THE HERB DANGEROUS

PART II

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HASHISH

BY

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THE HERB DANGEROUS

I

"The girders of the Soul, which give her breathing, are easy to be unloosed."

"Nature teaches us, and the oracles also affirm, that even the evil germs of matter may alike become useful and good."

ZOROASTER.

COMPARABLE to the Alf Laylah was Laylah itself, a very Tower of Babel, partaking alike of truth both gross and subtle inextricably interwoven with the most fantastic fable, is our view of the Herb—Hashish—the Herb Dangerous. Of the investigators who have pierced even for a moment the magic veil of its glamour ecstatic many have been appalled, many disappointed. Few have dared to crush in arms of steel this burning daughter of the Jinn; to ravish from her poisonous scarlet lips the kisses of death, to force her serpent-smooth and serpent-stinging body down to some infernal torture-couch, and strike her into spasm as the lightning splits the cloud-wrack, only to read in her infinite sea-green eyes the awful price of her virginity—black madness.

Even supreme Richard Burton, who solved nigh every other riddle of the Eastern Sphinx, passed this one by. He took the drug for months "with no other symptom than increased appetite," and in his general attitude to hashish-

intoxication (spoken of often in the "Nights") shows that he regards it as no more than a vice, and seems not to suspect that, vice or no, it had strange fruits; if not of the Tree of Life, at least of that other Tree, double and sinister and deadly. . . .

Nay! for I am of the Serpent's party; Knowledge is good, be the price what it may.

Such little fruit, then, as I may have culled from her autumnal breast (mere unripe berries, I confess!) I hasten to offer to my friends.

And lest the austerity of such a goddess be profaned by the least vestige of adornment I make haste to divest myself of whatever gold or jewellery of speech I may possess, to advance, my left breast bare, without timidity or rashness, into her temple, my hoped reward the lamb's skin of a clean heart, the badge of simple truthfulness and the apron of innocence.

In order to keep this paper within limits, I may premise that the preparation and properties of *Cannabis indica* can be studied in the proper pharmaceutical treatises, though, as this drug is more potent psychologically than physically, all strictly medical accounts of it, so far as I am aware, have been hitherto both meagre and misleading. Deeper and clearer is the information to be gained from the brilliant studies by Baudelaire, unsurpassed for insight and impartiality, and Ludlow, tainted by admiration of de Quincey and the sentimentalists.*

* At the time of writing this article, I had only glanced rapidly through Baudelaire's essay. When I made the experiments, I knew only Ludlow, and the brief note in "Martindale and Westcott." My research results, therefore,

My contribution to the subject will therefore be strictly personal, and so far incomplete; indeed in a sense valueless, since in such a matter personality may so largely outweigh all other factors of the problem. At the same time I must insist that my armour is more complete in several directions than that of my predecessors, inasmuch as I possess the advantage not only of a prolonged psychological training, a solid constitution, a temperament on which hashish acts by exciting perception (Saññа) quite unalloyed by sensation (Vedana) and a perfect scepticism; but also of more than an acquaintance with ceremonial drunkenness among many nations and with the magical or mystical processes of all times and all races. It may fairly be retorted upon me that this unique qualification of mine is the very factor which most vitiates my results. However . . .

With the question of intoxication considered as a key to knowledge let me begin, for from that side did I myself first suspect the existence of the drug which (as I now believe) is some sublimated or purified preparation of *Cannabis indica.*

II

"Labour thou around the Strophalos of Hecate."

ZOROASTER.

In 1898–1899 I had just left Cambridge and was living in rooms in Chancery Lane, honoured by the presence of Allan Bennett (now Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya) as my guest.

such as they are, are unbiased by knowledge. The coincidences with Baudelaire now appear very striking.

Together for many months we studied and practised Ceremonial Magic, and ransacked the ancient books and MSS. of the reputed sages for a key to the great mysteries of life and death. Not even fiction was neglected, and it was from fiction that we gathered one tiny seed-fact, which (in all these years) has germinated to the present essay.

