proclus and Apuleius in narrating the small portion of the final initiation that they dared reveal, throws completely into the shade the plagiaristic tales of the Christian ascetics, faithful *copies* though they were intended to be. The story of the temptation of St. Anthony in the desert by the female demon, is a parody upon the preliminary trials of the neophyte during the *Mikra*, or minor Mysteries of Agrai — those rites at the thought of which Clemens railed so bitterly, and which represented the bereaved Demeter in search of her child, and her good-natured hostess Baubo.¹

Deserved praise of Thomas Taylor, the English Platonist, staunch defender of the ancient faith.

His memory must be dear to every true Platonist, who seeks rather to learn the inner thought of the great philosopher than enjoy the mere external mechanism of his writings.

Without entering again into a demonstration that in Christian, and especially Irish Roman Catholic, churches² the same apparently indecent customs as the above prevailed until the end of the last century, we will recur to the untiring labours of that honest and brave defender of the ancient faith, Thomas Taylor, and his works. However much dogmatic Greek scholarship may have found to say against his “mistranslations,” his memory must be dear to every true Platonist, who seeks rather to learn the inner thought of the great philosopher than enjoy the mere external mechanism of his writings. Better classical translators may have [109] rendered us, in more correct phraseology, Plato’s *words*, but Taylor shows us Plato’s *meaning*, and this is more than can be said of Zeller, Jowett, and their predecessors. Yet, as writes Professor A. Wilder, Taylor’s works

¹ Arnobius, *Disputationes adversus gentes*, C, 25; Clement of Alexandria, *Exhortation to the Greeks*, c. ii.

² See Inman, *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, 1874, p. 66.

. . . have met with favour at the hands of men capable of profound and recondite thinking; and it must be conceded that he was endowed with a superior qualification — that of an intuitive perception of the interior meaning of the subjects which he considered. Others may have known more Greek, but he knew more Plato.¹

Taylor devoted his whole useful life to the search after such old manuscripts as would enable him to have his own speculations concerning several obscure rites in the Mysteries corroborated by writers who had been initiated themselves. It is with full confidence in the assertions of various classical writers that we say that ridiculous, perhaps licentious in some cases, as may appear ancient worship to the modern critic, it ought not to have so appeared to the Christians. During the mediæval ages, and even later, they accepted pretty nearly the same without understanding the secret import of its rites, and quite satisfied with the obscure and rather fantastic interpretations of their clergy, who accepted the exterior form and distorted the inner meaning. We are ready to concede, in full justice, that centuries have passed since the great majority of the Christian clergy, who *are not allowed to pry into God's mysteries nor seek to explain* that which the Church has once accepted and established, have had the remotest idea of their symbolism, whether in its exoteric or esoteric meaning. Not so with the head of the Church and its highest dignitaries. And if we fully agree with Inman that it is “difficult to believe that the ecclesiastics who sanctioned the publication of such a print² could have been as ignorant as modern ritualists,” we are not at all prepared to believe with the same author “that the latter, if they knew the real meaning of the symbols commonly used by the Roman Church, would *not* have adopted them.”³

To eliminate what is plainly derived from the sex and nature [110] worship of the ancient heathens, would be equivalent to pulling down the whole Roman Catholic image-worship — the *Madonna* element — and reforming the faith to Protestantism. The enforcement of the late dogma of the Immaculation was prompted by this very secret reason. The science of symbology was making too rapid progress. Blind faith in the Pope's infallibility and in the immaculate nature of the Virgin and *of her ancestral female lineage to a certain remove* could alone save the Church from the indiscreet revelations of science. It was a clever stroke of policy on the part of the vicegerent of God. What matters it if, by “conferring upon her such an honour,”⁴ as Don Pascale de Franciscis naïvely expresses it, he has made a goddess of the Virgin Mary, an Olympian Deity, who, having been by her very nature placed in the impossibility of sinning, can claim no virtue, no personal merit for her purity, precisely for which,

¹ Introduction to Thomas Taylor's *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, p. 27; 4th ed.

² Illustrated figures “from an ancient Rosary of the blessed Virgin Mary, printed at Venice, 1524, with a license from the Inquisition.” In the illustrations given by Dr. Inman the Virgin is represented in an Assyrian “grove,” the *abomination in the eyes of the Lord*, according to the *Bible* prophets. “The book in question,” says the author, “contains numerous figures, all resembling closely the Mesopotamian emblem of *Ishtar*. The presence of the woman *therein* identifies the two as symbolic of Isis, or *la nature*; and a man bowing down in adoration thereof shows the same idea as is depicted in Assyrian sculptures, where males offer to the goddess *symbols of themselves*.” See *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, 2nd ed., New York, p. 91.

³ [*ibid.*, p. 93]

⁴ [*Discorsi del Sommo Pontefico Pio IX*, Part II, p. 26. Cf. William Ewart Gladstone, *Rome and the newest fashions in religion. Three tracts: – The Vatican decrees – Vaticanism – Speeches of the Pope*, p. 140.]

as we were taught to believe in our younger days, she was chosen among all other women. If his Holiness has deprived her of this, perhaps, on the other hand, he thinks that he has endowed her with at least one physical attribute not shared by the other virgin-goddesses. But even this new dogma, which, in company with the new claim to *infallibility*, has quasi-revolutionized the Christian world, is not original with the Church of Rome. It is but a return to a hardly-remembered *heresy* of the early Christian ages, that of the Collyridians, so called from their *sacrificing cakes* to the Virgin, whom they claimed to *be Virgin-born*.¹ The new sentence, “O, Virgin Mary, *conceived without sin*,” is simply a tardy acceptance of that which was at first deemed a “*blasphemous heresy*” by the orthodox fathers.

The Virgin Mary paraded on the car of Juggernaut.

To think for one moment that any of the popes, cardinals, or other high dignitaries “were not aware” from the first to the last of the external meanings of their symbols, is to do injustice to their great learning and their spirit of Machiavellism. It is to forget that the emissaries of Rome will never be stopped by any difficulty which can be skirted by the employment of Jesuitical artifice. The policy of complaisant conformity was never carried to greater lengths than by the missionaries in Ceylon, who, according to the Abbé Dubois — certainly a learned and competent authority —

. . . conducted the images of the Virgin and Saviour on triumphal cars, imitated from the orgies of Juggernaut, and introduced the dancers from the Brāhmanical rites into the ceremonial of the church.²

Let us at least thank these black-frocked politicians for their consistency in [111] employing the car of Juggernaut, upon which the “wicked heathen” convey the *lingam* of Śiva. To have used *this* car to carry in its turn the Romish representative of the female principle in nature, is to show discrimination and a thorough knowledge of the oldest mythological conceptions. They have blended the two deities, and thus represented, in a Christian procession, the “heathen” Brahmā, or Nara (the father), Nārī (the mother), and Virāj (the son). Says Manu:

The Sovereign Master who exists through himself, divides his body into two halves, male and female, and from the union of these two principles is born Virāj, the Son.³

There was not a Christian Father who could have been ignorant of these symbols in their physical meaning; for it is in this latter aspect that they were abandoned to the ignorant rabble. Moreover, they all had as good reasons to suspect the occult symbolism contained in these images; although as none of them — Paul excepted, perhaps — had been initiated they could know nothing whatever about the nature of the final rites. Any person revealing these mysteries was put to death, regardless of sex,

¹ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, pp. 91-92 [p. 231 in 2nd ed.]; *The Genealogy of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, by Faustus, Bishop of Riez.

² *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. XCIII, April 1851, p. 415; cited in Edward Pococke, *India in Greece*, London 1852, pp. 318-19; [full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ *Manu*, Book I, śloka 32: Sir William Jones, translating from the Northern “Manu,” renders this *śloka* as follows: “Having divided his own substance, the mighty Power became half male, half female, or *nature active and passive*; and from that female he produced VIRĀJ.”

nationality, or creed. A Christian father would no more be proof against *an accident* than a Pagan *Μυστης*.

If during the *aporrhēta* or preliminary arcana, there were some practices which might have shocked the pudicity of a Christian convert — though we doubt the sincerity of such statements — their mystical symbolism was all sufficient to relieve the performance of any charge of licentiousness. Even the episode of the Matron Baubo — whose rather eccentric method of consolation was immortalized in the minor Mysteries — is explained by impartial mystagogues quite naturally. Ceres-Demeter and her earthly wanderings in search of her daughter are the euhemerized descriptions of one of the most metaphysico-psychological subjects ever treated off by human mind. It is a mask for the transcendent narrative of the initiated seers; the celestial vision of the freed soul of the initiate of the last hour describing the process by which the soul that has not yet been incarnated descends for the first time into matter. Says Pindar:

Blessed is he who hath seen those *common concerns* of the underworld; he knows both the end of life and its divine origin from Jupiter.¹

Taylor shows, on the authority of more than one initiate, that the

. . . dramatic spectacles of the Lesser Mysteries were designed by the ancient theologians, their founders, to signify *occultly* the condition of the unpurified soul invested with an earthly body, and enveloped in a material and physical nature [112] . . . that the soul, indeed, till purified by philosophy, suffers death through its union with the body . . .²

The body is the prison of the soul, and many Christian Fathers held with Plato the view that the soul is punished through its union with the body.

The body is the sepulchre, the prison of the soul, and many Christian Fathers held with Plato that the soul is *punished* through its union with the body. Such is the fundamental doctrine of the Buddhists and of many Brahmanists too. When Plotinus remarks that

. . . when the soul has descended into generation [from its *half*-divine condition] she partakes of evil, and is carried a great way into a state the opposite of her first purity and integrity, to be entirely merged in which is nothing more than to fall into dark mire;³

. . . he only repeats the teachings of Gautama-Buddha. If we have to believe the ancient initiates at all, we must accept their interpretation of the symbols. And if, moreover, we find them perfectly coinciding with the teachings of the greatest philos-

¹ [In Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, III, iii, quoting Pindar, *Dirges*, 137]

² [Thomas Taylor, *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, pp. 34-35; 4th ed.]

³ *Enneads*, I, book viii, 4 and 14; [full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series. — ED. PHIL.]

ophers and that which we know symbolizes the same meaning in the modern Mysteries in the East, we must believe them to be right.

Matron Baubo is the physical body; and the intellectual, as yet pure astral soul, can be ensnared into its new terrestrial prison only by the display of innocent babyhood.

If Demeter was considered the intellectual soul, or rather the *Astral* soul, half emanation from the spirit and half tainted with matter through a succession of spiritual evolutions — we may readily understand what is meant by the Matron Baubo, the Enchantress, who before she succeeds in reconciling the soul — Demeter, to its new position, finds herself obliged to assume the sexual forms of an infant. Baubo is *matter*, the physical body; and the intellectual, as yet pure astral soul can be ensnared into its new terrestrial prison but by the display of innocent babyhood. Until then, doomed to her fate, Demeter, or *Magna-mater*, the Soul, wonders and hesitates and suffers; but once having partaken of the magic potion prepared by Baubo, she forgets her sorrows; for a certain time she parts with that consciousness of higher intellect that she was possessed of before entering the body of a child. Thenceforth she must seek to rejoin it again; and when the age of reason arrives for the child, the struggle — forgotten for a few years of infancy — begins again. The astral soul is placed between matter (body) and the highest intellect (its immortal spirit or *nous*). Which of those two will conquer? The result of the battle of life lies between the triad. It is a question of a few years of physical enjoyment on earth and — if it has begotten abuse — of the dissolution of the earthly body being followed by death of the astral body, which thus is prevented from being united with the highest spirit of the triad, which alone confers on us individual immortality; or, on the other hand, of becoming immortal mystai; initiated before death of the body into the divine truths of the afterlife. Demi-gods below, and GODS above. [113]

Such was the chief object of the Mysteries represented as diabolical by theology, and ridiculed by modern symbologists.

Such was the chief object of the Mysteries represented as diabolical by theology, and ridiculed by modern symbologists. To disbelieve that there exist in man certain arcane powers, which, by psychological study he can develop in himself to the highest degree, become an hierophant and then impart to others under the same conditions of earthly discipline, is to cast an imputation of falsehood and lunacy upon a number of the best, purest, and most learned men of antiquity and of the middle ages. What the hierophant was allowed to see at the last hour is hardly hinted at by them. And yet Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus, and many others knew and affirmed their reality.

Insights to the sublimest part of epopteia.

Whether in the “inner temple,” or through the study of theurgy carried on privately, or by the sole exertion of a whole life of spiritual labour, they all obtained the practical proof of such divine possibilities for man fighting his battle with life on earth to

win a life in the eternity. What the last *epopteia* was is alluded to by Plato in *Phædrus* (250 B.C.):

. . . being initiated in those *Mysteries*, which it is lawful to call the most blessed of all mysteries . . . we were freed from the molestations of evils which otherwise await us in a future period of time. Likewise, in consequence of this divine *initiation*, we became *spectators* of entire, simple, immovable, and *blessed visions*, resident in a pure light.

This sentence shows that they saw *visions*, gods, spirits. As Taylor correctly observes, from all such passages in the works of the initiates it may be inferred,

. . . that the most sublime part of the *epopteia* . . . consisted in beholding the gods themselves invested with a resplendent light,¹

. . . or highest planetary spirits. The statement of Proclus upon this subject is unequivocal:

In all the initiations and mysteries, the gods exhibit many forms of themselves, and appear in *a variety of shapes*. And sometimes, indeed, a formless light of themselves is held forth to the view; sometimes this light is according to *a human form*, and sometimes it proceeds into a different shape.²

The Desatir shows the identity of esoteric doctrines with those of the Greek philosophers.

Whatever is *on earth is the resemblance and SHADOW of something that is in the sphere*, while that resplendent thing [the prototype of the soul-spirit] remaineth in *unchangeable* condition, it is well also with its shadow. But when the *resplendent one* removeth far from its shadow, life removeth from the latter to a distance. And yet, that very light is the shadow of something still more resplendent than itself.³

Thus speaks *Desātīr*, thereby showing its identity of esoteric doctrines with those of the Greek philosophers.

The second statement of Plato confirms our belief that the Mysteries of the ancients were identical with the Initiations, as practiced now [114] among the Buddhists and the Hindu adepts. The highest visions, the *most truthful*, are produced, not through *natural* ecstasies or “mediums,” as it is sometimes erroneously asserted, but through a regular discipline of gradual initiations and development of psychical powers. The *Mystai* were brought into close union with those whom Proclus calls “mystical natures,” “resplendent gods,” because, as Plato says,

. . . we were ourselves pure and immaculate, being liberated from this *surrounding vestment*, which we denominate body, and to which we are now bound like an oyster to its shell.⁴

¹ Thomas Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 107; 4th ed.

² Proclus, *On Plato's Republic*, p. 380. Cf. Thomas Taylor, *The Works of Plato*, Vol. III, p. 328 *fn.*; London 1804.

³ *The Book of Shet the Prophet Zirtūsht*, Bombay 1818, verses 33-38

⁴ *Phædrus*, 250c

The doctrine of the planetary and terrestrial Pitris was revealed entirely in ancient India, as well as now, only at the last moment of initiation, and to the adepts of superior degrees.

So the doctrine of planetary and terrestrial Pitris was revealed *entirely* in ancient India, as well as now, only at the last moment of initiation, and to the adepts of superior degrees. Many are the fakirs, who, though pure, and honest, and self-devoted, have yet never seen the astral form of a purely *human Pitri* (an ancestor or father), otherwise than at the solemn moment of their first and last initiation. It is in the presence of his instructor, the guru, and just before the *vatu-fakir* is dispatched into the world of the living, with his seven-knotted bamboo wand for all protection, that he is suddenly placed face to face with the unknown PRESENCE. He sees it, and falls prostrate at the feet of the evanescent form, but is not entrusted with the great secret of its evocation; for it is the supreme mystery of the holy syllable.

AUM is the trinity of mortal man on his way to become immortal through the union of his outer self with his inner triune Self. When this trinity, in anticipation of the final triumphant reunion beyond the gates of corporeal death becomes a Unity, then the candidate is allowed, at the moment of initiation, to behold his future Self.

The AUM contains the evocation of the Vedic triad, the *Trimūrti* Brahmā, Vishnu, Śiva, say the Orientalists;¹ it contains the evocation of *something more real and objective than this triune abstraction* — we say, respectfully contradicting the eminent scientists. It is the trinity of man himself, on his way to become immortal through the solemn union of his inner triune SELF — the exterior, gross body, the husk not even being taken in consideration in this human trinity.² It is, when this trinity, in anticipation of the final [115] triumphant reunion beyond the gates of corporeal death became for a few seconds a UNITY, that the candidate is allowed, at the moment of the initiation, to behold his future self. Thus we read in the Persian *Desātīr*, of the “Resplendent one”; in the Greek philosopher-initiates, of the *Augoeides* — the self-shining “blessed vision resident in the pure light”; in Porphyry,³ that Plotinus was united to his “god” four times during his lifetime; and so on.

¹ The Supreme Buddha is invoked with two of his acolytes of the theistic triad, Dharma and Sanga. This triad is addressed in Sanskrit in the following terms:

*Namo Buddhāya,
Namo Dharmāya,
Namo Sangāya,
Aum!*

While the Thibetan Buddhists pronounce their invocations as follows:

*Nan-wou Fo-tho-ye,
Nan-wou Tha-ma-ye,
Nan-wou Seng-kia-ye,
An!*

See also *Nouveau Journal Asiatique*, tome VII, March 1821, p. 265.

² The body of man — his coat of skin — is an inert mass of matter, *per se*; it is but the *sentient* living body within the man that is considered as the man’s body proper, and it is that which, together with the frontal soul or purely astral body, directly connected with the immortal spirit, constitutes the trinity of man.

³ [Plotini vita, cap. xxiii, in J.A. Fabricius, *Bibliotheca Græca*, 1705–28]

Says Brihaspati:

In ancient India, the mystery of the triad, known but to the initiates, could not, under the penalty of death, be revealed to the vulgar.

Neither could it in the ancient Grecian and Samothracian Mysteries. *Nor can it be now.* It is in the hands of the adepts, and must remain a mystery to the world so long as the materialistic savant regards it as an undemonstrated fallacy, an insane hallucination, and the dogmatic theologian, a snare of the Evil One.

Subjective communication with the god-like spirits of those who have preceded us to the silent land of bliss.

Subjective communication with the human, god-like spirits of those who have preceded us to the silent land of bliss, is in India divided into three categories.

① Under the spiritual training of a guru or *sannyāsin*, the *vatu* (disciple or neophyte) begins *to feel* them. Were he not under the immediate guidance of an adept, he would be controlled by the invisibles, and utterly at their mercy, for among these subjective influences he is unable to discern the good from the bad. Happy the sensitive who is sure of the purity of his spiritual atmosphere!

② To this subjective consciousness, which is the *first* degree is, after a time, added that of clairaudience. This is the *second* degree or stage of development. The sensitive — when not naturally made so by psychological training — now audibly hears, but is still unable to discern; and is incapable of verifying his impressions, and one who is unprotected the tricky powers of the air but too often delude with semblances of voices and speech. But the guru's influence is there; it is the most powerful shield against the intrusion of the *bhūtnā* into the atmosphere of the *vatu*, consecrated to the pure, human, and celestial Pitris.

③ The *third* degree is that when the fakir or any other candidate both feels, hears, and sees; and when he can at will produce the *reflections* of the Pitris on the mirror of astral light. All depends upon his psychological and mesmeric powers, which are always proportionate to the intensity of his *will*. But the fakir will never control the Ākāśa, the spiritual life-principle, the omnipotent agent of every phenomenon, in the same degree as an adept of the third and highest initiation. And the [116] phenomena produced by the will of the latter do not generally run the market-places for the satisfaction of open-mouthed investigators.

The unity of God, the immortality of the spirit, belief in salvation only through our works, merit and demerit; such are the principal articles of faith of the Wisdom-religion, and the ground-work of Vedaism, Buddhism, Pārsiism, and such we find to have been even that of the ancient Osirism, when we, after abandoning the popular sun-god to the materialism of the rabble, confine our attention to the *Books of Hermes*, the thrice-great:

The THOUGHT concealed as yet the world in silence and darkness. . . . Then the Lord who exists through Himself, and *who is not to be divulged to the external senses of man*, dissipated darkness, and manifested the perceptible world.

He that can be perceived only by the spirit, that escapes the organs of sense, who is without visible parts, eternal, the soul of all beings, that none can comprehend, displayed His own splendour.¹

Such is the ideal of the Supreme in the mind of every Hindu philosopher.

Man's highest duty (religion) is to acquire the knowledge of his universal self (paramatman) and then, by the annihilation of his worldly self (atman), to experience the infinity of happiness prevalent in Unconscious Immateriality.

Of all the duties, the principal one is to acquire the knowledge of the supreme soul [the spirit]; it is the first of all sciences, *for it alone confers on man immortality.*²

And our scientists talk of the Nirvāna of Buddha and the Moksha of Brahmā as of a complete annihilation! It is thus that the following verse is interpreted by some materialists.

The man who recognizes the *Supreme Soul*, in his own soul, as well as in that of all creatures, and who is equally just to all [whether man or animals] obtains the happiest of all fates, that to be finally *absorbed* in the bosom of Brahmā.³

Man cannot perceive, touch, and converse with pure spirit through any of his bodily senses. Only spirit alone can talk to and see spirit.

The doctrine of the Moksha and the Nirvāna, as understood by the school of Max Müller, can never bear confronting with numerous texts that can be found, if required, as a final refutation. There are sculptures in many pagodas which contradict, point-blank, the imputation. Ask a Brahman to explain Moksha, address yourself to an educated Buddhist and pray him to define for you the meaning of Nirvāna. Both will answer you that in every one of these religions Nirvāna represents the dogma of the spirit's immortality. That, to reach the Nirvāna means absorption into the great universal soul, the latter representing a *state*, not an individual being or an anthropomorphic god, as some understand the great EXISTENCE. That a spirit reaching such a state becomes a *part* of the integral *whole*, but never loses its individuality for all that. Henceforth, the spirit lives spiritually,⁴ without any fear of further [117] modifications of form; for form pertains to matter, and the state of *Nirvāna* implies a complete purification or a final riddance from even the most sublimated particle of matter.

This word, *absorbed*, when it is proved that the Hindus and Buddhists believe in the *immortality* of the spirit, must necessarily mean intimate union, not annihilation. Let Christians call them idolaters, if they still dare do so, in the face of science and the

¹ *Manu*, Bk. I, śloka 5-7

² *ibid.*, Bk. XII, śloka 85

³ *ibid.*, Bk. XII, śloka 125

⁴ [*i.e.*, in perfect harmony with the universal spirit, beyond space and time.]

latest translations of the sacred Sanskrit books; they have no right to present the speculative philosophy of ancient sages as an inconsistency and the philosophers themselves as illogical fools. With far better reason we can accuse the ancient Jews of utter *nihilism*. There is not a word contained in the Books of Moses — or the prophets either — which, taken literally, implies the spirit's immortality. Yet every devout Jew hopes as well to be “gathered into the bosom of A-Braham.”

The visions of seers cannot be induced by drugs.

The hierophants and some Brahmans are accused of having administered to their epoptai strong drinks or anæsthetics to produce visions which shall be taken by the latter as realities. They did and do use sacred beverages which, like the Soma-drink, possess the faculty of freeing the astral form from the bonds of matter; but in those visions there is as little to be attributed to hallucination as in the glimpses which the scientist, by the help of his optical instrument, gets into the microscopic world. A man cannot perceive, touch, and converse with pure spirit through any of his bodily senses. Only spirit alone can talk to and see spirit; and even our astral soul, the *Doppelgänger*, is too gross, too much tainted yet with earthly matter to trust entirely to its perceptions and insinuations.

The eccentricities of Socrates and his untimely demise were some of the consequences of untrained mediumship and unguarded moments of “spiritual inspiration.”

How dangerous may often become *untrained* mediumship, and how thoroughly it was understood and provided against by the ancient sages, is perfectly exemplified in the case of Socrates. The old Grecian philosopher was a “medium”; hence, he had never been initiated into the Mysteries; for such was the rigorous law.¹ But he had his “familiar spirit” as they call it, his *daimonion*; and this invisible counsellor became the cause of his death. It is generally believed that if he was not initiated into the Mysteries it was because he himself neglected to become so. But the *Secret Records* teach us that it was because he could not be admitted to participate in the sacred rites, and precisely, as we state, on account of his mediumship. There was a law against the admission not only of such as were convicted of deliberate *witchcraft*² [118] but even of those who were known to have “a familiar spirit.” The law was just and logical, because a genuine medium is more or less irresponsible; and the eccentricities of Socrates are thus accounted for in some degree. A medium must be *passive*; and if a firm believer in his “spirit-guide” he will allow himself to be ruled by the latter, not by the rules of the sanctuary. A *medium* of olden times, like the modern “medium” was subject to be *entranced* at the will and pleasure of the “power” which *controlled* him;

¹ [For mediumship is the opposite of adeptship.]

² We really think that the word “witchcraft” ought, once for all, to be understood in the sense which properly belongs to it. Witchcraft may be either conscious or unconscious. Certain wicked and dangerous results may be obtained through the mesmeric powers of a so-called sorcerer, who misuses his potential fluid; or again they may be achieved through an easy access of malicious tricky “spirits” (so much the worse if human) to the atmosphere surrounding a medium. How many thousands of such irresponsible innocent victims have met infamous deaths through the tricks of those Elementaries!

therefore, he could not well have been entrusted with the awful secrets of the final initiation, “never to be revealed under the penalty of death.” The old sage, in unguarded moments of “spiritual inspiration,” revealed that which he had never learned; and was therefore put to death as an atheist.

How then, with such an instance as that of Socrates, in relation to the visions and spiritual wonders at the epoptai, of the Inner Temple, can anyone assert that these seers, Theurgists, and thaumaturgists were all “spirit-mediums”? Neither Pythagoras, Plato, nor any of the later more important Neo-Platonists; neither Iamblichus, Longinus, Proclus, nor Apollonius of Tyana, were ever mediums; for in such case they would not have been admitted to the Mysteries at all. As Taylor proves,

This assertion of divine visions in the Mysteries is clearly confirmed by Plotinus.¹ And in short, that magical evocation formed a part of the sacerdotal office [in them], and that this was universally believed by all antiquity, long before the era of the later Platonists,²

. . . shows that apart from natural “mediumship,” there has existed, from the beginning of time, a mysterious science, discussed by many, but known only to a few.

A deep longing toward our true and real home is legitimate; abuse of it is sorcery, witchcraft, black magic.

He who fully recognizes the power of his immortal spirit, and never doubted for one moment its omnipotent protection, has naught to fear.

The use of it is a longing toward our only true and real home — the after-life, and a desire to cling more closely to our parent spirit; abuse of it is sorcery, witchcraft, *black* magic. Between the two is placed natural “mediumship”; a soul clothed with imperfect matter, a ready agent for either the one or the other, and utterly dependent on its surroundings of life, constitutional heredity — physical as well as mental — and on the nature of the “spirits” it attracts around itself. A blessing or a curse, as fate will have it, unless the medium is purified of earthly dross.

Why initiation has always been shrouded in mystery and secrecy?

The reason why in every age so little has been generally known of the mysteries of initiation, is twofold.

The first has already been explained by more than one author, and lies in the terrible penalty following the least indiscretion.

The second, is the superhuman difficulties and even dangers which the daring candidate of old had to encounter, and either conquer, or die in the attempt, when, what is still worse, he did not lose his reason. [119]

There was no real danger to him whose mind had become thoroughly spiritualized, and so prepared for every terrific sight. He who fully recognized the power of his immortal spirit, and never doubted for one moment its omnipotent protection, had naught to fear. But woe to the candidate in whom the slightest physical fear — sickly child of matter — made him lose sight and faith in his own invulnerability. He who

¹ [Enneads, I, vi; VI, ix]

² [Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries, pp. 108-11; 4th ed.]

was not wholly confident of his moral fitness to accept the burden of these tremendous secrets was doomed.

The four ancient Israeli Initiates (Tannaïm) enter into “the garden of delights.” They responsible for part of the Gospel story.

The *Talmud*¹ gives the story of the four Tannaïm, who are made, in allegorical terms, to enter into *the garden of delights*; *i.e.*, to be initiated into the occult and final science.

According to the teaching of our holy masters the names of the four who entered the garden of delight, are: Ben Asai, Ben Zoma, Aher, and Rabbi A’qibah.

Ben Asai looked — and lost his sight.

Ben Zoma looked — and lost his reason.

Aher made depredations in the plantation [mixed up the whole and failed].

But A’qibah, who had entered in peace, came out of it in peace, for the saint whose name be blessed had said,

This old man is worthy of serving us with glory.

Says A. Franck, in his *Kabbale*.²

The learned commentators of the *Talmud*, the Rabbis of the synagogue, explain that the *garden of delight*, in which those four personages are made to enter, is but that mysterious science, the most terrible of sciences *for weak intellects, which it leads directly to insanity*.

It is not the pure at heart and he who studies but with a view to perfecting himself and so more easily acquiring the promised immortality, who need have any fear; but rather he who makes of the science of sciences a sinful pretext for worldly motives, who should tremble. *The latter will never withstand the kabbalistic evocations of the supreme initiation.*

It is ignorance which leads to profanation. Men ridicule what they do not understand.

The licentious performances of the thousand and one early Christian sects, may be criticised by partial commentators as well as the ancient Eleusinian and other rites. But why should they incur the blame of the theologians, the Christians, when their own “Mysteries” of “the divine incarnation with Joseph, Mary, and the angel” in a sacred *trilogy* used to be enacted in more than one country, and were famous at one time in Spain and Southern France? Later, they fell like many other once secret rites into the hands of the populace. It is but a few years since, during every Christmas week, Punch-and-Judy boxes, containing the above named personages, an additional display of the infant Jesus in his manger, were carried about the country in Poland and Southern Russia. They were called *koliadovki*, a word the correct etymology of which we are [120] unable to give unless it is from the verb *koliadovat*, a word that we

¹ [*Mishnah Hagigāh*, 14b]

² [Part II, ch. I, pp. 57-58; ed. Paris 1843]

as willingly abandon to learned philologists.¹ We have seen this show in our days of childhood. We remember the three king-Magi represented by three dolls in powdered wigs and coloured tights; and it is from recollecting the simple, profound veneration depicted on the faces of the pious audience, that we can the more readily appreciate the honest and just remark by the editor, in the introduction to the *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, who says:

It is ignorance which leads to profanation. Men ridicule what they do not properly understand . . . The undercurrent of this world is set toward one goal; and inside of human credulity — call it human weakness, if you please — is a power almost infinite, a holy faith capable of apprehending the supremest truths of all Existence.²

It is not alone for the esoteric philosophy that we fight; nor for any modern system of moral philosophy, but for the inalienable right of private judgment, and especially for the ennobling idea of a future life of activity and accountability.

If that abstract sentiment called *Christian charity* prevailed in the Church, we would be well content to leave all this unsaid. We have no quarrel with Christians whose faith is sincere and whose practice coincides with their profession. But with an arrogant, dogmatic, and dishonest clergy, we have nothing to do except to see the ancient philosophy — antagonized by modern theology in its puny offspring, Spiritualism — defended and righted so far as we are able, so that its grandeur and sufficiency may be thoroughly displayed. It is not alone for the esoteric philosophy that we fight; nor for any modern system of moral philosophy, but for the inalienable right of private judgment, and especially for the ennobling idea of a future life of activity and accountability.

Learned authors are useless because, lacking the true key of interpretation, they see symbols only in their lowest, physical aspect. They have no password to cause the gates of mystery to swing open and, therefore, ancient spiritual philosophy is to them a closed book.

We eagerly applaud such commentators as Godfrey Higgins, Inman, R. Payne Knight, King, Dunlap, and Dr. Newton, however much they disagree with our own mystical views, for their diligence is constantly being rewarded by fresh discoveries of the Pagan paternity of Christian symbols. But otherwise, all these learned works are useless. Their researches only cover half the ground. Lacking the true key of interpretation they see the symbols only in a physical aspect. They have no password to cause

¹ [Note 18 by Boris de Zirkoff. *Kaleda* or *Kolyada* (possibly related to the Latin *calendæ*) is a term used in the Southern and Western portions of Russia in connection with the Christmas festival and the period between the latter and January 6th; *kolyadovanye* or *kolyadovat'* is the term used for the custom of going to various houses at Christmas and the New Year, carrying a star, congratulating people, singing and exchanging food, sometimes soliciting donations; *kolyadka* is the name for the songs which are being sung on these occasions; the above-mentioned terms have many variations in spelling from one province to another.]

² [pp. 11-12, ed. by Prof. Alexander Wilder]

the gates of mystery to swing open; and ancient spiritual philosophy is to them a closed book. Diametrically opposed though they be to the clergy in their ideas respecting it, in the way of interpretation they do little more than their opponents for a questioning public. Their labours tend to strengthen materialism as those of the clergy, especially the Romish clergy, do to cultivate belief in diabolism.

If the study of Hermetic philosophy held out no other hope of reward, it would be more than enough to know that by it we may learn with what perfection of justice the world is governed. A sermon upon this text is preached by every page of history. Among all there is not one that conveys a deeper moral than the case of the Roman Church. The divine law of compensation was never more strikingly exemplified than in the [121] fact that by her own act she has deprived herself of the only possible key to her own religious mysteries. The assumption of Godfrey Higgins that there are two doctrines maintained in the Roman Church, one for the masses and the other — the esoteric — for the “perfect,” or the initiates, as in the ancient Mysteries, appears to us unwarranted and rather fantastic. They have lost the key, we repeat; otherwise no terrestrial power could have prostrated her, and except [in] a superficial knowledge of the means of producing “miracles,” her clergy can in no way be compared in their wisdom with the hierophants of old.

Self-doomed is the Romish Church.

- In burning the works of the Theurgists;
- In proscribing those who affect their study;
- In affixing the stigma of demonolatry to magic in general,

Rome has left her exoteric worship and *Bible* to be helplessly riddled by every free-thinker, her sexual emblems to be identified with coarseness, and her priests to unwittingly turn magicians and even sorcerers in their exorcisms, which are but necromantic evocations. Thus retribution, by the exquisite adjustment of divine law, is made to overtake this scheme of cruelty, injustice, and bigotry, through her own suicidal acts.

True philosophy and divine truth are convertible terms.

A religion which dreads the light cannot be a religion based on either truth or philosophy, hence, it must be false. As the dogmas of every religion and sect often differ radically, they cannot be true. And if untrue, what are they?

True philosophy and divine truth are convertible terms. A religion which dreads the light cannot be a religion based on either truth or philosophy — hence, it must be false. The ancient Mysteries were mysteries to the profane only, whom the hierophant never sought nor would accept as proselytes; to the initiates the Mysteries became explained as soon as the final veil was withdrawn. No mind like that of Pythagoras or Plato would have contented itself with an unfathomable and incomprehensible mystery, like that of the Christian dogma. There can be but one truth, for two small truths on the same subject can but constitute one great error. Among thousands of exoteric or popular conflicting religions which have been propagated since

the days when the first men were enabled to interchange their ideas, not a nation, not a people, nor the most abject tribe, but after their own fashion has believed in an Unseen God, the First Cause of unerring and immutable laws, and in the immortality of our spirit. No creed, no false philosophy, no religious exaggerations, could ever destroy that feeling. It must, therefore, be based upon an absolute truth. On the other hand, every one of the numberless religions and religious sects views the Deity after its own fashion; and, fathering on the unknown its own speculations, it enforces these purely human outgrowths of overheated imagination on the ignorant masses, and calls them “revelation.” As the dogmas of every religion and sect often differ radically, they cannot be *true*. And if untrue, what are they? Remarks Dr. Inman:

The greatest curse to a nation is not a *bad religion*, but a form of faith which prevents manly inquiry. I know of no nation of old that was priest-ridden which did not fall under the swords [122] of those who did not care for hierarchs. The greatest danger is to be feared from those ecclesiastics who wink at vice, and encourage it as a means whereby they can gain power over their votaries. So long as every man does to other men as he would that they should do to him, and *allows no one to interfere between him and his Maker*, all will go well with the world.¹



¹ *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, Introduction, p. xxxiv

Part 3.

The only thing absolutely necessary for man is Truth; and to that, and that alone, must our moral consciousness adapt itself.

From H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, ch. 3: DIVISIONS AMONGST THE EARLY CHRISTIANS, pp. 123-66.
Edited and typographically enhanced by Philaletheians UK.

King: Let us from point to point this story know.

— SHAKESPEARE, *All's Well That Ends Well*, Act V, sc. iii, l. 330

He is the One, self-proceeding; and from Him all things proceed.
And in them He Himself exerts his activity; no mortal
Beholds him, but he beholds all!

— *Orphic Hymn*¹

And Athens, O Athena, is thy own!
Great Goddess hear! and on my darkened mind
Pour thy pure light in measure unconfined;
That sacred light, O all-proceeding Queen,
Which beams eternal from thy face serene.
My soul, while wand'ring on the earth, inspire
With thy own blessed and impulsive fire!

— PROCLUS, *To Minerva*²

Now *faith* is the substance of things hoped for By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had *received the spies in peace*.

— *Hebrews* xi, 1, 31

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man hath faith, and have not works? *Can FAITH save him?* . . . Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot *justified by works*, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

— *James* ii, 14, 25

Gnostic Basilides was a philosopher devoted to the contemplation of divine things.

On the other hand, the unintelligible dogmas, enforced by Irenæus, Tertullian, and others, are far more heretical than those they accused of apostasy.

Clement describes Basilides, the Gnostic, as “a philosopher devoted to the contemplation of divine things.”³ This very appropriate expression may be applied to many

¹ [Cf. Justin Martyr, *Cohortatio ad Græcos*, xv; Johann Matthias Gesner, *Orpheos apanta*; Thomas Taylor, *Eleusinian. and Bacchic Mysteries*, 4th ed., p. 238]

² [Thomas Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 226]

³ [Note 19 by Boris de Zirkoff: Wrongly ascribed to Clement of Alexandria, who, however, describes the Basilidean doctrine as in part occupied with “divine teaching.” Cf. *Stromata*, VIII, xi, “. . . he the Gnostic conceives truly and grandly in virtue of his reception of divine teaching”; see also King, *The Gnostics*, etc., p. 258; ed. 1887.]

of the founders of the more important sects which later were all engulfed in one — that stupendous compound of unintelligible dogmas enforced by Irenæus, Tertullian, and others, which is now termed Christianity. *If these must be called heresies, then early Christianity itself must be included in the number.* Basilides and Valentinus preceded Irenæus and Tertullian; and the two latter Fathers had less facts than the two former Gnostics to show that their *heresy* was plausible. Neither divine right nor truth brought about the triumph of their Christianity; fate alone was propitious. We can assert, with entire plausibility, that there is not one of all these sects — Kabballism, Judaism, and our present Christianity included — but sprung from the two main branches of that one mother-trunk, the once universal religion, which antedated the Vedaic ages — we speak of that prehistoric Buddhism which merged later into Brahmanism. [124]

The religion which the primitive teaching of the early few apostles most resembled — a religion preached by Jesus himself — is the elder of these two, Buddhism. The latter as taught in its primitive purity, and carried to perfection by the last of the Buddhas, Gautama, based its moral ethics on three fundamental principles. It alleged:

- 1 That everything existing, exists from natural causes;
- 2 That virtue brings its own reward, and vice and sin their own punishment; and,
- 3 That the state of man in this world is probationary.

We might add that on these three principles rested the universal foundation of every religious creed; God, and individual immortality for every man — if he could but win it. However puzzling the subsequent theological tenets; however seemingly incomprehensible the metaphysical abstractions which have convulsed the theology of every one of the great religions of mankind as soon as it was placed on a sure footing, the above is found to be the essence of every religious philosophy, with the exception of later Christianity. It was that of Zoroaster, of Pythagoras, of Plato, of Jesus, and even of Moses, albeit the teachings of the Jewish law-giver have been so piously tampered with.

We will devote the present chapter mainly to a brief survey of the numerous sects which have recognized themselves as Christians; that is to say, that have believed in a *Christos*, or an ANOINTED ONE. We will also endeavour to explain the latter appellation from the kabbalistic stand-point, and show it reappearing in every religious system. It might be profitable, at the same time, to see how much the earliest apostles — Paul and Peter, agreed in their preaching of the new Dispensation. We will begin with Peter.¹



¹ [Consult “Paul an Initiate and founder of Christianity,” and “Peter not an Initiate and the enemy of Paul,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

The fiction and fraud of apostolic succession.

The Church of Rome was consistent in choosing as her titular founder the apostle who thrice denied his master at the moment of danger; and the only one, except Judas, who provoked Christ in such a way as to be addressed as the “Enemy.”

We must once more return to that greatest of all the Patristic frauds; the one which has undeniably helped the Roman Catholic Church to its unmerited supremacy, *viz.*: the barefaced assertion, in the teeth of historical evidence, that Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome. It is but too natural that the Latin clergy should cling to it, for, with the exposure of the fraudulent nature of this pretext, the dogma of apostolic succession must fall to the ground.

There have been many able works of late, in refutation of this preposterous claim. Among others we note Mr. G. Reber's, *The Christ of Paul*, which overthrows it quite ingeniously. The author proves,

- 1 That there was no church established at Rome, until the reign of Antoninus Pius;
- 2 That as Eusebius and Irenæus both agree that Linus was the second Bishop of Rome, into whose hands “the blessed apostles” Peter and Paul committed the church after building it, it could not have been at any other time than between A.D. 64 and 68;
- 3 That this interval of years happens during the reign of Nero, for Eusebius states that Linus held this office twelve years, entering upon it A.D. 69, one year after the death of Nero, and dying himself in 81.¹

After that the author maintains, on very solid grounds, that Peter could not be in Rome A.D. 64, for he was then in Babylon; wherefrom he wrote his first [125] Epistle, the date of which is fixed by Dr. Lardner and other critics at precisely this year. But we believe that his best argument is in proving that it was not in the character of the cowardly Peter to risk himself in such close neighbourhood with Nero, who “was feeding the wild beasts of the Amphitheatre with the flesh and bones of Christians”² at that time.

Perhaps the Church of Rome was but consistent in choosing as her titular founder the apostle who thrice denied his master at the moment of danger; and the only one, moreover, except Judas, who provoked Christ in such a way as to be addressed as the “Enemy.” “Get thee behind me, SATAN!” exclaims Jesus, rebuking the taunting apostle.³

There is a tradition in the Greek Church which has never found favour at the Vatican. The former traces its origin to one of the Gnostic leaders — Basilides, perhaps, who lived under Trajan and Adrian, at the end of the first and the beginning of the

¹ *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. III, ch. xiii

² *The Christ of Paul*, p. 123

³ *Mark* viii, 33

second century. With regard to this particular tradition, if the Gnostic is Basilides, then he must be accepted as a sufficient authority, having claimed to have been a disciple of the Apostle Matthew, and to have had for master Glaucias, a disciple of St. Peter himself. Were the narrative attributed to him authenticated, the London Committee for the Revision of the *Bible* would have to add a new verse to *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *John*, who tell the story of Peter's denial of Christ.

When frightened at the accusation of the servant of the high priest, Peter thrice denied his master.