Through the ages we found this one constant story. Stripped of its local and chronological accidents, it usually came to this—the writer would tell of a young man, a seeker after the Hidden Wisdom, who, in one circumstance or another, meets an adept; who, after sundry ordeals, obtains from the said adept, for good or ill, a certain mysterious drug or potion, with the result (at least) of opening the gate of the Other-world. This potion was identified with the Elixir Vitæ of the physical Alchemists, or one of their "Tinctures," most likely the "White Tincture" which transforms the base metal (normal perception of life) to silver (poetic conception), and we sought it by fruitless attempts to poison ourselves with every drug in (and out of) the Pharmacopœia.

Like Huckleberry Finn's prayer, nuffin' come of it.

I must now, like the Baker, skip forty years, or rather eight, and reach a point where my travels in India had familiarised me with their systems of meditation and with the fact that many of the lesser Yogis employed hashish (whether vainly or no we shall discuss later) to obtain Samadhi, that oneness with the Universe, or with the Nothingness, which is the feeble expression by which alone we can shadow that supreme trance. I had also the advantage of falling across Ludlow's book, and was struck by the circumstance that he, obviously ignorant of Vedantist and

Yogic doctrines, yet approximately expressed them, though in a degraded and distorted form.

I was also aware of the prime agony of meditation, the "dryness"* (as Molinos calls it) which hardens and sterilises the soul.

The very practice which should flood it with light leads only to a darkness more terrible than death, a despair and disgust which only too often lead to abandonment, when in truth they should encourage, for that—as the oracles affirm—it is darkest before the dawn.

Meditation therefore annoyed me, as tightening and constricting the soul. I began to ask myself if the "dryness' was an essential part of the process. If by some means I could shake its catafalque of Mind, might not the Infinite Divine Spirit leap unfettered to the Light?

Who shall roll away the stone?

Let it not be imagined that I devised these thoughts from pure sloth or weariness. But with the mystical means then at my disposal, I required a period of days or of weeks to obtain any Result, such as Samadhi in one of its greater or lesser forms; and in England the difficulties were hardly to be overcome. I found it impossible to meditate in the cold, and fires will not last equably. Gas stinks abominably; heating apparatus does not heat; electricity has hitherto not been available. When I build my temple, I shall try it.

The food difficulty could be overcome by Messrs. Fortnum and Mason, the noise difficulty by training, the leisure difficulty

* The period of the rule of Apophis in the mystic regenerative process Isis Apophis Osiris I A O; or the Black Dragon in the alchemical translation from the First Matter of the Work into the Elixir.

by sending all business to the devil, the solitude difficulty by borrowing a vacant flat; but the British climate beat me. I hope one day to be rich enough to build a little house expressly for the purpose; but at present there is on the horizon no cloud even so large as the littlest finger of a man!

If only, therefore, I could reduce the necessary period to a few hours!

Moreover, I could persuade other people that mysticism was not all folly without insisting on their devoting a lifetime to studying under me; and if only I could convince a few competent observers—in such a matter I distrust even myself—Science would be bound to follow and to investigate, clear up the matter once for all, and, as I believed, and believe, arm itself with a new weapon ten thousand times more potent than the balance and the microscope.

Imagine me, therefore, if you please, selecting these few facts from the millions of others in the armoury of my brain, dovetailing them, and at last formulating an hypothesis verifiable by experiment.

III

"But I evolve all these mysteries in the profound abyss of Mind."—ZOROASTER.

This was my hypothesis:

"Perhaps hashish is the drug which 'loosens the girders of the soul,' but is in itself neither good nor bad. Perhaps, as Baudelaire thinks, it merely exaggerates and distorts the natural man and his mood of the moment." The whole of

Ludlow's wonderful introspection seemed to me to fortify this suggestion.

"Well, then, let me see whether by first exalting myself mystically and continuing my invocations while the drug dissolved the matrix of the diamond Soul, that diamond might not manifest limpid and sparkling, a radiance 'not of the Sun, nor of the Moon, nor of the Stars';" and then, of course, I remembered that this ceremonial intoxication constitutes the supreme ritual of all religions.

First, however, it was necessary to determine the normal action of the drug upon my particular organisation. There are various preparations of *Cannabis indica*, all alike in this, that their action is so uncertain as to be not easily or surely standardised. It is not even a question of reasonable limits: of two samples apparently alike one may be fifty times stronger than the other. A sample may apparently degenerate 50 per cent. in strength within a few days. Some samples may be totally inert.

This fact has led to the almost total abandonment of the use of the drug in medicine.

Further, the personal equation counts for much. Allan Bennett in Chancery Lane had on one occasion taken sufficient Conium (hemlock) to kill forty men without the smallest result of any kind.

In Kandy I had (for the first time in my life) taken two hundred and twenty-five drops of Laudanum in five hours, also with no more result than would have been produced by ten drops upon the average man.

Our equation was therefore composed exclusively of variables, and wide variables at that! Nothing for it, then,

but rule-of-thumb! The old Chancery Lane rule: begin with half the minimum dose of the Pharmacopœia, and if nothing happens within the expected time, double the dose. If you go on long enough, something is nearly sure to happen!

IV

"The Mind of the Father said Into Three! and immediately all things were so divided."—ZOROASTER.

Let my readers be good enough to remember, then, that what follows concerns myself only. This must excuse the use of the first person, highly improper in a scientific essay, were it not that the personality of the experimenter is perhaps an essential. I cannot assert that my results would be achieved by another. Yet I have the strong conviction that I have eliminated many sources of error, and that my observations may possess a more absolute value in psychology than those of Ludlow or even of my great master Baudelaire. The few on whom I have been able to test the drug have in large measure confirmed, and in no way contradicted, my results.

In the first place, I make an absolute distinction between three effects of hashish, which may be, and I think probably are—so distinct they appear—due to three separate substances.

Possibly a simple stimulus-curve may account for it, but I do not think so.

1. *The volatile aromatic effect* (α).

This, the first evanescent symptom, gives the "thrill" described by Ludlow, as of a new pulse of power pervading

one. Psychologically, the result is that one is thrown into an absolutely perfect state of introspection. One perceives one's thoughts and nothing but one's thoughts, and it is as thoughts that one perceives them. Material objects are only perceived as thoughts; in other words, in this respect, one possesses the direct consciousness of Berkeleyan idealism. The Ego and the Will are not involved; there is introspection of an almost if not quite purely impersonal type; that, and nothing more.

I am not to be understood as asserting that the results of this introspection are psychologically valid.

2. *The toxic hallucinative effect* (β).

With a sufficiently large dose—for it is possible to get effect (α) only as a transient phenomenon—the images of thought pass more rapidly through the brain, at last vertiginously fast. They are no longer recognised as thoughts, but imagined as exterior. The Will and the Ego become alarmed, and may be attacked and overwhelmed. This constitutes the main horror of the drug; it is to be combated by a highly—may I say magically?—trained will.

I trust my readers will concede that the practice of ceremonial magic and meditation, all occult theories apart, do lead the mind to immense power over its own imaginations.

The fear of being swept away in the tide of relentless images is a terrible experience. Woe to who yields!

3. *The narcotic effect* (γ).

One simply goes off to sleep. This is not necessarily due to the brain-fatigue induced by (α) and (β); for with one sample of *Cannabis*, I found it to occur independently.

V

"For this Paternal Intellect, which comprehendeth the Intelligibles and adorneth things ineffable, hath sowed symbols through the World."

"Comprehending that Intelligible with extended Mind; for the Intelligible is the flower of Mind."

"A similar fire flashingly extending through the rushings of air, or a Fire formless whence cometh the Image of a Voice, or even a flashing Light abounding, revolving, whirling forth, crying aloud. Also there is the vision of the fire-flashing Courser of Light, or also a Child, borne aloft on the shoulders of the Celestial Steed, fiery, or clothed with gold, or naked, or shooting with the bow shafts of Light and standing on the shoulders of the horse; then if thy meditation prolongeth itself, thou shalt unite all these symbols into the Form of a Lion."—ZOROASTER.