This tradition, then, of which we have been speaking, affirms that, when frightened at the accusation of the servant of the high priest, the apostle had thrice denied his master, and the cock had crowed, Jesus, who was then passing through the hall in custody of the soldiers, turned, and, looking at Peter, said:

Verily, I say unto thee, Peter, thou shalt deny me throughout the coming ages, and never stop until thou shalt be old, and shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.¹

The latter part of this sentence, say the Greeks, relates to the Church of Rome, and prophesies her constant apostasy from Christ, under the mask of false religion. Later, it was inserted in the twenty-first chapter of *John*, but the whole of this chapter had been pronounced a forgery, even before it was found that this *Gospel* was never written by John the Apostle at all.

The only thing absolutely necessary for man is Truth; and to that, and that alone, must our moral consciousness adapt itself.

Some of the extraordinary forgeries of the Fathers of the early centuries are here unmasked for everyone to see.

The anonymous author² of *Supernatural Religion*, a work which in two years passed through several editions, and which is alleged to have been written by an eminent theologian, proves conclusively the spuriousness of the four gospels, or at least their complete transformation in the hands [126] of the too-zealous Irenæus and his champions. The fourth gospel is completely upset by this able author; the extraordinary forgeries of the Fathers of the early centuries are plainly demonstrated, and the relative value of the synoptics is discussed with an unprecedented power of logic. The work carries conviction in its every line. From it we quote the following:



¹ [*John* xxi, 18]

² [Walter R. Cassels]

We gain infinitely more than we lose in abandoning belief in the reality of Divine Revelation. Whilst we retain, pure and unimpaired the light of Christian morality, we relinquish nothing but the debasing elements added to it by human superstition. We are no longer bound to believe a theology which outrages Reason and moral sense. We are freed from base anthropomorphic views of God and his government of the Universe, and from Jewish Mythology we rise to higher conceptions of an infinitely wise and beneficent Being, hidden from our finite minds, it is true, in the impenetrable glory of Divinity, but whose laws of wondrous comprehensiveness and perfection we ever perceive in operation around us . . . The argument so often employed by theologians, that Divine revelation is necessary for man, and that certain views contained in that Revelation are required for our moral consciousness, is purely imaginary and derived from the Revelation which it seeks to maintain. The only thing absolutely necessary for man is TRUTH; and to that, and that alone, must our moral consciousness adapt itself.¹

Of whatever else the Christian world can boast, it can hardly claim logic and consistency as its chief virtues.

We will consider farther in what light was regarded the Divine revelation of the Jewish *Bible* by the Gnostics, who yet believed in Christ in their own way, a far better and less blasphemous one than the Roman Catholic. The Fathers have forced on the believers in Christ a *Bible*, the laws prescribed in which he was the first to break; the teachings of which he utterly rejected; and for which crimes he was finally crucified. Of whatever else the Christian world can boast, it can hardly claim logic and consistency as its chief virtues.

Whosoever else might have built the Church of Rome it was not Peter.

The fact alone that Peter remained to the last an “apostle of the circumcision,” speaks for itself. *Whosoever else might have built the Church of Rome it was not Peter*. If such were the case, the successors of this apostle would have to submit themselves to circumcision, if it were but for the sake of consistency, and to show that the claims of the popes are not utterly groundless. Dr. Inman asserts that report says that “in our Christian times popes have to be privately perfect,”² but we do not know whether it is carried to the extent of the Lévitical Jewish law. The first fifteen Christian bishops of Jerusalem, commencing with James and including Judas, were all circumcised Jews.³ [127]

¹ *Supernatural Religion*, 5th ed., London 1875, Vol. II, pp. 489-91

² *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, Introduction, p. xxviii

³ Eusebius of Cæsarea, *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. VI, ch. v; Sulpicius Severus, *Chronica*, II, xxvi

He invented a burning hell and threatened everyone with it; promised miracles, but worked none.

In the *Sēpher Toledot Yeshu*,¹ a Hebrew manuscript of great antiquity, the version about Peter is different. Simon Peter, it says, was one of their own brethren, though he had somewhat departed from the laws, and the Jewish hatred and persecution of the apostle seems to have existed but in the fecund imagination of the fathers. The author speaks of him with great respect and fairness, calling him “a faithful servant of the living God,” who passed his life in austerity and meditation, “living in Babylon at the summit of a tower,” composing hymns, and preaching charity. He adds that Peter always recommended to the Christians not to molest the Jews, but as soon as he was dead, behold another preacher went to Rome and pretended that Simon Peter had altered the teachings of his master. He invented a burning hell and threatened everyone with it; promised miracles, but worked none.

How much there is in the above of fiction and how much of truth, it is for others to decide; but it certainly bears more the evidence of sincerity and fact on its face, than the fables concocted by the fathers to answer their end.

We may the more readily credit this friendship between Peter and his late co-religionists as we find in Theodoret the following assertion:

The Nazarenes are Jews, honouring the ANOINTED [Jesus] as a *just man* and using the *Evangel* according to Peter.²

Peter was a Nazarene, according to the *Talmud*. He belonged to the sect of the later Nazarenes, which dissented from the followers of John the Baptist, and became a rival sect; and which — as tradition goes — was instituted by Jesus himself.

History finds the first Christian sects to have been either Nazarenes like John the Baptist; or Ebionites, among whom were many of the relatives of Jesus; or Essenes (Iessæns) the Therapeutai healers, of which the Nazaria were a branch. All these sects, which only in the days of Irenæus began to be considered heretical, were more or less kabbalistic. They believed in the expulsion of demons by magical incantations, and practiced this method; Jervis terms the Nabatheans and other such sects “wandering Jewish exorcists,”³ the Arabic word *nabæ*, meaning to wander, and the Hebrew נבא *naba*, to prophesy. The *Talmud* [128] indiscriminately calls all the Christians *Nozari*.⁴ All the Gnostic sects equally believed in magic. Irenæus, in describing the followers of Basilides, says,

¹ It appears that the Jews attribute a very high antiquity to *Sēpher Toledot Yeshu*. It was mentioned for the first time by Martin, about the beginning of the thirteenth century, for the Talmudists took great care to conceal it from the Christians. Lévi says that Porchetus de Salvaticis [*Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebræos*, Paris 1520, fol.] published some portions of it, which were used by Luther (see Vol. III, pp. 109-10, Jena ed. 1583; also Wittenberg ed., 1556, Vol. V, pp. 509-35). The Hebrew text, which was missing, was at last found by Münster and Buxtorf, and published in 1681 by Christopher Wagenseil, in a collection entitled *Tela Ignea Satanæ*, or *The Burning Darts of Satan* [Altdorf, 2-vols.; and by Jah. Jac. Huldrich, as *Historia Jeschuæ Nazareni*, Leyden 1705]. (See also Éliphas Lévi, *La science des esprits*, pp. 37-38.)

² Theodoret of Cyrhus, *Hæreticarum fabularum compendium*, II, ii

³ Sir John Jervis-White Jervis, *Genesis Elucidated*, London 1852, p. 324

⁴ John Lightfoot, *Horæ hebraicæ et talmudicæ; Hebrew and Talmudical exercitations upon the Gospels, the Acts, some chapters of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and the First epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 501

They use images, invocations, incantations, and all other things pertaining unto magic.¹

Dunlap, on the authority of Lightfoot, shows that Jesus was called *Nazaraïos*, in reference to his humble and mean external condition;

. . . for Nazaraïos means separation, alienation from other men.²

The term nazar means to vow or consecrate one's self to the service of God.

Zoro-Aster was the Nazar of Ishtar. There is another hypothesis possible, which is that Zoro-Ishtar was the high priest of the Chaldæan worship, a Magian hierophant.

The real meaning of the word nazar, נָזַר, signifies to vow or consecrate one's self to the service of God. As a noun it is a *diadem* or emblem of such consecration, a head so consecrated.³ Joseph was styled a *nazar*.⁴ "The head of Joseph, the vertex of the nazar among his brethren." Samson and Samuel (שמִּשׁוֹן, שְׁמוּאֵל, Shimshōn and Shemūēl) are described alike as *nazars*. Porphyry, treating of Pythagoras, says that he was purified and initiated at Babylon by Zar-adas, the head of the sacred college. May it not be surmised, therefore, that the Zoro-Aster was the *nazar* of Ishtar, Zar-adas or Na-Zar-Ad,⁵ being the same with change of idiom? Ezra, or עֶזְרָא, was a priest and scribe, a hierophant; and the first Hebrew colonizer of Judæa was זֶרְבָבֶלֶת Zoro-Babel or the Zoro or *nazar* of Babylon.

The Jewish Scriptures indicate two distinct religions: that of Bacchus-worship under the mask of Jehovah; and that of the Chaldæan initiates to whom belonged some of the Nazars, the Theurgists, and a few of the prophets.

The nazars or prophets, as well as the Nazarenes, were an anti-Bacchus caste.

The Jewish Scriptures indicate two distinct worships and religions among the Israelites; that of Bacchus-worship under the mask of Jehovah, and that of the Chaldæan initiates to whom belonged some of the *nazars*, the Theurgists, and a few of the prophets. The headquarters of these were always at Babylon and Chaldæa, where two rival schools of Magians can be distinctly shown. Those who would doubt the statement will have in such a case to account for the discrepancy between history and Plato, who of all men of his day was certainly one of the best informed. Speaking of the Magians, he shows them as instructing the Persian kings [about] Zoroaster, as the son or priest of Oromasdes;⁶ and yet Darius, in the inscription at Behistum, boasts of having restored the cultus of Ormazd and put down the Magian rites! Evidently there were two distinct and antagonistic Magian schools. The oldest and the

¹ [*Adversus hæreses*, I, xxiv, 5]

² Samuel Fales Dunlap, *Sōd, the Son of Man*, p. x

³ *Jeremiah* vii, 29: "Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places."

⁴ *Genesis* xlix, 26

⁵ Nazareth? [Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, I, xv; Apuleius, *Florida*, II, xv.]

⁶ *1 Alcibiades*, 122a. Cf. Cicero, *De divinatione*, I, i]

most esoteric of the two being that which, satisfied with its unassailable knowledge and secret power, was content to apparently relinquish her exoteric popularity, and concede her supremacy into the hands of the reforming Darius. [129]

The later Gnostics showed the same prudent policy by accommodating themselves in every country to the prevailing religious forms, still secretly adhering to their own essential doctrines.

There is another hypothesis possible, which is that Zoro-Ishtar was the high priest of the Chaldæan worship, or Magian hierophant. When the Āryans of Persia, under Darius Hystaspes, overthrew the Magian Gomates, and *restored* the Masdean worship, there ensued an amalgamation by which the Magian Zoro-astar became the Zarathushtra of the *Vendīdād*. This was not acceptable to the other Āryans, who adopted the Vedic religion as distinguished from that of *Avesta*. But this is but an hypothesis.

Moses was an initiate.

And whatever Moses is now believed to have been, we will demonstrate that he was an initiate. The Mosaic religion was at best a sun-and-serpent worship, diluted, perhaps, with some slight monotheistic notions before the latter were forcibly crammed into the so-called “inspired Scriptures” by Ezra, at the time he was alleged to have rewritten the Mosaic books. At all events the *Book of Numbers* was a later book; and there the sun-and-serpent worship is as plainly traceable as in any Pagan story. The tale of the fiery serpents is an allegory in more than one sense. The “serpents” were the *Levites* or *Ophites*, who were Moses’ bodyguards;¹ and the command of the “Lord” to Moses to hang the heads of the people “before the Lord against the sun,” which is the emblem of this Lord, is unequivocal.

The fable of Aristæus pursuing Eurydice into the woods explained:

Aristæus is brutal power pursuing Eurydice, the esoteric doctrine, into the woods where the serpent (emblem of every sun-god, and worshipped under its grosser aspect even by the Jews) kills her; i.e., forces truth to become still more esoteric, and to seek shelter in the underworld (which is not the hell of the theologians).

The *nazars* or prophets, as well as the Nazarenes, were an anti-Bacchus caste, in so far that, in common with all the initiated prophets, they held to the spirit of the symbolical religions and offered a strong opposition to the idolatrous and exoteric practices of the dead letter. Hence, the frequent stoning of the prophets by the populace, under the leadership of those priests who made a profitable living out of the popular superstitions. Ottfried Müller shows how much the Orphic Mysteries differed from the *popular* rites of Bacchus,² although the *Orphikoi* are known to have followed the worship of Bacchus. The system of the purest morality and of a severe asceticism promulgated in the teachings of Orpheus, and so strictly adhered to by his votaries, are incompatible with the lasciviousness and gross immorality of the popular rites. The fable of Aristæus pursuing Eurydice into the woods where a serpent occasions

¹ See *Exodus* xxxii, 26

² Karl Ottfried Müller, *A History of the Literature of Ancient Greece*, pp. 230-240

her death,¹ is a very plain allegory, which was in part explained at the earliest times. Aristæus is *brutal power*, pursuing Eurydice, the esoteric doctrine, into the woods where the serpent (emblem of every sun-god, and worshipped under its grosser aspect even by the Jews) kills her; *i.e.*, forces truth to become still more esoteric, and seek shelter in the Underworld, which is not the hell of our theologians. Moreover, the fate of Orpheus, [130] torn to pieces by the Bacchantes, is another allegory to show that the gross and popular rites are always more welcome than divine but simple truth, and proves the great difference that must have existed between the esoteric and the popular worship. As the poems of both Orpheus and Musæus were said to have been lost since the earliest ages, so that neither Plato nor Aristotle recognized anything authentic in the poems extant in their time, it is difficult to say with precision what constituted their peculiar rites. Still we have the oral tradition, and every inference to draw therefrom; and this tradition points to Orpheus as having brought his doctrines from India, and as one whose religion was that of the oldest Magians — hence, that to which belonged the initiates of all countries, beginning with Moses, the “sons of the Prophets,” and the ascetic *nazars* (who must not be confounded with those against whom thundered Hosea and other prophets) [and ending with] the Essenes. This latter sect were Pythagoreans before they became degenerated rather than perfected in their system by the Buddhist missionaries, who, Pliny tells us, established themselves on the shores of the Dead Sea, ages before his time, “*per sæculorum millia.*”² But if, on the one hand, these Buddhist monks were the first to establish monastic communities and inculcate the strict observance of dogmatic conventional rule, on the other, they were also the first to enforce and popularize those stern virtues so exemplified by Śākyamuni, and which were previously exercised only in isolated cases of well-known philosophers and their followers; virtues preached two or three centuries later by Jesus, practiced by a few Christian ascetics, and gradually abandoned, and even entirely forgotten by the Christian Church.

The *initiated nazars* had ever held to this rule, which had to be followed before them by the adepts of every age; and the disciples of John were but a dissenting branch of the Essenes. Therefore, we cannot well confound them with all the nazars spoken of in the Old Testament, and who are accused by Hosea with having separated or consecrated themselves to *Bosheth*, בִּשְׁתֵּת (see Hebrew text);³ which implied the greatest possible abomination. To infer, as some critics and theologians do, that it means to separate one’s self to *chastity* or continence, is either to advisedly pervert the true meaning, or to be totally ignorant of the Hebrew language. The eleventh verse of the first chapter of *Micah* half explains the word in its veiled translation:

Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir, etc.,

and in the original text the word is *Bosheth*. Certainly neither Baal, nor Iahoh Kadosh, with his *Kadeshim*, was a god of ascetic virtue, albeit the *Septuagint* terms them, as well as the *galli* — the perfected priests — *τετελεσμενοι*, the *initiated* and the

¹ [Virgil, *Georgica*, VI, 282 *et seq.* Full text in our Down to Earth Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [*i.e.*, through thousands of ages: Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, V, xv]

³ [*Hosea* ix, 10]

consecrated.¹ [131] The great *Sōd* of the *Kadeshim*, translated in *Psalm lxxxix*, 7, as “assembly of the saints,” was anything but a mystery of the “sanctified” in the sense given to the latter word by Webster.

Nazarenes, a term nearly synonymous with Galileans, were a class of Chaldæan Theurgists that existed long ages before Christ. Jesus was a true reforming Nazarene.

The Nazireate sect existed long before the laws of Moses,² and originated among people most inimical to the “chosen” ones of Israel, *viz.*, the people of Galilee, the ancient *olla-podrida* of idolatrous nations, where was built Nazara, the present Nasra. It is in Nazara that the ancient Nazaria or Nazireates held their “Mysteries of Life” or “assemblies” (as the word now stands in the translation),³ which were but the secret mysteries of initiation,⁴ utterly distinct in their practical form from the popular Mysteries which were held at Byblus in honour of Adonis. While the true *initiates* of the ostracised Galilee were worshipping the true God and enjoying transcendent visions, what were the “chosen” ones about? Ezekiel tells it to us⁵ when, in describing what he saw, he says that the *form* of a hand took him by a lock of his head and transported him from Chaldæa unto Jerusalem.

And there stood seventy men of the senators of the house of Israel. . . . “Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients . . . do in the dark?” inquires the “Lord.” At the door of the house of the Lord . . . behold there sat women weeping for Tammuz (Adonis).

We really cannot suppose that the Pagans have ever surpassed the “chosen” people in certain shameful *abominations* of which their own prophets accuse them so profusely. To admit this truth, one hardly needs even to be a Hebrew scholar; let him read the *Bible* in English and meditate over the language of the “holy” prophets.

This accounts for the hatred of the later Nazarenes for the orthodox Jews — followers of the *exoteric* Mosaic Law — who are ever taunted by this sect with being the worshippers of Iurbo-Adunai, or Lord Bacchus. Passing under the disguise of *Adoni-Iahoh*,⁶ Iahoh and Lord Tsabāoth, the Baal-Adonis, or Bacchus, worshipped in the groves and *public sods* or Mysteries, under the polishing hand of Ezra becomes finally the later-vowelled Adonai of the Masorah — the One and Supreme God of the Christians!



¹ Franz Carl Movers, *Die Phönizier*, Vol. I, p. 683

² [Cf. *Numbers* vi, 2; Salomon Munk, *Palestine, description géographique, historique et archéologique*, in “L’Univers Pittoresque,” 1845, p. 169]

³ Matthias Norberg, *Codex Nazaræus*. Full title: *Lexidion codicis Nasaræi, cui liber Adami nomen* (1816) [with] *Onomasticon codicis Nasaræi, cui liber Adami nomen* (1827) 2-vols, II, p. 305

⁴ See Lucian of Samosata, *De Dea Syria*

⁵ Chapter viii

⁶ Original text, *Isaiah* lxi, 1

Says the *Codex* of the Nazarenes:

Thou shalt not worship the Sun who is named Adunai; whose name is also *Kadesh*¹ and El-El. This Adunai will elect to himself a nation and congregate *in crowds* [his worship will be exoteric] . . . Jerusalem will become the refuge and city of the *Abortive*, who shall perfect themselves [circumcise] with a sword . . . and shall adore Adunai.² [132]

The Essenes were the converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judæa at one time, since the reign of Ashoka.

Jesus cannot strictly be called an Essene, for reasons which we will indicate further on. Neither was he a Nazar, or Nazaria of the older sect.

The oldest Nazarenes, who were the descendants of the Scripture *nazars*, and whose last prominent leader was John the Baptist, although never very orthodox, in the sight of the scribes and Pharisees of Jerusalem were, nevertheless, respected and left unmolested. Even Herod “feared the multitude” because they regarded John as a prophet.³ But the followers of Jesus evidently adhered to a sect which became a still more exasperating thorn in their side. It appeared as a heresy *within* another heresy; for while the nazars of the olden times, the “Sons of the Prophets,” were Chaldæan Kabbalists, the adepts of the new dissenting sect showed themselves reformers and innovators from the first. The great similitude traced by some critics between the rites and observances of the earliest Christians and those of the Essenes may be accounted for without the slightest difficulty. The Essenes, as we remarked just now, were the converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judæa at one time, since the reign of Aśoka the zealous propagandist; and while it is evidently to the Essenes that belongs the honour of having had the Nazarene reformer Jesus as a pupil, still the latter is found disagreeing with his early teachers on several questions of formal observance. He cannot strictly be called an Essene, for reasons which we will indicate further on, neither was he a nazar, or Nazaria of the older sect. What Jesus *was*, may be found in the *Codex Nazaræus*, in the unjust accusations of the Bardesianian Gnostics.

Jesus was inspired by the genius of Mercury.

“Jesu Mesio is *Nebu*, the false Messiah, the destroyer of the ancient religion,” says the *Codex*.⁴ He is the founder of the sect of the new nazars, and, as the words clearly imply, a follower of the Buddhist doctrine. In Hebrew the word *naba*, נבא, means to speak of inspiration; and נבו, *nebo*, a god of wisdom. But Nebo is also *Mercury*, and *Mercury is Budha* in the Hindu monogram of planets. Moreover, we find the Talmudists holding that Jesus was inspired by the genius of Mercury.⁵

¹ *Psalms* lxxxix, 7

² Matthias Norberg, *Codex Nazaræus*. Full title: *Lexidion codicis Nasaræi, cui liber Adami nomen* (1816) [with] *Onomasticon codicis Nasaræi, cui liber Adami nomen* (1827) 2-vols, I, p. 47

³ *Matthew* xiv, 5

⁴ I, p. 55; M. Norberg, *Onomasticon*, etc., p. 74

⁵ Alphonsus de Spina, *Fortalitiium Fidei*, ii, 2. [Written in 1458, was published anonymously circa 1464–76.]

The blunders of the Old Testament are nothing to those of the Gospels.

Jesus preached the philosophy of Buddha-Shakyamuni.

The Nazarene reformer had undoubtedly belonged to one of these sects; though, perhaps, it would be next to impossible to decide absolutely which. But what is self-evident is that he preached the philosophy of Buddha-Śākyamuni. Denounced by the later prophets, cursed by the Sanhedrin, the *nazars* — they were confounded with others of that name “who separated themselves unto that shame”¹ — were secretly, if not openly, persecuted by the orthodox synagogue. [133] It becomes clear why Jesus was treated with such contempt from the first, and deprecatingly called “the Galilean.” Nathaniel inquires:

Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?²

at the very beginning of his career; and merely because he knows him to be a *nazar*. Does not this clearly hint, that even the older nazars were not really Hebrew religionists, but rather a class of Chaldæan Theurgists? Besides, as the New Testament is noted for its mistranslations and transparent falsifications of texts, we may justly suspect that the word Nazareth was substituted for that of *nasaria*, or *nozari*; and that it originally read “Can any good thing come from a *nozari*, or Nazarene?” a follower of St. John the Baptist, with whom we see him associating from his first appearance on the stage of action, after having been lost sight of for a period of nearly twenty years. The blunders of the Old Testament are as nothing to those of the *Gospels*. Nothing shows better than these self-evident contradictions the system of pious fraud upon which the superstructure of the Messiahship rests.

This is *Elias* which was for to come,

says Matthew of John the Baptist, thus forcing an ancient kabbalistic tradition into the frame of evidence.³ But when addressing the Baptist himself, they ask him,⁴

Art thou Elias?

And he saith *I am not!*

Which knew best — John or his biographer? And which is divine revelation?

His motive was evidently like that of Gautama-Buddha: to benefit humanity at large by producing a religious reform which should give it a religion of pure ethics.

The motive of Jesus was evidently like that of Gautama-Buddha, to benefit humanity at large by producing a religious reform which should give it a religion of pure ethics; the true knowledge of God and nature having remained until then solely in the hands of the esoteric sects, and their adepts. As Jesus used *oil* and the Essenes nev-

¹ *Hosea ix*, 10

² *John i*, 46

³ *xi*, 14

⁴ *John i*, 21

er used aught but pure water,¹ he cannot be called a strict Essene. On the other hand, the Essenes were also “set apart”; they were healers (*asaya*) and dwelt in the desert as all ascetics did.

But although he did not abstain from wine he could have remained a Nazarene all the same. For in chapter vi of *Numbers*, we see that after the priest has waved a part of the hair of a Nazarite for a wave-offering before the Lord, “after that a Nazarene may drink wine.”² The bitter denunciation by the reformer of the people who would be satisfied with nothing is worded in the following exclamation:

For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!³

And yet he was an Essene and Nazarene, for we not only find him sending a message to Herod, to say that he was one of those who cast out demons, and who performed [134] cures, but actually calling himself a prophet and declaring himself equal to the other prophets.⁴

The author of *Sōd* shows Matthew trying to connect the appellation of Nazarene with a prophecy,⁵ and inquires:

Why then does Matthew state that *the prophet* said he should be called *Nazaria*? Simply because he belonged to that sect, and a prophecy would confirm his claims to the Messiahship. Now it does not appear that the Prophets anywhere state that the Messiah will be called a *Nazarene*.⁶

The fact alone that Matthew tries in the last verse of chapter ii to strengthen his claim that Jesus dwelt in Nazareth *merely to fulfil a prophecy*, does more than weaken the argument, it upsets it entirely; for the first two chapters have sufficiently been proved later forgeries.

Modes and manners of baptism “imported” from India.

Baptism is one of the oldest rites and was practiced by all the nations in their Mysteries, as sacred ablutions. Dunlap seems to derive the name of the *nazars* from *nazah*, sprinkling; Bahāk-Ziwa is the genius who called the world into existence⁷ out of the “dark water,” say the Nazarenes; and Richardson’s *Persian, Arabic, and Eng-*

¹ “The Essenes considered oil as a defilement,” says Josephus, in *The Jewish War*, II, viii, 3.

² vi, 20

³ [Luke vii, 33-34 KJV]

⁴ Luke xiii, 32

⁵ *Matthew* ii, 23. We must bear in mind that the Gospel according to Matthew in the New Testament is not the original Gospel of the apostle of that name. The authentic Evangel was for centuries in the possession of the Nazarenes and the Ebionites, as we show further on the admission of St. Jerome himself, who confesses that he had to *ask permission* of the Nazarenes to translate it. [Vide p. 182 in present Volume.]

⁶ Samuel Fales Dunlap, *Sōd, the Son of the Man*, p. x

⁷ Matthias Norberg, *Codex Nazaræus*. Full title: *Lexidion codicis Nasaræi, cui liber Adami nomen* (1816) [with *Onomasticon codicis Nasaræi, cui liber Adami nomen* (1827) 2-volsm II, p. 233

lish Lexicon asserts that the word *Bahāk* means “raining.”¹ But the Bahāk-Ziwa of the Nazarenes cannot be traced so easily to Bacchus, who “was the rain-god,” for the nazars were the greatest opponents of Bacchus-worship. “Bacchus is brought up by the Hyades, the rain-nymphs,” says Preller;² who shows, furthermore,³ that at the conclusion of the religious Mysteries, the priests baptized (washed) their monuments and anointed them with oil. All this is but a very indirect proof. The Jordan baptism need not be shown a substitution for the *exoteric* Bacchic rites and the libations in honour of Adonis or Adoni — whom the Nazarenes abhorred — in order to prove it to have been a sect sprung from the “Mysteries” of the “Secret Doctrine”; and their rites can by no means be confounded with those of the Pagan populace, who had simply fallen into the idolatrous and unreasoning faith of all plebeian multitudes. John was the prophet of these Nazarenes, and in Galilee he was termed “the Saviour,” but he was not the founder of that sect which derived its tradition from the remotest Chaldeo-Akkadian theurgy. [135]

The early plebeian Israelites were Canaanites and Phœnicians, with the same worship of the Phallic gods: Bacchus, Baal or Adon, Iacchos — Iao or Jehovah; but even among them there had always been a class of initiated adepts.

“The early plebeian Israelites were Canaanites and Phœnicians, with the same worship of the Phallic gods — Bacchus, Baal or Adon, Iacchos — Iaō or Jehovah”; but even among them there had always been a class of *initiated* adepts. Later, the character of this *plebs* was modified by Assyrian conquests; and, finally, the Persian colonizations superimposed the Pharisean and Eastern ideas and usages, from which the Old Testament and the Mosaic institutes were derived. The Asmonean priest-kings promulgated the canon of the Old Testament in contradistinction to the *Apocrypha* or Secret Books of the Alexandrian Jews — Kabbalists.⁴ Till John Hyrcanus they were Asideans (Chasidim) and Pharisees (Pārsīs), but then they became Sadducees or Zadokites — asserters of sacerdotal rule as contradistinguished from rabbinical. The Pharisees were lenient and intellectual, the Sadducees, bigoted and cruel.

Says the *Codex*:

John, son of the Aba-Saba-Zacharia, conceived by his mother *Anasabet* in her hundredth year, had baptized for *forty-two years*⁵ when Iesu Messias came to the Jordan to be baptized with John’s baptism. But he will *pervert John’s doc-*

¹ [Samuel Fales Dunlap, *Sōd, the mysteries of Adoni*, p. 79]

² Ludwik Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*, 1872, Vol. I, p. 415

³ Dunlap, *op. cit.*, pp. 46 *et seq.*

⁴ The word *Apocrypha* was very erroneously adopted as doubtful and spurious. The word means *hidden* and *secret*; but that which is secret may be often more true than that which is revealed.

⁵ The statement, if reliable, would show that Jesus was between fifty and sixty years old when baptized; for the Gospels make him but a few months younger than John. The Kabbalists say that Jesus was over forty years old when first appearing at the gates of Jerusalem. The present copy of the *Codex Nazaræus* is dated in the year 1042, but Dunlap finds in Irenæus (2nd century) quotations from and ample references to this book. “The basis of the material common to Irenæus and the *Codex Nazaræus* must be at least as early as the first century,” says the author in his preface to *Sōd, the Son of the Man*, p. iii.

trine, changing the baptism of the Jordan, and perverting the sayings of justice.¹

Baptismal water, fire, and spirit, or Holy Ghost, have all their origin in India.

The baptism was changed from *water* to that of the Holy Ghost, undoubtedly in consequence of the ever-dominant idea of the Fathers to institute a reform, and make the Christians distinct from St. John's Nazarenes, the Nabatheans and Ebionites, in order to make room for new dogmas. Not only do the Synoptics tell us that Jesus was baptizing the same as John, but John's own disciples complained of it, though surely Jesus cannot be accused of following a purely Bacchic rite. The parenthesis in verse 2nd of *John iv*, ". . . though Jesus himself baptized not," is so clumsy as to show upon its face that it is an interpolation. *Matthew* makes John say that he that should come after him would not baptize them with water "but with *the Holy Ghost* and fire." *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John* corroborate these words. Water, fire, and spirit, or Holy Ghost, have all their origin in India, as we will show. [136]

Now there is one very strange peculiarity about this sentence. It is flatly denied in *Acts xix*, 2-5. Apollos, a Jew of Alexandria, belonged to the sect of St. John's disciples; he had been baptized, and instructed others in the doctrines of the Baptist. And yet when Paul, cleverly profiting by his absence at Corinth, finds certain disciples of Apollos at Ephesus, and asks them whether they received *the Holy Ghost*, he is naïvely answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost!" "Unto what then were you baptized?" he inquires. "*Unto John's baptism*," they say. Then Paul is made to repeat the words attributed to John by the Synoptics; and these men "were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," exhibiting, moreover, at the same instant, the usual polyglot gift which accompanies the descent of the Holy Ghost.

How then? St. John the Baptist, who is called the "precursor," that "the prophecy might be fulfilled," the great prophet and martyr, whose words ought to have had such an importance in the eyes of his disciples, announces the "Holy Ghost" to his listeners; causes crowds to assemble on the shores of the Jordan, where, at the great ceremony of Christ's baptism, the promised "Holy Ghost" appears within the opened heavens, and the multitude hears the voice, and yet there are disciples of St. John who have "never so much as *heard* whether there be any Holy Ghost"!

Verily the disciples who wrote the *Codex Nazaræus* were right. Only it is not Jesus himself, but those who came after him, and who concocted the *Bible* to suit themselves, that "*perverted* John's doctrine, *changed* the baptism of the Jordan, and perverted the sayings of justice."

It is useless to object that the present *Codex* was written centuries after the direct apostles of John preached. So were our *Gospels*. When this astounding interview of Paul with the "Baptists" took place, Bardesanes had not yet appeared among them, and the sect was not considered a "heresy." Moreover, we are enabled to judge how little St. John's promise of the "Holy Ghost," and the appearance of the "Ghost" him-

¹ *Codex Nazaræus*, Vol. I, p. 109; Dunlap, *op. cit.*, p. xxiv

self, had affected his disciples, by the displeasure shown by them toward the disciples of Jesus, and the kind of rivalry manifested from the first. Nay, so little is John himself sure of the identity of Jesus with the expected Messiah, that after the famous scene of the baptism at the Jordan, and the oral assurance by the *Holy Ghost* Himself that

*This is my beloved Son,*¹

we find “the Precursor,” in *Matthew* xi, 3, sending two of his disciples from his prison to inquire of Jesus:

Art thou *he* that should come, or do we look for another?!

If baptism is the sign of regeneration, and an ordinance instituted by Jesus, why do not Christians now baptize as Jesus did, with the Holy Ghost and with fire, instead of following the custom of the Nazarenes?

This flagrant contradiction alone ought to have long ago satisfied reasonable minds as to the putative divine inspiration of the New Testament. [137] But we may offer another question: If baptism is the sign of regeneration, and an ordinance instituted by Jesus, why do not Christians now baptize as Jesus is here represented as doing, “with the Holy Ghost and with fire,” instead of following the custom of the Nazarenes? In making these palpable interpolations, what possible motive could Irenæus have had except to cause people to believe that the appellation of Nazarene, which Jesus bore, came only from his father’s residence at Nazareth, and not from his affiliation with the sect of *Nazaria*, the healers?

From time immemorial the prophets of old had been thundering against the baptism of fire as practiced by their neighbours, which imparted the “spirit of prophecy,” or the Holy Ghost.

This expedient of Irenæus was a most unfortunate one, for from time immemorial the prophets of old had been thundering against the baptism of fire as practiced by their neighbours, which imparted the “spirit of prophecy,” or the Holy Ghost. But the case was desperate; the Christians were universally called Nazoræens and Iessæans (according to Epiphanius), and Christ simply ranked as a Jewish prophet and healer — so self-styled, so accepted by his own disciples, and so regarded by their followers. In such a state of things there was no room for either a new hierarchy or a new God-head; and since Irenæus had undertaken the business of manufacturing both, he had to put together such materials as were available, and fill the gaps with his own fertile inventions.

The true, original Christianity, such as was preached by Jesus, is to be found only in the so-called Syrian heresies. Such also was the faith of Paul.

To assure ourselves that Jesus was a true Nazarene — albeit with ideas of a new reform — we must not search for the proof in the translated *Gospels*, but in such original versions as are accessible. Tischendorf, in his translation from the Greek of *Luke* iv, 34, has it “Iesou Nazarene”; and in the Syriac it reads “Iasoua, thou *Nazaria*.”

¹ *Matthew* iii, 17

Thus, if we take in account all that is puzzling and incomprehensible in the four *Gospels*, revised and corrected as they now stand, we shall easily see for ourselves that the true, original Christianity, such as was preached by Jesus, is to be found only in the so-called Syrian heresies. Only from them can we extract any clear notions about what was primitive Christianity. Such was the faith of Paul, when Tertullus, the orator, accused the apostle before the governor Felix. What he complained of was that:

. . . we had found this man . . . a mover of sedition . . . a ringleader of *the sect of the Nazarenes*;¹

and, while Paul denies every other accusation, he confesses that:

. . . after the way which they call heresy, *so worship I the God of my fathers*.²

The confession of Paul, who worshipped the God of his fathers, is a revelation in itself.

This confession is a whole revelation. It shows:

- 1 That Paul admitted belonging to the sect of the Nazarenes;
- 2 That he worshipped the *God of his fathers*, not the trinitarian Christian God, of whom he knows nothing, and who was not invented until after his death; and,
- 3 That this unlucky confession satisfactorily explains why the treatise, *Acts of the Apostles*, together with John's *Revelation*, which at one [138] period was utterly rejected, were kept out of the canon of the New Testament for such a length of time.

At Byblos, the neophytes as well as the hierophants were, after participating in the Mysteries, obliged to fast and remain in solitude for some time.

At Byblos, the neophytes as well as the hierophants were, after participating in the Mysteries, obliged to fast and remain in solitude for some time. There was strict fasting and preparation before as well as after the Bacchic, Adonian, and Eleusinian orgies; and Herodotus hints, with fear and veneration about the LAKE of Bacchus, in which "they [the priests] made at night exhibitions of his life and sufferings."³ In the Mithraic sacrifices, during the initiation, a preliminary scene of death was simulated by the neophyte, and it preceded the scene showing him himself "being born again by the rite of *baptism*." A portion of this ceremony is still enacted in the present day by the Masons, when the neophyte, as the Grand Master Hiram Abiff, lies dead, and is raised by the strong grip of the lion's paw.



¹ *Acts* xxiv, 5

² *ibid.*, xxiv, 14

³ *The Histories*, Bk. II, § 170, 171

One orphic hymn calls water the greatest purifier of men and gods.

The priests were circumcised. The neophyte could not be initiated without having been present at the solemn Mysteries of the LAKE. The Nazarenes were baptized in the Jordan; and could not be baptized elsewhere; they were also circumcised, and had to fast before as well as after the purification by baptism. Jesus is said to have fasted in the wilderness for forty days, immediately after his baptism. To the present day, there is outside every temple in India, a lake, stream, or a reservoir full of holy water, in which the Brahmans and the Hindu devotees bathe daily. Such places of consecrated water are necessary to every temple. The bathing festivals, or *baptismal* rites, occur twice every year; in October and April. Each lasts ten days; and, as in ancient Egypt and Greece, the statues of their gods, goddesses, and idols are immersed in water by the priests; the object of the ceremony being to wash away from them the sins of their worshippers which they have taken upon themselves, and which pollute them, until washed off by holy water. During the Ārati, the bathing ceremony, the principal god of every temple is carried in solemn procession to be baptized in the sea. The Brahman priests, carrying the sacred images, are followed generally by the Mahārāja — barefoot, and nearly naked. *Three times* the priests enter the sea; the third time they carry with them the whole of the images. Holding them up with prayers repeated by the whole congregation, the Chief Priest plunges the statues of the gods *thrice* in the name of the *mystic trinity*, into the water; after which they are purified.¹ The Orphic hymn calls *water* the greatest purifier of men and gods. [139]

The Essenes were most undoubtedly Buddhist monks.

Our Nazarene sect is known to have existed some 150 years B.C., and to have lived on the banks of the Jordan, and on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, according to Pliny and Josephus.² But in King's *Gnostics*, we find quoted another statement by Josephus,³ which says that the Essenes had been established on the shores of the Dead Sea "for thousands of ages" before Pliny's time.⁴

The term Galilean is nearly synonymous with that of Nazarene.

According to Munk the term "Galilean" is nearly synonymous with that of "Nazarene"; furthermore, he shows the relations of the former with the Gentiles as very intimate. The populace had probably gradually adopted, in their constant intercourse, certain rites and modes of worship of the Pagans; and the scorn with which the Galileans were regarded by the orthodox Jews is attributed by him to the same cause. Their friendly relations had certainly led them, at a later period, to adopt the

¹ The Hindu High Pontiff — the Chief of the Nampūtiris, who lives in the Cochin Land, is generally present during these festivals of "Holy Water" immersions. He travels sometimes to very great distances to preside over the ceremony.

² Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, V, xv, 73; Josephus, *Antiq.*, XIII, v, 9; XV, x, 4, 5; XVIII, 1, 5.

³ Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, xv, 15

⁴ King thinks it a great exaggeration and is inclined to believe that these Essenes, who were most undoubtedly Buddhist monks, were "merely a continuation of the associations known as Sons of the Prophets." — *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 22, fn. [p. 52 in 2nd ed.]

“Adonia,” or the sacred rites over the body of the lamented Adonis, as we find Jerome fairly lamenting this circumstance:

Over Bethlehem the grove of Thammuz, that is of Adonis, was casting its shadow! And in the GROTTA where formerly the infant Jesus cried, the lover of Venus was being mourned.¹

A Roman Emperor established the Mysteries of Adonis at the Sacred Cave in Bethlehem.

It was after the rebellion of Bar Cocheba, that the Roman Emperor established the Mysteries of Adonis at the Sacred Cave in Bethlehem; and who knows but this was the *petra* or rock-temple on which the church was built? The Boar of Adonis was placed above the gate of Jerusalem which looked toward Bethlehem.

Munk says that the “Nazireate was an institution established before the laws of Mūsah.”² This is evident; as we find this sect not only mentioned but minutely described in *Numbers*.³ In the commandment given in this chapter to Moses by the “Lord,” it is easy to recognize the rites and laws of the Priests of Adonis.⁴ The abstinence and purity strictly prescribed in both sects are identical. Both allowed [140] their hair *to grow long*⁵ as the Hindu cœnobites and fakirs do to this day, while other castes shave their hair and abstain on certain days from wine. The prophet Elijah, a Nazarene, is described in *2 Kings*, and by Josephus as “a hairy man girt with a girdle of leather.”⁶ And John the Baptist and Jesus are both represented as wearing very long hair.⁷ John is “clothed with camel’s hair” and wearing a girdle of hide, and Jesus in a long garment “without any seams . . . and very white, like snow,” says *Mark*; the very dress worn by the Nazarene Priests and the Pythagorean and Buddhist Esenes, as described by Josephus.



¹ Jerome, *Epistles*, No. 49, *ad Paulinum altera*. Cf. Samuel Fales Dunlap, *Vestiges of the spirit-history of man*, p. 218.

² Salomon Munk, *Palestine, description géographique, historique et archéologique*, p. 169

³ Chapter vi

⁴ Bacchus and Ceres — or the mystical *Wine* and *Bread*, used during the Mysteries, become, in the “Adonia,” Adonis and Venus. Movers shows that “*Iaō* is Bacchus,” (*Die Phönizier*, I, p. 550); and his authority is Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, IV, 38, 74; see also Dunlap, *Vestiges*, etc., p. 195. *Iaō* is a Sun-god and the Jewish Jehovah; the intellectual or Central Sun of the Kabbalists. See Julian the Apostate, Oratio IV, *In regem solem*, p. 136; and Proclus, *On the 1st Alcibiades*, IV, p. 96. But this “*Iaō*” is not the Mystery-god.

⁵ Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, IV, v, 4

⁶ *ibid.*, IX, ii, 1; *2 Kings* i, 8

⁷ In relation to the well-known fact of Jesus wearing his hair long, and being always so represented, it becomes quite startling to find how little the unknown Editor of the *Acts* knew about the Apostle Paul, since he makes him say in *1 Corinthians* xi, 14, “Doth not Nature itself teach you, that if a *man* have long hair, it is a shame unto him?” Certainly Paul could never have said such a thing! Therefore, if the passage is genuine, Paul knew nothing of the prophet whose doctrines he had embraced and for which he died; and if false — how much more reliable is what remains?

Zoroaster is not a name but a generic term.

Apuleius maintains that it was Zoroaster who instructed Pythagoras.

If we carefully trace the terms *nazar*, and *nazaret*, throughout the best known works of ancient writers, we will meet them in connection with “Pagan” as well as Jewish adepts. Thus, Alexander Polyhistor says of Pythagoras that he was a disciple of the Assyrian *Nazaratus*, whom some suppose to be Ezekiel.¹ Diogenes Lærtius² states most positively that Pythagoras, after being initiated into all the Mysteries of the Greeks and barbarians, “went into Egypt and afterward visited the Chaldæans and Magi”; and Apuleius³ maintains that it was Zoroaster who instructed Pythagoras.