The most important of the psychological results of my experiments seem to me to lie in (*a*). I devoted much pains to obtaining this effect alone by taking only the minutest doses, by preparing myself physically and mentally for the experiment, and by seeking in every possible way to intensify and prolong the effect.

Simple impressions in normal consciousness are resolved by hashish into a concatenation of hieroglyphs of a purely symbolic type.

Just as we represent a horse by the five letters h-o-r-s-e, none of which has in itself the smallest relation to a horse, so an even simpler concept such as the letter A seems resolved into a set of pictures, a fairly large number, possibly a constant number, of them. These glyphs are perceived together, just as the skilled reader reads h-o-r-s-e as a single word, not letter by letter. These pictorial glyphs, letters as it were of the

word which we call a thought, seem to stand at a definite distance in space behind the thought, the thought being farther from the perceiving soul. Looking at each glyph, one perceives, too, that itself is made up of other glyphs yet nearer to the Self, these glyphs, however, being formless and nameless; they are not truly perceived, but one is somehow aware of them.

Unfortunately, the tendency to fall into effect (β) makes it very difficult to concentrate on the analysis of these ideas, so that one is hurried on to a similar examination of the next thought. It is curious, though, to notice how this analysis corresponds to the worlds of the Qabalah, the single "pure soul" at the back of all, the shadowy "creative" world, the varied "formative world," and the single though concrete "material" world.

It puzzles one, too (at the time, in the very course of the analysis), to ask: If the external simple impression be made up of so many glyphs, and each of these again of many more, how can one ever return to the "pure soul"? For all the while one is clearly conscious of a simple Ego or "pure soul" which perceives all this.

The only solution appears to lie in a metaphysical identification of Monotheism and Pantheism.

Again, one is conscious of a double direction in the phenomena. Not only is it true to say that the thoughts are analysed into glyphs and so on, back to the pure soul; but also that the pure soul sends forth the glyphs, which formulate the thought. Here again we must identify the Atman system of Hinduism centred in Ego with the Anatta system of Buddhism, in which the impressions are all.

Further, there arises an exceedingly remarkable state of mind, described in the Bhagavad-Gita (I quote Arnold):

> "I, who am all, and made it all, abide its separate Lord."

The experience could not be better phrased. Zoroaster, too:

> "Who first sprang from Mind, clothing the one Fire with the other Fire, binding them together, that he might mingle the fountainous craters, while preserving unsullied the brilliance of His own Fire."
>
> "Containing all things in the one summit of his Hyparxis, He Himself subsists wholly beyond."

It is almost impossible to describe so purely metaphysical a state, which involves clearly enough a contradiction in terms. Yet the consciousness is so vivid, so intense, so certain, that logic is condemned unflinchingly as puerile. The best escape for the logician is to argue that the three assertions are closely consecutive, so closely that mind thinks them one; just as the two points of a pair of compasses pressed upon certain parts of the body are felt as one point only. While the mystic will mutter some esoteric darkness about the true interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity.

I think one should add that these results of my introspection are almost certainly due to my own training in philosophy and magic, and that nothing but the intensification of the introspective faculty is due to the hashish. Probably, too, this effect (α) would be suppressed or unnoticed in a subject who had never developed his introspection at all.

Yet I am inclined to believe that this effect (α) is the true effect; and that Ludlow's "access of self-consciousness" is but the same operating on the organisation of a man evidently nervous and timid.

VI

"The Intelligible is the principle of all section."

"The Mind of the Father whirled forth in re-echoing roar, comprehending by invincible Will Ideas omniform ; which flying forth from that one fountain issued ; for from the Father alike was the Will and the End (by which are they connected with the Father according to alternating life, through varying vehicles). But they were divided asunder, being by Intellectual Fire distributed into other Intellectuals. For the King of all previously placed before the polymorphous World a Type, intellectual, incorruptible, the imprint of whose form is sent forth through the World, by which the Universe shone forth decked with Ideas all-various, of which the foundation is One, One and alone. From this the others rush forth distributed and separated through the various bodies of the Universe, and are borne in swarms through its vast abysses, ever whirling forth in illimitable radiation.