Were we to suggest that the Hebrew *nazars*, the railing prophets of the “Lord,” had been initiated into the so-called Pagan mysteries, and belonged (or at least a majority of them) to the same Lodge or circle of adepts as those who were considered idolaters, that their “circle of prophets” was but a collateral branch of a secret association, which we may well term “international,” what a visitation of Christian wrath would we not incur! And still, the case looks strangely suspicious.

Let us first recall to our mind that which Ammianus Marcellinus,⁴ and other historians relate of Darius Hystaspes. The latter, penetrating into Upper India (Bactriana), learned pure rites, and stellar and cosmical sciences from Brahmans, and communicated them to the Magi. Now Hystaspes is shown in history to have crushed the Magi; and introduced — or rather forced upon them — the pure religion of Zoroaster, that of Ormazd. How is it, then, that an inscription is found on the tomb [141] of Darius, stating that he was “teacher and hierophant of magic, or Magianism?” Evidently there must be some historical mistake, and history confesses it. In this imbroglio of names, Zoroaster, the teacher and instructor of Pythagoras, can be neither the Zoroaster nor Zarathustra who instituted sun-worship among the Pārsīs; nor he who appeared at the court of Gushtasp (Hystaspes) the alleged father of Darius; nor, again, the Zoroaster who placed his magi above the kings themselves. The oldest Zoroastrian scripture — the *Avesta* — does not betray the slightest traces of the reformer having ever been acquainted with any of the nations that subsequently adopted his mode of worship. He seems utterly ignorant of the neighbours of Western Iran, the Medes, the Assyrians, the Persians, and others. If we had no other evidences of the great antiquity of the Zoroastrian religion than the discovery of the blunder committed by some scholars in our own century, who regarded King Vishtāspa (Gushtasp) as identical with the father of Darius, whereas the Persian tradition points directly to Vishtāspa as to the last of the line of Kaianian princes who ruled in Bactriana, it

¹ [Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, I, xv]

² [*Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, “Pythagoras,” § 3]

³ [*Florida*, II, xv; cf. Thomas Hyde, *Historia religionis veterum Persarum eorumque magorum* (Oxford 1700), also known in its second edition of 1760 as *Veterum Persarum et Parthorum et Medorum religionis historia*. Both editions are referred to as *De vetere religione Persarum*, p. 309; Oxonii 1700]

⁴ [*Roman History*, XXIII, vi, 33]

ought to be enough, for the Assyrian conquest of Bactriana took place 1,200 years B.C.¹

Therefore, it is but natural that we should see in the appellation of Zoroaster not a name but a generic term, whose significance must be left to philologists to agree upon. *Guru*, in Sanskrit, is a spiritual teacher; and as *Zuruastara* means in the same language he who worships the sun, why is it impossible, that by some natural change of language, due to the great number of different nations which were converted to the sun-worship, the word *guru-astara*, the spiritual teacher of sun-worship, so closely resembling the name of the founder of this religion, became gradually transformed in its primal form of *Zuryastara* or *Zoroaster*? The opinion of the Kabbalists is that there was but one *Zarathustra* and many *guruasters* or spiritual teachers, and that one such *guru*, or rather *huru-aster*, as he is called in the old manuscripts, was the instructor of Pythagoras. To philology and our readers we leave the explanation for what it is worth. Personally we believe in it, as we credit on this subject kabbalistic tradition far more than the explanation of scientists, no two of whom have been able to agree up to the present year.

Aristotle states that Zoroaster lived 6,000 years before Plato.

Aristotle states that Zoroaster lived 6,000 years before Plato;² Hermippus of Alexandria, who is said to have read the genuine books of the Zoroastrians, although Alexander the Great is accused of having destroyed [142] them, shows Zoroaster as the pupil of Agonaces (Agon-ach, or the Ahon-God) and as having lived 5,000 years before the fall of Troy.³ Er or Eros, whose vision is related by Plato in the *Republic*,⁴ is declared by Clemens Alexandrinus to have been Zardosth.⁵ While the Magus who dethroned Cambyses was a Mede, and Darius proclaims that he put down the Magian rites to establish those of Ormazd, Xanthus of Lydia declares Zoroaster to have been the chief of the Magi!⁶

Which of them is wrong? or are they all right, and only the modern interpreters fail to explain the difference between the Reformer and his apostles and followers? This blundering of our commentators reminds us of that of Suetonius, who mistook the Christians for one Christos, or *Crestos*, as he spells it, and assured his readers that Claudius banished him for the disturbance he made among the Jews.⁷

¹ Max Müller has sufficiently proved the case in his lecture on the "Zend-Avesta." He calls Gushtasp "the mythical pupil of Zoroaster." [*Chips*, etc., I, p. 88] Mythical, perhaps, only because the period in which he lived and learned with Zoroaster is too remote to allow our modern science to speculate upon it with any certainty.

² [Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, XXX, ii]

³ [Pliny the Elder, *loc. cit.*]

⁴ [*Republic*, X, 614 *et seq.*]

⁵ [*Stromata*, V, xiv]

⁶ [Diogenes Lærtius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Proæmium, § 2.

Note 20 by Boris de Zirkoff: Xanthus (or Xanthos) was a celebrated Lydian historian, older than Herodotus, who is said to have been indebted to the work of Xanthus, which is known as the *Four Books of Lydian History*, only fragments of which have come down to our time.]

⁷ [*Life of the Cæsars*, "Claudius," § 25]

Additional notes on the Nazars.

Finally, and to return again to the *nazars*, Zaratus is mentioned by Pliny in the following words: “He was Zoroaster and *Nazaret*.”¹ As Zoroaster is called *princeps* of the Magi, and *nazar* signifies separated or consecrated, is it not a Hebrew rendering of *mag*? Volney believes so. The Persian word *Na-zaruan* means millions of years, and refers to the Chaldæan “Ancient of Days.” Hence the name of the Nazars or Nazarenes, who were consecrated to the service of the Supreme one God, the kabbalistic Ain-Soph, or the Ancient of Days, the “Aged of the aged.”

In Hindustani nazar is sight, internal or supernatural vision.

But the word *nazar* may also be found in India. In Hindōstānī *nazar* is sight, internal or *supernatural* vision; *nazar bandi* means fascination, a mesmeric or magical spell; and *nazarān* is the word for sight-seeing or vision.

The word Zeruana is nowhere to be found in the Avesta, but only in the later Parsi books. It came from the Magians, who composed the Persian sacred caste in the Sassanian period, but were originally Assyrians.

Professor Wilder thinks that as the word *Zeruana* is nowhere to be found in the *Avesta*, but only in the later Pārsī books, it came from the Magians, who composed the Persian sacred caste in the Sassanian period, but were originally Assyrians. He says:

Turan, of the poets, I consider to be Aturia, or Assyria; and that Zohak (*Azdahaka*, *Dei-okes*, or *Astyages*), the Serpent-king, was Assyrian, Median, and Babylonian — when those countries were united.

The secret doctrines of the Magi, of the pre-Vedic Buddhists, of the hierophants of the Egyptian Thoth or Hermes, and of the adepts of whatever age and nationality, including the Chaldæan Kabbalists and the Jewish Nazars, were identical from the beginning.

Zarathustra and his followers had been settled in India before they immigrated into Persia.

This opinion does not, however, in the least implicate our statement that the secret doctrines of the Magi, of the pre-Vedic Buddhists, of the hierophants of the Egyptian Thoth or Hermes, and of the adepts of whatever age and nationality, including the Chaldæan Kabbalists and the Jewish *nazars*, were *identical* from the beginning. When we use the term *Buddhists*, we do not mean to imply by it either the exoteric Buddhism instituted by the followers of Gautama-Buddha, nor the modern Buddhist religion, but the secret philosophy of Śākyamuni, which in its essence is certainly identical with the ancient wisdom-religion of the sanctuary, the pre-Vedic Brahmanism. [143] The “schism” of Zoroaster, as it is called, is a direct proof of it. For it was no *schism*, strictly speaking, but merely a partially public exposition of strictly monotheistic religious truths, hitherto taught only in the sanctuaries, and that he had learned from the Brahmans. Zoroaster, the primeval institutor of sun-worship, cannot be called the founder of the dualistic system; neither was he the first to teach

¹ [Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, XXX, ii]

the unity of God, for he taught but what he had learned himself with the Brahmins. And that Zarathustra and his followers, the Zoroastrians, “had been settled in India before they immigrated into Persia,” is also proved by Max Müller:

That the Zoroastrians and their ancestors started from India during the Vaidic period can be proved as distinctly as that the inhabitants of Massilia started from Greece . . . Many of the gods of the Zoroastrians come out . . . as mere reflections and deflections of the primitive and authentic gods of the *Veda*.¹

The old gods, whether Zoroastrian or Vedic, are personifications of the occult powers of nature, the faithful servants of the adepts of secret wisdom.

If, now, we can prove — and we can do so on the evidence of the *Kabbalah* and the oldest traditions of the wisdom-religion, the philosophy of the old sanctuaries — that all these gods, whether of the Zoroastrians or of the *Veda*, are but so many personated *occult powers* of nature, the faithful servants of the adepts of secret wisdom — Magic — we are on secure ground.

Buddhism² is the doctrine of wisdom-religion, which by many ages antedates the metaphysical philosophy of Siddhartha Shakyamuni.

Thus, whether we say that Kabbalism and Gnosticism proceeded from Mazdeanism or Zoroastrianism, it is all the same, unless we meant the *exoteric* worship — which we do not. Likewise, and in this sense, we may echo King, the author of *The Gnostics*,³ and several other archæologists, and maintain that both the former proceeded from *Buddhism*, at once the simplest and most satisfying of philosophies, and which resulted in one of the purest religions of the world. It is only a matter of chronology to decide which of these religions, differing but in external form, is the oldest, therefore the least adulterated. But even this bears but very indirectly, if at all, on the subject we treat of. Already some time before our era, the adepts, except in India, had ceased to congregate in large communities; but whether among the Essenes, or the Neo-Platonists, or, again, among the innumerable struggling sects born but to die, the same doctrines, identical in substance and spirit, if not always in form, are encountered. By *Buddhism*, therefore, we mean that religion signifying literally the doctrine of wisdom, and which by many ages antedates the metaphysical philosophy of Siddhārtha-Śākyamuni.



¹ Friedrich Max Müller, “The Zend-Avesta,” in *Chips from a German Workshop*, (1867–75, 5-vols.), Vol. I, p. 86

² [Buddhism should have been spelled with one d. In subsequent writings H.P. Blavatsky made it clear that there is a great difference between Budhism, which antedates Gautama Buddha, and Buddhism, the religion. For further information consult “Budhism is Inner Wisdom,” in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ [Page 55 in 2nd ed.]

By analogy and a close study of the hidden meaning of their rites and customs, we can now trace the kinship of the Pagan worshippers of Adonis, their neighbours, the Nazarenes, and the Pythagorean Essenes, the healing Therapeutai, the Ebionites, and other followers of the ancient theurgic Mysteries.

After nineteen centuries of enforced eliminations from the canonical books of every sentence which might put the investigator on the true path, it has become very difficult to show, to the satisfaction of exact science, [144] that the “Pagan” worshippers of Adonis, their neighbours, the Nazarenes, and the Pythagorean Essenes, the healing Therapeutai,¹ the Ebionites, and other sects, were all, with very slight differences, followers of the ancient theurgic Mysteries. And yet by analogy and a close study of the *hidden* sense of their rites and customs, we can trace their kinship.

It was given to a contemporary of Jesus to become the means of pointing out to posterity, by his interpretation of the oldest literature of Israel, how deeply the kabbalistic philosophy agreed in its esotericism with that of the profoundest Greek thinkers. This contemporary, an ardent disciple of Plato and Aristotle, was Philo Judæus. While explaining the Mosaic books according to a purely kabbalistic method, he is the famous Hebrew writer whom Kingsley calls the Father of New Platonism.

It is evident that Philo’s Therapeutai are a branch of the Essenes. Their name indicates it — *Εσσηαιοι*, Essaioi, physicians. Hence, the contradictions, forgeries, and other desperate expedients to reconcile the prophecies of the Jewish canon with the Galilean nativity and godship.

The chiefs of the Essene communities were Kabbalists and Theurgists.

Luke, who was a physician, is designated in the Syriac texts as *Asaya*, the Essaian or Essene. Josephus and Philo Judæus have sufficiently described this sect to leave no doubt in our mind that the Nazarene Reformer, after having received his education in their dwellings in the desert, and been duly initiated in the Mysteries, preferred the free and independent life of a wandering *Nazaria*, and so separated or *inazarenized* himself from them, thus becoming a travelling Therapeutai,² a *Nazaria*, a healer. Every Therapeutai, before quitting his community, had to do the same. Both Jesus and St. John the Baptist preached the end of the Age;³ which proves their knowledge of the secret computation of the priests and Kabbalists, who with the chiefs of the Essene communities alone had the secret of the duration of the cycles. The latter were Kabbalists and Theurgists; “they had their *mystic* books, and predicted future events,” says Munk.⁴

¹ Philo Judæus, *De vita contemplativa*

² [Singular of Therapeutai]

³ The real meaning of the division into *ages* is esoteric and Buddhistic. So little did the uninitiated Christians understand it that they accepted the words of Jesus *literally* and firmly believed that he meant the end of the world. There had been many prophecies about the forthcoming age. Virgil, in the fourth Eclogue, mentions the Metatron — a new offspring, with whom the *iron age* shall end and a *golden one* arise.

⁴ *Palestine, description géographique, historique et archéologique*, p. 517, *et seq.*

Dunlap, whose personal researches seem to have been quite successful in that direction, traces the Essenes, Nazarenes, Dositheans, and some other sects as having all existed before Christ:

They rejected pleasures, *despised riches, loved one another*, and more than other sects, [145] neglected wedlock, deeming the conquest of the passions to be virtuous.¹

The Essenes were Pythagoreans in all their doctrine and habits.

These are all virtues preached by Jesus; and if we are to take the gospels as a standard of truth, Christ was a metempsychosist or *re-incarnationist* — again like these same Essenes, whom we see were Pythagoreans in all their doctrine and habits. Iamblichus asserts that the Samian philosopher spent a certain time at Carmel with them.² In his discourses and sermons, Jesus always spoke in parables and used metaphors with his audience. This habit was again that of the Esseneans and the Nazarenes; the Galileans who dwelt in cities and villages were never known to use such allegorical language. Indeed, some of his disciples being Galileans as well as himself, felt even surprised to find him using with the people such a form of expression. “Why speakest thou unto them in parables?” they often inquired. “Because, it is given unto you to know the Mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given,” was the reply, which was that of an initiate.

Therefore, I speak unto them in parables; because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.³

Jesus expressed his thoughts in purely Pythagorean sentences.

Moreover, we find Jesus expressing his thoughts still clearer — and in sentences which are purely Pythagorean — when, during the *Sermon on the Mount*, he says:

Give ye not that which is sacred to the dogs,
Neither cast ye your pearls before swine;
For the swine will tread them under their feet
And the dogs will turn and rend you.

Professor A. Wilder, the editor of Taylor’s *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, observes

. . . a like disposition on the part of Jesus and Paul to classify their doctrines as esoteric and exoteric, “the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God” for the apostles, and “parables” for the multitude. “We speak wisdom,” says Paul, “among them that *are perfect*” (or initiated).⁴

¹ Samuel Fales Dunlap, *Söd, the Son of the Man*, p. xi

² Thomas Taylor, *Iamblichus’ Life of Pythagoras*, p. 10, London 1818. Munk derives the name of the *Iessæns* or Essenes from the Syriac *Asaya* — the healers, or physicians, thus showing their identity with the Egyptian Therapeutai. — *Palestine*, p. 515

³ *Matthew* xiii, 10-13

⁴ Page 47 in 4th ed.

The descent to Hades signified the inevitable fate of each soul to be united for a time with a terrestrial body. This union, a dark prospect for the soul to find itself imprisoned within the bleak tenement of a body, was considered by all the ancient philosophers, and even by the modern Buddhists, as a punishment.

In the Eleusinian and other Mysteries the participants were always divided into two classes, the *neophytes* and the *perfect*. The former were sometimes admitted to the preliminary initiation: the dramatic performance of Ceres, or the soul, descending to Hades.¹ But it was [146] given only to the “*perfect*” to enjoy and learn the Mysteries of the divine *Elysium*, the celestial abode of the blessed; this Elysium being unquestionably the same as the “Kingdom of Heaven.” To contradict or reject the above, would be merely to shut one’s eyes to the truth.

The narrative of the Apostle Paul, in his second *Epistle to the Corinthians*,² has struck several scholars, well versed in the descriptions of the mystical rites of the initiation given by some classics, as alluding most undoubtedly to the final *Epopteia*.³

I knew a certain man — *whether in body or outside of body*, I know not: God knoweth — who was rapt into Paradise, and heard things ineffable, *απορητα ρηματα*, *which it is not lawful for a man to repeat*.

These words have rarely, so far as we know, been regarded by commentators as an allusion to the beatific visions of an “*initiated*” seer. But the phraseology is unequivocal. These things “*which it is not lawful to repeat*,” are hinted at in the same words, and the reason for it assigned, is the same as that which we find repeatedly expressed by Plato, Proclus, Iamblichus, Herodotus, and other classics.

We speak WISDOM [only] among them who are PERFECT,
says Paul;⁴ the plain and undeniable translation of the sentence being:

We speak of the profounder (or final) esoteric doctrines of the Mysteries (which were denominated *wisdom*) only among them who are *initiated*.⁵

So in relation to the “man who was rapt into Paradise” — and who was evidently Paul himself⁶ — the Christian word Paradise having replaced that of Elysium. To complete the proof, we might recall the words of Plato, given elsewhere, which show that before an initiate could see the gods in their purest light, he had to become *liberated* from

¹ This descent to Hades signified the inevitable fate of each soul to be united for a time with a terrestrial body. This union, or dark prospect for the soul to find itself imprisoned within the dark tenement of a body, was considered by all the ancient philosophers, and is even by the modern Buddhists, as a punishment.

² xii, 2-4

³ Thomas Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88, in 4th ed.

⁴ [1 *Corinthians* ii, 6]

⁵ “The profound or esoteric doctrines of the ancients were denominated *wisdom*, and afterward *philosophy*, and also the *gnosis*, or knowledge. They related to the human soul, its divine parentage, its supposed degradation from its high estate by becoming connected with ‘generation’ or the physical world, its onward progress and restoration to God by regenerations or . . . transmigrations.” — Thomas Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32

⁶ Cyril of Jerusalem asserts it. See *Catechetical Lectures*, Oxford 1838, xiv, 26.

his body; *i.e.*, to separate his astral soul from it.¹ Apuleius also describes his initiation into the Mysteries in the same way:

I approached the confines of death; and, having trodden on the threshold of Proserpina, returned, having been carried through all the elements. In the depths of midnight I saw the sun glittering with a splendid light, together with *the infernal and supernal gods*, and to these divinities approaching, I paid the tribute of devout adoration.² [147]

In common with Pythagoras and other hierophant reformers, Jesus divided his teachings into exoteric and esoteric. He also divided his followers into “neophytes,” “brethren,” and the “perfect.”

Thus, in common with Pythagoras and other hierophant reformers, Jesus divided his teachings into exoteric and esoteric. Following faithfully the Pythagoreo-Essenean ways, he never sat at a meal without saying “grace.” “The priest prays before his meal,” says Josephus, describing the Essenes.³ Jesus also divided his followers into “neophytes,” “brethren,” and the “perfect,” if we may judge by the difference he made between them. But his career at least as a public Rabbi, was of a too short duration to allow him to establish a regular school of his own; and with the exception, perhaps, of John, it does not seem that he had initiated any other apostle. The Gnostic amulets and talismans are mostly the emblems of the apocalyptic allegories. The “seven vowels” are closely related to the “seven seals”; and the mystic title Abraxas, partakes as much of the composition of *Shem ha-Mephrorash*, “the holy word” or ineffable name,⁴ as the name called: The word of God, that “*no man knew but he himself*,”⁵ as John expresses it.

Apocalypse is the production of an initiated Kabbalist.

It would be difficult to escape from the well-adduced proofs that the *Apocalypse* is the production of an initiated Kabbalist, when this *Revelation* presents whole passages taken from the *Books of Enoch* and *Daniel*, which latter is in itself an abridged imitation of the former; and when, furthermore, we ascertain that the Ophite Gnostics who rejected the Old Testament entirely, as “emanating from an inferior being” (Jehovah), accepted the most ancient prophets, such as Enoch, and deduced the strongest support from this book for their religious tenets, the demonstration becomes evident. We will show further how closely related are all these doctrines. Besides, there is the history of Domitian’s persecutions of magicians and philosophers, which affords as good a proof as any that John was generally considered a Kabbalist. As the apostle was included among the number, and, moreover, conspicuous, the

¹ *Phædrus*, 250b-c

² Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, xi, 23; Thomas Taylor’s ed., p. 283

[Note 21 by Boris de Zirkoff: The original Latin of this passage from the *Metamorphoses*, XI, 23, is as follows:

Accessi confinium mortis et calcato Proserpinæ limine per omnia vectus elementa remeavi; nocte media vidi solem candido coruscantem lumine, deos inferos et deos superos accessi coram et adoravi de proximo.]

³ [*Jewish Wars*, lib. II, cap. viii, 5]

⁴ [Consult “The Ineffable Name,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁵ *Revelation* xix, 12

imperial edict banished him not only from Rome, but even from the continent. It was not the Christians whom — confounding them with the Jews, as some historians will have it — the emperor persecuted, but the astrologers and Kabbalists.¹

The accusations against Jesus of practicing the magic of Egypt were numerous and at one time universal. But we believe that it was the Sadducees and not the Pharisees who crucified him.

The accusations against Jesus of practicing the magic of Egypt were numerous, and at one time universal, in the towns where he was known. The Pharisees, as claimed in the *Bible*, had been the first to fling it in his [148] face, although Rabbi Wise considers Jesus himself a Pharisee. The *Talmud* certainly points to James the Just as one of that sect.² But these partisans are known to have always stoned every prophet who denounced their evil ways, and it is not on this fact that we base our assertion. These accused him of sorcery, and of driving out devils by Beelzebub, their prince, with as much justice as later the Catholic clergy had to accuse of the same more than one innocent martyr. But Justin Martyr states on better authority that the men of his time *who were not Jews* asserted that the miracles of Jesus were performed by magical art — *μαγικη φαντασια* — the very expression used by the sceptics of those days to designate the feats of thaumaturgy accomplished in the Pagan temples.

They even ventured to call him a magician and a deceiver of the people, complains the martyr.³ In the *Gospel of Nicodemus* (the *Acta Pilati*), the Jews bring the same accusation before Pilate.

Did we not tell thee he was a magician?⁴

Like Apuleius, Jesus was accused of witchcraft by the profane.

Celsus speaks of the same charge, and as a Neo-Platonist believes in it.⁵ The Talmudic literature is full of the most minute particulars, and their greatest accusation is that “Jesus could fly as easily in the air as others could walk.”⁶ St. Austin asserted that it was generally believed that he had been initiated in Egypt, and that he wrote books concerning magic, which he delivered to John. There was a work called *Magia Jesu Christi*, which was attributed to Jesus himself.⁷ In the *Clementine Recognitions*

¹ Suetonius, *Lives of the Ceasars*, “Domitian,” 3, 12, 14. It is neither cruelty, nor an insane indulgence in it, which shows this emperor in history as passing his time in catching flies and transpiercing them with a golden bodkin, but religious superstition. The Jewish astrologers had predicted to him that he had provoked the wrath of Beelzebub, the “Lord of the flies,” and would perish miserably through the revenge of the dark god of Ekron, and die like King Ahaziah, because he persecuted the Jews.

² We believe that it was the Sadducees and not the Pharisees who crucified Jesus. They were Zadokites — partisans of the house of Zadok, or the sacerdotal family. In the “Acts” the apostles were said to be persecuted by the Sadducees, but never by the Pharisees. In fact, the latter never persecuted any one. They had the scribes, rabbis, and learned men in their numbers, and were not, like the Sadducees, jealous of their order.

³ Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, lxix

⁴ *Gospel of Nicodemus* (also known as the *Acts of Pilate*) ii, 3, by William Hone and Johann Jakob Grynæus; the latter included a translation of Nicodemus’s Gospel in his collection of patristic literature entitled *Monumenia S. patrum orthodoxographa* (2-vols., fol., 1569.)

⁵ Origen of Alexandria, *Contra Celsum*, I, lxxviii; II, xlviiii, *et seq.*

⁶ *Talmud*: Yōhānān

⁷ Augustine of Hippo, *De consensu evangeliorum*, Bk. I, ch. ix; Johann Albert Fabricius, *Codex apocryphus novi testamenti*, 1703, 4-vols, I pp. 305 *et seq.*

the charge is brought against Jesus that he did not perform his miracles as a Jewish prophet, but as a magician, *i.e.*, an initiate of the “heathen” temples.¹

It was usual then, as it is now, among the intolerant clergy of opposing religions, as well as among the lower classes of society, and even among those patricians who, for various reasons had been excluded from any participation of the Mysteries, to accuse, sometimes, the highest hierophants and adepts of sorcery and black magic.

So Apuleius, who [149] had been initiated, was likewise accused of witchcraft, and of carrying about him the figure of a skeleton — a potent agent, as it is asserted, in the operations of the black art. But one of the best and most unquestionable proofs of our assertion may be found in the so-called *Museo Gregoriano*. On the sarcophagus, which is panelled with bas-reliefs representing the miracles of Christ, may be seen the full figure of Jesus, who, in the resurrection of Lazarus, appears beardless,

. . . and equipped with a wand in the received guise of a *necromancer* [?] whilst the corpse of Lazarus is swathed in bandages exactly as an Egyptian mummy.²

Had posterity been enabled to have several representations of Jesus executed during the first century when the figure, dress, and everyday habits of the Reformer were still fresh in the memory of his contemporaries, perhaps the Christian world would be more Christ-like.

Had posterity been enabled to have several such representations executed during the first century when the figure, dress, and everyday habits of the Reformer were still fresh in the memory of his contemporaries, perhaps the Christian world would be more Christ-like; the dozens of contradictory, groundless, and utterly meaningless speculations about the “Son of Man” would have been impossible; and humanity would now have but one religion and one God. It is this absence of all proof, the lack of the least positive clue about him whom Christianity has deified, that has caused the present state of perplexity. No pictures of Christ were possible until after the days of Constantine, when the Jewish element was nearly eliminated among the followers of the new religion. The Jews, apostles, and disciples, whom the Zoroastrians and the Pārsīs had inoculated with a holy horror of any form of images, would have considered it a sacrilegious blasphemy to represent in any way or shape their master. The only authorized image of Jesus, even in the days of Tertullian, was an allegorical representation of the “Good Shepherd,”³ which was no portrait, but the figure of a man with a jackal-head, like Anubis.⁴ On this gem, as seen in the collection of Gnostic amulets, the Good Shepherd bears upon his shoulders the lost lamb. He seems to have a human head upon his neck; but, as C.W. King⁵ correctly observes,

¹ I, lviii

² Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 145 (1st ed., London 1864); the author places this sarcophagus among the earliest productions of that art which later inundated the world with mosaics and engravings, representing the events and personages of the “New Testament.”

³ Tertullian, *De pudicitia*, vii, 1. See King, *op. cit.*, p. 144 (1st ed.)

⁴ C.W. King, *op. cit.*, p. 200 (1st ed.)

⁵ Author of *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, London 1864

. . . it only *seems* so to the uninitiated eye. . . On closer inspection, he becomes the double-headed Anubis, having one head human, the other a jackal's, whilst his girdle assumes the form of a serpent rearing aloft its crested head. . . This figure had two meanings: one obvious for the vulgar; the other mystical, and recognizable by the *initiated alone*. It was perhaps the signet of some chief [150] teacher or apostle.¹

This affords a fresh proof that the Gnostics and early *orthodox* (?) Christians were not so wide apart in their *secret doctrine*. King deduces from a quotation from Epiphanius, that even as late as 400 A.D. "it was considered an atrocious sin to attempt to represent the bodily appearance of Christ." Epiphanius² brings it as an idolatrous charge against the Carpocratians that:

. . . they kept painted portraits, and *even gold and silver images*, and in other materials, which they pretended to be portraits of Jesus, and made by Pilate after the likeness of Christ. . . These they keep in secret, along with Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, and setting them all up together, they worship and offer sacrifices unto them *after the Gentiles' fashion*.

What would the pious Epiphanius say were he to resuscitate and step into St. Peter's Cathedral at Rome! Ambrosius³ seems also very desperate at the idea that some persons fully credited the statement of Lampridius that Alexander Severus had in his private chapel an image of Christ among other great philosophers.⁴ He exclaims:

That the Pagans should have preserved the likeness of Christ but the disciples have neglected to do so, is a notion the mind shudders to entertain, much less to believe.



¹ This gem is in the collection of the author of *The Gnostics and their Remains*, etc. See p. 201 (1st. ed.), Plate I, fig. 8. p. 201.

² Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* (in 16C Latin translations known as *Adversus hæreses*) lib. I, tom. II, *Hær.* XXVII, vi

³ [Note 22 by Boris de Zirkoff: This Ambrosius should not be confused with the Church Father by that name. Theseus Ambrosius was Teseo Ambrogio, an Italian Orientalist born at Pavia in 1469, and who died there in 1540. He was one of the first Italians who devoted himself to Oriental studies. Pope Leo X encouraged him in this. He knew some eighteen languages, and must have been somewhat of a genius since early childhood. In the British Museum Catalogue he is listed under Albonisus (Theseus Ambrosius). He wrote a work, now very rare, entitled *Introductio in Chaldaicam linguam, Syriacam atque Armenicam et decem alias linguas*, Pavia 1539, 4to.

As to the statement of Ælius Lampridius concerning Alexander Severus as having in his chapel an image of Christ, it is actually not Lampridius himself who says so, but "a contemporary writer" whose name is not mentioned. See Chapter XXIX of Lampridius' account in *Scriptores Historiæ Augustæ*, Vol. II, Loeb Classical Series.]

⁴ [King, *The Gnostics*, etc., p. 144; p. 227 in 2nd ed., of 1887]

The civilized portion of the Pagans, who knew of Jesus and honoured him as a philosopher-adept, placed him on the same level with Pythagoras and Apollonius.

All this points undeniably to the fact that, except a handful of self-styled Christians who subsequently won the day, all the civilized portion of the Pagans who knew of Jesus honoured him as a philosopher, an *adept* whom they placed on the same level with Pythagoras and Apollonius. Whence such a veneration on their part for a man, were he simply, as represented by the Synoptics, a poor, unknown Jewish carpenter from Nazareth? As an incarnated God there is no single record of him on this earth capable of withstanding the critical examination of science; as one of the greatest reformers, an inveterate enemy of every theological dogmatism, a persecutor of bigotry, a teacher of one of the most sublime codes of ethics, Jesus is one of the grandest and most clearly-defined figures on the panorama of human history. His age may, with every day, be receding farther and farther back into the gloomy and hazy mists of the past; and his theology — based on human fancy and supported by untenable dogmas may — nay, must with every day lose more of its unmerited prestige; alone the grand figure of the philosopher and moral reformer instead of growing paler will become with every century more pronounced and more clearly defined. It will reign supreme and universal only on that day when the whole of humanity recognizes but one father — the UNKNOWN ONE above — and one brother — the whole of mankind below. [151]

If Jesus did wear his hair long, like Samson, parted in the middle of the forehead after the fashion of the Nazarenes, he must have belonged to the sect of the Nazarenes and been called Nazaria for this reason, and not because he was an inhabitant of Nazareth.

In a pretended letter of Lentulus, a senator and a distinguished historian, to the Roman senate, there is a description of the personal appearance of Jesus. The letter itself,¹ written in horrid Latin, is pronounced a bare-faced forgery; but we find therein an expression which suggests many thoughts. Albeit a forgery, it is evident that whoever invented it has nevertheless tried to follow tradition as closely as possible. The hair of Jesus is represented in it as “wavy and curling . . . flowing down upon his shoulders,” and as “*having a parting in the middle of the head after the fashion of the Nazarenes.*” This last sentence shows:

- 1 That there was such a tradition, based on the biblical description of John the Baptist, the *Nazaria*, and the custom of this sect.
- 2 Had Lentulus been the author of this letter, it is difficult to believe that Paul should never have heard of it; and had he known its contents, he would never have pronounced it a *shame* for men to wear their hair long,² thus shaming his Lord and Christ-God.

¹ [Grynæus, *Monumenta S. Patrum Orthodoxographa*, Vol. I, p. 2; Basileæ 1569. Cf. King, *The Gnostics*, etc., p. 69, in 1st ed. of 1864]

² *1 Corinthians xi*, 14

3 If Jesus did wear his hair long and “parted in the middle of the forehead, after the fashion of the Nazarenes” (as well as John, the only one of his apostles who followed it), then we have one good reason more to say that Jesus must have belonged to the sect of the Nazarenes, and been called NAZARIA for this reason and not because he was an inhabitant of Nazareth; for they never wore their hair long. The Nazarite, who *separated* himself unto the Lord, allowed “no razor to come upon his head.” “He shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow,” says *Numbers*.¹ Samson was a Nazarite, *i.e.*, vowed to the service of God, and in his hair was his strength. “No razor shall come upon his head; for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb.”²

But the final and most reasonable conclusion to be inferred from this is that Jesus, who was so opposed to all the orthodox Jewish practices, would *not* have allowed his hair to grow had he not belonged to this sect, which in the days of John the Baptist had already become a heresy in the eyes of the Sanhedrim. The *Talmud*, speaking of the Nazaria, or the Nazarenes (who had abandoned the world like Hindu yogis or hermits) calls them a sect of physicians, of wandering exorcists; as also does Jervis. “They went about the country, living on alms and performing cures.”³ Epiphanius says that the Nazarenes come next in heresy to the Corinthians whether having existed “before them or after them, nevertheless *synchronous*,” and then adds that “all Christians at that time were equally called *Nazarenes*”!⁴ [152]

In the very first remark made by Jesus about John the Baptist, we find him stating that he is “Elias, which was for to come.” This assertion, if it is not a later interpolation for the sake of having a prophecy fulfilled, means again that Jesus was a Kabbalist; unless indeed we have to adopt the doctrine of the French spiritists and suspect him of believing in reincarnation. Except the kabbalistic sects of the Essenes, the Nazarenes, the disciples of Shimon ben-Yohai, and Hillel, neither the orthodox Jews, nor the Galileans, believed or knew anything about the doctrine of *permutation*. And the Sadducees rejected even that of the resurrection.

“But the author of this *restitutio* was Mosah, our master, upon whom be peace! Who was the *revolutio* [transmigration] of Seth and Hebel, that he might cover the nudity of his Father Adam, to wit, *Primus*,” says the *Kabbalah*.⁵ Thus, Jesus hinting that John was the *revolutio*, or transmigration of Elias, seems to prove beyond any doubt the school to which he belonged.



¹ vi, 5

² *Judges* xiii, 5

³ Isaak Markus Jost, *The Israelite Indeed*,* Vol. II, p. 238; *Talmud, Mishnah Nazir*.

[*Consult his opus magnum, *Geschichte der Israeliten seit der Zeit der Maccabæer* (The History of the Israelites since Maccabean times), which was published in 9 volumes between 1820 and 1829.]

⁴ Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* (in 16C Latin translations known as *Adversus hæreses*), lib. I, tom. II, *Hær.* XXIX, i; XXX, i

⁵ *Kabbala denudata*, II, 155; also *Vallis Regia*, Paris edition.

Permutation, transmigration, metempsychosis.¹

Until the present day uninitiated Kabbalists and Masons believe permutation to be synonymous with transmigration and metempsychosis. But they are as much mistaken in regard to the doctrine of the true Kabbalists as to that of the Buddhists. True, the *Zohar* says in one place:

All souls are subject to transmigration . . . men do not know the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He; they do not know that they are brought before the tribunal, both before they enter this world and after they quit it.²

And the Pharisees also held this doctrine, as Josephus shows.³ Also the doctrine of *Gilgūlah*, held to the strange theory of the “Whirling of the Soul,” which taught that the bodies of Jews buried far away from the Holy Land, still preserve a particle of soul which can neither rest nor quit them, until it reaches the soil of the “Promised Land.” And this “whirling” process was thought to be accomplished by the soul being conveyed back through an actual evolution of species; transmigrating from the minutest insect up to the largest animal. But this was an *exoteric* doctrine. We refer the reader to the *Kabbala denudata* of Knorr von Rosenroth; his language, however obscure, may yet throw some light upon the subject.

The expression “Ye are gods,” which to biblical students is a mere abstraction, has for the Kabbalists a vital significance.

But this doctrine of permutation, or *revolutio*, must not be understood as a belief in reincarnation. That Moses was considered the transmigration of Abel and Seth, does not imply that the Kabbalists — those who were *initiated* at least — believed that the identical spirit of either of Adam’s sons reappeared under the corporeal form of Moses. It only shows what was the mode of expression they used when hinting at one of the profoundest mysteries of the Oriental Gnosis, one of the most majestic articles [153] of faith of the Secret Wisdom. It was purposely veiled so as to half-conceal and half-reveal the truth. It implied that Moses, like certain other god-like men, was believed to have reached the highest of all states on earth — the rarest of all psychological phenomena — the perfect union of the immortal spirit with the terrestrial *duad* had occurred. The trinity was complete. A *god* was incarnate. But how rare [are] such incarnations!



¹ [Consult “Transmigration, Reincarnation, Gilgulim,” in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [*Zohar*, II, p. 99b; Amsterdam edition]

³ Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, i, 3

That expression, “Ye are gods,”¹ which, to our biblical students, is a mere abstraction, has for the Kabbalists a vital significance. Each immortal spirit that sheds its radiance upon a human being is a god — the Microcosmos of the Macrocosmos, part and parcel of the Unknown God, the First Cause of which it is a direct emanation. It is possessed of all the attributes of its parent source. Among these attributes are omniscience and omnipotence. Endowed with these, but yet unable to fully manifest them while in the body, during which time they are obscured, veiled, limited by the capabilities of physical nature, the thus divinely-inhabited man may tower far above his kind, evince a god-like wisdom, and display deific powers; for while the rest of mortals around him are but *overshadowed* by their divine SELF, with every chance given to them to become immortal hereafter, but no other security than their personal efforts to win the kingdom of heaven, the so chosen man has already become an immortal while yet on earth. His prize is secured. Henceforth he will live forever in eternal life. Not only he may have “dominion”² over all the works of creation by employing the “excellence” of the NAME (the ineffable one)³ but be higher in this life, not, as Paul is made to say, “a little lower than the angels.”⁴

The disembodied spirits of the heroes and sages were termed gods by the ancients. Hence, the accusation of polytheism and idolatry on the part of those who were the first to anthropomorphize the holiest and purest abstractions of their forefathers.

The ancients never entertained the sacrilegious thought that such perfected entities were incarnations of the One Supreme and forever invisible God. No such profanation of the awful Majesty entered into their conceptions. Moses and his antetypes and types were to them but complete men, gods on earth, for their *gods* (divine spirits) had entered unto their hallowed tabernacles, the purified physical bodies. The disembodied spirits of the heroes and sages were termed gods by the ancients. Hence, the accusation of polytheism and idolatry on the part of those who were the first to anthropomorphize the holiest and purest abstractions of their forefathers.

[154]

The hierophants of the Tannaïm could prove the legitimacy of their claims and the plausibility of their doctrines, whereas now, believers must be content with blind faith.

The real and hidden sense of this doctrine was known to all the initiates. The Tannaïm imparted it to their elect ones, the Ozarim, in the solemn solitudes of crypts and deserted places. It was one of the most esoteric and jealously guarded, for human nature was the same then as it is now, and the sacerdotal caste as confident as now in the supremacy of its knowledge, and ambitious of ascendancy over the weak-

¹ [Potentially]

² *Psalms* viii, 6

³ [Consult “The Ineffable Name,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁴ This contradiction, which is attributed to Paul in *Hebrews*, by making him say of Jesus in chapter i, 4: “Being made *so much better* than the angels,” and then immediately stating in chapter ii, 9: “But we see Jesus, who was made *a little lower* than the angels,” shows how unscrupulously the writings of the apostles, if they ever wrote any, were tampered with.

er masses; with the difference perhaps that its hierophants could prove the legitimacy of their claims and the plausibility of their doctrines, whereas now, *believers* must be content with blind faith.

While the Kabbalists called this mysterious and rare occurrence of the union of spirit with the mortal charge entrusted to its care, the “descent of the Angel Gabriel” (the latter being a kind of generic name for it), the *Messenger of Life*, and the angel Metatron;¹ and while the Nazarenes termed the same *Hibil-Ziwa*,² the *Legatus* sent by the Lord of Celsitude, it was universally known as the “Anointed Spirit.”

Thus it is the acceptance of this doctrine which caused the Gnostics to maintain that Jesus was a man overshadowed by the Christos or Messenger of Life, and that his despairing cry from the cross “*Eloi, Eloi, lama shābahtani*,” was wrung from him at the instant when he felt that this inspiring Presence had finally abandoned him, for — as some affirmed — his faith *had* also abandoned him when on the cross.

The early Nazarenes, who must be numbered among the Gnostic sects, believing that Jesus was a prophet, held, nevertheless, in relation to him the same doctrine of the divine “overshadowing,” of certain “men of God,” sent for the salvation of nations, and to recall them to the path of righteousness.

The Divine mind is eternal, and it is pure light, and poured out through splendid *and immense space* (plērōma). It is Genetrix of the Aiōns. But one of them went to Matter [chaos] stirring up confused (*turbulentos*) movements; and by a certain portion of *heavenly* light fashioned it, properly constituted for use and appearance, but the beginning of every evil. The Demiurge [of matter] claimed divine honour.³ Therefore Christos (“the anointed”), the prince of the Aiōns (powers),⁴ was sent (*expeditus*), who *taking on the person* of a most devout Jew (Iesu), *was to conquer him*; but who having *laid it* [the body] *aside*, departed on high.⁵



¹ [Metatron is the Angel of the Jewish Kabbalists, the mediator between spirit and matter, or god and man. Cf.

“Among other absurdities, the Kabbalists maintain that the word metatron being divided into *meta* and *θρονος*, means *near the throne*. It means quite the reverse, as *meta* means “beyond” and not “near.” *Secret Doctrine*, II, p. 479]

² Matthias Norberg, *Codex Nazaræus*. Full title: *Lexidion codicis Nasaræi, cui liber Adami nomen* (1816) [with] *Onomasticon codicis Nasaræi, cui liber Adami nomen* (1827) 2-vols, I, p. 23

³ *ibid.*, Norberg’s Preface, pp. iv, v

⁴ [*i.e.*, emanations. Cf. “Emanation and Radiation,” in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁵ “According to the Nazarenes and Gnostics, the Demiurge, the creator of the material world, is not the highest God.” (See S.F. Dunlap, *Sōd, the Son of the Man*.)

The full significance of Christos and its mystic meaning revealed.

It was Ephesus, with her numerous collateral branches of the great college of the Essenes, which proved to be the hotbed of all the kabbalistic speculations brought by the Tannaïm from the captivity.