"They are intellectual conceptions from the Paternal Fountain partaking abundantly of the brilliance of Fire in the culmination of unresting Time.

"But the primary self-perfect Fountain of the Father poured forth these primogenial Ideas."

"The Soul, being a brilliant Fire, by the power of the Father remaineth immortal, and is Mistress of Life, and filleth up the many recesses of the bosom of the World."—ZOROASTER.

The alleged annihilation of time and space, which so frequently reappears in articles on hashish, seems to me solved more simply by a more accurate analysis of the phenomenon. The normal explanation involves the assumption that man naturally possesses a perfect and infallible "time-sense" as regular as a clock. Which is absurd ; were it so, we should not need watches. We are accustomed to work (whether the idea be philosophically tenable or not is not german to the matter) with a minimum cogitabile both of space and of time. Just as a definite number of beats of the pendulum makes an

hour, so mentally a less definite but far from indefinite number of thoughts makes an hour's consciousness. Perhaps powerful and vivid thoughts count for a longer lapse of time than weak ones. Deep sleep passes like an invisible electric discharge.

The apparently contrary fact that time seems short when we have been reading an interesting book or performing a pleasant and absorbing task is explained thus; the multitude of impressions is harmonised into one impression. Read an unharmonious and dull book, or an essay like this, and the time appears ineffably long.

The other contrary fact, that a minute's Samadhi appears as an eternity, though Samadhi is a single thought, is explained by the intensity of that thought and by other considerations which I shall hope to discuss more fully in section xiii. of this essay.

This, then, is what happens to the eater of hashish. For each impression he has thousands of glyphs (effect (α)) or in the more common * effect (β) the images are so multiplied and superimposed that all harmony is lost; the brain fails to keep pace with its impressions, still less to codify and control them. It finds then that from the idea *cat* to the idea *mouse* is a journey through the million dying echoes of cat to the million dawn-rays of mouse, and that the journey takes a million times as long as usual.

This analysis of a thought into its dawn, noon, and sunset, is well drawn in Buddhist psychology.†

Often, too, most often, one of the "cat-echoes" will be so loud that the whole chain is shattered; the cat-echo becomes

* More common, judging by the reports of Ludlow and others. I never permitted myself to fall under its dominion.

† *See* Mrs. Rhys David's book.

the dominant, and its harmonics (or inharmonics) themselves usurp the throne—and so on and so on—through countless ages of insane hallucination.

The same criticism applies to space; for in practice we judge of space by the time required to pass through it, either by the small angular or focussing movements of the eye or by our general experience. So that if I cross a room, and think a million thoughts on the way, the room seems immense. It is by the tedium of the journey, not by any hallucination of the physical eye, that this illusion is produced.

In writing my notes on one occasion I found that my right arm (which of course is not in the line of vision at all, normally) was many thousands of miles in extent. It was strange and difficult to control such colossal sweeps through space to the fine work of the pen. Yet my handwriting was no worse than usual—I admit this says little! It was the time that it apparently took to get one word written that caused the illusion of extravagant size, itself therefore a rational illusion, turned to phantastic absurdity by the excited imagination, which visualised it.

VII

"The Intelligible is the principle of all section."

"God is never so turned away from man, and never so much sendeth him new paths, as when he maketh ascent to divine speculations or works in a confused or disordered manner, and as it adds, with unhallowed lips, or unwashed feet. For of those who are thus negligent, the progress is imperfect, the impulses are vain, and the paths are dark."—ZOROASTER.

Another and highly important result of thought-analysis is the criticism of thought as it arises. Just as the impres-

sions are represented by pictorial glyphs, so each reflection upon an impression is accompanied by either one or two (more only when the control is imperfect) *critical* glyphs, as it were in small type, an annotation of approval or otherwise. Thus, a chain of thought A—B—C will have three approving pictures in a fainter key; the soul justifying the sequence. Should one continue A—B—C—E an opposing glyph will warn of the falsity, or at least cast doubt upon it. In the generally unstable condition of the thought, such a critical glyph may be strong enough to become the dominant; and then the whole line of thought breaks down. Let me give an example:

Thought.	*Criticisms and their glyphs.*
1. Man.	a man reaping—meaning "Good—go on."
	a horse = "True—Mill's definition."
2. Featherless Biped.	Three horses in a field = "Are there no other featherless bipeds?"
	a stream = "Stop—Stop—Stop."
3. Was it Mill?	A tombstone on a hill = "Was it Locke?"
4. Locke? Locke?	a battle.
	thousands of other violent glyphs.

The whole mind is now a raging sea of confused thought: doubts, attempts to remember accurately who on earth first said "featherless biped," even an agony to recover thought 1, and start again. This one unfortunate weakness of thought 2 has drawn the thought-current away from the consideration of "man" to an academic question; and, as hashish goes, one is unlikely ever to get back to it. On the contrary, one of the critical glyphs attacking the thought "Locke? Locke?" will probably be strong enough to carry away the thought into a new channel, in its turn to be diverted. This at the best: for one is now ready to fall into the Maelstrom of effect (β).

There is only one remedy for this state of affairs, the discipline of thought which we call in its highest forms meditation and magic. The existence of the disease, it will be noticed, indeed perfectly explains the nature of thought-wandering as observed by me in simple meditation without drugs. It should be taken, I think, as the normal action of the untrained mind. So long as the thoughts are strongly thrown out, rational, the critical glyphs approve, and the thought-current moves harmoniously to its end. Such are the trained thought-currents of educated men. The irresponsible and aimless chatter of women and clergymen is the result of weak thoughts constantly drowned by their associated critical glyphs. Mere sympathetic glyphs, too, may be excited in really feeble intelligences. Puns and other false associations of thought are symptomatic of this imbecility. An extreme case is the classical "Cat—mousetrap—kittens" chain of the lunatic, when somebody said "hat."

As I said, there is but one remedy; we are all more or less subject to this wandering of thought, and we may all wisely seek to overcome it; that remedy is to train the mind constantly by severe methods; the logic of mathematics, the concentrated observation necessary in all branches of science, the still more elaborate and austere training of magic and meditation.

Too many people mistake reverie for meditation; the chemist's boy who thought Epsom salts was oxalic acid is a less dangerous person. Reverie is turning thought out to grass; meditation is putting him between the shafts.

The so-called poet with his vague dreams and ideals is indeed no better than a harmless lunatic; the true poet is the

worker, who grips life's throat and wrings out its secret, who selects austerely and composes concisely, whose work is as true and clean as razor-steel, albeit its sweep is vaster and swifter than the sun's!

The discursive prattle of such superficial twaddlers as Longfellow and Tennyson is the most deadly poison of the mind. All this is true enough in the merest exoteric necessity of adult civilisation. But if we are to go further into the nature of things, to dive deeper than the chemist, soar higher than the poet, look wider than the astronomer, we must furnish ourselves with a blade of still better temper.

VIII

> "It is not proper to understand that Intelligible One with vehemence, but with the extended flame of far-reaching Mind, measuring all things except that Intelligible. But it is requisite to understand this; for if thou inclinest thy Mind thou wilt understand it, not earnestly; but it is becoming to bring with thee a pure and inquiring sense, to extend the void mind of thy soul to that Intelligible, that thou mayst learn the Intelligible, because it subsisteth beyond Mind."
>
> "Thou wilt not understand it, as when understanding some common thing."—ZOROASTER.

In other of my philosophical writings I have endeavoured to show that the ratiocinative faculty was in its nature unable to solve any single problem of the universe.

Its *reductio ad absurdum* is clear enough in the gorgeous first section of Herbert Spencer's First Principles. Kant demonstrated the Dualism and inherent Self-contradiction well enough in the Prolegomena and its four theses and their

antitheses (§ 51); and Hegel's Logic, if properly understood, would have brought the whole thing into contempt.