We will explain further on the full significance of the name Christos and its mystic meaning.¹

And now, in order to make such passages as the above more intelligible, we will endeavour to define, as briefly as possible, the dogmas in [155] which, with very trifling differences, nearly all the Gnostic sects believed. It is in Ephesus that flourished in those days the greatest college, wherein the abstruse Oriental speculations and the Platonic philosophy were taught in conjunction. It was a focus of the universal “secret” doctrines; the weird laboratory whence, fashioned in elegant Grecian phraseology, sprang the quintessence of Buddhistic, Zoroastrian, and Chaldæan philosophy. Artemis, the gigantic concrete symbol of theosophico-pantheistic abstractions, the great mother Multimamma, androgyne and patroness of the “Ephesian writings,” was conquered by Paul; but although the zealous converts of the apostles pretended to burn all their books on “curious arts,” *τα περιεργα*, enough of these remained for them to study when their first zeal had cooled off. It is from Ephesus that spread nearly all the *Gnosis* which antagonized so fiercely with the Irenæan dogmas; and still it was Ephesus, with her numerous collateral branches of the great college of the Essenes, which proved to be the hotbed of all the kabbalistic speculations brought by the Tannaïm from the captivity. Says J. Matter:

In Ephesus, the notions of the Jewish-Egyptian school, and the semi-Persian speculations of the Kabbalists had then recently come to swell the vast conflux of Grecian and Asiatic doctrines, so there is no wonder that teachers should have sprung up there who strove to combine the religion newly preached by the Apostle with the ideas there so long established.²

Had not the Christians burdened themselves with the *Revelations* of a little nation, and accepted the Jehovah of Moses, the Gnostic ideas would never have been termed *heresies*; once relieved of their dogmatic exaggerations, the world would have had a religious system based on pure Platonic philosophy, and surely something would then have been gained.

Now let us see what are the greatest *heresies* of the Gnostics. We will select Basilides as the standard for our comparisons, for all the founders of other Gnostic sects group round him, like a cluster of stars borrowing light from their sun.

¹ [Consult “Blavatsky on the Trials and Triumph of Initiation,” “Jesus Ben Pandira, the historical Christ,” and “The real Christ is Buddhi-Manas, the glorified Divine Ego,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 3; (p. 7 in 2nd edition)]

Basilides, the bright sun of Gnosticism, on Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis.

Basilides maintained that he had all his doctrines from the Apostle Matthew, and from Peter through Glaucias, the disciple of the latter.¹ According to Eusebius,² he published twenty-four volumes of *Interpretations upon the Gospels*,³ all of which were burned, a fact which makes us suppose that they contained more truthful matter than the school of Irenæus was prepared to deny. [156] He asserted that the unknown, eternal, and uncreated Father having first brought forth *Nous*, or Mind, the latter emanated from itself — the *Logos*. The *Logos* (the “Word” of John) emanated in its turn *Phronēsis*, or the Intelligences (Divine-human spirits). From *Phronēsis* sprung *Sophia*, or feminine wisdom, and *Dynamis* — strength.⁴ These were the personified attributes of the Mysterious godhead, the Gnostic quinternion, typifying the five spiritual, but intelligible substances, personal virtues or beings external to the unknown godhead. This is pre-eminently a kabbalistic idea. It is still more Buddhistic. The earliest system of the Buddhistic philosophy — which preceded by far Gautama Buddha — is based upon the uncreated substance of the “Unknown,” the Ādi-Buddha.⁵ This eternal, infinite Monad⁶ possesses, as proper to his own essence, five acts of wisdom. From these it, by five separate acts of Dhyāna, emitted five Dhyāni-Buddhas; these, like Ādi-Buddha, are quiescent in their system (passive). Neither Ādi, nor either of the five Dhyāni-Buddhas, were ever incarnated, but seven of their emanations became Avatāras, *i.e.*, were incarnated on this earth. [157]

¹ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, VII, xvii. [Cf. Hippolytus, *Philosophumena*, VII, § 20]

² *Ecclesiastical History*, IV, vii

³ The gospels interpreted by Basilides were not our present gospels, which, as it is proved by the greatest authorities [W.R. Cassels], were not in his days in existence. See *Supernatural Religion*, Vol. II, ch. vi, “Basilides.”

⁴ [Irenæus, *Adversus hæreses*, I, xxiv, 3]

⁵ The five make mystically ten. They are androgynes. “Having divided big body in two parts, the Supreme Wisdom became male and female” (*Manu*, Book I, śloka 32). There are many early Buddhistic ideas to be found in Brahmanism.

The prevalent idea that the last of the Buddhas, Gautama, is the ninth incarnation of Vishnu, or the *ninth* Avatāra, is disclaimed partially by the Brahmans, and wholly rejected by the learned Buddhist theologians. The latter insist that the worship of Buddha possesses a far higher claim to antiquity than any of the Brāhmanical deities of the *Vedas*, which they call secular literature. The Brahmans, they show, came from other countries, and established their heresy on the already accepted popular *deities*. They conquered the land by the sword, and succeeded in burying truth, by building a theology of their own on the ruins of the more ancient one of Buddha, which had prevailed for ages. They admit the divinity and spiritual existence of some of the Vedāntic gods; but as in the case of the Christian angel-hierarchy they believe that all these deities are greatly subordinate, even to the incarnated Buddhas. They do not even acknowledge the creation of the physical universe. Spiritually and *invisibly* it has existed from all eternity, and thus it was made merely visible to the human senses. When it first appeared it was called forth from the realm of the invisible into the visible by the impulse of Ādi Buddha — the “Essence.” They reckon twenty-two such visible appearances of the universe governed by Buddhas, and as many destructions of it, by fire and water in regular successions. After the last destruction by the flood, at the end of the precedent cycle (the exact calculation, embracing several millions of years, is a secret cycle) the world, during the present age of the Kali-Yuga — *Mahā-Bhadda-Kalpa* — has been ruled successively by four Buddhas, the last of whom was Gautama, the “Holy One.” The fifth, Maitreya-Buddha, is yet to come. This latter is the expected kabbalistic King Messiah, the Messenger of Light, and Saoshyant, the Persian Saviour, who will come on a *white* horse. It is also the Christian Second Advent. See *Apocalypse* of St. John.

[Consult “Kali-Yuga and the Kalki-Avatara,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁶ [Note to Students: Monad (*μοναδα*, in Greek) is the accusative case of *μονα*. However, as the term is here used in the nominative case (*μονα*), *i.e.*, the subject of the verb, it should be transliterated as monas (*pl.* monases), *i.e.*, the object of the verb, and not as monad (*pl.* monads). The same grammatical rule applies to duad, triad, tetrad, pentad, hexad, heptad, ogdoad, hebdomad, decad, etc. — ED. PHIL.]

Gnosticism is highly reverential toward deity.

Describing the Basilidean system, Irenæus, quoting the Gnostics, declares as follows:

When the uncreated, *unnamed* Father saw the corruption of mankind, he sent his first-born *Nous*, into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in him, out of the power of those who fabricated the world [the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii]. He appeared amongst men as the man, Jesus, and wrought miracles. This Christ did *not die* in person, but Simon the Cyrenian suffered in his stead, *to whom he lent his bodily form*; for the Divine Power, the *Nous* of the Eternal Father, *is not corporeal, and cannot die*. Whoso, therefore, maintains that Christ has died, is still the bondsman of ignorance; whoso denies the same, he is free, and hath understood the purpose of the Father.¹

So far, and taken in its abstract sense, we do not see anything blasphemous in this system. It may be a *heresy* against the theology of Irenæus and Tertullian,² but there is certainly nothing sacrilegious against the religious idea itself, and it will seem to every impartial thinker far more consistent with divine reverence than the anthropomorphism of actual Christianity. The Gnostics were called by the orthodox Christians, *Docetæ*, or Illusionists, for believing that Christ did not, nor could, suffer death actually — in physical body. The later Brāhmanical books contain, likewise, much that is repugnant to the reverential feeling and idea of the Divinity; and as well as the Gnostics, the Brahmans explain such legends as may shock the divine dignity of the Spiritual beings called gods by attributing them to *Māyā* or illusion.

We all live under the powerful dominion of phantasy. Everything that is finite is illusion, all that which is infinite is reality, and the only reality.

A people brought up and nurtured for countless ages among all the psychological phenomena of which the civilized (!) nations read, but reject as incredible and worthless, cannot well expect to have its religious system even understood — let alone appreciated. The profoundest and most transcendental speculations of the ancient metaphysicians of India and other countries, are all based on that great Buddhistic and Brāhmanical principle underlying the whole of their religious metaphysics — *illusion* of the senses. Everything that is finite is illusion, all that which is eternal and infinite is reality. Form, colour, that which we hear and feel, or see with our mortal eyes, exists only so far as it can be conveyed to each of us through our senses. The universe for a man born blind does not exist in either form or colour, but it exists in its *privation* (in the Aristotelean sense), and is a reality for the spiritual senses [158] of the blind man. We all live under the powerful dominion of phantasy. Alone the highest and invisible *originals* emanated from the thought of the Unknown are real and permanent beings, forms, and ideas; on earth, we see but their reflections, more or less correct, and ever dependent on the physical and mental organization of the person who beholds them.

¹ Irenæus, *Adversus hæreses*, I, xxiv, 4

² Tertullian reversed the table himself by rejecting, later in life, the doctrines for which he fought with such an acerbity and by becoming a Montanist.

Ages untold before our era, the Hindu Mystic Kapila, who is considered by many scientists as a sceptic, because they judge him with their habitual superficiality, magnificently expressed this idea in the following terms:

Man [physical man] counts for so little, that hardly anything can demonstrate to him his proper existence and that of nature. Perhaps, that which we regard as the universe, and the divers beings which seem to compose it, have nothing real, and are but the product of continued illusion — *māyā* — of our senses.

Nature, then, is the infinite illusion of our senses.

And the modern Schopenhauer, repeating this philosophical idea, 10,000 years old now, says:

Nature is non-existent, *per se*. . . . Nature is the infinite illusion of our senses.

Christos suffered spiritually for us, and far more acutely than did the illusionary Jesus while his body was being tortured on the cross.

Kant, Schelling, and other metaphysicians have said the same, and their school maintains the idea. The objects of sense being ever delusive and fluctuating, cannot be a reality. Spirit alone is unchangeable, hence — alone is no illusion. This is pure Buddhist doctrine. The religion of the *Gnosis* (knowledge), the most evident offshoot of Buddhism, was utterly based on this metaphysical tenet. Christos suffered *spiritually* for us, and far more acutely than did the illusionary Jesus while his body was being tortured on the Cross.

In the ideas of the Christians, Christ is but another name for Jesus. The philosophy of the Gnostics, the initiates and hierophants understood, it otherwise. The word Christos, *Χριστος*, like all Greek words, must be sought in its philological origin — the Sanskrit. In this latter language *Kris* means sacred,¹ and the Hindu deity was named Kris-na (the pure or the sacred) from that. On the other hand, the Greek *Christos* bears several meanings, as anointed (pure oil, *chrism*) and others. In all languages, though the synonym of the word means pure or sacred essence, it is the first emanation of the invisible Godhead, manifesting itself tangibly in spirit. The Greek Logos, the Hebrew Messiah, the [159] Latin Verbum, and the Hindu Virāj (the son) are identically the same; they represent an idea of collective entities — of flames detached from the one eternal centre of light.



¹ In his debate with Jaccoliot upon the right spelling of the Hindu Khrishna, Mr. Textor de Ravisi, an ultramontane Catholic, tries to prove that the name of Christna ought to be written Krishna, for, as the latter means black, and the statues of this deity are generally black, the word is derived from the colour. We refer the reader to Jaccoliot's answer in his recent work, *Christna et le Christ*, for the conclusive evidence that the name is not derived from the colour.

[Note 23 by Boris de Zirkoff: There seems to be an error here. There is no authority known for kris meaning "sacred." It may be due to some confusion on Jaccoliot's part. Krishna means black, dark, dark-blue, and it is the accepted form of the name of one of the avatāras of Vishnu. *Krishna-paksha* is the term used for the dark half of the month, during which the moon is on the wane.]

The man who accomplishes pious but interested acts [with the sole object of his salvation] may reach the ranks of the *devas* [saints];¹ but he who accomplishes, disinterestedly, the same pious acts, finds himself ridden forever of the five elements” [of matter].

Perceiving the Supreme Soul in all beings and all beings in the Supreme Soul, in offering his own soul in sacrifice, he identifies himself with the Being who shines in his own splendour.²

Hence, the meaning of the Gnostics who, by saying that “Christos” suffered spiritually for humanity, implied that his Divine Spirit suffered mostly.

Thus, Christos, as a unity, is but an abstraction: a general idea representing the collective aggregation of the numberless spirit-entities, which are the direct emanations of the infinite, invisible, incomprehensible FIRST CAUSE — the individual spirits of men, erroneously called the souls. They are the divine sons of God, of which some only overshadow mortal men — but this the majority; some remain forever planetary spirits, and some — the smaller and rare minority — unite themselves during life with some men. Such God-like beings as Gautama Buddha, Jesus, Lao-Tse, Krishna, and a few others had united themselves with their spirits permanently — hence, they became gods on earth. Others, such as Moses, Pythagoras, Apollonius, Plotinus, Confucius, Plato, Iamblichus, and some Christian saints, having at intervals been so united, have taken rank in history as demi-gods and leaders of mankind. When unburdened of their terrestrial tabernacles, their freed souls, henceforth united forever with their spirits, rejoin the whole shining host, which is bound together in one spiritual solidarity of thought and deed, and called “the anointed.” Hence, the meaning of the Gnostics, who, by saying that “Christos” suffered spiritually for humanity, implied that his Divine Spirit suffered mostly.

The ideas of Marcion, the noble Heresiarch.

His high and irreproachable character, his pure religious aspirations and elevated views, were vilified by the Patristic Cerberus.

Such, and far more elevating, were the ideas of Marcion, the great “Heresiarch” of the second century, as he is termed by his opponents. He came to Rome toward the latter part of the half-century, from A.D. 139-142, according to Tertullian, Irenæus, Clement, and most of his modern commentators, such as Bunsen, Tischendorf, Westcott, and many others. Credner and Schleiermacher³ agree as to his high and irreproachable personal character, his pure religious aspirations and elevated views.

¹ There is no equivalent for the word “miracle,” in the Christian sense, among the Brahmins or Buddhists. The only correct translation would be *meipo*, a wonder, something remarkable; but not a violation of natural law. The “saints” only produce *meipo*.

² *Manu*, Bk. XII, śloka 90, 91

³ Carl August Credner, *Beiträge zur Einleitung in die biblischen Schriften*, I, p. 40; Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Sämtliche Werke*, VIII; *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, p. 64; ed. 1845

His influence must have been powerful, as we find [160] Epiphanius writing more than two centuries later that in his time the followers of Marcion were to be found throughout the whole world.¹

The danger must have been pressing and great indeed, if we are to judge it to have been proportioned with the opprobrious epithets and vituperation heaped upon Marcion by the “Great African,” that Patristic Cerberus, whom we find ever barking at the door of the Irenæan dogmas. We have but to open his celebrated refutation of Marcion’s *Antitheses*, to acquaint ourselves with the *fine-fleur* of monkish abuse of the Christian school; an abuse so faithfully carried through the middle ages, to be renewed again in our present day — at the Vatican.

Now, then, ye hounds, yelping at the God of Truth, whom the Apostle casts out, to all your questions. These are the bones of contention which ye gnaw . . .²

Remarks the author of *Supernatural Religion*:

The poverty of the “Great African’s” arguments keeps pace with his abuse.³

Their [the Father’s] religious controversy bristles with mis-statements, and is turbid with pious abuse. Tertullian was a master of this style, and the vehement vituperation with which he opens and often interlards his work against “the impious and sacrilegious Marcion,” offers anything but a guarantee of fair and legitimate criticism.⁴

Tertullian and Epiphanius vehemently reproach Marcion by erasing passages from the Gospel of Luke, which never were in Luke at all.

How firm these two Fathers — Tertullian and Epiphanius — were on their theological ground, may be inferred from the curious fact that they intemperately both vehemently reproach “the beast” (Marcion) “with erasing passages from the *Gospel of Luke*, which never were in *Luke* at all.”⁵ Adds the critic:

The lightness and inaccuracy with which Tertullian proceeds, are all the better illustrated by the fact that not only does he accuse Marcion falsely, but *he actually defines the motives* for which he expunged a passage *which never existed*, for in the same chapter he also similarly accuses Marcion of erasing [from *Luke*] the saying that Christ had not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them, and he actually repeats the charge on two other occasions.⁶ Epiphanius commits the same mistake of reproaching Marcion with omitting from *Luke* what is only found in *Matthew*.⁷

¹ Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* (6C Latin translations are known as *Adversus hæreses*), lib. I, tom. III, *Hæer.* XLII, i

² Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, II, v

³ Vol. II, Part II, vii, p. 105

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 89

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 100

⁶ Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, IV, ix; IV, xxxvi; *Matthew* v, 17

⁷ Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* (in 16C Latin translations known as *Adversus hæreses*), *Hæer.* XLII

What the Fathers fought for was not truth, but their own interpretations and unwarranted assertions.

Having so far shown the amount of reliance to be placed in the Patristic literature, and it being unanimously conceded by the great majority of biblical critics that what the Fathers fought for was not *truth*, but their own interpretations and unwarranted assertions,¹ we will now [161] proceed to state what were the views of Marcion, whom Tertullian desired to annihilate as the most dangerous *heretic* of his day. If we are to believe Hilgenfeld, one of the greatest German biblical critics, then:

From the critical standing-point one must . . . consider the statements of the Fathers of the Church only as expressions of their *subjective view*, which itself requires proof.²

In the days of Marcion two factions divided the primitive Church: The one considering Christianity a mere continuation of the Law, and dwarfing it into an Israelitish institution, a narrow sect of Judaism; the other, representing the glad tidings as the introduction of a new system, applicable to all, and supplanting the Mosaic dispensation of the Law by a universal dispensation of grace.

We can do no better nor make a more correct statement of facts concerning Marcion than by quoting what our space permits from *Supernatural Religion*, the author of which bases his assertions on the evidence of the greatest critics, as well as on his own researches. He shows in the days of Marcion “two broad parties in the primitive Church” — one considering Christianity “a mere continuation of the law, and dwarfing it into an Israelitish institution, a narrow sect of Judaism”; the other representing the glad tidings “as the introduction of a new system, applicable to all, and supplanting the Mosaic dispensation of the law by a universal dispensation of grace.” These two parties, he adds, “were popularly represented in the early Church, by the two apostles Peter and Paul, and their antagonism is faintly revealed in the *Epistle to the Galatians*.”³ [162]

¹ The author of *Supernatural Religion* (Vol. II, Pt. II, vii, p. 103) remarks with great justice of the “Heresiarch” Marcion, “whose high personal character exerted so powerful an influence upon his own time,” that

. . . it was the misfortune of Marcion to live in an age when Christianity had passed out of the pure morality of its infancy; when, untroubled by complicated questions of dogma, simple faith and pious enthusiasm had been the one great bond of Christian brotherhood, into a phase of ecclesiastical development in which religion was fast degenerating into theology, and complicated doctrines were rapidly assuming that rampant attitude which led to so much bitterness, persecution, and schism. In later times Marcion might have been honoured as a reformer, in his own he was denounced as a heretic. Austere and ascetic in his opinions, he aimed at superhuman purity, and, although his clerical adversaries might scoff at his impracticable doctrines regarding marriage and the subjugation of the flesh, they have had their parallels amongst those whom the Church has since most delighted to honour; and, at least, the whole tendency of his system was markedly towards the side of virtue.

These statements are based upon Credner’s *Beiträge*, etc., I, p. 40; cf. August Neander, *Allgemeine Geschichte der christlichen Religion und Kirche*, II, pp. 792, 815 *et seq.*; Henry Hart Milman, *History of Christianity to the Abolition of Paganism in the Roman Empire*, pp. 77 *et seq.* (1867); Friedrich Schleiermacher, etc., etc.

² Adolf Hilgenfeld, *Kritische Untersuchungen über die Evangelien Justin’s, der clementinischen Homilien und Marcion’s, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der ältesten Evangelien-Literatur*, p. 445

³ [Vol. II, p. 104] But, on the other hand, this antagonism is very *strongly* marked in the *Clementine Homilies*, in which Peter unequivocally denies that Paul, whom he calls Simon the Magician, has ever had a *vision* of Christ, and calls him “an enemy.” Canon Westcott says: “There can be no doubt that St. Paul is referred to as ‘the enemy’” (*A general survey of the history of the canon of the New Testament*, p. 252, note 2; *Supernatural Religion*, Vol. II, p. 35). But this antagonism, which rages unto the present day, we find even in St. Paul’s *Epistles*. What can be more energetic than such like sentences: —

Marcion, who recognised no other *Gospels* than a few *Epistles of Paul*, who rejected totally the anthropomorphism of the Old Testament, and drew a distinct line of demarcation between the old Judaism and Christianity, viewed Jesus neither as a King, Messiah of the Jews, nor the son of David, who was in any way connected with the law or prophets,

. . . but, a divine being sent to reveal to man a wholly new spiritual religion, and a hitherto unknown God of goodness and grace.

Marcion maintained that the mission of Jesus was to abrogate the Jewish “Lord,” who was opposed to the God and Father of Jesus Christ as matter is to spirit, and impurity to purity.

The “Lord God” of the Jews in his eyes, the Creator (Demiourgos), was totally different and distinct from the Deity who sent Jesus to reveal the divine truth and preach the glad tidings, to bring reconciliation and salvation to all. [163] The mission of Jesus — according to Marcion — was to abrogate the Jewish “Lord,” who “was opposed to the God and Father of Jesus Christ as *matter is to Spirit, impurity to purity.*”¹

“Such are *false* apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. . . . I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles” (2 *Corinthians* xi, 13, 5). “Paul, an apostle *not of men*, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ *and* God the Father, who raised him from the dead . . . but there be some that trouble you, and *would pervert* the Gospel of Christ . . . *false brethren*. . . . When Peter was come to Antioch I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, *he did eat* with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew . . . fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled . . . insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their *dissimulation*,” etc., etc. (*Galatians* i, 7; ii, 11-13)

On the other hand, we find Peter in the *Homilies*, indulging in various complaints which, although alleged to be addressed to Simon Magus, are evidently all direct answers to the above-quoted sentences from the Pauline *Epistles*, and *cannot* have anything to do with Simon. So, for instance, Peter said:

“For some among the Gentiles have rejected my lawful preaching, and accepted certain *lawless* and *foolish* teaching of the hostile man [enemy].” (*Epistle of Peter to James*, § 2)

He says further:

“Simon [Paul] . . . who came before me to the Gentiles . . . and [I] have followed him as light upon darkness, as knowledge upon ignorance, as health upon disease.” (*Homilies*, ii, 17)

Still further, he calls him *Death* and a *deceiver* (*ibid.*, ii, 18). He warns the Gentiles that

“ . . . our Lord and *Prophet* [?] [*Jesus*] announced that the evil one he would send from among his followers apostles to *deceive*. Therefore, above all remember to avoid every apostle, or teacher, or prophet, who first does not accurately compare his teaching with that of James, called the brother of my Lord” [see the difference between Paul and James on *faith*, *Epistle to Hebrews* xi, xii, and *Epistle of James*, ii]. “Lest this evil one should send a false preacher . . . as he has sent to us Simon [?] preaching a counterfeit of truth in the name of our Lord and disseminating error.” (*Homilies*, xi, 35; see above quotation from *Galatians* ii, 11-13)

He then denies Paul’s assertion, in the following words:

“If, therefore, our Jesus indeed was seen in a vision . . . it was only as one angry with an adversary . . . But can anyone through a vision become wise to teach? And if you sayest: ‘It is possible,’ then wherefore did the Teacher remain and discourse for a whole year to us who are awake? And how can *we believe thy story that he was seen by thee?* And how could he have been seen by thee when thy thoughts are contrary to his teaching? . . . For thou hast directly withstood me who am a *firm rock, the foundation of the Church*. If thou hadst not been an adversary thou wouldst not have calumniated me, thou wouldst not have reviled my teaching [circumcision?] in order that, when declaring what I have myself heard from the Lord, I might not be believed, as though *I were condemned* . . . If thou callest me condemned, thou speakest against God who revealed Christ to me.” [*Homilies*, xvii, 19]

“This last phrase,” observes the author of *Supernatural Religion* [Vol. II, p. 37], “if thou callest me condemned,” is an evident allusion to *Galatians* ii, 11:

‘I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.’”

“There cannot be a doubt,” adds the just-quoted author [W.R. Cassels], “that the Apostle Paul is attacked in it, as the great enemy of the true faith, under the hated name of Simon the Magician, whom Peter follows everywhere for the purpose of unmasking and confuting him.” (p. 34) And if so, then we must believe that it was St. Paul who broke both his legs in Rome when flying in the air.

¹ [*Supernatural Religion*, Vol. II, ch. vii, p. 104]

In what particular does the jealous, wrathful, revengeful God of Israel resemble the unknown deity, the God of mercy preached by Jesus?

Was Marcion so far wrong? Was it blasphemy, or was it intuition, divine inspiration in him to express that which every honest heart yearning for truth, more or less feels and acknowledges? If in his sincere desire to establish a purely spiritual religion, a universal faith based on unadulterated truth, he found it necessary to make of Christianity an entirely new and separate system from that of Judaism, did not Marcion have the very words of Christ for his authority?

No man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment . . . for the rent is made worse. . . . Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish; but *they put new wine into new bottles*, and both are preserved.¹

The “Father who is in secret”² alone is the God of spirit and purity. To compare Him with the subordinate and capricious Sinaitic Deity is an error.

- In what particular does the jealous, wrathful, revengeful God of Israel resemble the unknown deity, the God of mercy preached by Jesus — *his* Father who is in Heaven, and the Father of all humanity?
- This Father alone is the God of spirit and purity, and, to compare Him with the subordinate and capricious Sinaitic Deity is an error. Did Jesus ever pronounce the name of Jehovah?
- Did he ever place *his* Father in contrast with this severe and cruel Judge; his God of mercy, love, and justice, with the Jewish genius of retaliation? Never!



¹ [Matthew ix, 16-17]

² [Matthew vi, 6. There is a great difference between the “Father who is in Secret” of Matthew and the “Father in Heaven” of the Churches. See drawing overleaf. — ED. PHIL.]

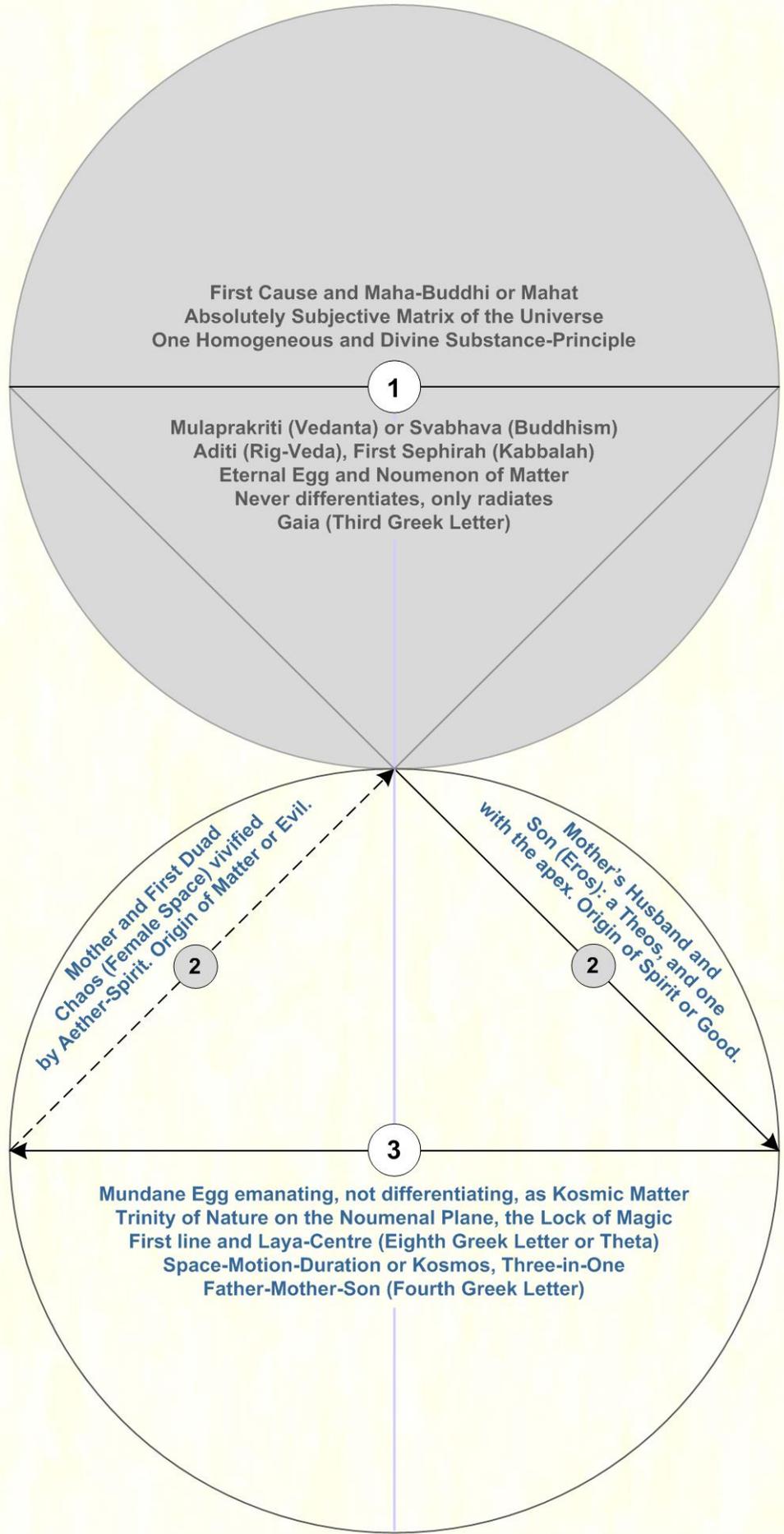
**First Triangle in the Manifested World
Dawn of Chaos–Theos–Kosmos**

“Father in Heaven” of the Churches
A reflection of the Monad in
the Universe of Illusion.
Horus the Younger



**Chaos–Theos–Kosmos in Pralaya
Unity of First Logos and Hidden Deity**

“Father who is in Secret” of Matthew
Uncreated Pythagorean Monad,
a radiation of Parabrahman.
Horus the Elder



DAWN OF CHAOS–THEOS–KOSMOS

Accompanying Proposition 1 – The Rope of the Angels

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The divine injunctions of Matthew, the living up to which would purify and exalt humanity, are identical with the Ordinances of Manu.

From that memorable day when he preached his Sermon on the Mount, an immeasurable void opened between his God and that other deity who fulminated his commands from that other mount — Sinai. The language of Jesus is unequivocal; it implies not only rebellion but defiance of the Mosaic “Lord God.”

Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but *I say* unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.¹ Ye have heard that it hath been said [by the same “Lord God” on Sinai], Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But *I say* unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.²

And now, open *Manu* and read:

Resignation, *the action of rendering good for evil*, temperance, probity, purity, repression of the senses, the knowledge of the *Śāstras* [the holy books], that of the supreme soul, truthfulness and abstinence from anger, such are the ten virtues in which consists duty. . . . Those who [164] study these ten precepts of duty, and after having studied them conform their lives thereto, will reach to the supreme condition.³

If *Manu* did not trace these words many thousands of years before the era of Christianity, at least no voice in the whole world will dare deny them a less antiquity than several centuries B.C. The same in the case of the precepts of Buddhism.

If we turn to the *Pratimoksha-Sūtra* and other religious tracts of the Buddhists, we read the ten following commandments:

- 1 Thou shalt not kill any living creature.
- 2 Thou shalt not steal.
- 3 Thou shalt not break thy vow of chastity.
- 4 Thou shalt not lie.
- 5 Thou shalt not betray the secrets of others.
- 6 Thou shalt not wish for the death of thy enemies.
- 7 Thou shalt not desire the wealth of others.

¹ [Find out why one should not turn the other cheek, by looking up in our Living the Life Series, “Occult Laws and Paradoxes,” pp. 8-9. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Matthew* v, 38-44

³ *Manu*, Bk. VI, ślokas 92-93

- 8 Thou shalt not pronounce injurious and foul words.
- 9 Thou shalt not indulge in luxury (sleep on soft beds or be lazy).
- 10 Thou shalt not accept gold or silver.¹

“Good master, what shall I do that I may have eternal life?” asks a man of Jesus.

“Keep the commandments.”

“Which?”

“Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,”² is the answer.

“What shall I do to obtain possession of Bodhi?” [knowledge of eternal truth], asks a disciple of his Buddhist master. “What way is there to become an Upāsaka?”

“Keep the commandments.”

“What are they?”

“Thou shalt abstain all thy life from murder, theft, adultery, and lying,” answers the master.³



The Hindus taught to return good for evil, but the Jehovistic command was “an eye for an eye” and “a tooth for a tooth.”

Identical injunctions are they not? Divine injunctions, the living up to which would purify and exalt humanity. But are they more divine when uttered through one mouth than another? If it is god-like to return good for evil, does the enunciation of the precept by a Nazarene give it any greater force than its enunciation by an Indian, or Thibetan philosopher? We see that the Golden Rule was not original with Jesus; that its birth-place was India. Do what we may, we cannot deny Śākyamuni Buddha a less remote antiquity than several centuries before the birth of Jesus. In seeking a model for his system of ethics why should Jesus have gone to the foot of the Himalayas rather than to the foot of [165] Sinai, but that the doctrines of Manu and Gautama harmonized exactly with his own philosophy, while those of Jehovah were to him abhorrent and terrifying? The Hindus taught to return *good for evil*, but the Jehovistic command was: “An eye for an eye” and “a tooth for a tooth.”



¹ *Pratimoksha-Sūtra*, Pāli-Burmese copy; see also *Le lotus de la bonne loi*, translated by Eugène Burnouf, p. 444.

² *Matthew* xix, 16-18

³ *Pitakattayan*, Bk. III, Pāli Version

Jehovah and Bacchus are one the same.

Would Christians still maintain the identity of the “Father” of Jesus and Jehovah, if evidence sufficiently clear could be adduced that the “Lord God” was no other than the Pagan Bacchus, Dionysos?

Would Christians still maintain the identity of the “Father” of Jesus and Jehovah, if evidence sufficiently clear could be adduced that the “Lord God” was no other than the Pagan Bacchus, Dionysos? Well, this identity of the Jehovah at Mount Sinai with the god Bacchus is hardly disputable. The name יהוה is Yava or Iaō, according to Diodorus and Lydus, which is the *secret* name of the Phœnician Mystery-god;¹ and it was actually adopted from the Chaldæans with whom it also was the secret name of the creator. Wherever Bacchus was worshipped there was a tradition of Nysa and a cave where he was reared. Beth-San or Scythopolis in Palestine had that designation; so had a spot on Mount Parnassus. But Diodorus declares that Nysa was between Phœnicia and Egypt; Euripides states that Dionysos came to Greece from India; and Diodorus² adds his testimony:

Osiris was brought up in Nysa, in Arabia the Happy; he was the son of Zeus, and was named from his father [nominative Zeus, genitive *Dios*] and the place *Dio-Nysos*

— the Zeus or Jove of Nysa. This identity of name or title is very significant. In Greece Dionysos was second only to Zeus, and Pindar says:

So Father Zeus governs all things, and Bacchus he governs also.

But outside of Greece Bacchus was the all-powerful “Zagreus, the highest of gods.” Moses seems to have worshipped him personally and together with the populace at Mount Sinai; unless we admit that he was an *initiated* priest, an adept, who knew how to lift the veil which hangs behind all such exoteric worship, but kept the secret.

And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-NISSI!

or Iaō-NISSI.³ What better evidence is required to show that the Sinaitic god was indifferently Bacchus, Osiris, and Jehovah? Samuel Sharpe appends also his testimony that the place where Osiris was born

. . . was Mount Sinai, called by the Egyptians Mount Nissa.⁴

The Brazen Serpent was a *nahash*, נחש, and the month of the Jewish Passover *nisan*.

If the Mosaic “Lord God” was the only living God, and Jesus His only Son, how account for the rebellious language of the latter? Without hesitation or qualification he sweeps away the Jewish *lex talionis*⁵ and substitutes for it the law of charity and

¹ See *Judges* xiii, 18, “And the angel of the Lord said unto him: Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is SECRET?”

² [Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica*, I, xv]

³ [*Exodus* xvii, 15]

⁴ [*Egyptian Mythology and Egyptian Christianity*, 1863, pp. 10-11]

⁵ [i.e., law of retaliation]

self-denial. If the Old Testament [166] is a divine revelation, how can the New Testament be? Are we required to believe and worship a Deity who contradicts himself every few hundred years? Was Moses inspired, or was Jesus *not* the son of God? This is a dilemma from which the theologians are bound to rescue us. It is from this very dilemma that the Gnostics endeavoured to snatch the budding Christianity.

Justice has been waiting nineteen centuries for intelligent commentators to appreciate this difference between the orthodox Tertullian and the Gnostic Marcion. The brutal violence, unfairness, and bigotry of the “great African” repulse all who accept his Christianity. Inquired Marcion:

How can a god break his own commandments? How could he consistently prohibit idolatry and image-worship, and still cause Moses to set up the brazen serpent? How command: Thou shalt not steal, and then order the Israelites to *spoil* the Egyptians of their gold and silver?

Anticipating the results of modern criticism, Marcion denies the applicability to Jesus of the so-called Messianic prophecies. Writes the author of *Supernatural Religion*:¹

The Emmanuel of *Isaiah*² is not Christ; the “Virgin,” his mother, is simply a “young woman” [an *almeh* of the temple]; and the sufferings of the servant of God³ are not predictions of the death of Jesus.⁴



¹ Vol. II, Pt. II, ch. vii, pp. 106-7 (1879). Cf. Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, III, xii

² [vii, 14; cf. viii, 4]

³ *Isaiah* lii, 13; liii, 3

⁴ Emmanuel was doubtless the son of the prophet himself, as described in the sixth chapter; what was predicted, can only be interpreted on that hypothesis. The prophet had also announced to Ahaz the extinction of his line. “If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.” Next comes the prediction of the placing of a new prince on the throne — Hezekiah of Bethlehem, said to have been Isaiah’s son-in-law, under whom the captives should return from the uttermost parts of the earth. Assyria should be humbled, and peace overspread the Israelitish country. (Cf. *Isaiah* vii, 14-16; viii, 3, 4; ix, 6, 7; x, 12, 20, 21; xi; *Micah* v, 2-7) The popular party, the party of the prophets, always opposed to the Zadokite priesthood, had resolved to set aside Ahaz and his time-serving policy, which had let in Assyria upon Palestine, and to set up Hezekiah, a man of their own, who should rebel against Assyria and overthrow the Assur-worship and Baalim. (*2 Kings* xviii, 4) Though only the prophets hint this, it being cut out from the historical books, it is noticeable that Ahaz offered his own child to Moloch, also that he died at the age of thirty-six, and Hezekiah took the throne at twenty-five, in full adult age.

Part 4.

Ageless Wisdom is the only religion of reason and free thought, of truth and impartiality, not authority.

From H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, ch. 7: EARLY CHRISTIAN HERESIES AND SECRET SOCIETIES, pp. 289-347. Edited and typographically enhanced by Philaletheians UK.

Of the tenets of the Druzes, nothing authentic has ever come to light; the popular belief amongst their neighbours is that they adore an idol in the form of a calf.

— KING, *The Gnostics and their Remains*, p. 183

O ye Lords of Truth without fault, who are forever cycling for eternity . . . save me from the annihilation of this Region of the *Two Truths*.

— *Book of the Dead*, ch. CXXV, lines 4-5

Pythagoras correctly [regarded] the Ineffable Name of God . . . [as] the key to the Mysteries of the Kabbala.

— S. PANCOAST, *Blue and Red Light*, ch. I, pp. 24-25

The sorely-abused communities compared with the Christian sects, and the Secret Science, its students and champions defended against unjust imputation.

To term them Christians is wholly unwarranted.

We will begin with a quick glance at the Ophites and Nazareans, their scions in Syria and Palestine that still exist today under the name of Druzes of Mount Lebanon, and near Basra under that of Mandæans or Disciples of St. John. And we will conclude with a brief survey of the Jesuits, and of that venerable nightmare of the Roman Catholic Church, modern Freemasonry.

All these sects have an immediate connection with our subject, for they are of kabbalistic parentage and have once held to the secret “Wisdom Religion,” recognizing as the One Supreme, the Mystery-God of the *Ineffable Name*.¹ Noticing these numerous secret societies of the past, we will bring them into direct comparison with several of the modern.

In the next two chapters² we shall notice the most important of the Christian secret sects — the so-called “Heresies” which sprang into existence between the first and fourth centuries of our era.

¹ [Consult “The Ineffable Name,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [VIII and IX]

Glancing rapidly at the Ophites and Nazareans, we shall pass to their scions which yet exist in Syria and Palestine, under the name of Druzes of Mount Lebanon; and near Basra or Bassorah, in Persia,¹ under that of Mandæans, or Disciples of St. John. All these sects have an immediate connection with our subject, for they are of kabbalistic parentage and have once held to the secret “Wisdom Religion,” recognizing as the One Supreme, the Mystery-God of the *Ineffable Name*.² Noticing these numerous secret societies of the past, we will bring them into direct comparison with several of the modern. We will conclude with a brief survey of the Jesuits, and of that venerable nightmare of the Roman Catholic Church — modern Freemasonry. All of these modern as well as ancient fraternities — present Freemasonry excepted — were and are more or less connected with magic — practically, as well as theoretically; and, every one of them — Freemasonry *not* excepted — was and still is accused of demonolatry, blasphemy, and licentiousness.

Our object is not to write the history of either of them; but only to compare these sorely-abused communities with the Christian sects, past and present, and then, taking historical facts for our guidance, to defend the secret science as well as the men who are its students and champions against any unjust imputation.

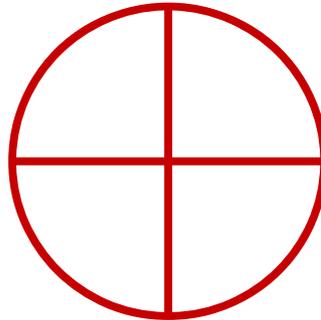
One by one the tide of time engulfed the sects of the early centuries, until of the whole number only one survived in its primitive integrity. That one still exists, still teaches the doctrine of its founder, still exemplifies its [290] faith in works of power. The quicksands which swallowed up every other outgrowth of the religious agitation of the times of Jesus, with its records, relics, and traditions, proved firm ground for this. Driven from their native land, its members found refuge in Persia, and today the anxious traveller may converse with the direct descendants of the “Disciples of John,” who listened, on the Jordan’s shore, to the “man sent from God,” and were baptized and believed. This curious people, numbering 30,000 or more, are miscalled “Christians of St. John,” but, in fact, should be known by their old name of Nazareans, or their new one of Mandæans. The work of Buddhistic proselytism began in Nepal. Not only did they make their way to the Mesopotamian Valley, but they even went so far west as Ireland.



¹ [Now situated in the S.E. corner of Iraq.]

² [Consult “The Ineffable Name,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

The encircled cross in Ireland came from the far East with the Phœnician colonists, who erected the Round Towers as symbols of the life-giving and preserving power of man and nature, and of universal life that is produced through suffering and death. For Ireland, like every other nation, once listened to the proponents of Siddhartha-Buddha.



To term them Christians, is wholly unwarranted. They neither believe in Jesus as Christ, nor accept his atonement, nor adhere to his Church, nor revere its “Holy Scriptures.” Neither do they worship the Jehovah-God of the Jews and Christians, a circumstance which of course proves that their founder, John the Baptist, did not worship him either. And if not, what right has he to a place in the *Bible*, or in the portrait-gallery of Christian saints? Still further, if Ferho was his God, and he was “a man sent by God,” he must have been sent by Lord Ferho, and in his name baptized and preached. Now, if Jesus was baptized by John, the inference is that he was baptized according to his own faith; therefore, Jesus too, was a believer in Ferho, or Faho, as they call him; a conclusion that seems the more warranted by his silence as to the name of his “Father.” And why should the hypothesis that *Faho* is but one of the many corruptions of Fho or Fo, as the Thibetans and Chinese call Buddha, appear ridiculous? In the North of Nepaul, Buddha is more often called *Fo* than *Bud-dha*. The Book of *Mahāvānśa* shows how early the work of Buddhistic proselytism began in Nepal; and history teaches that Buddhist monks crowded into Syria¹ and

¹ Not only did the Buddhist missionaries make their way to the Mesopotamian Valley, but they even went so far west as Ireland. The Rev. Dr. John Patterson Lundy, in his work on *Monumental Christianity, or, the Art and Symbolism of the Primitive Church: as Witnesses and Teachers of the One Catholic Faith and Practice* (p. 255), referring to an Irish Round Tower, observes:

“Henry O’Brien explains this Round Tower Crucifixion as that of Buddha; the animals as the elephant and the bull, sacred to Buddha, and into which his soul entered after death; the two figures standing beside the cross as Buddha’s virgin mother, and Rāma his favourite disciple. The whole picture bears a close likeness to the Crucifixion in the cemetery of Pope Julius, except the animals, which are conclusive proof that it cannot be Christian. It came ultimately from the far East to Ireland, with the Phœnician colonists, who erected the Round Towers as symbols of the Life-giving and Preserving Power of man and nature, and how that universal life is produced through suffering and death.” [Cf. *The Round Towers of Ireland; or, the History of the Tuath-de-danaans*, 1st ed., p. 301. Also cf. “Ireland, the last outpost of Atlantis,” in our Atlantean Realities Series.]

When a Protestant clergyman is thus forced to confess the pre-Christian existence of the crucifix in Ireland, its Buddhistic character, and the penetration of the missionaries of that faith even to that then remote portion of the earth, we need not wonder that in the minds of the Nazarean contemporaries of Jesus and their descendants, he should not have been associated with that universally known emblem in the character of a Redeemer.

In noticing this admission of Dr. Lundy, Charles Sotheran remarked, in a lecture before the American Philological Society, that both legends and archæological remains unite in proving beyond question “that Ireland, like every other nation, once listened to the propagandists of Siddhārtha-Buddha.”

Babylon in the [291] century preceding our era, and that Buddhasp (*Bodhisattva*) the alleged Chaldæan, was the founder of Sabiasm or *baptism*.¹

What the actual Baptists, *al-Mughtasilah*,² or Nazareans, do believe, is fully set forth in other places, for they are the very Nazarenes of whom we have spoken so much, and from whose *Codex* we have quoted. Persecuted and threatened with annihilation, they took refuge in the Nestorian body, and so allowed themselves to be arbitrarily classed as Christians, but as soon as opportunity offered, they separated, and now, for several centuries have not even nominally deserved the appellation. That they are, nevertheless, so called by ecclesiastical writers, is perhaps not very difficult to comprehend. They know too much of early Christianity to be left outside the pale, to bear witness against it with their traditions, without the stigma of heresy and backsliding being fastened upon them to weaken confidence in what they might say.

As Messenger and Messiah stood in the Jordan, and the elder John was consecrating the younger, the heavens opened and God Himself, in the shape of a dove, descended in a glory upon his Beloved Son.

But where else can science find so good a field for biblical research as among this too neglected people? No doubt of their inheritance of the Baptist's doctrine; their traditions are without a break. What they teach now, their forefathers taught at every epoch where they appear in history. They are the disciples of that John who is said to have foretold the advent of Jesus, baptized him, and declared that the latchet of his shoe he (John) was not worthy to unloose. As they two — the Messenger and the Messiah — stood in the Jordan, and the elder was consecrating the younger — his own cousin, too, humanly speaking — the heavens opened and God Himself, in the

¹ "The religion of multiplied baptisms, the scion of the still existent sect named the 'Christians of St. John,' or Mandæans, whom the Arabs call *al-Mughtasilah*, the Baptists. The Aramean verb *seba*, origin of the name *Sabian*, is a synonym of βαπτίζω." (Joseph Ernest Renan, *Vie de Jésus*, 1863, ch. vi)

² [Note 41 by Boris de Zirkoff: By the rivers of Iraq and especially in the alluvial land of Al-Khaur watered by the Tigris and the Euphrates, and in the lowland of Persia along the Karun, there still dwells the remnant of a handsome people who call themselves *Mandaïa*, Mandæans ("gnostics"), and speak a dialect of Aramaic. When the armies of Islam vanquished the Sassanids, they were already there and in such numbers that the *Qur'an* granted them protection as "people of a book," calling them *Sābiya* (Sabians). They still cling to this name, both in its literary form and as the vernacular *as-Subba*. This word means "submergers" and refers to their baptism (*masbuta*) and frequent self-immersion. In the ninth book of his *Fihrist al-'ulūm*, Al-Nadim, who wrote in the tenth century, calls them *al-Mughtasilah*, "the self-ablutionists."

Those amongst the community who possess secret knowledge are called *Nasuraïa*, Nasoræans (or, if the heavy *s* is written as *z*, Nazorenes). The ignorant or semi-ignorant laity are called "Mandæans, *Mandaïa*," which originally meant "gnostics." When a man becomes a priest he leaves "Mandæanism" and enters *termiduta*, "priesthood." Even then he is not considered as having attained to true enlightenment, for this, called *nasirutha*, is reserved for a very few. Those possessed of its secrets may call themselves Nasoræans, and this term indicates today not only one who observes strictly all the rules of ritual purity, but one who understands the secret doctrine.

The principal sacred books of the Mandæans are the *Ginzā* ("Treasure") and the *John-Book* written in a peculiar type of Aramaic. Consult the following sources:

Ginzā: der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer. German translated by M. Lidzbarski. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1925.

Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer. Text and translated by M. Lidzbarski. Giessen: Töpelmann, 1915; 2-vols.

Codex Nazaræus, Liber Adami Appellatus. Syriac text and Latin translated by M. Norberg, Lund, 1815–16; 3-vols.

Theaurus Liber Magnus vulgo "Liber Adami" appellatus, opus Mandæorum summi ponderis. Descriptis et edidit, H. Petermann. Leipzig: Weigel, 1867; 2-vols.

The Secret Adam. A study of Nasoræan Gnosis, by E.S. Drower. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960.]

shape of a dove, descended in a glory upon his “Beloved Son”! How then, if this tale be true, can we account for the strange infidelity which we find among these surviving Nazareans? So far from believing Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God, they actually told the Persian missionaries, who, in the seventeenth century, first discovered them to Europeans, that the Christ of the New Testament was “a false teacher,” and that the Jewish system, as well as that of Jesus (?), came from the realm of darkness! Who knows better than they? Where can more competent living witnesses be found? Christian ecclesiastics [292] would force upon us an anointed Saviour heralded by John, and the disciples of this very Baptist, from the earliest centuries, have stigmatized this ideal personage as an impostor, and his putative Father, Jehovah, “a spurious God,” the Ialdabaōth of the Ophites! Unlucky for Christianity will be the day when some fearless and honest scholar shall persuade their elders to let him translate the contents of their secret books and compile their hoary traditions! It is a strange delusion that makes some writers think that the Nazareans have no other sacred literature, no other literary relics than four doctrinal works, and that curious volume full of astrology and magic which they are bound to peruse at the sunset hour, on every Sol’s day (Sunday).

Christianity is on trial, and has been, ever since science felt strong enough to act as Public Prosecutor.

This search after truth leads us, indeed, into devious ways. Many are the obstacles that ecclesiastical cunning has placed in the way of our finding the primal source of religious ideas. Christianity is on trial, and has been, ever since science felt strong enough to act as Public Prosecutor. A portion of the case we are drafting in this book. What of truth is there in this Theology? Through what sects has it been transmitted? *Whence was it primarily derived?* To answer, we must trace the history of the World Religion, alike through the secret Christian sects as through those of other great religious subdivisions of the race; *for the Secret Doctrine is the Truth*, and that religion is nearest divine that has contained it with least adulteration.

Our search takes us hither and thither, but never aimlessly do we bring sects widely separated in chronological order, into critical juxtaposition. There is one purpose in our work to be kept constantly in view — the analysis of religious beliefs, and the definition of their descent from the past to the present. What has most blocked the way is Roman Catholicism; and not until the secret principles of this religion are uncovered can we comprehend the iron staff upon which it leans to steady its now tottering steps.

Let us begin with the Ophites, the Nazareans, and the modern Druzes of Mount Lebanon.

We will begin with the Ophites, Nazareans, and the modern Druzes. The personal views of the author, as they will be presented in the diagrams, will be most decidedly at variance with the prejudiced speculations of Irenæus, Theodoret, and Epiphanius (the sainted renegade, who sold his brethren), inasmuch as they will reflect the ideas of certain Kabbalists in close relations with the mysterious Druzes of Mount Leba-

non. The Syrian *‘Uqqāls*, or Spiritualists, as they are sometimes termed, are in possession of a great many ancient manuscripts and gems, bearing upon our present subject.

The scheme of the Ophites varies from the description given by the Fathers, inasmuch as it makes Bythos or depth a female emanation, and assigns her a place answering to that of Pleroma,¹ only in a far superior region; whereas, the Fathers assure us that the Gnostics gave the name of Bythos to the First Cause.

The first *scheme* — that of the Ophites — from the very start, as we have shown, varies from the description given by the Fathers, inasmuch as it makes Bythos or depth, a female emanation, and assigns her a place [293] answering to that of Pleroma, only in a far superior region; whereas, the Fathers assure us that the Gnostics gave the name of Bythos to the First Cause. As in the kabbalistic system, it represents the boundless and infinite void within which is concealed in darkness the Unknown Primal motor of all. It envelops HIM like a veil: in short we recognize again the “Shekhinah” of the Ain-Soph. Alone, the name of ΙΑΩ, Iaō, marks the upper centre, or rather the presumed spot where the Unknown One may be supposed to dwell. Around the Iaō, runs the legend, CEMEC EΙΛΑΜ ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ, “The eternal Sun-Abrasax” (the Central Spiritual Sun of all the Kabbalists, represented in some diagrams of the latter by the circle of Tiphereth).

The Ophite Serpent, emblem of wisdom and eternity, is androgyne manifesting itself as the double Principle of Good and Evil.

From this region of unfathomable Depth, issues forth a circle formed of spirals; which, in the language of symbolism, means a grand cycle, *κυκλος*, composed of smaller ones. Coiled within, so as to follow the spirals, lies the serpent — emblem of wisdom and eternity — the Dual Androgyne: the cycle representing *Ennoia* or the Divine mind, and the Serpent — Agathodaimōn, the Ophis — the Shadow of the Light. Both were the Logoi of the Ophites; or the unity as Logos manifesting itself as a double principle of good and evil; for, according to their views, these two principles are immutable, and existed from all eternity, as they will ever continue to exist.

This symbol accounts for the adoration by this sect of the Serpent, as the Saviour, coiled either around the Sacramental loaf or a Tau. As a unity, *Ennoia* and *Ophis* are the Logos; when separated, one is the Tree of Life (Spiritual); the other, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Therefore, we find *Ophis* urging the first human couple — the material production of *Ialdabaōth*, but which owed its spiritual principle to *Sophia-Akhamōth* — to eat of the forbidden fruit, although *Ophis* represents Divine Wisdom.

¹ [Plerōma or “fullness” is the Space or Chaos of Occult Philosophy, the sum total of all divine manifestations and emanations expressing the totality of the rays proceeding from the One. It is the Jagad Yoni or Golden Egg of Brahmā.]

The Serpent, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree of Life, are all symbols transplanted from the soil of India.

The Serpent, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree of Life, are all symbols transplanted from the soil of India. The *Araśa-maram*, the banyan tree,¹ so sacred with the Hindus, since Vishnu, during one of his incarnations, reposed under its mighty shade, and there taught humanity philosophy and sciences, is called the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life. Under the protective umbrage of this king of the forests, the Gurus teach their pupils their first lessons on immortality and initiate them in the mysteries of life and death. The *Yava-ALEIM* of the Sacerdotal College are said, in the Chaldæan tradition, to have taught the sons of men to become like one of them. To the present day Foh-tchou,² who lives in his *Foh-Maëyu*, or temple of Buddha, on the [294] top of “Kuen-lug-shan,”³ the great mountain, produces his greatest religious miracles under a tree called in Chinese *Sung-Ming-Shu*, or the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life, for ignorance is death, and knowledge alone gives immortality. This marvellous display takes place every three years, when an immense concourse of Chinese Buddhists assemble in pilgrimage at the holy place.

Ialdabaōth, the “Son of Darkness” and the creator of the material world, was made to inhabit the planet Saturn, which identifies him still more with the Jewish Jehovah, who was Saturn himself, according to the Ophites, and is by them denied his Sinaitic name. From Ialdabaōth emanate six spirits, who respectively dwell with their father in the seven planets. These are:

- 1 Tsabāoth — or Mars;
- 2 Adonaios — Sol, or the Sun;⁴
- 3 Iaō — the Moon;
- 4 Eloaios — Jupiter;
- 5 Astaphaios — Mercury (spirit of water); and
- 6 Horaios — Venus, spirit of fire.⁵

¹ [Note 42 by Boris de Zirkoff: *Araśa-maram* is the Tamil word for the *Ficus religiosa*. The Sanskrit for *Araśa* is *Aśvattha*; *maram* in Tamil is tree. This tree, however, is not the Banyan. The latter is the *Ficus indica* called in Skt. *vata*. Both belong to the same family, but it is the *Aśvattha* or *Araśa* which is usually held sacred.]

² Foh-Tchou, literally, in Chinese, meaning Buddha’s lord, or the teacher of the doctrines of Buddha — Foh.

³ This mountain is situated south-west of China, almost between China and Thibet.

⁴ SOL, being situated, on the diagram, exactly in the centre of the solar system (of which the Ophites appear to have been cognizant) — hence, under the direct vertical ray of the Higher Spiritual Sun — showers his brightness on all other planets.

⁵ Speaking of Venus, Placidus de Titus, the astrologer, always maintained that “her bluish lustre denotes heat.” As to Mercury, it was a strange fancy of the Ophites to represent him as a spirit of water, when astrologically considered he is as “a cold, dry, earthy, and melancholy star.”

[Note 43 by Boris de Zirkoff: Placidus de Titus (or Titi) was a monk of the monastery on Montis Oliveti, born at Perugia, and who flourished in the middle of the 17th century. He was the author of several works, two of which, now very rare, are in the British Museum. In his *Physiomatica* (Francisci Vigoni, Milan, 1675, 4to.), Section entitled “De Viribus Astrorum in Sublunaria,” liber I, cap. 13, p. 79, he says:

Quod color ceruleus, et croceus, quales sunt in Jove, & Venere, qui colores mixti sunt ex albo, & aureo, indigent naturam temperatam ex calore, & humiditate, in ceruleo quidem prædominante calore, in croceo humiditate . . .

In his *Tabulæ primi mobilis cum thesibus ad theoricen & canonibus ad praxim additis in rerum demonstrationem, et supputationum exemplum triginta clarissimorum natalium thematibus auctore D. Placido de Titis . . . Juxta*



principia ab eodem autore in sua Cœlesti Philosophia exposita, etc. (Vatavii, Typis Pauli Frambotti, 1657, 4to.), the 20th thesis says:

Alii colores in Astris sunt causæ qualitatum in specie, ut ceruleus, & croceus, quales sunt in Jove, & Venere, qui mixti sunt ex albo, & aureo, indicant naturam temperatam ex calore, & humiditate, in ceruleo quidem predominante calore, in croceo humiditate, ideoque hi duo Planetæ ambo dant bonum utile, & delectabile.

In M. Sibly's revision of John Cooper's English translation entitled *Astronomy and Elementary Philosophy* (W. Justins, London, 1789, 8vo.), page 131 renders this passage as follows:

The other colours in the stars are the cause of specific qualities; so the blue and yellow, such as are in Jupiter and Venus, which are a mixture of white and gold, give signs of a temperate nature between heat and cold, or moisture; in the blue, heat is predominant . . .]

In their functions and description as given, these seven planets are identical with the Hindu *Sapta-lokas*, the seven places or spheres, or the superior and inferior worlds; for they represent the kabbalistic seven spheres. With the Ophites, they belong to the lower spheres. The monograms of these Gnostic planets are also Buddhistic, the latter differing, albeit slightly, from those of the usual astrological “houses.” In the explanatory notes which accompany the diagram, the names of Cerinthus (the disciple of Simon Magus), of Menander, and of certain other Gnostics, whose names are not to be met with in the Patristic writings, are often mentioned; such as Par’ha (Ferho), for instance.¹

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The Nazarene and Gnostic-Ophite Cosmogonies are one and the same.

The author of the diagram claims, moreover, for his sect the greatest antiquity, bringing forward, as a proof, that their “forefathers” were the builders of all the “Dracontia” temples, even of those beyond “the great waters.” He asserts that the “Just One,” who was the mouth-piece of the Eternal Aiōn (Christos), himself sent his disciples into the world, placing them under the double protection of Sigē (Silence, the [295] Logos), and Ophis, the Agathodaimōn. The author alludes no doubt, to the favourite expression of Jesus, “be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” On the diagram, Ophis is represented as the Egyptian Chnouphis or Kneph, called Dracontia. He appears as a serpent standing erect on its tail, with a lion’s head, crowned and radiated, and bearing on the point of each ray one of the seven Greek vowels — symbol of the seven celestial spheres. This figure is quite familiar to those who are acquainted with the Gnostic gems,³ and is borrowed from the Egyptian *Hermetic books*. The description given in the *Revelation*, of one “like unto the Son of Man,” with his seven stars, and who is the Logos, is another form of Ophis.

The Nazarene diagram, except in a change of names, is identical with that of the Gnostics, who evidently borrowed their ideas from it, adding a few appellations from

¹ The name which Norberg translates, in his *Onomasticon* to the *Codex Nazaræus*, as Ferho, stands, in the original, *Par’ha Rabba*. In the *Life of Manes*, given by Epiphanius, in his *Panarion* [lib. II, tom. II, *Hær.* LXVI, iii], is mentioned a certain priest of Mithras, a friend of the great Heresiarch Manes, named Parchus.

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³ Its description is found in one of the magic books of the Egyptian King Nechepso, and its use prescribed on green jasper stones, as a potent amulet. Galen mentions it in his work, *De simplicium medicamentorum facultatibus*, ix; [cf. Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 74; or p. 220, in 2nd ed.]

the Basilidean and Valentinian systems. To avoid repetition, we will now simply present the two in parallel.

Thus, we find that, in the Nazarene Cosmogony, the names of their powers and geni stand in the following relations to those of the Gnostics:

Nazarene

First Trinity

Lord FERHO — the Life which is no Life — the Supreme God. The *Cause* which produces the Light, or the Logos *in abscondito*. The water of Jordanus Maximus — the water of Life, or Ajar, the feminine principle. Unity in a Trinity, enclosed within the ISH AMON.

Second Trinity.

(The manifestation of the first)

1. Lord MANO — the King of Life and Light — *Rex Lucis*. First LIFE, or the primitive man.
2. Lord Jordan — manifestation or emanation of Jordan Maximus — the waters of grace. Second LIFE.
3. The Superior Father — Abatur. Third LIFE.

This Trinity produces also a duad — Lord Lehdoio, and Pthahil, the genius (the former, a perfect emanation, the latter, imperfect).

Lord Jordan — “the Lord of all Jordans,” manifests NETUBTO (Faith *without* Works).

Gnostic-Ophite

First Unity in a Trinity

IAO — the Ineffable Name of the Unknown Deity — Abraxas, and the “Eternal Spiritual Sun.” Unity enclosed within the Depth, Bythos, feminine principle — the boundless circle, within which lie all ideal forms. From this Unity emanates the ↓

Second Trinity.

(*idem*)

1. Ennoia — mind.
2. Ophis, the Agathodaimōn.
3. Sophia-Androgyne — wisdom; who, in her turn — fecundated with the Divine Light — produces ↓

Christos and Sophia-Akhamōth (one perfect, the other imperfect), as an emanation. [296]

Sophia-Akhamōth emanates Ialdabaōth — the Demiurge, who produces material and soulless creation. “Works *without* Faith” (or grace).¹

¹ Consider those two diametrically-opposed doctrines — the Catholic and the Protestant; the one preached by Paul, the semi-Platonist, and the other by James, the orthodox Talmudist.

Moreover, the Ophite seven planetary genii, who emanated one from the other, are found again in the Nazarene religion, under the name of the “seven impostor-dæmons,” or stellars, who “will deceive all the sons of Adam.” These are:

- 1 Sol;
- 2 Spiritus Venerus (Holy Spirit, in her material aspect);¹ the mother of the “seven badly-disposed stellars,” answering to the Gnostic Akhamōth;
- 3 Nebu, or Mercury, “a false Messiah, who will deprave the ancient worship of God”;²
- 4 SIN (or Luna, or Shuril);
- 5 KHIYŪN (or Saturn);
- 6 Bel-Jupiter;
- 7 And the seventh, Nerig, Mars.³

The Christos of the Gnostics is the chief of the seven Aiōns, St. John’s seven spirits of God; the Nazarenes have also their seven genii or good Aiōns, whose chief is *Rex Lucis*, MANO, their Christos. The *Sapta-Rishis*, the seven sages of India, inhabit the *Sapta-Puras*, or the seven celestial cities.

What less or more do we find in the Universal Ecclesia, until the days of the Reformation, and in the Roman Popish Church after the separation? We have compared the relative value of the Hindu Cosmogony; the Chaldæan, Zoroastrian, Jewish *Kabalah*; and that of the so-termed Heretics. A correct diagram of the Judaico-CHRISTIAN religion — to enforce which on the heathen who have furnished it, are expended such great sums every year — would still better prove the identity of the two; but we lack space and are also spared the necessity of proving what is already thoroughly demonstrated.

Neither King David nor Solomon recognized either Moses or the law of Moses.

IAΩ⁴ is a title of the Supreme Being and belongs partially to the Ineffable Name; but it neither originated with, nor was it the sole property, of the Jews.

In the Ophite gems of C.W. King,⁵ we find the name of Iaō repeated, and often confounded with that of Ievo, while the latter simply represents one of the genii antagonistic to Abraxas. In order that these names may not be taken as identical with the name of the Jewish Jehovah we will at once explain this word. It seems to us sur-

¹ The material, bad side of Sophia-Akhamōth, who emanates from herself Ialdabaōth and his six sons.

² See Norberg’s translation of *Codex Nazaræus*, Preface. This proves once more the identification of Jesus with Gautama-Buddha, in the minds of the Nazarene Gnostics, as *Nebu* or Mercury is the planet sacred to the Bud-dhas.

³ *Codex Nazaræus*, p. 57

⁴ [Ω stands for O-mega, the 24th and last letter of Greek alphabet. It means the “great O,” as opposed to O-micron, the “little O,” the 15th letter of the alphabet. Their isopsephic value is 800 and 70, respectively.]

⁵ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*

passingly strange that so many learned archæologists should have so little insisted that there was more than one Jehovah, and disclaimed that the name originated with Moses. [297] Iaō is certainly a title of the Supreme Being, and belongs *partially* to the Ineffable Name; but it neither originated with, nor was it the sole property of the Jews. Even if it had pleased Moses to bestow the name upon the tutelary “Spirit,” the alleged protector and national deity of the “Chosen people of Israel,” there is yet no possible reason why other nationalities should receive Him as the Highest and One-living God. But we deny the assumption altogether. Besides, there is the fact that Yaho or Iaō was a “mystery name” from the beginning, for יה and יהוה never came into use before King David. Anterior to his time, few or no proper names were compounded with *iah* or *yah*. It looks rather as though David, being a sojourner among the Tyrians and Philistines,¹ brought thence the name of Jehovah. He made Zadok high-priest, from whom came the Zadokites or Sadducees. He lived and ruled first at Hebron, Habir-on or Kabir-town, where the rites of the four (mystery-gods) were celebrated. Neither David nor Solomon recognized either Moses or the law of Moses. They aspired to build a temple to יהוה, like the structures erected by Hiram to Hercules and Venus, Adon and Astartē. Says Fürst:

The very ancient name of God, *Yāho* . . . written in the Greek *Iaω*, appears, apart *from its derivation*, to have been an old mystic name of the Supreme deity of the Shemites. [Hence it was told to Moses when initiated at HOR-EB — the *cave* — under the direction of Jethro, the Kenite or Cainite priest of Midian.] In an old religion of the Chaldæans, whose remains are to be found amongst the new Platonists, the highest divinity enthroned above the seven heavens, representing the Spiritual light-principle [*nous*]² and also conceived as demiurge,³ was called *Iaω*,⁴ who was, like the Hebrew *Yāho*, mysterious and unmentionable . . . and whose name was communicated only to the initiated. . . . The Phœnicians had a Supreme god whose name was trilateral (*literal trina*) and *secret* . . . and he was *Iaω*.⁵

But while Fürst insists that the name has a Semitic origin, there are other scholars who trace it farther than he does, and look back beyond the classification of the Caucasians.

The Veda bears witness to the early Aryan worship of Dyaus, the Greek Zeus.

In Sanskrit we have *Jah* and *Jaya*, or *Jaa* and *Jagad*, and this throws light on the origin of the famous festival of the car of *Jagan-nātha*, commonly called Jagannāth. *Yahve* means “he who is,” and Dr. F. Spiegel traces even the Persian name of God,

¹ 2 Samuel

² *Nous*, the designation given by Anaxagoras to the Supreme Deity, was taken from Egypt, where he was styled NOUT.

³ By very few though, for the creators of the material universe were always considered as subordinate deities to the Most High God.

⁴ John Lydus, *De mensibus*, IV, 38, 74, 98; [?] Cedrus, *Compendium historicum*, I, p. 296.

⁵ [Julius Fürst, *A Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, translated by S. Davidson, 4th ed., London 1871]

Ahura, to the root *ah*,¹ which [298] in Sanskrit is pronounced *as*, to breathe, and *asu*, became, therefore, in time, synonymous with “Spirit.”² Rawlinson strongly supports the opinion of an Āryan or Vedic influence on the early Babylonian mythology. We have given, a few pages back, the strongest possible proofs of the identity of Vishnu with Dag-on. The same may be adduced for the title of *Iaω*, and its Sanskrit root traced in every country. JU or *Jovis* is the oldest Latin name for God. “As male he is Ju-*piter*, or *Ju*, the father, *pitri* being Sanskrit for father; as feminine, Ju-*no* or *Ju*, the comforter — being the Phœnician word for rest and comfort.”³ Professor Max Müller shows that although *Dyaus*, sky, does not occur as a masculine in the ordinary Sanskrit, yet it does occur in the *Veda*, “and thus bears witness to the early Āryan worship of Dyaus, the Greek Zeus.”⁴

To grasp the real and primitive sense of the term *IAΩ*, and the reason of its becoming the designation for the most mysterious of all deities, we must search for its origin in the figurative phraseology of all the primitive people. We must first of all go to the most ancient sources for our information. In one of the *Books of Hermes*, for instance, we find him saying that the number TEN is the mother of the soul, and that the *life* and *light* are therein united. For

. . . the number 1 (one) is born from the spirit, and the number 10 (ten) from matter”;⁵ . . . the unity has made the TEN, the TEN the unity.⁶

The kabbalistic *Gematria* — one of the methods for extracting the hidden meaning from letters, words, and sentences — is arithmetical. It consists in applying to the letters of a word the sense they bear as numbers, in *outward* shape as well as in their individual sense. Moreover, by the *Themurah* (another method used by the Kabbalists) any word could be made to yield its mystery out of its anagram. Thus, we find the author of *Sēpher-Yetzīrah*⁷ saying, one or two centuries before our era:

ONE, the spirit of the *Alahim* of Lives.⁸

So again, in the oldest kabbalistic diagrams, the *ten* Sephīrōth are represented as wheels or circles, and Adam Kadmon,⁹ the primitive man, as an *upright* pillar.

¹ Friedrich von Spiegel, *Erān das Land zwischen dem Indus und Tigris*, Berlin 1863; *Avesta*, I, p. 9.

² *Asi* means, moreover, “thou art,” in Sanskrit, and also “sword,” *Asi*, without the accent on the first vowel.

³ Professor Alexander Wilder

⁴ “The Veda,” in *Chips from a German Workshop*, etc., Vol. I, p. 79

⁵ These sacred anagrams were called *Zeruph*.

⁶ *Book of Numbers*, or *Book of the Keys*.

⁷ The *Sēpher-Yetzīrah*, or Book of the Creation, was written by Rabbi A’qībah, who was the teacher and instructor of Simeon ben-Yohai, who was called the prince of the Kabbalists, and wrote the *Zohar*. Franck asserts that *Yetzīrah* was written one century B.C. (*La Kabbale*, 1843, p. 91), but other and as competent judges make it far older. At all events, it is now proved that Simeon ben-Yohai lived *before* the second destruction of the temple.

⁸ *Sēpher-Yetzīrah*, I, § 8

⁹ [Note to Students: There are four variants of Adam, one for each of the preceding Root-Races:

Adam 1, (Kadmon) or Heavenly Man (Second Logos) in the context of the above passage.

Adam 2, of *Genesis*, the ethereal, Self-born Astral Sons of Yoga (First Root-Race, Self-Existent).

Adam 3 plus Eve, the sweat-born, asexual, Sons of Passive Yoga (early Third Root-Race, Lemurian).

Adam 4, of *Genesis*, the womb-born men and women (Fourth Root-Race, Atlantean).]

“Wheels and [299] seraphim and the holy creatures” (*hayyōth*), says Rabbi A’qībah.¹ In another system of the same branch of the symbolical *Kabbalah*, called *Albath* — which arranges the letters of the alphabet by pairs in three rows — all the couples in the first row bear the numerical value *ten*; and in the system of Shimon ben-Shetah,² the uppermost couple, the most sacred of all, is preceded by the Pythagorean cipher, one and a nought, or zero — 10.

The First Cause is manifesting itself in its creatures as a hermaphrodite deity: the male principle is the vivifying invisible spirit; the female, mother nature. The two are the Alpha and Omega, moved by the Hierarchy of Compassion, making IAΩ the trilateral name of the mystery-God, a breath of life.

But Yaho IAΩ, the supreme deity of the Semites, is not the Lord God of other nations.

If we can once appreciate the fact that, among all the peoples of the highest antiquity, the most natural conception of the First Cause manifesting itself in its creatures — and that to this they could not but ascribe the creation of all — was that of an androgyne deity; that the male principle was considered the vivifying invisible spirit, and the female, mother nature; we shall be enabled to understand how that mysterious cause came at first to be represented (in the picture-writings, perhaps) as the combination of the Alpha and Omega of numbers, a decimal, then as IAŌ, a trilateral name, containing in itself a deep allegory.

IAŌ, in such a case, would — etymologically considered — mean the “Breath of Life,” generated or springing forth between an upright male and an egg-shaped female principle of nature; for, in Sanskrit, “as” means “to be,” “to live or exist”; and originally it meant “to breathe.” Says Max Müller:

From it, in its original sense of breathing, the Hindus formed “asu,” breath, and “asura,” the name of God, whether it meant the breathing one or the giver of breath.³

It certainly meant the latter. In Hebrew, “Iāh and Iāh” mean life. Cornelius Agrippa, in his treatise on the *Pre-eminence of Woman*, shows that the word Eve suggests comparison with the mystic symbols of the Kabbalists, the name of the woman having affinity with the ineffable Tetragrammaton, the most sacred name of the divinity.⁴ Ancient names were always consonant with the things they represented. In relation to the mysterious name of the Deity in question, the hitherto inexplicable hint of the Kabbalists as to the efficacy of the letter H, “which Abram took away from his wife Sarah” and “put into the middle of his own name,” becomes clear.

¹ *Sēpher-Yetzīrah*, I, § 11. See the constancy with which Ezekiel sticks in his vision to the “wheels” of the “living creatures” (ch. i, *passim*).

² He was an Alexandrian Neo-Platonic under the first of the Ptolemies.

³ *Chips from a German Workshop*, (1867–75, 5-vols.), Vol. I, p. 158

⁴ [*De nobilitate et præcellentia fœminei sexus*, édition critique d’après le texte d’Anvers, 1529; also Coloniae 1532. Compare the views of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa on women with those held by the Church Fathers in “Why women should avoid the Church like a plague,” in our Black versus White Magic Series. — ED. PHIL.]

The numerals of Pythagoras are hieroglyphical symbols, by means whereof he explained ideas concerning the nature of things. The first is I, and the final Ω-mega.

It may perhaps be argued, by way of objection, that it is not ascertained as yet at what period of antiquity the *nought* occurs for the first time in Indian manuscripts or inscriptions. Be that as it may, the case presents circumstantial evidence of too strong a character not to carry a conviction of probability with it. According to Max Müller,

. . . the two words “cipher” and “zero,” which are in reality but one . . . are sufficient [300] to prove that our figures are borrowed from the Arabs. Cipher is the Arabic “cifron,” and means *empty*, a translation of the Sanskrit name of the nought “śūnya.”¹

The Arabs had their figures from Hindostan, and never claimed the discovery for themselves.² As to the Pythagoreans, we need but turn to the ancient manuscripts of Boethius’ *Geometry*, composed in the sixth century, to find in the Pythagorean numerals³ the 1 and the *nought*, as the first and final cipher. And Porphyry, who quotes from the Pythagorean Moderatus,⁴ says that the numerals of Pythagoras were “hieroglyphical symbols, by means whereof he explained ideas concerning the nature of things.”

Now, if the most ancient Indian manuscripts show as yet no trace of decimal notation in them — Max Müller states very clearly that until now he has found but nine letters (the initials of the Sanskrit numerals) in them — on the other hand we have records as ancient to supply the wanted proof. We speak of the sculptures and the sacred imagery in the most ancient temples of the Far East. Pythagoras derived his knowledge from India; and we find Professor Max Müller corroborating this statement, at least so far as allowing the *Neo-Pythagoreans* to have been the first teachers of “ciphering” among the Greeks and Romans; that “they, at Alexandria, or in Syria, became acquainted with the Indian figures, and adapted them to the Pythagorean abacus” (our figures). This cautious allowance implies that Pythagoras himself was acquainted with but *nine* figures. So that we might reasonably answer that although we possess no certain proof that the decimal notation was known to Pythagoras, who lived on the very close of the archaic ages,⁵ we yet have sufficient evidence to show that the full numbers, as given by Boethius, were known to the Pythagoreans, even before Alexandria was built.⁶ This evidence we find in Aristotle, who says that

. . . some philosophers hold that ideas and numbers are of the same nature, and amount to TEN in all.⁷

¹ *Chips from a German Workshop*, (1867–75, 5-vols.), Vol. II, p. 286

² *ibid.*

³ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, Plate XIII, G

⁴ *Pythagoræ vita*

⁵ 608 B.C.

⁶ This city was built 332 B.C.

⁷ *Metaphysics*, XII, viii; XIII, viii

This, we believe, will be sufficient to show that the decimal notation was known among them at least as early as four centuries B.C., for Aristotle does not seem to treat the question as an innovation of the “Neo-Pythagoreans.”

Besides, as we have remarked above, the representations of the archaic deities, on the walls of the temples are of themselves quite suggestive enough. So, for instance, Vishnu is represented in the *Kūrma-avatāra* (his second *avatāra*) as a tortoise sustaining a circular pillar, on which the semblance of himself (*Māyā*, or the illusion) sits with all his attributes.¹ [301] While one hand holds a flower, another a club, the third a shell, the fourth, generally the upper one, or at the right, holds on his forefinger, extended as the cipher 1, the *chakra*, or discus, which resembles a ring, or a wheel, and might be taken for the nought. In his first *avatāra*, the *Matsya-avatāra*, when emerging from the fish’s mouth, he is represented in the same position.² The ten-armed *Durgā* of Bengal; the ten-headed Rāvana, the giant; Pārvatī — as *Durgā*, Indra, and *Indrānī*, are found with this attribute, which is a perfect representation of the Maypole.³

The holiest of the pyramidal temples among the Hindus are those of Jagannath, the Lord of the World.

The holiest of the temples among the Hindus, are those of Jagan-nātha. This deity is worshipped equally by all the sects of India, and Jagan-nātha is named “The Lord of the World.” He is the god of the Mysteries, and his temples, which are most numerous in Bengal, are all of a pyramidal form.

It is only by associating Yāho with the Masoretic points that the later Rabbins succeeded in making Jehovah read Adonai, or “Lord.”

The future Deity of the sons of Israel calls out from the burning bush, gives His name as “I am that I am,” and specifies carefully that He is the “Lord God of the Hebrews,” not of the other nations.

There is no other deity which affords such a variety of etymologies as Yāho, nor a name which can be so variously pronounced. It is only by associating it with the Masoretic points that the later Rabbins succeeded in making Jehovah read “Adonai” — or Lord. Philo Byblius spells it in Greek letters IEYΩ — IEVO. Theodoret⁴ says that the Samaritans pronounced it *Iαβε* (Yabe) and the Jews *Aīa*; Diodorus states that “among the Jews they relate that Moses called the God *Iaω*,” which would make it as we have shown I-ah-Ō.⁵ It is on the authority of the *Bible* itself, therefore, that we maintain that before his initiation by Jethro, his father-in-law, Moses had never known the word Yāho. The future Deity of the sons of Israel calls out from the burning bush and gives His name as “I am *that* I am,” and specifies carefully that He is

¹ [See Plate IX in Thomas Maurice’s *The History of Hindostan*, 1820, Vol. I.]

² See drawings from the Temple of Rāma, Plate III, Charles Coleman, *The Mythology of the Hindus*. New York: J.W. Bouton, 1832.

³ See Hargrave Jennings, *The Rosicrucians: their Rites and Mysteries*, 1870, p. 252

⁴ [Theodoret of Cyrrihus, *Quæstiones*, xv in *Exodum*. Cf. *Exodus* iii, 14]

⁵ [Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica*, I, 94. Cf. Wilhelm Gesenius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, sv., יהוה]

the “Lord God of the Hebrews,”¹ not of the other nations. Judging him by his own acts, throughout the Jewish records, we doubt whether Christ himself, had he appeared in the days of the *Exodus*, would have been welcomed by the irascible Sinaitic Deity. However, “The Lord God,” who becomes, on His own confession, Jehovah only in the 6th chapter of *Exodus*, verse 3, finds his veracity put to a startling test in *Genesis* xxii, 9, 14, in which *revealed* passage Abraham builds an altar to *Jehovah-jireh*.

It would seem, therefore, but natural to make a difference between the mystery-God *Iaō*, adopted from the highest antiquity by all who participated in the esoteric knowledge of the priests, and his phonetic counterparts, whom we find treated with so little reverence by the Ophites and other Gnostics. Once having burdened themselves like the Azāzēl [302] of the wilderness with the sins and iniquities of the Jewish nation, it now appears hard for the Christians to have to confess that those whom they thought fit to consider the “chosen people” of God — their sole predecessors in monotheism — were, till a very late period, as idolatrous and polytheistic as their neighbours. The shrewd Talmudists have escaped the accusation for long centuries by screening themselves behind the Masoretic invention. But, as in everything else, truth was at last brought to light. We know now that *Ihoh* יהוה, must be read *Yāhoh* and *Yāh*, not *Jehovah*. *Yāh* of the Hebrews is plainly the *Iacchos* (*Bacchus*) of the Mysteries; the God “from whom the liberation of souls was expected — *Dionysus*, *Iacchos*, *Iachoh*, *Iahoh*, *Iaō*.”² Aristotle then was right when he said:

Joh, יהוה, was *Oromazdes* and *Ahriman* *Pluto*, for the God of heaven, *Ahura-Mazda*, rides on a chariot which the *Horse of the Sun* follows.³

And *Dunlap* quotes *Psalm* lxxviii, 4, which reads:

Praise him by his name *Yāh* (יה),
Who rides upon the heavens, as on a horse,

and then shows that:

the Arabs represented *Iauk* (*Iach*) by a horse. The *Horse of the Sun* (*Dionysus*).

Iah is a softening of *Iah*. [he explains]. *h* and *h* interchange; so *s* softens to *h*. The Hebrews express the idea of *LIFE* both by a *h* and an *h*; as *hiah*, to be, *hi-ah*, [also] to be; *Iah*, God of Life, *Iah*, “I am.”⁴

Well then may we repeat these lines of *Ausonius*:

The sons of *Ogyges* call me *Bacchus*; *Egypt* thinks me *Osiris*;
Musians name me *Phanaces*; *Indians* regard me a *Dionysus*;
Roman Mysteries call me *Liber*; the *Arab race* thinks me *Adoneus*;
Lucanians, the *Universal God* . . .⁵

And the chosen people *Adonis* and *Jehovah* — we may add.

¹ *Exodus* iii, 18

² *Karl Otfried Müller, A History of the Literature of Ancient Greece*, p. 283; *Franz Carl Movers, Die Phönizier*, Vol. I, pp. 547-53; *Samuel Fales Dunlap, Söd, the mysteries of Adoni*, p. 21

³ *A Universal History*, Vol. V, p. 301; London, 1747-66.

⁴ *Dunlap, op. cit.*, p. 21

⁵ *Epigrammata Ausonii de diversis rebus*, XLVIII

The scapegoat of Israel was a sacrificial martyr, symbol of the greatest mystery in heaven and on earth, the “fall” into generation.¹

How little the philosophy of the old secret doctrine was understood, is illustrated in the atrocious persecutions of the Templars by the Church, and in the accusation of their worshipping the Devil under the shape of the goat — Baphomet! Without going into the old Masonic mysteries, there is not a Mason — of those we mean who *do know something* — but has an idea of the true relation that Baphomet bore to Azāzēl, the scapegoat of the wilderness,² whose character and meaning are entirely [303] perverted in the Christian translations. Says Lanci,³ librarian to the Vatican,

This terrible and venerable name of God through the pen of biblical glossers, has been a *devil*, a mountain, a *wilderness*, and a *he-goat*.

Death to the Life-giver and life to the Death-dealer, are the two opposing forces of Evil and Good.