But unfortunately the "common sense" of mankind retorted that after all the interior angles of every triangle *are* together equal to two right-angles; and that a mental process which deduced this so accurately from a few simple axioms and definitions must be trustworthy; adding something uncomplimentary about Germans and Metaphysics.

Both are right, and both are wrong. In the world of common sense, reason works; in the world of philosophy, it doesn't. The metaphysical deadlock is a real and not a verbal one. The inner nature of things is not rational, at least so long as we are asked to define "rational" as "rationalistic." Why should it be? Why should the rules of golf govern the mechanics of the flight of a golf-ball?

It is this fact that has made it possible for the faith-mongers to make head against the stream of philosophy. Fichte is really and truly just as right and as wrong as Schelling; Hume is quite as impregnable as Berkeley.

Let us not try to shirk the truth of it, either by the "common-sense" folly, or the "faith" folly, or the Hegelian folly.

It may, I think, be readily conceded that the reasoning faculty is not apodeictally absolute. It represents a stage in human thought, no more.

You cannot convince a savage of the truth of the Binomial Theorem; should we then be surprised if a mystic fails to convert a philosopher?

Yet must he try.

IX

"For being furnished with every kind of armour, and armed, he is similar to the goddess."—ZOROASTER.

My dear Professor, how can you expect me to believe this nonsense about bacteria? Come, saith he, to the microscope; and behold them!

I don't see anything.

Just shift the fine adjustment—that screw there—to and fro very slowly!

I can't see——

Keep the left eye open; you'll see better!

Ah!—But how do I know? . . .

Oh, there are a thousand questions to ask!

Is it fair observation to use lenses, which admittedly refract light and distort vision?

How do I know those specks are not dust?

Couldn't those things be in the air?

And so on.

The Professor can convince me, of course, and the more sceptical I am the more thoroughly I shall be convinced in the end; but not until I have learned to use a microscope. And when I have learned—a matter of some months, maybe years—how can I convince the next sceptic?

Only in the same way, by teaching him to use the instrument.

And suppose he retorts, "You have deliberately trained yourself to hallucination!" What answer have I? None that I know of. Save that microscopy has revolutionised

surgery, &c., just as mysticism has revolutionised, again and again, the philosophies of mankind.

The analogy is a perfect one. By meditation we obtain the vision of a new world, even as the world of micro-organisms was unsuspected for centuries of thinking—thinking without method—bricks without straw!

Just so, also, the masters of meditation have erred. They have attained the Mystic Vision, written long books about it, assumed that the conclusions drawn from their vision were true on other planes—as if a microscopist were to stand for Parliament on the platform "Votes for Microbes"—never noted possible sources of error, fallen foul of sense and science, dropped into oblivion and deserved contempt.

I want to combine the methods, to check the old empirical mysticism by the precision of modern science.

Hashish at least gives proof of a new order of consciousness, and (it seems to me) it is this *primâ facie* case that mystics have always needed to make out, and never have made out.

But to-day I claim the hashish-phenomena as mental phenomena of the first importance; and I demand investigation.

I assert—more or less *ex cathedrâ*—that meditation will revolutionise our conception of the universe, just as the microscope has done.

Then my friend the physiologist remarks:

"But if you disturb the observing faculty with drugs and a special mental training, your results will be invalid."

And I reply:

"But if you disturb the observing faculty with lenses and a special mental training, your results will be invalid."

And he smiles gently:

"Patient experiment will prove to you that the microscope is reliable."

And I smile gently:

"Patient experiment will prove to you that meditation is reliable."

So there we are.

X

"Stay not on the precipice with the dross of matter, for there is a place for thine image in a realm ever splendid."

ZOROASTER.

"When thou seest a terrestrial demon approaching, cry aloud and sacrifice the stone Mnizourin."—ZOROASTER.

As a boy at school I enjoyed a reputation for unparalleled cowardice; in the world I am equally accused of foolhardiness. The judgment of the boys was the better. The truth is that I have always been excessively cautious, have never willingly undertaken even the smallest risk.