In Mackenzie’s *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, the author very correctly remarks that “this word should be divided into Azaz and El,” for “it signifies God of Victory, but is here used in the sense of *Author of Death*, in contrast to Jehovah, the *Author of Life*; the latter received a dead goat as an offering.”⁴ The Hindu Trinity is composed of three personages, which are convertible into one. The *Trimūrti* is one, and in its abstraction indivisible, and yet we see a metaphysical division taking place from the first, and while Brahmā, though collectively representing the three, remains behind the scenes, Vishnu is the Life-Giver, the Creator, and the Preserver, and Śiva is the *Destroyer*, and the *Death-giving* deity. Says Gliddon:⁵

Death to the *Life-Giver*, life to the *Death-dealer*. The symbolical antithesis is grand and beautiful.

“*Deus est Dæmon inversus*” of the Kabbalists now becomes clear. It is but the intense and cruel desire to crush out the last vestige of the old philosophies by perverting their meaning, for fear that their own dogmas should not be rightly fathered on them, which impels the Catholic Church to carry on such a systematic persecution in regard to Gnostics, Kabbalists, and even the comparatively innocent Masons.



¹ [Cf. “Only the Jews have long forgotten the real meaning of their (to the non-initiated) ridiculous hero, selected from the drama of life in the great mysteries enacted by them in the desert; and the Christians never knew it.” *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 510]

² See *Leviticus* xvi, 8, 10, and other verses relating to the biblical goat in the original texts.

³ Michelangelo Lanci, *La Sacra Scrittura illustrata con monumenti fenico-assir ed egiziani*, Roma, Società Tipografica, 1827, and *Paralipomeni alla illustrazione della Sacra Scrittura per monumenti fenico assiri ed egiziani di Michelangelo Lanci Contenente quattro parti dell’opera con due appendici*, 1845

⁴ Article “Goat,” p. 257

⁵ Josiah Clark Nott, George Robins Gliddon, Samuel George Morton, et al., *Types of Mankind: or, Ethnological Researches: based upon the Ancient Monuments, Paintings, Sculptures, and Crania of Races, and upon their Natural, Geographical, Philological and Biblical History, Illustrated by Selections from the Inedited Papers of Samuel George Morton and by Additional Contributions from L. Agassiz, W. Usher, and H.S. Patterson*, 1854, p. 600

Alas, alas! How little has the divine seed, scattered, broadcast by the hand of the meek Judæan philosopher, thrived or brought forth fruit. He, who himself had shunned hypocrisy, warned against public prayer, showing such contempt for any useless exhibition of the same, could he but cast his sorrowful glance on the earth, from the regions of eternal bliss, would see that this seed fell neither on sterile rock nor by the wayside. Nay, it took deep root in the most prolific soil; one enriched even to plethora with lies and human gore!

Is it an act of virtue to deceive and lie, particularly when by such means the interests of the Church might be promoted?

Eusebius, Irenæus, Theophilus, Cyril, Athanasius, and a host of other canonized “saints,” were followed by an army of pious assassins who had improved upon the system of deceit by proclaiming that it was lawful even to kill, when by murder they could enforce the new religion.

“For, if the truth of God hath more abounded, *through my lie* unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?” naively inquires Paul, the best and sincerest of all the apostles. And he then adds: “*Let us do evil*, that good may come!”¹ This is a confession which we are asked to believe as having been a direct inspiration from God! It explains, if it does not excuse, the maxim adopted later by the Church that

. . . it is an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by such means the interests of *the Church* might be promoted.²

Constantine, the Emperor of Darkness, drowned his wife in boiling water, butchered his little nephew, murdered with his own pious hand two of his brothers-in-law, killed his own son Crispus, bled to death several men and women, and smothered in a well an old monk. What a record!

A maxim [304] applied in its fullest sense by that accomplished professor in forgery, the Armenian Eusebius; or yet, that innocent-looking *Bible*-kaleidoscopist — Irenæus. And these men were followed by a whole army of pious assassins, who, in the meanwhile, had improved upon the system of deceit, by proclaiming that it was lawful even to kill, when by murder they could enforce the new religion. Theophilus, “that perpetual enemy of peace and virtue,” as the famous bishop was called; Cyril,³ Athanasius, the murderer of Arius, and a host of other canonized “Saints,” were all but too worthy successors of *Saint* Constantine, who drowned his wife in boiling water; butchered his little nephew; murdered with his own pious hand two of his broth-

¹ *Romans* iii, 7, 8

[*Note 44 by Boris de Zirkoff*: This is apt to lead to a misunderstanding unless quoted in full. The text in *Romans* iii, 7-8, reads thus:

For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not *rather* (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), *Let us do evil*, that good may come? whose damnation is just.]

² Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, *An ecclesiastical history: Ancient and Modern*, cent. IV, part II, ch. iii, § 16. Read the whole section to appreciate the doctrine in full.

³ [Of Alexandria.]

ers-in-law; killed his own son Crispus, bled to death several men and women, and smothered in a well an old monk. However, we are told by Eusebius that this Christian Emperor was rewarded by a *vision* of Christ himself, bearing his cross, who instructed him to march to other triumphs, inasmuch as he would always protect him!

It is under the shade of the Imperial standard, with its famous sign, “*In hoc signo vinces,*” that “*visionary*” Christianity, which had crept on since the days of Irenæus, arrogantly proclaimed its rights in the full blaze of the sun. The Labarum had most probably furnished the model for the *true* cross, which was “miraculously,” and agreeably to the Imperial will, found a few years later. Nothing short of such a remarkable vision, impiously doubted by some severe critics — Dr. Lardner for one — and a fresh miracle to match, could have resulted in the finding of a cross where there had never before been one. Still, we have either to believe the phenomenon or dispute it at the risk of being treated as infidels; and this, notwithstanding that upon a careful computation we would find that the fragments of the “true Cross” had multiplied themselves even more miraculously than the five loaves in the invisible bakery, and the two fishes. In all cases like this, where miracles can be so conveniently called in, there is no room for dull fact. History must step out that fiction may step in.

How determined Irenæus was to crush Truth and build up a Church of his own on the mangled remains of the seven primitive churches mentioned in the Revelation, may be inferred from his quarrel with Ptolemæus. Neither falsehood, nor sophistry, was too much for the bishop of Lugdunum.

If the alleged founder of the Christian religion is now, after the lapse of nineteen centuries, preached — more or less unsuccessfully however — in every corner of the globe, we are at liberty to think that the doctrines attributed to him would astonish and dismay him more than anyone else. A system of deliberate falsification was adopted from the first. How determined Irenæus was to crush truth and build up a Church of his own on the mangled remains of the seven primitive churches mentioned in the *Revelation*, may be inferred from his quarrel with Ptolemæus. And this is again a case of evidence against which no blind faith can prevail. Ecclesiastical history assures us that Christ’s [305] ministry was but of three years’ duration. There is a decided discrepancy on this point between the first three Synoptics and the fourth gospel; but it was left for Irenæus to show to Christian posterity that so early as A.D. 180 — the probable time when this Father wrote his works against heresies — even such pillars of the Church as himself either knew nothing certain about it, or deliberately lied and falsified dates to support their own views. So anxious was the worthy Father to meet every possible objection against his plans, that no falsehood, no sophistry, was too much for him. How are we to understand the following; and who is the falsifier in this case? The argument of Ptolemæus was that Jesus was too young to have taught anything of much importance; adding that “Christ preached for *one year only*, and then suffered in the twelfth month.” In this Ptolemæus was very little at variance with the gospels. But Irenæus, carried by his object far beyond the limits of prudence, from a mere discrepancy between one and three years, makes it *ten* and even twenty years!

Destroying his [Christ's] whole work, and *robbing him of that age* which is *both necessary* and more honourable than any other; that more advanced age, I mean, during which also, as a teacher, he excelled all others.

And then, having no certain data to furnish, he throws himself back on *tradition*, and claims that Christ had preached for over TEN years!¹ In another place he makes Jesus fifty years old.

The origins of Christianity and the sources from which Jesus derived his own ideas of God and Humanity.

But we must proceed in our work of showing the various origins of Christianity, as also the sources from which Jesus derived his own ideas of God and humanity.

The Koinobioi lived in Egypt, where Jesus passed his early youth. They were usually confounded with the Therapeutai, who were a branch of this widely-spread society. Such is the opinion of Godfrey Higgins and Dr. Rebold. After the downfall of the principal sanctuaries, which had already begun in the days of Plato, the many different sects, such as the Gymnosophists and the Magi — from whom Clearchus very erroneously derives the former — the Pythagoreans, the Sūfis, and the Rishis of Kashmir, instituted a kind of international and universal Freemasonry, among their esoteric societies. Says Higgins:

These Rishis are the same as Sofees, and are the Carmelites, Nazarites or Essenians, belonging to the temple of Solomon in this country.²

Says Father Rebold:

That occult science known by ancient priests under the name of *regenerating fire* . . . is a science that for more than 3,000 years was the peculiar possession of the [Indian and Egyptian] priesthood, into the knowledge of which Moses was initiated at Heliopolis, where he was educated; and Jesus among the Essenian priests of [Egypt or] Judæa; [306] and by which these two great reformers, *particularly the latter*, wrought many of the miracles mentioned in the *Scriptures*.³

The mystic Magian religion, also known as Machagistia, is the most uncorrupted form of worship in things divine. Later, the mysteries of the Chaldæan sanctuaries were added to it by one of the Zoroasters and Darius Hystaspes, a hierophant and initiated Magian himself.

Plato states that the mystic Magian religion, known under the name of *Machagistia*, is the most uncorrupted form of worship in things divine. Later, the Mysteries of the Chaldæan sanctuaries were added to it by one of the Zoroasters and Darius Hys-

¹ *Adversus hæreses*, II, xxii, § 4, 5, 6

² *Anacalypsis*, Vol. I, p. 731

³ [Emmanuel Rebold, *Histoire générale de la franc-maçonnerie basée sur ses anciens documents et les monuments élevés par elle, depuis sa fondation en l'an 715 av. J.-C., jusqu'en 1850* (1851), p. 23 fn. Translated into English by J. Fletcher Brennan, of Cincinnati, Ohio.]

taspes.¹ The latter completed and perfected it still more with the help of the knowledge obtained by him from the learned ascetics of India, whose rites were identical with those of the initiated Magi.² Ammianus, in his history of Julian's Persian expedition, gives the story by stating that one day . . .

Hystaspes, as he was boldly penetrating into the unknown regions of Upper India, had come upon a certain wooded solitude, the tranquil recesses of which were occupied by those exalted sages, the Brāchmanes [or Shamans]. Instructed by their teaching in the science of *the motions of the world* and of the heavenly bodies, and in *pure religious rites* . . . he transfused them into the creed of the Magi. The latter, coupling these doctrines with their *own peculiar science of foretelling the future*, have handed down the whole through their descendants to succeeding ages.³

It is from these descendants that the Sūfis, chiefly composed of Persians and Syrians, acquired their proficient knowledge in astrology, medicine, and the esoteric doctrine of the ages. Says C.W. King:

The Sūfi doctrine involved the grand idea of one universal creed which could be secretly held under any profession of an outward faith; and, in fact, took virtually the same view of religious systems as that in which the ancient philosophers had regarded such matters.⁴

Secrecy was preserved by the one and supreme great lodge as well as other sub-lodges. The mysterious Druzes of Mount Lebanon are the descendants of all these.⁵

The mysterious Druzes of Mount Lebanon are the descendants of all these. Solitary Copts, earnest students scattered hither and thither throughout the sandy solitudes of Egypt, Arabia, Petraea, Palestine, and the impenetrable forests of Abyssinia, though rarely met with, may sometimes be seen. Many and various are the nationalities to which belong the disciples of that mysterious school, and many the sideshoots of that [307] one primitive stock. The secrecy preserved by these sub-lodges, as well as by the one and supreme great lodge, has ever been proportionate to the activity of religious persecutions; and now, in the face of the growing materialism, their very existence is becoming a mystery.⁶

¹ [Ammianus Marcellinus, *Roman History*, XXIII, vi, 32, 33]

² We hold to the idea — which becomes self-evident when the Zoroastrian imbroglio is considered — that there were, even in the days of Darius, two distinct sacerdotal castes of Magi: the initiated and those who were allowed to officiate in the popular rites only. We see the same in the Eleusinian Mysteries. Belonging to every temple there were attached the “hierophants” of the *inner* sanctuary, and the secular clergy who were not even instructed in the Mysteries. It is against the absurdities and superstitions of the latter that Darius revolted, and “crushed them,” for the inscription of his tomb shows that he was a “hierophant” and a Magian himself. It is also but the exoteric rites of this class of Magi which descended to posterity, for the great secrecy in which were preserved the “Mysteries” of the true Chaldæan Magi was never violated, however much guesswork may have been expended on them.

³ [Ammianus Marcellinus, *op. cit.*, XXIII, vi]

⁴ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 185 [p. 415 in 2nd ed.]

⁵ [Consult “Lamas and Druzes, descendants of the Elect Race,” in our Atlantean Realities Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁶ These are truths which cannot fail to impress themselves upon the minds of earnest thinkers. While the Ebionites, Nazarites, Hemerobaptists, Lampseans, Sabians, and the many other earliest sects, wavered later between the varying dogmatisms suggested to them by the *esoteric* and misunderstood parables of the Nazarene

Whether its affiliates are called by an Egyptian, Hindu, or Persian name, it matters not. Persons belonging to one of these sub-brotherhoods have been met by trustworthy, and not unknown persons, besides the present writer.

But it must not be inferred, on that account, that such a mysterious brotherhood is but a fiction, not even *a name*, though it remains unknown to this day. Whether its affiliates are called by an Egyptian, Hindu, or Persian name, it matters not. Persons belonging to one of these sub-brotherhoods have been met by trustworthy, and not unknown persons, besides the present writer, who states a few facts concerning them, by the special permission of one *who has a right to give it*.

Kenneth Mackenzie on the self-effacing Hermetic Brothers of Egypt.

In a recent and very valuable work on secret societies, K.R.H. Mackenzie's *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, we find the learned author himself, an honorary member of the Canongate Kilwinning Lodge, No. 2 (Scotland), and a Mason not likely to be imposed upon, stating the following, under the head, "Hermetic Brothers of Egypt":¹

An occult fraternity, which has endured from very ancient times, having a hierarchy of officers, secret signs, and passwords, and a peculiar method of instruction in science, religion, and philosophy . . . If we may believe those who, at the present time profess to belong to it, *the philosopher's stone, the elixir of life, the art of invisibility*, and the power of communication directly with the ultramundane life, are parts of the inheritance they possess. The writer has met with only three persons who maintained the actual existence of this body of religious philosophers, and who hinted that they themselves were actually members. There was no reason to doubt the good faith of these individuals — apparently unknown to each other, and men of moderate competence, blameless lives, austere manners, and almost ascetic in their habits. [308] They all appeared to be men of forty to forty-five years of age, and evidently of vast erudition . . . their knowledge of languages not to be doubted. . . . They never remained long in any one country, but passed away without creating notice.²

teacher, whom they justly regarded as a prophet, there were men, for whose names we would vainly search history, who preserved the secret doctrines of Jesus as pure and unadulterated as they had been received. And still, even all these above-mentioned and conflicting sects were far more orthodox in their Christianity, or rather Christism, than the Churches of Constantine and Rome. Says Lord Amberley:

It was a strange fate that befell these unfortunate people [the Ebionites] when, overwhelmed by the flood of heathenism that had swept into the Church, they were condemned as heretics. Yet, there is no evidence that they had ever swerved from the doctrines of Jesus, or of the disciples who knew him in his lifetime. Jesus himself had been circumcised . . . revered the temple at Jerusalem as "a house of prayer for all nations.

But the torrent of progress swept past the Ebionites, and left them stranded on the shore. (*An Analysis of Religious Belief*, by John Russell, Viscount Amberley, 1877, Vol. I, p. 446)

¹ Page 309

² What will, perhaps, still more astonish American readers, is the fact that, in the United States, a mystical fraternity now exists, which claims an intimate relationship with one of the oldest and most powerful of Eastern Brotherhoods. It is known as the Brotherhood of Luxor, and its faithful members have the custody of very important secrets of science. Its ramifications extend widely throughout the great Republic of the West. Though this brotherhood has been long and hard at work, the secret of its existence has been jealously guarded. Mackenzie describes it as having "a Rosicrucian basis, and numbering many members." (*Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, p. 461) But, in this, the author is mistaken; it has no Rosicrucian basis. The name Luxor is primarily derived from the ancient Baluchistan city of Lukhsur, which lies between Bela and Kedje, and also gave its name to the Egyptian city.

The sub-brotherhood of the Pitris in India is even more arcane than the Hermetic Brothers.

Another of such sub-brotherhoods is the sect of the Pitris in India. Known by name, now that Jaccoliot has brought it into public notice, it yet is more arcane, perhaps, than the brotherhood that Mr. Mackenzie names the “Hermetic Brothers.” What Jaccoliot learned of it was from fragmentary manuscripts delivered to him by Brahmans, who had their reasons for doing so, we must believe. The *Agrushada Parikshai* gives certain details about the association, as it was in days of old, and, when explaining mystic rites and magical incantations, explains nothing at all, so that the mystic *L’om*, *L’Rhum*, *Sh’hrum*, and *Sho-rhim Rāmāya-Namaha*, remain, for the mystified writer, as much a puzzle as ever. To do him justice, though, he fully admits the fact, and does not enter upon useless speculations.¹

Who are the Druzes of Mount Lebanon?

Well over 80,000 Syrian Druzes are scattered from the plain east of Damascus to the western coast. There never was a case of an initiated Druze becoming a Christian.

These people do not accept the name of Druzes but regard the appellation as an insult. They call themselves the “disciples of H’amsa,” their Messiah, who came to them in the eleventh century from the “Land of the Word of God.”

Whoever desires to assure himself that there now exists a religion which has baffled, for centuries, the impudent inquisitiveness of missionaries, and the persevering inquiry of science, let him violate, if he can, the seclusion of the Syrian Druzes. He will find them numbering over 80,000 warriors, scattered from the plain east of Damascus to the western coast. They covet no proselytes, shun notoriety, keep friendly — as far as possible — with both Christians and Mohammedans, respect the religion of every other sect or people, but will never disclose their own secrets. Vainly do the missionaries stigmatize them as infidels, idolaters, brigands, and thieves. Neither threat, bribe, nor any other consideration will induce a Druze to become a convert to dogmatic Christianity. We have heard of two in fifty years, and both have finished their careers in prison, for drunkenness and theft. They proved to be “real *Druzes*,”² said one [309] of their chiefs, in discussing the subject. There never was a case of an *initiated* Druze becoming a Christian. As to the uninitiated, they are never allowed to even see the sacred writings, and none of them have the remotest idea where these are kept. There are missionaries in Syria who boast of having in their possession a few copies. The volumes alleged to be the correct expositions from these secret books (such as the translation by Pétis de la Croix, in 1701, from the works presented by Nasr-Allah to the French king), are nothing more than a compilation of “secrets,” known more or less to every inhabitant of the southern ranges of Lebanon and Anti-

¹ [Louis Jaccoliot, *Le spiritisme dans le monde: L’initiation et les sciences occultes dans l’inde et chez tous les peuples de l’antiquité*, p. 78]

² These people do not accept the name of Druzes, but regard the appellation as an insult. They call themselves the “disciples of H’amsa,” their Messiah, who came to them, in the eleventh century, from the “Land of the Word of God,” and, together with his disciple, Mokshatana Boha-eddin, committed this *Word* to writing, and entrusted it to the care of a few initiates, with the injunction of the greatest secrecy. They are usually called Unitarians.

Libanus. They were the work of an apostate Dervish, who was expelled from the sect Hanafi, for improper conduct — the embezzlement of the money of widows and orphans. The *Exposé de la Religion des Druzes*, in two volumes, by Silvestre de Sacy (1838), is another network of hypotheses. A copy of this work was to be found in 1870, on the window sill of one of their principal *Khalwehs*, or place of religious meeting. To the inquisitive question of an English traveller, as to their rites, the ‘*Uqqāl*,¹ a venerable old man, who spoke English as well as French, opened the volume of de Sacy, and, offering it to his interlocutor, remarked, with a benevolent smile:

Read this instructive and truthful book; I could explain to you neither better nor more correctly the secrets of God and our blessed H’amsa, than it does.

The traveller understood the hint.

Mackenzie says they settled at Lebanon about the tenth century, and

. . . seem to be a mixture of Kurds, Mardi-Arabs, and other semi-civilized tribes. Their religion is compounded of Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. They have a regular order of priesthood and *a kind of hierarchy* . . . there is a regular system of passwords and signs . . . Twelve months’ probation, to which either sex is admitted, preceded initiation.²

We quote the above only to show how little even persons as trustworthy as Mr. Mackenzie really know of these mystics.

Mosheim, who knows as much, or we should rather say as little, as any others, is entitled to the merit of candidly admitting that “their religion is peculiar to themselves, and is involved in some mystery.”³ We should say it was — rather!

The characteristic dogma of the Druzes is absolute unity with God. He is the essence of life and, although incomprehensible and invisible, He is to be known through occasional manifestations in human form.

That their religion exhibits traces of Magianism and Gnosticism is natural, as the whole of the Ophite esoteric philosophy is at the bottom of it. But the characteristic dogma of the Druzes is the absolute unity [310] of God. He is the essence of life, and although incomprehensible and invisible, is to be known through *occasional manifestations in human form*.⁴ Like the Hindus they hold that he was incarnated more than once on earth. H’amsa was the *precursor*, not the inheritor of *Hākīm*, the last manifestation (the tenth *avatāra*),⁵ who is yet to come. H’amsa was the personification of the “Universal Wisdom.” Boha-eddin in his writings calls him Messiah. The whole number of his disciples, or those who at different ages of the world have imparted

¹ The ‘*Uqqāls* (from the Arabic *akl* — intelligence or wisdom) are the initiated, or wise men of this sect. They hold, in their mysteries, the same position as the hierophant of old, in the Eleusinian and others.

² [*Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, p. 165]

³ [Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, *An ecclesiastical history: Ancient and Modern*, cent. XVI, § III, pt. I, ch. ii, § 19]

⁴ This is the doctrine of the Gnostics who held Christos to be the personal immortal Spirit of man.

⁵ The ten Messiahs or *avatāras* remind again of the five Buddhistic and ten Brāhmanical *avatāras* of Buddha and Krishna.

wisdom to mankind, which the latter as invariably have forgotten and rejected in course of time, is one hundred and sixty-four (164, the kabbalistic *s d k*). Therefore, their stages or degrees of promotion after initiation are five; the first three degrees are typified by the “three feet of the candlestick of the inner Sanctuary, which holds the light of the *five* elements”; the last two degrees, the most important and terrifying in their solemn grandeur, belonging to the highest orders; and the whole five degrees emblematically represent the said five mystic Elements. The “three feet are the holy *Application*, the *Opening*, and the *Phantom*,” says one of their books; on man’s inner and outer soul, and his body, a phantom, a passing shadow. The body, or matter, is also called the “Rival,” for “he is the minister of sin, the Devil ever creating dissensions between the Heavenly Intelligence [spirit] and the soul, which he tempts incessantly.” Their ideas on transmigration are Pythagorean and kabbalistic. The spirit, or al-Tamīmī (the divine soul), was in Elijah and John the Baptist; and the soul of Jesus was that of H’amsa; that is to say, of the same degree of purity and sanctity. Until their resurrection, by which they understand the day when the spiritual bodies of men will be absorbed into God’s own essence and being (the Nirvāna of the Hindus), the souls of men will keep their astral forms, except the few chosen ones who, from the moment of their separation from their bodies, begin to exist as pure spirits. The life of man they divide into soul, body, and intelligence, or mind. It is the latter which imparts and communicates to the soul the divine spark from its H’amsa (Christos).

They have seven great commandments which are imparted equally to all the uninitiated; and yet, even these well-known articles of faith have been so mixed up in the accounts of outside writers, that, in one of the best Cyclopædias of America (Appleton’s), they are garbled after the fashion that may be seen in the comparative tabulation below; the spurious and the true order parallel: [311]



Chastity, honesty, meekness, and mercy, are the four theological virtues of every Druze.

Murder, theft, cruelty, covetousness, and slander are the five main sins.

The Seven Commandments of the Druzes

Correct version of the Commandments as imparted orally by the Teacher.¹

- 1 *The unity of God, or the infinite oneness of Deity.*
- 2 *The essential excellence of Truth.*
- 3 Toleration; right given to all men and women to freely express their opinions on religious matters, and make the latter subservient to reason.
- 4 Respect to all men and women according to their character and conduct.
- 5 Entire submission to God's decrees.
- 6 Chastity of body, mind, and soul.
- 7 Mutual help under all conditions.

Garbled version reported by the Christian Missionaries and given in pretended expositions.²

- (2) "‘Truth in words,’ meaning in practice, *only truth to the religion and to the initiated; it is lawful to act and to speak falsehood to men of another creed.*"³
- (7) "Mutual help, watchfulness, and protection."
- (?) "To renounce all other religions."⁴
- (?) "To be separate from infidels of every kind, not externally but only in heart."⁵
- (1) "Recognize God's eternal unity."
- (5) "Satisfied with God's acts."
- (5) "Resigned to God's will."

As will be seen, the only exposé in the above is that of the great ignorance, perhaps malice, of the writers who, like Silvestre de Sacy, undertake to enlighten the world upon matters concerning which they know nothing.

"Chastity, honesty, meekness, and mercy," are thus the four theological virtues of all Druzes, besides several others demanded from the initiates: "murder, theft, cruelty, covetousness, slander," the five sins, to which several other sins are added in the sa-

¹ See, farther on, a letter from an "Initiate."

² In this column the first numbers are those given in the article on the *Druzes* in the *New American Cyclopædia* (Appleton's), Vol. VI, p. 631. The numbers in parentheses show the sequence in which the commandments would stand were they given correctly.

³ This pernicious doctrine belongs to the old policy of the Catholic Church, but is certainly false as regards the Druzes. They maintain that it is right and lawful to *withhold the truth* about their own tenets, no one outside their own sect having a right to pry into their religion. The *Uqqāls* never countenance deliberate falsehood in any form, although the laymen have many a time gotten rid of the spies sent by the Christians to discover their secrets, by deceiving them with sham initiations. (See the letter of Prof. Rawson to the author, p. 313.)

⁴ This commandment does not exist in the Lebanon teaching.

⁵ There is no such commandment, but the practice thereof exists by mutual agreement, as in the days of the Gnostic persecution.

cred tablets, but which we must abstain from giving. The morality of the Druzes is strict and [312] uncompromising. Nothing can tempt one of these Lebanon Unitarians to go astray from what he is taught to consider his duty. *Their ritual being unknown to outsiders*, their would-be historians have hitherto denied them one. Their “Thursday meetings” are open to all, but no interloper has ever participated in the rites of initiation which take place occasionally on Fridays in the greatest secrecy. Women are admitted to them as well as men, and they play a part of great importance at the initiation of men. The probation, unless some extraordinary exception is made, is long and severe. Once, in a certain period of time, a solemn ceremony takes place, during which all the elders and the initiates of the highest two degrees start out for a pilgrimage of several days to a certain place in the mountains. They meet within the safe precincts of a monastery said to have been erected during the earliest times of the Christian era. Outwardly one sees but old ruins of a once grand edifice, used, says the legend, by some Gnostic sects as a place of worship during the religious persecutions. The ruins above ground, however, are but a convenient mask; the subterranean chapel, halls, and cells, covering an area of ground far greater than the upper building; while the richness of ornamentation, the beauty of the ancient sculptures, and the gold and silver vessels in this sacred resort, appear like “a dream of glory,” according to the expression of an initiate. As the lamaseries of Mongolia and Thibet are visited upon grand occasions by the holy shadow of “Lord Buddha,” so here, during the ceremonial, appears the resplendent ethereal form of H’amsa, the Blessed, which instructs the faithful. The most extraordinary feats of what would be termed magic take place during the several nights that the convocation lasts; and one of the greatest mysteries — faithful copy of the past — is accomplished within the discreet bosom of our mother earth; not an echo, nor the faintest sound, not a glimmer of light betrays without the grand secret of the initiates.

H’amsa, like Jesus, was a mortal man, and yet H’amsa and Christos are synonymous terms as to their inner meaning: they stand for Nous, the divine and higher soul of man, his Spirit.

H’amsa, like Jesus, was a mortal man, and yet “H’amsa” and “Christos” are synonymous terms as to their inner and hidden meaning. Both are symbols of the *Nous*, the divine and higher soul of man — his spirit. The doctrine taught by the Druzes on that particular question of the duality of spiritual man, consisting of one soul mortal, and another immortal, is identical with that of the Gnostics, the older Greek philosophers, and other initiates.

Outside the East we have met one initiate (and only one), who, for some reasons best known to himself, does not make a secret of his initiation into the Brotherhood of Lebanon. It is the learned traveller and artist, Professor A.L. Rawson, of New York City.¹ This gentleman has passed many years in the East, four times visited Palestine, and has [313] travelled to Mecca. It is safe to say that he has a priceless store of

¹ [Note 45 by Boris de Zirkoff: Albert Leighton Rawson was an American engraver, philologist, archæologist and writer, born at Chester, Vt., October 15th, 1829; he died at New York in November, 1902. He illustrated various works by other writers and scholars and took part in the archæological work conducted on Cyprus by Gen. Luigi Palma di Cesnola. Very little is known of the personal life of Rawson, but there is little doubt that he was well versed in various mystical doctrines and secret societies. Rawson published in the pages of Frank Leslie’s *Popular Monthly* (Vol. XXXIII, February 1892, pp. 199-208) an illustrated account of H.P. Blavatsky titled “Madame Blavatsky: A Theosophical Occult Apology” which contains a number of interesting points.]

facts about the beginnings of the Christian Church, which none but one who had had free access to repositories closed against the ordinary traveller could have collected. Professor Rawson, with the true devotion of a man of science, noted down every important discovery he made in the Palestinian libraries, and every precious fact orally communicated to him by the mystics he encountered, and some day they will see the light. He has most obligingly sent us the following communication, which, as the reader will perceive, fully corroborates what is above written from our personal experience about the strange fraternity incorrectly styled the Druzes.

An American Initiate writes about the Druzes of Mount Lebanon.

34 BOND ST., NEW YORK, June 6th, 1877

Your note, asking me to give you an account of my initiation into a secret order among the people commonly known as Druzes, in Mount Lebanon, was received this morning. I took, as you are fully aware, an obligation at that time to conceal within my own memory the greater part of the “mysteries,” with the most interesting parts of the “instruction”; so that what is left may not be of any service to the public. Such information as I can rightfully give, you are welcome to have and use as you may have occasion.

The probation in my case was, by *special dispensation*, made one month, during which time I was “shadowed” by a priest, who served as my cook, guide, interpreter, and general servant, that he might be able to testify to the fact of my having strictly conformed to the rules in diet, ablutions, and other matters. He was also my instructor in the text of the ritual, which we recited from time to time for practice, in dialogue or in song, as it may have been. Whenever we happened to be near a Druze village, on a Thursday, we attended the “open” meetings, where men and women assembled for instruction and worship, and to expose to the world generally their religious practices. I was never present at a Friday “close” meeting before my initiation, nor do I believe anyone else, man or woman, ever was, except by collusion with a priest, and that is not probable, for a false priest forfeits his life. The practical jokers among them sometimes “fool” a too curious “Frank” by a sham initiation, especially if such a one is suspected of having some connection with the missionaries at Beirut or elsewhere.

The initiates include both women and men, and the ceremonies are of so peculiar a nature that both sexes are required to assist in the ritual and “work.” The “furniture” of the “prayer-house” and of the “vision-chamber” is simple, and except for convenience may consist of but a strip of carpet. In the “Gray Hall” (the place is never named, and is underground, *not far* from Bayt-ed-Deen) there are some rich decorations and valuable pieces of ancient furniture, the work of Arab silversmiths five or six centuries ago, inscribed and dated. The day of initiation must be a continual fast from daylight to sunset in winter, or six o’clock in

summer, and the ceremony is from beginning to end a series of trials and temptations, calculated to test the endurance of the candidate under physical and mental pressure. It is seldom that any but the young man or woman succeeds in “winning” all the “prizes,” since *nature will sometimes exert itself* in spite of the most stubborn will, and the neophyte fail of passing some of the tests. In such a case the probation is extended another year, when another trial is had.

Among other tests of the neophyte’s self-control are the following: Choice pieces [314] of cooked meat, savoury soup, pilau, and other appetizing dishes, with sherbet, coffee, wine, and water, are set, as if accidentally, in his way, and he is left alone for a time with the tempting things. To a hungry and fainting soul the trial is severe. But a more difficult ordeal is when the seven priestesses retire, all but one, the youngest and prettiest, and the door is closed and barred on the outside, after warning the candidate that he will be left to his “reflections,” for half an hour. Wearied by the long-continued ceremonial, weak with hunger, parched with thirst, and a sweet reaction coming after the tremendous strain to keep his animal nature in subjection, this moment of privacy and of temptation is brim-full of peril. The beautiful young vestal, timidly approaching, and with glances which lend a double magnetic allurements to her words, begs him in low tones to “bless her.” Woe to him if he does! A hundred eyes see him from secret peep-holes, and only to the ignorant neophyte is there the appearance of concealment and opportunity.

There is no infidelity, idolatry, or other really bad feature in the system. They have the relics of what was once a grand form of nature-worship, which has been contracted under a despotism into a secret order, hidden from the light of day, and exposed only in the smoky glare of a few burning lamps, in some damp cave or chapel underground. The chief tenets of their religious teachings are comprised in seven “tablets,” which are these, to state them in general terms:

- 1 The unity of God, or the infinite oneness of deity.
- 2 The essential excellence of truth.
- 3 The law of toleration as to all men and women in opinion.
- 4 Respect for all men and women as to character and conduct.
- 5 Entire submission to God’s decrees as to fate.
- 6 Chastity of body and mind and soul.
- 7 Mutual help under all conditions.

These tenets are not printed or written. Another set is printed or written to mislead the unwary, but with these we are not concerned.

The chief results of the initiation seemed to be a kind of mental illusion or sleep-waking, in which the neophyte saw, or thought he saw, the images of people who were known to be absent, and in some cases thousands of miles away. I thought (or perhaps it was my mind at work) I saw friends and relatives that I knew at the time were in New York State, while I was then in Lebanon. How these results were produced I cannot say. They appeared in a dark room, when the “guide” was talking, the “company” singing in the next “chamber,”

and near the close of the day, when I was tired out with fasting, walking, talking, singing, robing, unrobing, seeing a great many people in various conditions as to dress and undress, and with great mental strain in resisting certain physical manifestations that result from the appetites when they overcome the will, and in paying close attention to the passing scenes, hoping to remember them — so that I may have been unfit to judge of any new and surprising phenomena, and more especially of those apparently magical appearances which have always excited my suspicion and distrust. I know the various uses of the magic-lantern, and other apparatus, and took care to examine the room where the “visions” appeared to me the same evening, and the next day, and several times afterwards, and knew that, in my case, there was no use made of any machinery or other means besides the voice of the “guide and instructor.” On several occasions afterward, when at a great distance from the “chamber,” the same or similar visions were produced, as, for instance, in Hornstein’s Hotel at Jerusalem. A daughter-in-law of a well-known Jewish merchant in Jerusalem is an initiated “sister,” and can produce the visions almost at will on any one who will [315] live strictly according to the rules of the Order for a few weeks, more or less, according to their nature, as gross or refined, etc.

I am quite safe in saying that the initiation is so peculiar that it could not be printed so as to instruct one who had not been “worked” through the “chamber.” So it would be even more impossible to make an exposé of them than of the Freemasons. The real secrets are acted and not spoken, and require several initiated persons to assist in the work.

It is not necessary for me to say how some of the notions of that people seem to perpetuate certain beliefs of the ancient Greeks — as, for instance, the idea that a man has two souls, and many others — for you probably were made familiar with them in your passage through the “upper” and “lower chamber.” If I am mistaken in supposing you an “initiate,” please excuse me. I am aware that the closest friends often conceal that “sacred secret” from each other; and even husband and wife may live — as I was informed in Dayr-el-Kamar was the fact in one family there — for twenty years together and yet neither know anything of the initiation of the other. You, undoubtedly, have good reasons for keeping your own counsel.

Yours truly,

A.L. RAWSON

Before we close the subject we may add that if a stranger ask for admission to a “Thursday” meeting he will never be refused. Only, if he is a Christian, the *‘Uqqāl* will open a *Bible* and read from it; and if a Mohammedan, he will hear a few chapters of the Koran, and the ceremony will end with this. They will wait until he is gone, and then, shutting well the doors of their convent, take to their own rites and books,

passing for this purpose into their subterranean sanctuaries.¹ “The Druzes remain, even more than the Jews, a peculiar people,” says Colonel Churchill, one of the few fair and strictly impartial writers.

They marry within their own race; they are rarely if ever converted; they adhere tenaciously to their traditions, and they baffle all efforts to discover their cherished secrets . . . The bad name of that caliph whom they claim as their founder is fairly compensated by the pure lives of many whom they honour as saints, and by the heroism of their feudal leaders.

The great “Mother Lodge” and its branches.

And yet the Druzes may be said to belong to one of the least esoteric of secret societies. There are others far more powerful and learned, the existence of which is not even suspected in Europe. There are many branches belonging to the great “Mother Lodge” which, mixed up with certain communities, may be termed secret sects within other sects. One of them is the sect commonly known as that of *Langhana-Śāstra*. It reckons several thousand adepts who are scattered about in small groups in the south of the Deccan, India. In the popular superstition, this sect is dreaded on account of its great reputation for magic and sorcery. The Brahmans accuse its members of atheism and sacrilege, for none of them [316] will consent to recognize the authority of either the *Vedas* or *Manu*, except so far as they conform to the versions in their possession, and which they maintain are professedly the only original texts; the *Langhana-Śāstra* have neither temples nor priests, but, twice a month, every member of the community has to absent himself from home for three days. Popular rumour, originated among their women, ascribes such absences to pilgrimages performed to their places of fortnightly resort. In some secluded mountainous spots, unknown and inaccessible to other sects, hidden far from sight among the luxurious vegetation of India, they keep their bungalows, which look like small fortresses, encircled as they are by lofty and thick walls. These, in their turn, are surrounded by the sacred trees called *aśvattha*, and in Tamil *araśa maram*. These are the “sacred groves,” the originals of those of Egypt and Greece, whose initiates also built their temples within such “groves” inaccessible to the profane.²

It will not be found without interest to see what Mr. John Yarker, Jr., has to say on some modern secret societies among the Orientals.

The nearest resemblance to the Brāhminical Mysteries, is probably found in the very ancient “*Paths*” of the Dervishes, which are usually governed by twelve officers, the oldest “Court” superintending the others by right of seniority. Here the master of the “Court” is called “*Sheik*,” and has his deputies, “Caliphs,” or successors, *of which there may be many* (as for instance in the brevet degree of a Master Mason). The order is divided into at least four columns, pillars, or degrees.

¹ Cf. Col. Charles Henry Churchill, *Mount Lebanon: A Ten Years' Residence from 1842 to 1852, describing the Manners, Customs, and Religion of its Inhabitants with a Full and Correct Account of the Druze religion and Containing Historical Records of the Mountain Tribes from Personal Intercourse with their Chiefs and Other Authentic Sources*. 3-vols. London: Saunders & Otley, 1853. Vol. II, pp. 255-56

² Every temple in India is surrounded by such belts of sacred trees. And like the Kumbum of Kansu (Mongolia) no one but an initiate has a right to approach them.

The first step is that of “Humanity,” which supposes attention to the written law, and “annihilation in the *Sheik*.”

The second is that of the “Path,” in which the “*Murid*” or disciple, attains spiritual powers and “self-annihilation into the *Peer*” or founder of the “*Path*.”

The third stage is called “Knowledge,” and the “*Murid*” is supposed to become inspired, called “annihilation into the Prophet.”

The fourth stage leads him even to God, when he becomes a part of the Deity and sees Him in all things.

The first and second stages have received modern subdivisions, as “Integrity,” “Virtue,” “Temperance,” “Benevolence.” After this the *Sheik* confers upon him the grade of “Caliph,” or Honorary Master, for in their mystical language, “the man must die before the saint can be born.” It will be seen that this kind of mysticism is applicable to Christ as founder of a “Path.”

Initiation among the Baktashi Dervishes, who often initiated the Janizaries.

To this statement, the author adds the following on the Baktāshī Dervishes, who

. . . often initiated the Janizaries. They wear *a small marble cube spotted with blood*. Their ceremony is as follows: Before reception a year’s probation is required, during which false secrets are [317] given to test the candidate; he has two godfathers *and is divested of all metals and even clothing*; from the wool of a sheep a cord is made for his neck, and a girdle for his loins; he is led into the centre of a square room, presented as a slave, and seated upon a large stone with twelve escallops; his arms are crossed upon his breast, his body inclined forwards, his right toes extended over his left foot; after various prayers he is placed in a particular manner with his hand in a peculiar way in that of the Sheik, who repeats a verse from the Koran:

Those who on giving thee their hand swear to thee an oath, swear it to God, the hand of God is placed in their hand; whoever violates this oath will do so to his hurt, and to whoever remains faithful God will give a magnificent reward.

Placing the hand below the chin is their sign, perhaps in memory of their vow. All use the double triangles. The Brahmins inscribe the angles with their trinity, and they possess also the Masonic sign of distress as used in France.¹



¹ John Yarker, *Notes on the Scientific and Religious Mysteries of Antiquity: The Gnosis and Secret Schools of the Middle Ages; Modern Rosicrucianism; and the Various Rites and Degrees of Free and Accepted Masonry*, pp. 7-8; New York 1878.

The first self-made adept initiated but a select few, and kept silence with the multitudes.

From the very day when the first mystic found the means of communication between this world and the worlds of the invisible host, between the sphere of matter and that of pure spirit, he concluded that to abandon this mysterious science to the profanation of the rabble was to lose it. An abuse of it might lead mankind to speedy destruction; it was like surrounding a group of children with explosive batteries, and furnishing them with matches. The first self-made adept initiated but a select few, and kept silence with the multitudes. He recognized his God and felt the great Being within himself. The “Ātman,” the Self,¹ the [318] mighty Lord and Protector, once that man knew him as the “*I am*,” the “*Ego Sum*,” the “*Asmi*,” showed his full power to him who could recognize the “*still small voice*.” From the days of the primitive man described by the first Vedic poet, down to our modern age, there has not been a philosopher worthy of that name, who did not carry in the silent sanctuary of his heart the grand and mysterious truth. If initiated, he learnt it as a sacred science; if otherwise, then, like Socrates repeating to himself, as well as to his fellow-men, the noble injunction, “O man, know thyself,” he succeeded in recognizing his God within himself. “Ye are gods,” the king-psalmist tells us, and we find Jesus reminding the scribes that the expression, “Ye are gods,” was addressed to other mortal men, claiming for himself the same privilege without any blasphemy.² And, as a faithful echo, Paul, while asserting that we are all “the temple of the living God,”³ cautiously adds, that after all these things are only for the “wise,” and it is “unlawful” to speak of them.

¹ This “Self,” which the Greek philosophers called *Augoeides*, the “Shining One,” is impressively and beautifully described in Max Müller’s “Veda.” Showing the *Veda* to be the first book of the Āryan nations, the professor adds that:

. . . we have in it . . . a period of the intellectual life of man to which there is no parallel in any other part of the world. In the hymns of the *Veda* we see man left to himself to solve the riddle of this world. . . . He invokes [the gods around him], he praises them, he worships them. But still with all these gods . . . beneath him, and above him, the early poet seems ill at rest within himself. There, too, in his own breast, he has discovered a power . . . that is never mute when he prays, never absent when he fears and trembles. It seems to inspire his prayers, and yet to listen to them; it seems to live in him, and yet to support him and all around him. The only name he can find for this mysterious power is “Brāhman”; for *Brāhman* meant originally force, will, wish, and the propulsive power of creation. But this impersonal Brāhman, too, as soon as it is named, grows into something strange and divine. It ends by being one of many gods, one of the great triad, worshipped to the present day. And still the thought within him has no real name; that power which is nothing but itself, which supports the gods, the heavens, and every living being, floats before his mind, conceived but not expressed. At last he calls it “Ātman,” for *ātman*, originally breath or spirit, comes to mean Self, and Self alone; *Self* whether Divine or human; *Self* whether creating or suffering; *Self* whether one or all; but always *Self*, independent and free. “Who has seen the first-born,” says the poet, “when he who had no bones (*i.e.*, form) bore him that had bones? Where was the life, the blood, the Self of the world? Who went to ask this from any [one] that knew it?” (*Rig-Veda*, I, 164, 4). This idea of a divine Self, once expressed, everything else must acknowledge its supremacy; “*Self* is the Lord of all things, *Self* is the King of all things. As all the spokes of a wheel are contained in the nave and the circumference, all things are contained in this *Self*; all *Selves* are contained in this *Self* (*Bṛihad-āraṇyaka*, IV, 5, 15; ed. Roer, p. 487);. Brāhman itself is but *Self* (*ibid.*, p. 478; *Chhāndogya-Upanishad*, VIII, 3, 3-4).” — *Chips from a German Workshop*, (1867–75, 5-vols.), Vol. I, pp. 69-70.

² *John* x, 34, 35

³ *2 Corinthians* vi, 16

We cannot attain the Kingdom of Heaven unless we unite ourselves indissolubly with our Rex Lucis, the Lord of Splendour and Light, our Immortal God.

Therefore, we must accept the reminder, and simply remark that even in the tortured and barbarous phraseology of the *Codex Nazaræus*, we detect throughout the same idea. Like an undercurrent, rapid and clear, it runs without mixing its crystalline purity with the muddy and heavy waves of dogmatism. We find it in the *Codex*, as well as in the *Vedas*, in the *Avesta*, as in the *Abhidharma*, and in Kapila's *Sāṅkhya-Sūtras* not less than in the Fourth Gospel. We cannot attain the "Kingdom of Heaven," unless we unite ourselves indissolubly with our *Rex Lucis*, the Lord of Splendour and of Light, our Immortal God. We must first conquer immortality and "take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence," offered to our material selves. "The first man is of the earth earthy; the *second* man is from heaven. . . . Behold, I show you a *mystery*," says Paul.¹ In the religion of Śākya-Muni, which learned commentators have delighted so much of late to set down as purely *nihilistic*, the doctrine of immortality is very clearly defined, notwithstanding the European or rather Christian ideas about Nirvāna. In the sacred Jaina books, of Pattana, the dying Gautama-Buddha [319] is thus addressed:

Arise into *Nirvi* (Nirvāna) from this decrepit body into which thou hast been sent. Ascend into *thy former abode*, O blessed Avatāra!

Buddhistic philosophy does not teach annihilation. Nirvana implies impersonal life-eternal in Spirit, not in Soul. But even this actionless state is maya-illusion.

It was the Christian missionaries in China and India, who first started this falsehood about Nirvana.

This seems to us the very opposite of Nihilism. If Gautama is invited to re-ascend into his "former abode," and this abode is Nirvāna, then it is incontestable that Buddhistic philosophy does *not* teach final annihilation. As Jesus is alleged to have appeared to his disciples after death, so to the present day is Gautama believed to descend from Nirvāna. And if he has an existence there, then this state cannot be a synonym for *annihilation*.



¹ 1 Corinthians xv, 47-51

Students of Esoteric Philosophy see in the Nazarene Sage a Bodhisattva with the spirit of Buddha Himself in Him.¹

Gautama Buddha was moved by that generous feeling which locks the whole humanity within one embrace, inviting the poor, the lame, and the blind to the King's festival table, from which he excluded those who had hitherto sat alone, in haughty seclusion.

All this he did six centuries before another reformer, as noble and as loving, though less favoured by opportunity, in another land. If both, aware of the great danger of furnishing an uncultivated populace with the double-edged weapon of knowledge which gives power, left the innermost corner of the sanctuary in the profoundest shade, who that is acquainted with human nature can blame them for it? But while one was actuated by prudence, the other was forced into such a course.

Gautama, no less than all other great reformers, had a doctrine for his "elect" and another for the outside masses, though the main object of his reform consisted in initiating all, so far as it was permissible and prudent to do, without distinction of castes or wealth, to the great truths hitherto kept so secret by the selfish Brāhmanical class. Gautama Buddha it was whom we see the first in the world's history, moved by that generous feeling which locks the whole humanity within one embrace, inviting the "poor," the "lame," and the "blind" to the King's festival table, from which he excluded those who had hitherto sat alone, in haughty seclusion. It was he, who, with a bold hand, first opened the door of the sanctuary to the pariah, the fallen one, and all those "afflicted by men" clothed in gold and purple, often far less worthy than the outcast to whom their finger was scornfully pointing. All this did Siddhārtha six centuries before another reformer, as noble and as loving, though less favoured by opportunity, in another land. If both, aware of the great danger of furnishing an uncultivated populace with the double-edged weapon of *knowledge which gives power*, left the innermost corner of the sanctuary in the profoundest shade, who that is acquainted with human nature can blame them for it? But while one was actuated by prudence, the other was forced into such a course. Gautama left the esoteric and most dangerous portion of the "secret knowledge" untouched, and lived to the ripe old age of eighty, with the certainty of having taught the essential truths, and having converted to them one-third of the world; Jesus promised his disciples the knowledge which confers upon man the power *of producing far greater miracles than he ever did himself*, and he died, leaving but a few faithful men, only halfway to knowledge, to struggle with the world to which they could impart but what they *half-knew* themselves. Later, their followers disfigured truth still more than they themselves had done.

It is not true that Gautama never taught anything concerning a future life, or that he denied the immortality of the soul. Ask any intelligent Buddhist his ideas on Nirvāna, and he will unquestionably express himself, as the well-known Wong Ching Foo, the

¹ Consult "Gautama and Jesus parallel lives," in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Chinese orator, now [320] travelling in this country, did in a recent conversation with us about *Niepang* (Nirvāna). He remarked:

This condition we all understand to mean a final reunion with God, coincident with the perfection of the human spirit by its ultimate disembarassment of matter. It is the very opposite of personal annihilation.

Why did the Master recommended to his mendicants the cultivation of the four degrees of Dhyana?

Nirvāna means the certitude of personal immortality in *Spirit*, not in *Soul*, which, as a finite emanation, must certainly disintegrate its particles — a compound of human sensations, passions, and yearning for some objective kind of existence — before the immortal spirit of the *Ego* is quite freed, and henceforth secure against further transmigration in any form. And how can man ever reach this state so long as the *Upādāna*, that state of longing for *life*, more life, does not disappear from the sentient being, from the *Ahamkāra* clothed, however, in a sublimated body? It is the “Upādāna” or the intense desire which produces WILL, and it is *will* which develops *force*, and the latter generates *matter*, or an object having form. Thus the disembodied *Ego*, through this sole undying desire in him, unconsciously furnishes the conditions of his successive self-procreations in various forms, which depend on his mental state and *Karma*, the good or bad deeds of his preceding existence, commonly called “merit and demerit.” This is why the “Master” recommended to his mendicants the cultivation of the four degrees of Dhyāna, the noble “Path of the Four Truths,” *i.e.*, that gradual acquirement of stoical indifference for either life or death; that state of spiritual self-contemplation during which man utterly loses sight of his physical and dual individuality, composed of soul and body; and uniting himself with his third and higher immortal self the *real and heavenly man* merges, so to say, into the divine Essence, whence his own spirit proceeded like a spark from the common hearth. Thus the Arhat, the holy mendicant, can reach Nirvāna while yet on earth; and his spirit, totally freed from the trammels of the “psychical, terrestrial, *devilish* wisdom,” as James calls it, and being in its own nature omniscient and omnipotent, can on earth, through the sole power of his *thought*, produce the greatest of phenomena.

Eastern mystics abide by strict rules of chastity.

“It is the missionaries in China and India, who first started this falsehood about Niepang, or Niepana (Nirvāna),” says Wong Chin Foo. Who can deny the truth of this accusation after reading the works of the Abbé Dubois, for instance? A missionary who passes forty years of his life in India, and then writes that the “Buddhists admit of no other God but the body of man, and have no other object but the satisfaction of their senses,” utters an untruth which can be proved on the testimony of the laws of the Talapoïns of Siam and Burma; laws, which prevail unto this very day and which sentence a *sahān*, or *punghi* (a learned man; from the Sanskrit *pundit*), as well as a simple Talapoin, to death by [321] decapitation, for the crime of unchastity. No foreigner can be admitted into their *Kyums*, or *Vihāras* (monasteries); and yet there are

French writers, otherwise impartial and fair, who, speaking of the great severity of the rules to which the Buddhist monks are subjected in these communities, and without possessing one single fact to corroborate their scepticism, bluntly say, that

. . . notwithstanding the great laudations bestowed upon them [Talapoins] by certain travellers, merely on the *strength of appearances*, I do not believe at all in their chastity.¹

Fortunately for the Buddhist talapoins, lamas, sahāns, upasampadās,² and even sāmārēnas,³ they have popular records and facts for themselves, which are weightier than the unsupported personal opinion of a Frenchman, born in Catholic lands, whom we can hardly blame for having lost all faith in clerical virtue. When a Buddhist monk becomes guilty (which does not happen once in a century, perhaps) of criminal conversation, he has neither a congregation of tender-hearted members, whom he can move to tears by an eloquent confession of his guilt, nor a Jesus, on whose overburdened, long-suffering bosom are flung, as in a common Christian dust box, all the impurities of the race. No Buddhist transgressor can comfort himself with visions of a Vatican, within whose sin-encompassing walls black is turned into white, murderers into sinless saints, and golden or silvery lotions can be bought at the confessional to cleanse the tardy penitent of greater or lesser offenses against God and man.

Except a few impartial archæologists, who trace a direct Buddhistic element in Gnosticism, as in all those early short-lived sects, we know of very few authors who, in writing upon primitive Christianity, have accorded to the question its due importance.

Except a few impartial archæologists, who trace a direct Buddhistic element in Gnosticism, as in all those early short-lived sects, we know of very few authors, who, in writing upon primitive Christianity, have accorded to the question its due importance. Have we not facts enough to, at least, suggest some interest in that direction? Do we not learn that as early as in the days of Plato, there were “Brāchmanes” — read Buddhist, Samanean, Saman, or Shaman missionaries — in Greece, and that, at one time they had overflowed the country?⁴ Does not Pliny show them established on the shores of the Dead Sea, for “thousands of ages”? After making every necessary allowance for the exaggeration, we still have several centuries B.C. left as a margin. And is it possible that their influence should not have left deeper traces in all these sects than is generally thought? We know that the Jaina sect claims Buddhism as derived from its tenets — that Buddhism existed before Siddhārtha, better known as Gautama Buddha. The Hindu Brahmans who, by [322] the European Orientalists, are denied the right of knowing anything about their own country, or understanding their own language and records better than those who have never been in

¹ Louis Jacolliot, *Voyage au pays des éléphants* (1876), p. 252

² Buddhist chief priests at Ceylon.

³ Sāmārēna is one who studies to obtain the high office of a *Upasampadā*. He is a disciple and is looked upon as a son by the chief priest. We suspect that the Catholic seminarist must look to the Buddhists for the parentage of his title.

⁴ [See Edward Pococke’s *India in Greece*, London 1852, Full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series. — ED. PHIL.]

India, on the same principle as the Jews are forbidden, by the Christian theologians, to interpret their own Scriptures — the Brahmans, we say, have authentic records. And these show the incarnation from the Virgin Avany of the first Buddha — *divine light* — as having taken place more than some thousands of years B.C., on the island of Ceylon. The Brahmans reject the claim that it was an avatāra of Vishnu, but admit the appearance of a reformer of Brahmanism at that time. The story of the Virgin Avany and her divine son, Śākyamuni, is recorded in one of the sacred books of the Singhalese Buddhists — the *Culla-Niddesa*; and the Brāhmanic chronology fixes the great Buddhistic revolution and religious war, and the subsequent spread of Śākyamuni's doctrine in Thibet, China, Japan, and other places at 4,620 years B.C.¹

Philanthropist by nature, Gautama-Buddha's ideas were developed and matured while under the tuition of Tirthankara, the famous guru of the Jaina sect.

It is curious that three dissenting and inimical religions, Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Jainism, should agree so perfectly in their traditions and chronology, as to Buddhism.

It is clear that Gautama-Buddha, the son of the King of Kapilavastu, and the descendant of the first Śākya, through his father, who was of the Kshatriya, or warrior-caste, did not invent his philosophy. Philanthropist by nature, his ideas were developed and matured while under the tuition of Tirthankara, the famous guru of the Jaina sect. The latter claim the present Buddhism as a diverging branch of their own philosophy, and themselves, as the only followers of the first Buddha who were allowed to remain in India, after the expulsion of all other Buddhists, probably because they had made a compromise, and admitted some of the Brāhmanic notions. It is, to say the least, curious, that three dissenting and inimical religions, like Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Jainism, should agree so perfectly in their traditions and chronology, as to Buddhism, and that our scientists should give a hearing but to their own unwarranted speculations and hypotheses. If the birth of Gautama may, with some show of reason, be placed at about 600 B.C., then the preceding Buddhas ought to have some place allowed them in chronology.² The Buddhas are not gods, but simply individuals overshadowed by the spirit of *Buddha* — the divine ray. Or is it because, unable to extricate themselves from the difficulty by the help of their own researches only, our Orientalists prefer to obliterate and deny the whole, rather than accord to the Hindus the right of knowing something of their own religion and history? Strange way of discovering truths!

There is a perfect identity of philosophical thought and popular rites between the Jainas and the Buddhists.

The common argument adduced against the Jaina claim, of having been the source of the restoration of ancient Buddhism, that the principal [323] tenet of the latter religion is opposed to the belief of the Jainas, is not a sound one. Buddhists, say our

¹ Jacolliot declares, in *Les fils de Dieu*, pp. 349, 352, that he copied these dates from the *Book of the Historical Zodiacs*, preserved in the pagoda of Villianūr.

[Note 46 by Boris de Zirkoff: This is a date which may have had some special meaning to Jacolliot from whom H.P. Blavatsky copied it; but it does not coincide with any historically established facts concerning the origin and spread of Buddhism.]

² [Consult "Date of Gautama Buddha's disincarnation," in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Orientalists, deny the existence of a Supreme Being; the Jainas admit one, but protest against the assumption that the “He” can ever interfere in the regulation of the universe. We have shown in the preceding chapter that the Buddhists do not deny any such thing. But if any disinterested scholar could study carefully the Jaina literature, in their thousands of books preserved — or shall we say hidden — in Rājputāna, Jaisalmer, at Pattan, and other places;¹ and especially if he could but gain access to the oldest of their sacred volumes, he would find a perfect identity of philosophical thought, if not of popular rites, between the Jainas and the Buddhists. The *Ādi-Buddha* and *Ādinātha* (or *Ādīśvara*) are identical in essence and purpose. And now, if we trace the Jainas back, with their claims to the ownership of the oldest cave-temples (those superb specimens of Indian architecture and sculpture), and their records of an almost incredible antiquity, we can hardly refuse to view them in the light which they claim for themselves. We must admit, that in all probability they are the only true descendants of the primitive owners of old India, dispossessed by those conquering and mysterious hordes of white-skinned Brahmans whom, in the twilight of history, we see appearing at the first as wanderers in the valleys of Jumnā and Ganges. The books of the Śrāvakas — the only descendants of the Arhats or earliest Jainas, the naked forest-hermits of the days of old, might throw some light, perhaps, on many a puzzling question. But will our European scholars, so long as they pursue their own policy, ever have access to the *right* volumes? We have our doubts about this. Ask any trustworthy Hindu how the missionaries have dealt with those manuscripts which unluckily fell into their hands, and then see if we can blame the natives for trying to save from desecration the “gods of their fathers.”

If there were no Christians, there were Chrēstians long before the era of Christianity; and the Essenes belonged to the latter as well as to all other initiated brotherhoods, without even mentioning the Krishna-ites of India.

To maintain their ground Irenæus and his school had to fight hard with the Gnostics. Such, also, was the lot of Eusebius, who found himself hopelessly perplexed to know how the Essenes should be disposed of. The ways and customs of Jesus and his apostles exhibited too close a resemblance to this sect to allow the fact to pass unexplained. Eusebius tried to make people believe that the Essenes were the first Christians. His efforts were thwarted by Philo Judæus, who wrote his historical account of the Essenes and described them with the minutest care, long before there had appeared a single Christian in Palestine. But, if there were no *Christians*, there were Chrēstians long before the era of Christianity; and the Essenes belonged to the latter as well as to all other initiated brotherhoods, without even mentioning [324] the Krishna-ites of India.

Lepsius shows that the word *Nofre* means Chrēstos, “good,” and that one of the titles of Osiris, “Onnofer” [*Un-nefer*], must be translated “the goodness of God made manifest.”² Explains Mackenzie:

¹ We were told that there were nearly 20,000 of such books.

² von C. Richard Lepsius, *Königsbuch der alten Ägypter*, 1858, b. 11, tal. I, dyn. 5, h.p. In *1 Peter* ii, 3, Jesus is called “the Lord Chrēstos.”

The worship of Christ was not universal at this early date, by which I mean that Christolatry had not been introduced; but the worship of *Chrēstos* — the Good Principle — had preceded it by many centuries, and even survived the general adoption of Christianity, as shown on monuments still in existence . . . Again, we have an inscription which is pre-Christian on an epitaphial tablet,¹

Υακινθε Λαρισιαίων Δημοσιε, Ηρώς Χρηστε, Χαιρε

And de Rossi² gives us another example from the catacombs,

*Ælia Chrēste, in Pace.*³

And, *Kris*, as Jacolliot shows, means in Sanskrit “sacred.”⁴

The meritorious stratagems of the trustworthy Eusebius⁵ thus proved lost labour. He was triumphantly detected by Basnage,⁶ who, says Gibbon, “examined with the utmost critical accuracy the curious treatise of Philo,⁷ which describes the Therapeutai,” and found that “by proving it was composed as early as the time of Augustus, [he] has demonstrated, in spite of Eusebius and a crowd of modern Catholics, that the Therapeutai were neither Christians nor monks.”⁸

The esoteric significance of the Greek letter Iota, demonstrates to a Kabbalist that Jesus belonged to the Freemasonry of those days.

As a last word, the Christian Gnostics sprang into existence toward the beginning of the second century, and just at the time when the Essenes most mysteriously faded away, which indicated that they were the identical Essenes, and moreover pure *Christists*, viz.: they believed and were those who best understood what one of their own brethren had preached. In insisting that the letter Iota, mentioned by Jesus in *Matthew*,⁹ indicated a secret doctrine in relation to the ten Aeōns, it is sufficient to demonstrate to a Kabbalist that Jesus belonged to the Freemasonry of those days; for “I,” which is Iota in Greek, has other names in other languages; and is, as it was among the Gnostics of those days, a password, meaning the SCEPTRE of the FATHER, in Eastern brotherhoods which exist to this very day.

But in the early centuries these facts, if known, were purposely ignored, and not only withheld from public notice as much as possible, but vehemently denied whenever the question was forced upon discussion. The denunciations of the Fathers were

¹ Jacob Spon, *Miscellanea eruditæ antiquitatis* (Lugduni 1685), X, xviii, 2

² Giovanni Battista de Rossi, *La Roma Sotterranea Cristiana*, 1864, tome i, tav. xxi

³ Kenneth Robert Henderson Mackenzie, *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, pp. 206-7

⁴ [Louis Jacolliot, *Christna et le Christ*, p. 357]

⁵ [Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, *An ecclesiastical history: Ancient and Modern*, II, xvii]

⁶ [Jacques Basnage De Beauval, *Histoire des Juifs*, Rotterdam 1706; English translation 1708; II, ch. 20-23]

⁷ [*De vita contemplativa*]

⁸ [Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. xv, note 163]

⁹ v, 18. [Cf. ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν, ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἰῶτα ἐν ἧ μίᾳ κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου, ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται.]

rendered bitter in proportion to the truth of the claim which they endeavoured to refute. [325]

Christianity is fraudulent through and through.

“It comes to this,” writes Irenæus, complaining of the Gnostics, “they neither consent to Scripture nor tradition.”¹ And why should we wonder at that, when even the commentators of the nineteenth century, with nothing but fragments of the Gnostic manuscripts to compare with the voluminous writings of their calumniators, have been enabled to detect fraud on nearly every page? How much more must the polished and learned Gnostics, with all their advantages of personal observation and knowledge of fact, have realized the stupendous scheme of fraud that was being consummated before their very eyes! Why should they accuse Celsus of maintaining that their religion was all based on the speculations of Plato, with the difference that his doctrines were far more pure and rational than theirs, when we find Sprengel, seventeen centuries later, writing the following?

Not only did they [the Christians] think to discover the dogmas of Plato in the books of Moses, but, moreover, they fancied that, by introducing Platonism into Christianity, they would *elevate the dignity of this religion and make it more popular among the heathens.*²

The myths of “miraculous,” immaculate conception debunked.

Even the annunciation by an angel to Joseph “in a dream,” the Christians copied from the message of Apollo to Ariston, Perictione’s husband, that the child to be born from her was the offspring of that god.

They introduced it so well, that not only was the Platonic philosophy selected as a basis for the trinity, but even the legends and mythical stories which had been current among the admirers of the great philosopher — as a time-honoured homage to every hero worthy of deification — were revamped and used by the Christians. Without going so far as India, did they not have a ready model for the “miraculous conception,” in the legend about Perictionē, Plato’s mother?³ In her case it was also maintained by popular tradition that she had immaculately conceived him, and that the god Apollo was his father. Even the annunciation by an angel to Joseph “in a dream,” the Christians copied from the message of Apollo to Ariston, Perictione’s husband, that the child to be born from her was the offspring of that god. So, too, Romulus was said to be the son of Mars, by the virgin Rhea Sylvia.

Times have changed now, and even the once all-powerful clergy have to either bridle their tongues, or prove their slanderous accusations.

It is generally held by all the symbolical writers that the Ophites were found guilty of practicing the most licentious rites during their religious meetings. The same accusa-

¹ *Adversus hæreses*, III, ii, 2

² Kurt Polycarp Joachim Sprengel, *Versuch einer pragmatischen Geschichte der Arzneikunde*, Vol. II, p. 200

³ [Diogenes Lærtius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, “Plato,” § 1; Lucius Mestrius Plutarchus, *Symposiacs; Convivium Septem Sapientium*, Book VIII, i, 2]

tion was brought against the Manichæans, the Carpocratians, the Paulicians, the Albigenses — in short, against every Gnostic sect which had the temerity to claim the right to think for itself. In our modern days,¹ the 160 American sects and the 125 sects of England are not so often troubled with such accusations; times are changed, and even the once all-powerful clergy have to either bridle their tongues or prove their slanderous accusations.

We have carefully looked over the works of such authors as R. Payne Knight, [326] C.W. King, and Olshausen, which treat of our subject; we have reviewed the bulky volumes of Irenæus, Tertullian, Sozomen, Theodoret; and in none but those of Epiphanius have we found any accusation based upon direct evidence of an eye-witness. “They say”; “Some say”; “We have heard” — such are the general and indefinite terms used by the patristic accusers. Alone, Epiphanius, whose works are invariably referred to in all such cases, seems to chuckle with delight whenever he couches a lance. We do not mean to take upon ourselves to defend the sects which inundated Europe at the eleventh century, and which brought to light the most wonderful creeds; we limit our defence merely to those Christian sects whose theories were usually grouped under the generic name of *Gnosticism*. These are those which appeared immediately after the alleged crucifixion, and lasted till they were nearly exterminated under the rigorous execution of the Constantinian law. The greatest guilt of these were their syncretistic views, for at no other period of the world’s history had truth a poorer prospect of triumph than in those days of forgery, lying, and deliberate falsification of facts.

Irenæus did not furnish one single valid proof of the claims that he so audaciously advanced against every Gnostic sect which had the temerity to claim the right to think for itself, and who resorted to endless forgeries. He gives authority neither for his dates nor his assertions.

This Smyrniote worthy has not even the brutal but sincere faith of Tertullian, for he contradicts himself at every step, and supports his claims solely on acute sophistry.

But before we are forced to believe the accusations, may we not be permitted to inquire into the historical characters of their accusers? Let us begin by asking, upon what ground does the Church of Rome build her claim of supremacy for her doctrines over those of the Gnostics? Apostolic succession, undoubtedly. The succession *traditionally* instituted by the direct Apostle Peter. But what if this prove a fiction? Clearly, the whole superstructure supported upon this one imaginary stilt would fall in a tremendous crash. And when we do inquire carefully, we find that we must take the word of Irenæus *alone* for it — of Irenæus, who did not furnish one single valid proof of the claim which he so audaciously advanced, and who resorted for that to endless forgeries. He gives authority neither for his dates nor his assertions. This Smyrniote worthy has not even the brutal but sincere faith of Tertullian, for he contradicts himself at every step, and supports his claims solely on acute sophistry. Though he was undoubtedly a man of the shrewdest intellect and great learning, he fears not, in some of his assertions and arguments, to even appear an idiot in the

¹ [Last quarter of the nineteenth century]

eyes of posterity, so long as he can “carry the situation.” Twitted and cornered at every step by his not less acute and learned adversaries, the Gnostics, he boldly shields himself behind blind faith, and in answer to their merciless logic falls upon imaginary tradition invented by himself.¹ Reber wittily remarks:

As we read his misapplications of words and sentences, we would conclude that he was a lunatic if we did not know that he was something else.² [327]

So boldly mendacious does this “holy Father” prove himself in many instances, that he is even contradicted by Eusebius, more cautious if not more truthful than himself. He is driven to that necessity in the face of unimpeachable evidence. So, for instance, Irenæus asserts that Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, was a direct hearer of St. John;³ and Eusebius is compelled to show that Papias never pretended to such a claim, but simply stated that he had received his *doctrine from those who had known John*.⁴

In one point, the Gnostics had the best of Irenæus. They drove him, through mere fear of inconsistency, to the recognition of their kabbalistic doctrine of atonement; unable to grasp it in its allegorical meaning, Irenæus presented, with Christian theology as we find it in its present state of “original sin *versus* Adam,” a doctrine which would have filled Peter with pious horror if he had been still alive.

Eusebius, another champion for the propagation of Apostolic Succession, was attacked by George Syncellus for falsifying the Egyptian chronology.

The next champion for the propagation of Apostolic Succession, is Eusebius himself. Is the word of this Armenian Father any better than that of Irenæus? Let us see what the most competent critics say of him. And before we turn to modern critics at all, we might remind the reader of the scurrilous terms in which Eusebius is attacked by George Syncellus, the Vice-Patriarch of Constantinople (eighth century), for his audacious falsification of the Egyptian chronology. The opinion of Socrates, a historian of the fifth century, is no more flattering. He fearlessly charges Eusebius with perverting historical dates, in order to please the Emperor Constantine.⁵ In his chronological work, before proceeding to falsify the synchronistic tables *himself*, in order to impart to Scriptural chronology a more trustworthy appearance, Syncellus covers Eusebius with the choicest of monkish Billingsgate.⁶ *Baron Bunsen has verified the justness if not justified the politeness of this abusive reprehension*. His elaborate researches in the rectification of the *Egyptian List of Chronology*, by Manetho, led him to confess that throughout his work, the Bishop of Cæsarea “had undertaken, in a very *unscrupulous* and arbitrary spirit, to mutilate history.” He says,

¹ Irenæus, *Adversus hæreses*, III, iii, 3]

² George Reber, *The Christ of Paul; or, the Enigmas of Christianity*, p. 188; New York, 1876

³ *Adversus hæreses*, V, xxxiii, 4

⁴ *Ecclesiastical history*, etc., III, xxxix

⁵ [Socrates Scholasticus, *The ecclesiastical history of Socrates, surnamed Scholasticus, or the Advocate: comprising a history of the church in seven books, from the accession of Constantine, A.D. 305, to the 38th year of Theodosius II, including a period of 140 years. Translated from the Greek, with some account of the author, and notes selected from Valesius* (1853, I, i]

⁶ [Foul and abusive language after Billingsgate, an open air fish market in London.]

Eusebius is the originator of that systematic theory of synchronisms which has so often subsequently maimed and mutilated history in its procrustean bed.¹

To this the author of the *History of Intellectual Development of Europe* adds:

Among those who have been the most guilty of this offense, the name of the celebrated Eusebius, the Bishop of Cæsarea . . . should be designated [!].²

It will not be amiss to remind the reader that it is the same Eusebius who is charged with the interpolation of the famous paragraph concerning [328] Jesus, which was so miraculously found, in his time, in the writings of Josephus,³ the sentence in question having till that time remained perfectly unknown. Renan, in his *Vie de Jésus*, expresses a contrary opinion:

I believe the passage respecting Jesus to be authentic. *It is perfectly in the style of Josephus*; and, *if* this historian had made mention of Jesus, it is *thus* that he must have spoken of him. [Introductory]⁴

Begging this eminent scholar's pardon, we must again contradict him. Laying aside his cautious "*if*," we will merely show that though the short paragraph may possibly be genuine, and "perfectly in the style of Josephus," its several parentheses are most palpably later forgeries; and "*if*" Josephus had made any mention of Christ at all, it is *not* thus that he would "have spoken of him." The whole paragraph consists of but a few lines, and reads:

At this time was *Iêsous*, a "WISE MAN,"⁵ if, at least, *it is right to call him a man* [αὐθραῦν], for he was a doer of surprising works, and a teacher of such men as receive "the truths" with pleasure. . . . *This was the ANOINTED* [!!]. And, on an accusation by the first men among us, having been condemned by Pilate to the cross, they did not stop loving him who loved them. For *he appeared to them on the third day alive*, and the divine prophets having said these and many other wonderful things concerning him.⁶

Nine reasons for rejecting a preposterous incongruity by Josephus, supported by Renan.

This paragraph (of sixteen lines in the original) has two unequivocal assertions and one qualification. The latter is expressed in the following sentence: "If, at least, it is right to call him a man." The unequivocal assertions are contained in "This is the ANOINTED," and in that Jesus "appeared to them *on the third day alive*." History

¹ Christian Charles Josias von Bunsen, *Egypt's place in universal history: an historical investigation in five books*, Vol. I, p. 206; Vol. II, p. 438

² John William Draper, *History of Intellectual Development of Europe*, 1891, ch. vi

³ Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, 63-64

⁴ Joseph Ernest Renan, *Vie de Jésus*, 8-vols., published between 1863 and 1883

⁵ "Wise man" always meant with the ancients a Kabbalist. It means astrologer and magician. (Isaak Markus Jost, *The Israelite Indeed*,* III, p. 206) *Hakim* is a physician.

[*Consult his opus magnum, *Geschichte der Israeliten seit der Zeit der Maccabæer* (The History of the Israelites since Maccabean times), published in 9 volumes between 1820 and 1829.]

⁶ [Note 47 by Boris de Zirkoff: Consult *The Loeb Classical Library's* edition of Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. XVIII, 63-64 (pp. 48-51 in *Loeb*), wherein, in addition to the Greek and English text and translation, may be found valuable notes concerning this passage and the divergent views of various scholars as to its genuineness.]

shows us Josephus as a thorough, uncompromising, stiff-necked, orthodox Jew, though he wrote for “the Pagans.” It is well to observe the false position in which these sentences would have placed a true-born Jew, if they had really emanated from him. Their “Messiah” was then and is still expected. The Messiah is the *Anointed*, and *vice versa*. And Josephus is made to admit that the “first men” among them have accused and crucified *their* Messiah and Anointed!! No need to comment any further upon such a preposterous incongruity,¹ even though supported by so ripe a scholar as Renan.

Rough, rude, and brutal was Tertullian, the patristic firebrand.

As to that patristic firebrand, Tertullian, whom des Mousseaux apotheosizes in company with his other demigods, he is regarded by Reuss, Baur, and Schwegler, in quite a different light. The untrustworthiness of statement and inaccuracy of Tertullian, says the author of *Supernatural Religion*, [329] are often apparent.² Reuss characterizes his Christianity as

. . . *âpre, insolent, brutal, ferrailleur*. It is without unction and without charity, sometimes even *without loyalty*, when he finds himself confronted with opposition. . . . If in the second century all parties except certain Gnostics were intolerant, Tertullian was the most intolerant of all!³

The work begun by the early Fathers was achieved by the sophomorical Augustine. His supra-transcendental speculations on the Trinity; his imaginary dialogues with the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the *disclosures* and covert allusions about his ex-brethren, the Manichæans, have led the world to load Gnosticism with opprobrium, and have thrown into a deep shadow the insulted majesty of the one God, worshipped in reverential silence by every “heathen.”

Thus the whole pyramid of Roman Catholic dogmas rests not upon proof, but upon assumption.

And thus is it that the whole pyramid of Roman Catholic dogmas rests not upon proof, but upon assumption. The Gnostics had cornered the Fathers too cleverly, and the only salvation of the latter was a resort to forgery. For nearly four centuries, the great historians nearly cotemporary with Jesus had not taken the slightest notice either of his life or death. Christians wondered at such an unaccountable omission of what the Church considered the greatest events in the world’s history. Eusebius saved the battle of the day. Such are the men who have slandered the Gnostics.

The first and most unimportant sect we hear of is that of the *Nicolaitans*, of whom John, in the *Apocalypse*, makes the voice in his vision say that he hates their doctrine.⁴ These Nicolaitans were the followers, however, of Nicolas of Antioch, one of the “seven” chosen by the “twelve” to make distribution from the common fund to the

¹ Dr. Lardner rejects it as spurious, and gives *nine* reasons for rejecting it. [Cf. *The Credibility of the Gospel History; or the Principal Facts of the New Testament confirmed by Passages of Ancient Authors, who were contemporary with our Saviour or his Apostles, or lived near their time*, 1727–55.]

² Vol. II, Pt. II, ch. vii, pp. 89-90

³ [Édouard Guillaume Eugène Reuss, *Revue de théologie et de philosophie chrétienne*, XV, 1857, pp. 67 et seq.]

⁴ *Revelation* ii, 6, 15

proselytes at Jerusalem,¹ hardly more than a few weeks, or perhaps months, after the Crucifixion;² and a man “of honest report, *full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.*”³ Thus it would appear that the “Holy Ghost and wisdom” from on high, were no more a shield against the accusation of “heresy” than though they had never overshadowed the “chosen ones” of the apostles.

What is the difference between a wife and a virgin? — other than the obvious one?

It would be but too easy to detect what kind of heresy it was that offended, even had we not other and more authentic sources of information in the kabbalistic writings. The accusation and the precise nature of the “abomination” are stated in the second chapter of the book of *Revelation*.⁴ The sin was merely — *marriage*. John was a [330] “virgin”; several of the Fathers assert the fact on the authority of tradition. Even Paul, the most liberal and high-minded of them all, finds it difficult to reconcile the position of a married man with that of a faithful servant of God. There is also “a difference between a wife and a virgin.” The latter cares “for the things of the Lord,” and the former only for “how she may please her husband.”⁵ “If any man think that he behaveth uncomely towards his virgin . . . let them marry. Nevertheless, he that standeth steadfast in his heart . . . and hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed . . . that he will keep *his virgin*, doeth well.” So that he who marries “doeth well . . . but he that giveth her not in marriage *doeth better.*”⁶ “Art thou loosed from a wife?” he asks, “seek not a wife.”⁷ And remarking that according to his judgment, both will be happier if they do not marry, he adds, as a weighty conclusion: “And I think also that I have the spirit of God.”⁸ Far from this spirit of tolerance are the words of John. According to his vision there are “but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were *redeemed* from the earth,” and “these are they which were not defiled with women; for *they were virgins.*”⁹ This seems conclusive; for except Paul there is not one of these primitive *Nazari*, there “set apart” and vowed to God, who seemed to make a great difference between “sin” within the relationship of legal marriage, and the “abomination” of adultery.



¹ Acts ii, 44, 45; vi, 1-5

² Philip, the first martyr, was one of the seven, and he was stoned about the year A.D. 34.

³ verse 3

⁴ verses 14-15

⁵ *1 Corinthians* vii, 34

⁶ *ibid.*, 36-37

⁷ verse 27

⁸ verse 40

⁹ *Revelation* xiv, 3, 4

Men never forgive or relent toward those whom they injure. We hate our victims in proportion to the harm we do them.

With such views and such narrow-mindedness, it was but natural that these fanatics should have begun by casting this *iniquity* as a slur in the faces of brethren, and then “bearing on progressively” with their accusations. As we have already shown, it is only Epiphanius whom we find giving such minute details as to the Masonic “grips” and other signs of recognition among the Gnostics. He had once belonged to their number, and therefore it was easy for him to furnish particulars. Only how far the worthy Bishop is to be relied upon is a very grave question. One need fathom human nature but very superficially to find that there seldom was yet a traitor, a renegade, who, in a moment of danger turned “State’s evidence,” who would not lie as remorselessly as he betrayed. Men never forgive or relent toward those whom they injure. We hate our victims in proportion to the harm we do them. This is a truth as old as the world. On the other hand, it is preposterous to believe that such persons as the Gnostics, who, according to Gibbon,¹ were the wealthiest, proudest, most polite, as well as the most learned “of the Christian name,” were guilty of the disgusting, libidinous actions of which Epiphanius delights to accuse them. Were they even like that “set of [331] tatterdemalions, almost naked, with fierce looks,” that Lucian describes as Paul’s followers,² we would hesitate to believe such an infamous story. How much less probable then that men who were Platonists, as well as Christians, should have ever been guilty of such preposterous rites.

R. Payne Knight seems never to suspect the testimony of Epiphanius. He argues that

. . . if we make allowance for the willing exaggerations of religious hatred, and consequent popular prejudice, the general conviction that these sectarians had rites and practices of a licentious character appears too strong to be entirely disregarded.³

If the Templars were accused of applying the “holy kiss” to the root of Baphomet’s tail, St. Augustine allowed his community to go somewhat astray from the primitive way of administering the “holy kiss” at the feast of the Eucharist.

Wherever there lurks a true and sincere religious feeling, there is no room for worldly details!

If he draws an honest line of demarcation between the Gnostics of the first three centuries and those mediæval sects whose doctrines “rather closely resembled modern communism,” we have nothing to say. Only, we would beg every critic to remember that if the Templars were accused of that most “abominable crime” of applying the “holy kiss” to the root of Baphomet’s tail,⁴ St. Augustine is also suspected, and on

¹ [Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, I, xv]

² *Philopatris*, in Robert Taylor, *The Diegesis: Being a discovery of the origin, evidences, and early history of Christianity never yet before of elsewhere so fully and faithfully set forth*, Boston 1832, p. 376

³ [Richard Payne Knight, *A discourse on the worship of Priapus, and its connection with the mystic theology of the ancients*, London 1865, pp. 175-76]

⁴ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 420, note [2nd ed., 1887]

very good grounds, too, of having allowed his community to go somewhat astray from the primitive way of administering the “holy kiss” at the feast of the Eucharist. The holy Bishop seems quite too anxious as to certain details of the ladies’ toilet for the “kiss” to be of a strictly orthodox nature.¹ Wherever there lurks a true and sincere religious feeling, there is no room for worldly details.

Considering the extraordinary dislike exhibited from the first by Christians to all manner of cleanliness, we cannot enough wonder at such a strange solicitude on the part of the holy Bishop for his female parishioners, unless, indeed, we have to excuse it on the ground of a lingering reminiscence of Manichean rites!

The so-called heretics are accused of crimes in which the Church has more or less openly indulged.

It would be hard, indeed, to blame any writer for entertaining such suspicions of immorality as those above noticed, when the records of many historians are at hand to help us to make an impartial investigation. “Heretics” are accused of crimes in which the Church has more or less openly indulged even down to the beginning of our century. In 1233 Pope Gregory IV issued two bulls against the Stedingers “for various *heathen* and magical practices,”² and the latter, as a matter of course, were exterminated in the name of Christ and his Holy Mother. In 1282, a parish priest of Inverkeithing, named John, performed rites on Easter day by far worse than “magical.” Collecting a crowd of young girls, he forced them to enter into “divine ecstasies” and Bacchanalian fury, [332] dancing the old Amazonian circle-dance around the figure of the heathen “god of the gardens.” Notwithstanding that upon the complaint of some of his parishioners he was cited before his bishop, he retained his benefice because he proved that *such was the common usage of the country*.³ The Waldenses, those “earliest Protestants,” were accused of the most unnatural horrors; burned, butchered, and exterminated for calumnies heaped upon them by their accusers. Meanwhile the latter, in open triumph, forming their heathen processions of “Corpus Christi,” with emblems modelled on those of Baal-Peor⁴ and “Osiris,” and every city in Southern France carried, in yearly processions on Easter days, loaves and cakes fashioned like the so-much-decried emblems of the Hindu Śivaites and Vishnites, as late as 1825!⁵

Deprived of their old means for slandering Christian sects whose religious views differ from their own, it is now the turn of the “heathen,” Hindus, Chinese, and Japanese, to share with the ancient religions the honour of having cast in their teeth denunciations of their “libidinous religions.”

¹ Sermones, clii. See R.P. Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 107

² Cæsar Baronius, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, Vol. XXI, Anno 1233, § 41

³ *Chronicon de Lanercost*, 1201–1346; ed. J. Stevenson, Edinburgh 1839, p. 109.

⁴ [The heresy of Peor is an event related in the *Torah* at *Numbers* xxv, 1–15. Later biblical references to the event occur in *Numbers* xxv, 18 and xxxi, 16; *Deuteronomy* iv, 3, *Joshua* xxii, 17, *Hosea* ix, 10; *Psalms* cvi, 28. Another reference can be found in the New Testament, *1 Corinthians* x, 8.]

⁵ Jacques-Antoine Dulaure, *Histoire abrégée des différents cultes*, 1825, Vol. II, p. 285; [?] Martezzi, *Pagani e Cristiani*, p. 78.

Just look at the obscene bas-reliefs on the doors of St. Peter's Cathedral!

Without going far for proofs of equal if not surpassing immorality, we would remind Roman Catholic writers of certain *bas-reliefs* on the doors of St. Peter's Cathedral. They are as brazen-faced as the door itself; but less so than any author, who, knowing all this, feigns to ignore historical facts. A long succession of Popes have reposed their pastoral eyes upon these brazen pictures of the vilest obscenity, through these many centuries, without ever finding the slightest necessity for removing them. Quite the contrary; for we might name certain Popes and Cardinals who made it a life-long study to copy these heathen suggestions of "nature-gods," in practice as well as in theory.

In Polish Podolia there was some years ago, in a Roman Catholic Church, a statue of Christ in black marble. It was reputed to perform miracles on certain days, such as having its hair and beard grow in the sight of the public, and indulging in other *less* innocent wonders. This show was finally prohibited by the Russian Government. When in 1585 the Protestants took Embrun (Department of the Upper Alps), they found in the churches of this town relics of such a character, that, as the Chronicle expresses it "old Huguenot soldiers were seen to blush, several weeks after, at the bare mention of the discovery." In a corner of the Church of St. Fiacre, near Monceaux, in France, there was — and it still is there, if we mistake not — a seat called "the chair of St. Fiacre," [333] which had the reputation of conferring fecundity upon barren women. A rock in the vicinity of Athens, not far from the so-called "Tomb of Socrates," is said to be possessed of the same virtue. When, some twenty years since, the Queen Amelia [of Greece], perhaps in a merry moment, was said to have tried the experiment, there was no end of most insulting abuse heaped upon her by a Catholic Padre, on his way through Syra to some mission. The Queen, he declared, was a "superstitious heretic!" "an abominable witch!" "Jezebel using magic arts." Much more the zealous missionary would doubtless have added, had he not found himself, right in the middle of his vituperations, landed in a pool of mud outside the window. The virtuous elocutionist was forced to this unusual transit by the strong arm of a Greek officer, who happened to enter the room at the right moment.

There never was a great religious reform that was not pure at the beginning.

There never was a great religious reform that was not pure at the beginning. The first followers of Buddha, as well as the disciples of Jesus, were all men of the highest morality. The aversion felt by the reformers of all ages to vice under any shape, is proved in the cases of Śākyamuni, Pythagoras, Plato, Jesus, St. Paul, Ammonius Saccas. The great Gnostic leaders — if less successful — were not less virtuous in practice nor less morally pure. Marcion, Basilides, Valentinus,¹ were renowned for their ascetic lives. The Nicolaitans, who, if they did not belong to the great body of the Ophites, were numbered among the small sects which were absorbed in it at the beginning of the second century, owe their origin, as we have shown, to Nicolas of

¹ Valentinus is termed by Tertullian a Platonist. [*De præscriptione hæreticorum*, vii]

Antioch, “a man of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.” How absurd the idea that such men would have instituted “libidinous rites.” As well [as] accuse Jesus of having promoted the similar rites which we find practiced so extensively by the mediæval *orthodox* Christians behind the secure shelter of monastic walls.

If, however, we are asked to credit such an accusation against the Gnostics, an accusation transferred with tenfold acrimony, centuries later, to the unfortunate heads of the Templars, why should we not believe the same of the orthodox Christians? Minucius Felix states that

. . . the first Christians were accused by the world of inducing [during the ceremony of the “Perfect Passover”] each neophyte on his admission, to plunge a knife into an infant concealed under a heap of flour; the body then serving for a banquet to the whole congregation. After they had become the dominant party, they [the Christians] transferred this charge to their own dissenters.¹ [334]

The real crime of heterodoxy is plainly stated by John in his *Epistles* and *Gospel*. he “who confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh . . . is a deceiver and an *antichrist*.”² In his previous *Epistle*, he teaches his flock that there are *two* trinities³ — in short, the Nazarene system.

Nearly everything in Christianity is mere baggage brought from the Pagan Mysteries.

But the Church can claim one invention as thoroughly original with her, namely, the doctrine of eternal damnation, and one custom — that of the anathema.

The inference to be drawn from all this is that the made-up and dogmatic Christianity of the Constantinian period is simply an offspring of the numerous conflicting sects, half-castes themselves, born of Pagan parents. Each of these could claim representatives converted to the so-called *orthodox* body of Christians. And, as every newly-born dogma had to be carried out by the majority of votes, every sect coloured the main substance with its own hue, till the moment when the emperor enforced this *revealed olla-podrida*, of which he evidently did not himself understand a word, upon an unwilling world as the *religion of Christ*. Wearied in the vain attempt to sound this fathomless bog of international speculations, unable to appreciate a religion based on the pure spirituality of an ideal conception, Christendom gave itself up to the adoration of brutal force as represented by a Church backed up by Constantine. Since then, among the thousand rites, dogmas, and ceremonies copied from Paganism, the Church can claim but one invention as thoroughly original with her — namely, the doctrine of eternal damnation, and one custom, that of the anathema. The Pagans rejected both with horror. Says Plutarch:

An execration is a fearful and grievous thing. Wherefore, the priestess at Athens was commended for refusing to curse Alcibiades [for desecration of the Myster-

¹ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 197, fn. 1 [pp. 124, 334, in 2nd ed., 1887]

² 2 *John* 7

³ 1 *John* v, 7, 8

ies] when the people required her to do it; *for*, she said, *that she was a priestess of prayers and not of curses.*¹

Says Renan:

Deep researches would show that nearly everything in Christianity is mere baggage brought from the Pagan Mysteries. The primitive Christian worship is nothing but a *mystery*. The whole interior police of the Church, the degrees of initiation, the command of silence, and a crowd of phrases in the ecclesiastical language, have no other origin. The revolution which overthrew Paganism *seems* at first glance . . . an absolute rupture with the past . . . but *the popular faith saved its most familiar symbols from shipwreck*. Christianity introduced, at first, so little change into the habits of private and social life, that with great numbers in the fourth and fifth centuries it remains uncertain whether they were Pagans or Christians; many seem even to have pursued an irresolute course between the two worships.

Even primitive Christian art is nothing but Pagan art in its decay, or in its lower departments.

Speaking further of *Art*, which formed an essential part of the ancient religion, he says that

. . . *it had to break with scarce one of its traditions*. Primitive Christian art is [335] really nothing but Pagan art in its decay, or in its lower departments. The Good Shepherd of the catacombs in Rome is a copy from the Aristæus, or from the Apollo Nomios, which figure in the same posture on the Pagan sarcophagi, and still carries the flute of Pan in the midst of the four half-naked seasons. On the Christian tomb of the Cemetery of St. Calixtus, Orpheus charms the animals. Elsewhere, the Christ as Jupiter-Pluto, and Mary as Proserpine, receive the souls that Mercury, wearing the broad-brimmed hat and carrying in his hand the rod of the soul-guide (*psychopompos*), brings to them, in [the] presence of the three fates. Pegasus, the symbol of the apotheosis; Psychē, the symbol of the immortal soul; Heaven, personified by an old man; the river Jordan; and Victory, figure on a host of Christian monuments.²

And, were Christianity not composed of “secret communities” from the start, history would have more facts to record of its founder and disciples than it has.

As we have elsewhere shown, the primitive Christian community was composed of small groups scattered about and organized in secret societies, with passwords, grips, and signs. To avoid the relentless persecutions of their enemies, they were obliged to seek safety and hold meetings in deserted catacombs, the fastnesses of mountains, and other safe retreats. Like disabilities were naturally encountered by each religious reform at its inception. From the very first appearance of Jesus and his twelve disciples, we see them congregating apart, having secure refuges in the

¹ Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, § 22; *Roman Questions*, § 44.

² [Ernest Renan, “Des religions de l’antiquité et de leurs derniers historiens,” in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, May 15th, 1853]

wilderness, and among friends in Bethany, and elsewhere. Were Christianity not composed of “*secret communities*,” from the start, history would have more *facts* to record of its founder and disciples than it has.

Jesus was totally unknown to his century.

How little Jesus had impressed his personality upon his own century, is calculated to astound the inquirer. Renan shows that Philo, who died toward the year 50, and who was born many years earlier than Jesus, living all the while in Palestine while the “glad tidings” were being preached all over the country, according to the *Gospels*, had never heard of him!¹ Josephus, the historian, who was born three or four years after the death of Jesus, mentions his execution in a short sentence, and even those few words were altered “by a *Christian hand*,” says the author of the *Vie de Jésus*.² Writing at the close of the first century, when Paul, the learned propagandist, is said to have founded so many churches, and Peter is alleged to have established the apostolic succession, which the Irenæo-Eusebian chronology shows to have already included three bishops of Rome,³ Josephus, the painstaking enumerator and careful historian of even the most unimportant sects, entirely ignores the existence of a Christian sect. Suetonius, secretary of Adrian, writing in the first quarter of the second century, knows so little of Jesus or his history as to say that [336] the Emperor Claudius “banished all the Jews, who were continually making disturbances, at the instigation of one *Chrēstos*,” meaning Christ, we must suppose.⁴ The Emperor Hadrian himself, writing still later, was so little impressed with the tenets or importance of the new sect, that in a letter to Servianus he shows that he believes the Christians to be worshippers of Serapis.⁵ Says C.W. King:

In the second century the syncretistic sects had sprung up in Alexandria, the very hotbed of Gnosticism, found out in Serapis a prophetic type of Christ as the Lord and Creator of all, and Judge of the living and the dead.

Thus, while the “Pagan” philosophers had never viewed Serapis, or rather the abstract idea which was embodied in him, as otherwise than a representation of the Anima Mundi, the Christians anthropomorphized the “Son of God” and his “Father,” finding no better model for him than the idol of a Pagan myth! “There can be no doubt,” remarks the same author, “that the head of Serapis, marked as the face is by a grave and pensive majesty, supplied the first idea for the conventional portraits of the Saviour.”⁶

¹ [Note 48 by Boris de Zirkoff: This is unfortunately an erroneous statement. Philo Judæus resided mainly at Alexandria, long “a favourite abode of the learned Jews” (*The works of Philo Judæus, the contemporary of Josephus*, translated from the Greek by C.D. Yonge, Preface), but on at least one occasion visited Jerusalem.]

² [Introduction and ch. xxviii]

³ Linus, Anacletus, and Clement.

⁴ *Lives of the Cæsars*: “Claudius,” § 25

⁵ Flavius Vopiscus Syracusanus, *Vita Saturnini*, in *Scriptores historiæ Augustæ*, viii

⁶ Charles William King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediæval*, p. 68 [pp. 161-62, in 2nd ed.] In R. Payne Knight’s *Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*, Serapis is represented as wearing his hair long, “formally turned back and disposed in ringlets falling down upon his breast and shoulders like that of women. His whole person, too, is always enveloped in drapery reaching to his feet” (§ cxlv). This is the conventional picture of Christ.

Forcing upon Jesus four gospels, in which there is not a single narrative, sentence, or peculiar expression, whose parallel may not be found in some older doctrine or philosophy, is a poor compliment paid to the Supreme.

In the notes taken by a traveller — whose episode with the monks on Mount Athos we have mentioned elsewhere — we find that, during his early life, Jesus had frequent intercourse with the Essenes belonging to the Pythagorean school, and known as the *Koinobioi*. We believe it rather hazardous on the part of Renan to assert so dogmatically, as he does, that Jesus “ignored the very name of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Plato”; that he had never read a Greek nor a Buddhistic book, “although he had more than one element in him, which, unawares to himself, proceeded from Buddhism, Pārsism, and the Greek wisdom.”¹ This is conceding half a miracle, and allowing as much to chance and coincidence. It is an abuse of privilege, when an author, who claims to write historical facts, draws convenient deductions from hypothetical premises, and then calls it a biography — a *Life* of Jesus. No more than any other compiler of legends concerning the problematical history of the Nazarene prophet, has Renan one inch of secure foothold upon which to maintain himself; nor can anyone else assert a claim to the contrary, except on inferential evidence. And yet, while Renan has not one solitary fact to show that Jesus had never studied the metaphysical tenets of Buddhism and Pārsism, or heard of the philosophy of Plato, [337] his opponents have the best reasons in the world to suspect the contrary. When they find that:

- 1 All his sayings are in a Pythagorean spirit, when not *verbatim* repetitions;
- 2 His code of ethics is purely Buddhistic;
- 3 His mode of action and walk in life, Essenean; and
- 4 His mystical mode of expression, his parables, and his ways, those of an initiate, whether Grecian, Chaldæan, or, Magian (for the “Perfect,” who spoke the *hidden* wisdom, were of the same school of archaic learning the world over),

. . . it is difficult to escape from the logical conclusion that he [Jesus] belonged to that same body of initiates. It is a poor compliment paid the Supreme, this forcing upon Him four gospels, in which, contradictory as they often are, there is not a single narrative, sentence, or peculiar expression, whose parallel may not be found in some older doctrine or philosophy. Surely, the Almighty — were it but to spare future generations their present perplexity — might have brought down with Him, at His *first and only* incarnation on earth, something original — something that would trace a distinct line of demarcation between Himself and the score or so of incarnate Pagan gods, who had been born of virgins, had all been saviours, and were either killed, or otherwise sacrificed themselves for humanity.

¹ *Vie de Jésus*, ch. xxviii

We need not be frightened, if we discover traces of truth, traces even of Christian truth, among the sages and lawgivers of other nations.

Too much has already been conceded to the emotional side of the story. What the world needs is a less exalted, but more faithful view of a personage, in whose favour nearly half of Christendom has dethroned the Almighty. It is not the erudite, world-famous scholar,¹ whom we question for what we find in his *Vie de Jésus*, nor is it one of his *historical* statements. We simply challenge a few unwarranted and untenable assertions that have found their way past the emotional narrator, into the otherwise beautiful pages of the work — a life built altogether on mere probabilities, and yet that of one who, if accepted as an historical personage, has far greater claims upon our love and veneration, fallible as he is with all his greatness, than if we figure him as an omnipotent God. It is but in the latter character that Jesus must be regarded by every reverential mind as a failure.

Notwithstanding the paucity of old philosophical works now extant, we could find no end of instances of perfect identity between Pythagorean, Hindu, and New Testament sayings. There is no lack of proofs upon this point. What is needed is a Christian public that will examine what will be offered, and show common honesty in rendering its verdict. Bigotry has had its day, and done its worst. Says Professor Müller,

We need not be frightened, if we discover traces of truth, traces even of Christian truth, among the sages and lawgivers of other nations.²

After reading the following philosophical aphorisms, who can believe that Jesus and Paul had never read the Grecian and Indian philosophers? [338]

Sentences from Sextus, the Pythagorean, and other heathen

- 1 Possess those things which no one can take from you.⁴
- 2 As it is better for a part of the body to be burned, than to continue in the state in which it is, thus also it is better for a deprived man to die than to live.⁵

Verses from the New Testament³

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. (*Matthew* vi, 19)

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter *unto life* maimed, than go to hell, etc. (*Mark* ix, 43)

¹ [Joseph Ernest Renan (1823–92) was a French philologist of Semitic languages and civilizations, philosopher, biblical scholar and critic, and historian of religion, devoted to his native province of Brittany. He is best known for his influential and pioneering historical works on the origins of Early Christianity, and his political theories, especially concerning nationalism and national identity.]

² [*Chips from a German Workshop*, (1867–75, 5-vols.), Vol. I, p. 55]

³ See Mishnah, *Pirke Aboth*: a Collection of Proverbs and Sentences of the old Jewish Teachers, in which many New Testament sayings are found. [ed. Strack, Karlsruhe 1882]

⁴ Thomas Taylor, *Iamblichus' Life of Pythagoras*, "Select Sentences of Sextus the Pythagorean," p. 271

⁵ *ibid.*, from Iamblichus' *Protreptics*, p. 279

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|--|---|
| <p>3 You have in yourself something <i>similar to God</i>, and therefore use yourself <i>as the temple of God</i>.¹</p> | <p>Know ye not ye are <i>the temple of God</i>, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (<i>1 Corinthians</i> iii, 16)</p> |
| <p>4 The greatest honour which can be paid to God, is to know and imitate him.²</p> | <p>That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven . . . be ye therefore perfect even as your <i>Father</i> which is in heaven <i>is perfect</i>. (<i>Matthew</i> v, 45-48)</p> |
| <p>5 What I do not wish men to do to me, I also wish not to do to men. (<i>Analects of Confucius</i>, ch. v, xv; See Max Müller's <i>Chips</i>, etc., I, p. 304 <i>et seq.</i>)</p> | <p>Do ye unto others as ye would that others should do to you. [<i>ibid.</i>, vii, 12; <i>Luke</i> xi, 31]</p> |
| <p>6 The moon shines even in the house of the wicked. (<i>Manu</i>)</p> | <p>He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (<i>Matthew</i> v, 45)</p> |
| <p>7 They who give, have things given to them; those who withhold, have things taken from them. (<i>ibid.</i>)</p> | <p>Whosoever hath, to him shall be given . . . but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. (<i>Matthew</i> xiii, 12)</p> |
| <p>8 Purity of mind alone sees God. (<i>ibid.</i>) — still a popular saying in India.</p> | <p>Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (<i>Matthew</i> v, 8)</p> |

Drop out from Christianity the personality of Jesus, so sublime, because of its unparalleled simplicity, and what remains? History and comparative theology echo back the melancholy answer, “A crumbling skeleton formed of the oldest Pagan myths!”

Plato did not conceal the fact that he derived his best philosophical doctrines from Pythagoras, and that himself was merely the first to reduce them to systematic order, occasionally interweaving with them metaphysical speculations of his own. But Pythagoras himself got his recondite doctrines, first from the descendants of Mochus,³ and later, from the Brahmans of India. He was also initiated into the Mysteries among the hierophants of Thebes, the Persian and Chaldæan Magi. Thus, step by step do we trace the origin of most of our Christian doctrines to Middle Asia. Drop out from Christianity the personality of Jesus, so sublime, because of its unparalleled simplicity, and what remains? [339] History and comparative theology echo back the melancholy answer, “A crumbling skeleton formed of the oldest Pagan myths!”

¹ Taylor, *op. cit.*, from Sextus, p. 269

² *ibid.*

³ [Also known as Mochus of Sidon and Mochus the Phœnician, is listed by Diogenes Laërtius along with Zalmoxis the Thracian and Atlas of Mauretania, as a proto-philosopher. Athenæus claimed that he authored a work on the history of Phœnicia. Strabo, on the authority of Poseidonius, speaks of one Mochus or Moschus of Sidon as the author of the atomic theory and says that he was more ancient than the Trojan war. He is also referred to by Josephus, Tatian, and Eusebius.]

While the mythical birth and life of Jesus are a faithful copy of those of the Brahmanical Krishna, his historical character of a religious reformer in Palestine is the true type of Buddha in India.

What the Nazarene did as a consequence of his humble birth and position, Buddha did as a voluntary penance.

While the mythical birth and life of Jesus are a faithful copy of those of the Brāhmanical Krishna, his historical character of a religious reformer in Palestine is the true type of Buddha in India. In more than one respect their great resemblance in philanthropic and spiritual aspirations, as well as external circumstances, is truly striking. Though the son of a king, while Jesus was but a carpenter, Buddha was not of the high Brāhmanical caste by birth. Like Jesus, he felt dissatisfied with the dogmatic spirit of the religion of his country, the intolerance and hypocrisy of the priesthood, their outward show of devotion, and their useless ceremonials and prayers. As Buddha broke violently through the traditional laws and rules of the Brahmans, so did Jesus declare war against the Pharisees, and the proud Sadducees. What the Nazarene did as a consequence of his humble birth and position, Buddha did as a voluntary penance. He travelled about as a beggar; and — again like Jesus — later in life he sought by preference the companionship of publicans and sinners.¹ Each aimed at a social as well as at a religious reform; and giving a death-blow to the old religions of his countries, each became the founder of a new one.

The most important element of Buddhist reform has always been its social and moral code, one of the most perfect which the world has ever known, not just its metaphysical theories.

Says Max Müller:

The reform of Buddha had originally much more of a social than of a religious character . . . The most important element of Buddhist reform has always been its social and moral code, not its metaphysical theories. *That moral code . . . is one of the most perfect which the world has ever known . . .* and he whose meditations had been how to deliver the soul of man from misery and the fear of death, had delivered the people of India from a degrading thralldom and from priestly tyranny.

Further, the lecturer adds that were it otherwise,

Buddha might have taught whatever philosophy he pleased, and we should hardly have heard his name. The people would not have minded him, and his system would only have been a drop in the ocean of philosophic speculation by which India was deluged at all times.²

The same with Jesus. While Philo, whom Renan calls Jesus' elder brother, Hillel, Shammai, and Gamaliel, are hardly mentioned — Jesus has become a God! And still,

¹ [Compare "Tolstoy on how to make a poor man happy," in our Mystic Verse and Insights Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Chips from a German Workshop*, "Buddhism," Vol. I, pp. 219-20

pure and divine as was the moral code taught by Christ, it never could have borne comparison with that of Buddha, but for the tragedy of Calvary.¹ That which helped forward the deification of Jesus was his dramatic death, the voluntary sacrifice of his life, alleged to have been made for the sake of mankind, and the later convenient dogma of the atonement, invented by the Christians. [340] In India, where life is valued as of no account, the crucifixion would have produced little effect, if any. In a country:

- Where — as all the Indianists are well aware — religious fanatics set themselves to dying by inches, in penances lasting for years;
- Where the most fearful macerations are self-inflicted by fakirs;
- Where young and delicate widows, in a spirit of bravado against the government, as much as out of religious fanaticism, mount the funeral pile with a smile on their face;
- Where, to quote the words of the great lecturer,

“. . . men in the prime of life throw themselves under the car of Jagannāth, to be crushed to death by the idol they believe in; where the plaintiff who cannot get redress starves himself to death at the door of his judge; where the philosopher who thinks he has learned all which this world can teach him, and who longs for absorption into the Deity, quietly steps into the Ganges, in order to arrive at the other shore of existence.”²

— in such a country even a voluntary crucifixion would have passed unnoticed. In Judæa, and even among braver nations than the Jews — the Romans and the Greeks — where everyone clung more or less to life, and most people would have fought for it with desperation, the tragical end of the great Reformer was calculated to produce a profound impression. The names of even such minor heroes as Mucius Scævola, Horatius Cocles, the mother of the Gracchi, and others, have descended to posterity; and, during our schooldays, as well as later in life, their histories have awakened our sympathy and commanded a reverential admiration. But, can we ever forget the scornful smile of certain Hindus at Benares, when an English lady, the wife of a clergyman, tried to impress them with the greatness of the sacrifice of Jesus, in giving *his* life for us? Then, for the first time the idea struck us how much the pathos of the great drama of Calvary had to do with subsequent events in the foundation of Christianity. Even the imaginative Renan was moved by this feeling to write in the last chapter of his *Vie de Jésus*, a few pages of singular and sympathetic beauty.³ [341]

¹ [Or Golgotha, traditionally interpreted as reflecting Syriac *golgoltam*, a site outside Jerusalem's walls where Jesus was crucified. The subject matter has inspired several authors.]

² Max Müller, “Christ and other Masters,” *Chips*, etc., Vol. I, p. 58

³ *Das Leben Jesu* by Strauss, which Renan calls “*un livre, commode, exact, spirituel et consciencieux*” (a handy, exact, witty, and conscientious book), rude and iconoclastic as it is, is nevertheless in many ways preferable to the *Vie de Jésus*, of the French author. Laying aside the intrinsic and historical value of the two works — with which we have nothing to do — we now simply point to Renan's distorted outline-sketch of Jesus. We cannot think what led Renan into such an erroneous delineation of character. Few of those who, while rejecting the divinity of the Nazarene prophet, still believe that he is no myth, can read the work without experiencing an uneasy, and even angry feeling at such a psychological mutilation. He makes of Jesus a sort of sentimental ninny, a theatrical simpleton, enamoured of his own poetical divagations and speeches, wanting everyone to adore

The similar lives of Apollonius, Jesus, and Buddha.¹

Apollonius was the friend of kings and moved with the aristocracy, while Jesus, representing the people, “had nowhere to lay his head.”

Apollonius, a contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, was, like him, an enthusiastic founder of a new spiritual school. Perhaps less metaphysical and more practical than Jesus, less tender and perfect in his nature, he nevertheless inculcated the same quintessence of spirituality, and the same high moral truths. His great mistake was to confine them too closely to the higher classes of society. While to the poor and the humble Jesus preached “Peace on earth and good will to men,” Apollonius was the friend of kings, and moved with the aristocracy. He was born among the latter, and himself a man of wealth, while the “Son of man,” representing the people, “hath not where to lay his head”;² nevertheless, the two “miracle-workers” exhibited striking similarity of purpose. Still earlier than Apollonius had appeared Simon Magus, called “the great Power of God.” His “miracles” are both more wonderful, more varied, and better attested than those either of the apostles or of the Galilean philosopher himself. Materialism denies the fact in both cases, but history affirms. Apollonius followed both; and how great and renowned were his miraculous works in comparison with those of the alleged founder of Christianity as the Kabbalists claim, we have history again, and Justin Martyr, to corroborate.³

But like Buddha and Jesus, Apollonius was the uncompromising enemy of all outward show of piety, all display of useless religious ceremonies and hypocrisy.

Like Buddha and Jesus, Apollonius was the uncompromising enemy of all outward show of piety, all display of useless religious ceremonies and hypocrisy. If, like the Christian Saviour, the sage of Tyana had by preference sought the companionship of the poor and humble; and if instead of dying comfortably, at over one hundred years of age, he had been a voluntary martyr, proclaiming divine Truth from a cross,⁴ [342]

him, and finally caught in the snares of his enemies. Such was not Jesus, the Jewish philanthropist, the adept and mystic of a school now forgotten by the Christians and the Church — if it ever was known to her; the hero, who preferred even to risk death, rather than withhold some truths which he believed would benefit humanity. We prefer Strauss who openly names him an impostor and a pretender, occasionally calling in doubt his very existence; but who at least spares him that ridiculous colour of sentimentalism in which Renan paints him.

¹ [Consult “Gautama and Jesus parallel lives,” and “Blavatsky on Apollonius of Tyana,” in our *Buddhas and Initiates Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

² [Matthew viii, 20]

³ See ch. III, p. 97 of the present Volume.

⁴ In a recent work, called *The World’s Sixteen Crucified Saviors; or, Christianity Before Christ, Containing New, Startling, and Extraordinary Revelations in Religious History, which Disclose the Oriental Origin of All the Doctrines, Principles, Precepts, and Miracles of the Christian New Testament, and Furnishing a Key for Unlocking Many of Its Sacred Mysteries, Besides Comprising the History of 16 Heathen Crucified Gods*, 1875 (by Mr. Kersey Graves) which attracted our notice by its title, we were indeed startled, as we were forewarned on the title-page we should be, by *historical* evidences to be found neither in history nor tradition. Apollonius, who is represented in it as one of these sixteen “saviours,” is shown by the author as finally “*crucified* . . . having risen from the dead . . . appearing to his disciples after his resurrection, and” — like Christ again — “convincing a Tommy [?] Didymus by getting him to feel the print of the nails on his hands and feet.” (p. 268, ed. 1875) To begin with, neither Philostratus, the biographer of Apollonius, nor history says any such thing. Though the precise time of his death is unknown, no disciple of Apollonius ever said that he was either crucified, or appeared to them. So much for one “Saviour.” After that we are told that Gautama-Buddha, whose life and death have been so minutely described by several authorities, Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire included, was also “*crucified* by his enemies near the foot of the Nepal mountains”; (see p. 107) while the Buddhist books, history, and scientific research

his blood might have proved as efficacious for the subsequent dissemination of spiritual doctrines as that of the Christian Messiah.

The calumnies set afloat against Apollonius, were as numerous as they were false.

The calumnies set afloat against Apollonius, were as numerous as they were false. So late as eighteen centuries after his death he was defamed by Bishop Douglas in his work against miracles. In this, the Right Reverend bishop crushed himself against historical facts.

If we study the question with a dispassionate mind, we will soon perceive that the ethics of Gautama Buddha, Plato, Apollonius, Jesus, Ammonius Saccas, and his disciples, were all based on the same mystic philosophy; that all worshipped one God, whether they considered Him as the “Father” of humanity, who lives in man as man lives in Him, or as the Incomprehensible Creative Principle; all led God-like lives. Ammonius, speaking of his philosophy, taught that their school dated from the days of Hermes, who brought his wisdom from India. It was the same mystical contemplation throughout, as that of the Yogin: the communion of the Brahman with his own luminous Self — the “Ātman.” And this Hindu term is again kabbalistic, *par excellence*. Who is “Self”? is asked in the *Rig-Veda*;

Self is the Lord of all things . . . all things are contained in this Self; all selves are contained in this Self. Brāhman itself is but Self,¹

is the answer. Says *Idrah Rabbah*:

All things are Himself, and Himself is *concealed* on every side.²

The groundwork of the Eclectic School was identical with the doctrines of the Yogins, the Hindu mystics, and the earlier Buddhism of the disciples of Gautama.

The “Adam Kadmon of the Kabbalists contains in himself all the souls of the Israelites, and he is himself in every soul,” says the *Zohar*.³ The groundwork of the Eclectic School was thus identical with the doctrines of the Yogins, the Hindu [343] mystics, and the earlier Buddhism of the disciples of Gautama. And when Jesus assured his

tell us, through the lips of Max Müller and a host of Orientalists, that Gautama Buddha, (Śākya-muni) died near the Ganges. “He had nearly reached the city of Kuśināgara, when his vital strength began to fail. He halted in a forest, and while sitting under a sāl tree he gave up the ghost.” (Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 216). The references of Mr. Graves to Higgins and Sir W. Jones, in some of his hazardous speculations, prove nothing. Max Müller shows some antiquated authorities writing elaborate books “in order to prove that Buddha had been in reality the Thoth of the Egyptians; that he was Mercury, or Wodan, or Zoroaster, or Pythagoras. Even Sir W. Jones identified Buddha first with Odin, and afterwards with Shishak.” (*Chips*, etc., I, p. 222) We are in the nineteenth century, not in the eighteenth; and though to write books on the authority of the earliest Orientalists may in one sense be viewed as a mark of respect for old age, it is not always safe to try the experiment in our times. Hence this highly instructive volume lacks one important feature which would have made it still more interesting. The author should have added after Prometheus the “Roman,” and Alcides the *Egyptian god* (p. 300) a seventeenth “crucified Saviour” to the list, “Venus, god of the war,” introduced to an admiring world by Artemus Ward the “showman”!

¹ *Chhândogya-Upanishad*, viii, 3, 4; Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 70

² *Idrah Rabbah* [Book of the Greater Assembly], § 171

³ Christian Knorr von Rosenroth, *Kabbala Denudata*, Vol. II, pp. 304 *et seq.* [A partial English translation of the *Kabbala Denudata* was made by S.L. MacGregor Mathers in 1887, and this is still in print by several publishers under the title *The Kabbalah Unveiled*.]

disciples that “the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because *it seeth Him not*, neither knoweth Him,” dwells *with* and *in* them, who “are in Him and He in them,”¹ he but expounded the same tenet that we find running through every philosophy worthy of that name.

Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire on the two Christs.

Saint-Hilaire, the learned and sceptical French savant, does not believe a word of the miraculous portion of Buddha’s life; nevertheless, he has the candour to speak of Gautama as being *only second* to Christ in the great purity of his ethics and personal morality. For both of these opinions he is respectfully rebuked by des Mousseaux. Vexed at this scientific contradiction of his accusations of demonolatry against Gautama-Buddha, he assures his readers that “ce savant distingué n’avait point étudié cette question.”²

Gautama Buddha is the perfect model of all the virtues he preaches: his abnegation, his charity, his unalterable sweetness of disposition, do not fail him for one instant.

Remarks in his turn Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire:

I do not hesitate to say that, except Christ alone, there is not among the founders of religions, a figure either more pure or more touching than that of Buddha. His life is spotless. His constant heroism equals his convictions . . . He is the perfect model of all the virtues he preaches; his abnegation, his charity, his unalterable sweetness of disposition, do not fail him for one instant. He abandoned, at the age of twenty-nine, his father’s court to become a monk and a beggar . . . and when he dies in the arms of his disciples, it is with the serenity of a sage who practiced virtue all his life, and who dies convinced of having found the truth.³

This deserved panegyric is no stronger than the one which Laboulaye himself pronounced,⁴ and which occasioned des Mousseaux’s wrath. “It is more than difficult,” adds the former, “to understand how men not assisted by revelation could have soared so high and approached so near the truth.”⁵ Curious that there should be so many lofty souls “not assisted by revelation”!



¹ John xiv, 17

² Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *La Magie au dix-neuvième siècle, ses agents, ses vérités, ses mensonges, précédée d’une lettre adressée à l’auteur par le P. Ventura de Raulica*, p. 74 fn.

³ Jules Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, *Le Bouddha et sa religion*, Paris 1860, Introduction, p. v

⁴ [Cf. Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, pp. 220-21]

⁵ *Journal des Débats*, April 4th, 1853

He who lives for humanity does even more than him who dies for it.

And why should anyone feel surprised that Gautama could die with philosophical serenity? As the Kabbalists justly say,

Death does not exist, and man never steps outside of universal life. Those whom we think dead live still in us, as we live in them . . . The more one lives for his kind, the less need he fear to die.¹

And, we might add, that he who *lives* for humanity does even more than him who dies for it.

The *Ineffable Name*,² in the search for which so many Kabbalists — unacquainted with any Oriental or even European adept — vainly consume their knowledge and lives, dwells latent in the heart of every man. [344] This mirific name which, according to the most ancient oracles, “rushes into the infinite worlds [ακοιμητω στροφαλιγγι],”³ can be obtained in a twofold way: by regular initiation, and through the “small voice” which Elijah heard in the cave of Horeb, the mount of God. And,

. . . when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his *face in his mantle*, and went out, and stood in the entering of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him.⁴

When Apollonius of Tyana desired to hear the “small voice,” he used to wrap himself up entirely in a mantle of fine wool, on which he placed both his feet, after having performed certain magnetic passes, and pronounced not the “name,” but an invocation well known to every adept. Then he drew the mantle over his head and face, and his translucid or astral spirit was free. On ordinary occasions he wore wool no more than the priests of the temples. The possession of the secret combination of the “name” gave the hierophant supreme power over every being, human or otherwise, inferior to himself in soul-strength. Hence, when Max Müller⁵ tells us of the Quiché “Hidden majesty, which was never to be opened by human hands,” the Kabbalist perfectly understands what was meant by the expression, and is not at all surprised to hear even this most erudite philologist exclaim: “What it was we do not know!”



¹ Éliphas Lévi, *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*, Vol. II, ch. xiii

² [Consult “Proposition 1 - The Ineffable Name,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ [Proclus, *On the Cratylus of Plato*]

⁴ [1 *Kings* xix, 13]

⁵ [*Chips*, etc., Vol. I, p. 340]

It is only through the doctrines of Pythagoras, Confucius, and Plato, that we can comprehend the idea which underlies the term “Father” in the New Testament.¹

We cannot too often repeat that it is only through the doctrines of the more ancient philosophies that the religion preached by Jesus may be understood. It is through Pythagoras, Confucius, and Plato, that we can comprehend the idea which underlies the term “Father” in the New Testament. Plato’s ideal of the Deity, whom he terms the one everlasting, invisible God, the Fashioner and Father of all things,² is rather the “Father” of Jesus. It is this Divine Being of whom the Grecian sage says that He can neither be envious nor the originator of evil, for He can produce nothing but what is good and just,³ is certainly not the Mosaic Jehovah, the “jealous God,” but the God of Jesus, who “alone is good.” He extols His all-embracing, divine power,⁴ and His omnipotence, but at the same time intimates that, as He is unchangeable, He can never desire to change his laws, *i.e.*, to extirpate evil from the world through a miracle.⁵ He is omniscient, and nothing escapes His watchful eye.⁶ His justice, which we find embodied in the law of compensation and retribution, will leave no crime without punishment, no virtue without its reward;⁷ and therefore he declares that the only way to honour God is to cultivate moral purity. He utterly rejects not only the anthropomorphic [345] idea that God could have a material body,⁸ but rejects with disgust those fables which ascribe passions, quarrels, and crimes of all sorts to the minor gods.⁹ He indignantly denies that God allows Himself to be propitiated, or rather bribed, by prayers and sacrifices.¹⁰

Plato on Humanity’s First Root-Race, the Astral Sons of Yoga, self-existent and self-born.

Neither flood nor fire could destroy them. They disappeared in the Second Race without either begetting it, procreating it, or dying.

The *Phædrus* of Plato displays all that man once was, and that which he may yet become again.

Before man’s spirit sank into sensuality and was embodied with it through the loss of his wings, he lived among the gods in the airy [spiritual] world where everything is true and pure.

¹ [For the difference between the “Father in Heaven” of the Churches, and the “Father who is in Secret” of Matthew, look up our drawing on page 185. — ED. PHIL.]

² Plato, *Timæus*, 28c, 3a, 37c; *Politicus*, 269e

³ *Timæus*, 29e; *Phædrus*, 182, 247a; *Republic*, II, 379b

⁴ *Laws*, IV, 715e; X, 901c

⁵ *Republic*, II, 381c; *Theætetus*, 176a-b

⁶ *Laws*, X, 901d

⁷ *Laws*, IV, 716a; *Republic*, X, 613a

⁸ *Phædrus*, 246d

⁹ Eduard Zeller, *Plato and the Older Academy*, 1876

¹⁰ *Laws*, X, 905d

In the *Timæus* he says that

. . . there was a time when mankind did not perpetuate itself, but lived as pure spirits.

In the future world, says Jesus, “they neither marry nor are given in marriage,” but “live as the angels of God in Heaven.”¹

Abbé Huc² was struck off the list of missionaries at Rome after his book of travels was published, for pointing out the similarities between the Buddhist and Roman Catholic ceremonials.

The researches of Laboulaye, Anquetil-Duperron, Colebrooke, Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, Max Müller, Spiegel, Burnouf, Wilson, and so many other linguists, have brought some of the truth to light. And now that the difficulties of the Sanskrit, the Thibetan, the Singhalese, the Zend, the Pehlevi, the Chinese, and even of the Burmese, are partially conquered, and the *Vedas*, and the *Zend-Avesta*, the Buddhist texts, and even Kapila’s *Sūtras* are translated, a door is thrown wide open, which, once passed, must close forever behind any speculative or ignorant calumniators of the old religions. Even till the present time, the clergy have to use the words of Max Müller,

. . . generally appealed to the devilries and orgies of heathen worship . . . but they have seldom, if ever, endeavoured to discover the true and original character of the strange forms of faith and worship which they call the work of the devil.³

When we read the true history of Buddha and Buddhism by Müller, and the enthusiastic opinions of both expressed by Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, and Laboulaye; and when, finally, a Popish missionary, an eyewitness, and one who least of all can be accused of partiality to the Buddhists — the Abbé Huc, we mean — finds occasion for nothing but admiration for the high individual character of these “devil-worshippers”; we must consider Śākyamuni’s philosophy as something more than the religion of fetishism and atheism, which the Catholics would have us believe it. Huc was a missionary and it was his first duty to regard Buddhism as no better than an outgrowth of the worship of Satan. The poor Abbé was struck off the list of missionaries at Rome,⁴ after his [346] book of travels was published. This illustrates how

¹ [Matthew xxii, 30. Consult “Blavatsky on Marriage, Divorce, and Celibacy,” in our Blavatsky Speaks Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [Évariste Régis Huc, C.M. (1813–60) was a French missionary Catholic priest and traveller, famous for his accounts of China, Tartary and Tibet, in his book *A Journey Through the Chinese Empire*. Huc stimulated European interest in Central Asia and blazed a trail for Asian studies.]

³ Friedrich Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, (1867–75, 5-vols.), Vol. I, p. 184

⁴ Of the Abbé Huc, Max Müller thus wrote in his *Chips*, etc., Vol. I, p. 180:

The late Abbé Huc pointed out the similarities between the Buddhist and Roman Catholic ceremonials with such a *naïveté*, that, to his surprise, he found his delightful Travels in Tartary, Thibet, etc., placed on the Index. “One cannot fail being struck,” he writes, “with their great resemblance with the Catholicism. The bishop’s crosier, the mitre, the dalmatic, the round hat that the great lamas wear in travel . . . the mass, the double choir, the psalmody, the exorcisms, the censer with five chains to it, opening and shutting at will, the blessings of the lamas, who extend their right hands over the head of the faithful ones, the rosary, the celibacy of the clergy, the penances and retreats, the cultus of the Saints, the fasting, the processions, the litanies, the holy water; such are the similarities of the Buddhists with ourselves.” He might have added tonsure, relics, and the confessional.

little we may expect to learn the truth about the religions of other people, through missionaries, when their accounts are first revised by the superior ecclesiastical authorities, and the former severely punished for telling the truth.

Indian ascetics have no sin of the flesh to be conscious of and, therefore, are not ashamed of their nakedness.

When these men who have been and still are often termed “the obscene ascetics,” the devotees of different sects of India in short, generally termed “Yogins,” were asked by Marco Polo, “how it comes that they are not ashamed to go stark naked as they do?” they answered the inquirer of the thirteenth century as a missionary of the nineteenth was answered. They say,

We go naked because naked we came into the world, and we desire to have nothing about us that is of this world. Moreover we have no sin of the flesh to be conscious of, and therefore, we are not ashamed of our nakedness any more than you are to show your hand or your face. You who are conscious of the sins of the flesh do well to have shame, and to cover your nakedness.¹

One could make a curious list of the excuses and explanations of the clergy to account for similarities daily discovered between Romanism and heathen religions. Yet the summary would invariably lead to one sweeping claim: The doctrines of Christianity were plagiarized by the Pagans the world over! Plato and his older Academy stole the ideas from the Christian revelation — said the Alexandrian Fathers!! The Brahmans and Manu borrowed from the Jesuit missionaries, and the *Bhagavad-Gītā* was the production of Father Calmet, who transformed Christ and John into *Khrisna* and Arjuna to fit the Hindu mind!! The trifling fact that Buddhism and Platonism both antedated Christianity, and the *Vedas* had already degenerated into Brahmanism before the days of Moses, makes no difference. The same with regard to Apollonius of Tyana. Although his thaumaturgical powers could not be denied in the face of the testimony of emperors, their courts, and the populations of several cities; and although few of these had ever heard of the Nazarene prophet whose “miracles” had been witnessed by a few apostles only, whose very individualities remain to this day a problem in history, yet Apollonius has to be accepted as the “monkey of Christ.”

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A priest knows himself to be an impostor, unless he be a fool, or have been taught to lie from boyhood.

If of really pious, good, and honest men, many are yet found among the Catholic, Greek, and Protestant clergy, whose sincere faith has the best of their reasoning powers, and who having never been among heathen populations, are unjust only through ignorance, it is not so with the missionaries. The invariable subterfuge of the latter is to attribute to demonolatry the really Christ-like life of the Hindu and Buddhist ascetics and many of the lamas. Years of sojourn among “heathen” nations, in China, Tartary, Thibet, and Hindostan have furnished them with ample evidence how unjustly the so-called idolaters have been slandered. The missionaries have not even

¹ John Crawford, *Journal of an embassy from the governor-general of India to the courts of Siam and Cochin China; exhibiting a view of the actual state of those kingdoms*, 1830, p. 182. [Cf. *Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. II, p. 352; ed. 1875.]

the excuse of sincere faith to give the world that they mislead; and, with very few exceptions, one may boldly paraphrase the remark made by Garibaldi, and say that:

A priest knows himself to be an impostor, unless he be a fool, or have been taught to lie from boyhood.