The paradoxical result is that I have walked hundreds of miles unroped over snow-covered glaciers, and that nobody (so far as I know) has even attempted to repeat my major climbs on Beachy Head. One may add a little grimly that the same remark applies to my excursions into the regions of the mind, the conscience, and the soul.

This bombastic prelude to a simple note on the precautions which I took in my experiments.

First, the use of the minutest care in estimating doses.

Secondly, the rule never to repeat my experiment before the lapse of at least a month.

Frankly, I doubt if these were necessary. I do not suppose my will to be abnormally strong; I believe rather that there is a definite type of drug-slave, born from his mother's womb; and that those who achieve it or have it thrust upon them are a very small percentage. In saying this I include such obsessions as music, religion, gambling, among drugs. Is the "Keswick week" less of a debauch than the navvy's Bank Holiday? There are people who rush from meeting to meeting, and give up their whole lives to this unwholesome excess of stimulant; they are happy nowhere else; they become as irritable as the cocaine-fiend, and render wretched the lives of those who are forced to come in contact with them.

Personally, I have never felt the bearing-rein of habit, though I have tried all the mental and physical poisons in turn. I smoke tobacco, the strongest tobacco, to excess, as I am told; yet a dozen times I have abandoned it, in order to see whether it had any hold upon me. It had none; I resigned it as cheerfully as a small boy resigns the tempting second half of his first cigar. After a meal (for the first day or two) my hands would go to my pockets from habit; finding nothing there, I would remember, laugh, and forget the subject at once.

I think, therefore, that we may dismiss the alleged danger of acquiring the hashish habit as fantastic.

Nobody will acquire the habit but the destined drug-slave; and he may just as well have the hashish habit as any other; he is sure to fall under the power of some enchantress.

All these alarmist reports, however, are really worthless, worthless at the best as the *omne ignotum pro terribili* fear

of the savage for an unfamiliar shape of bottle, worthless at the worst as the temperance crank's account of the fatal effects of alcohol, the vegetarian's account of the dangers of meat-eating, or the missionary's account of the religion of the people he lives among. The alleged sensuality of hashish—even Baudelaire admits it—simply does not exist for me, perhaps because there is no germ of lasciviousness in my mind. Of course if you excite, by whatever stimulus, a foul imagination, you will get pestilent effects. When Queen Mab tickles the lawyer, he dreams of fees. So the people who associate nudity with debauchery, and see Piccadilly Circus in Monna Lisa, will probably obtain the fullest itching from the use of the drug.

I recommend it to them for, slaves and swine as they are, it must inevitably drag them to death by the road of a certifiable insanity less dangerous to society than their present subtler moral beastliness.

I think, too, that Baudelaire altogether exaggerates the reaction. I never felt the slightest fatigue or lassitude; but went from the experiments to my other work with accustomed freshness and energy. Probably, however, these effects depend largely on the sample of the drug employed; some may contain more active or grosser toxic agents than others.

Putting aside all these optimistic considerations, one is yet perfectly in accord with Baudelaire's conclusion, and for the same reason. (We discard his preliminary sophisms.)

I have no use for hashish save as a preliminary demonstration that there exists another world attainable—somehow. Possibly if pharmacists were to concentrate their efforts upon

producing a standard drug, upon isolating the substance responsible for effect (*a*), and so on, we might find a reliable and harmless adjuvant to the process which I have optimistically named Scientific Illuminism.

But at least for the present we have not arrived so far. In my own case I should know fairly well what to do, well enough to get my little "loosening of the girders of the soul" at a guess twice in five times, perhaps more.

Not surely enough to guarantee results to other people without a lengthy series of experiments, still less to recommend them to try for themselves, unless under skilled supervision.

My present appeal is to recognised physiologists and psychologists to increase the number and accuracy of their researches on the introspective lines which I have laid down above, possibly with further aid from the pharmacist.

Once the pure physio-psychological action is determined, I shall then ask their further attention to the special results of combining the drug with the mystic process—always invoking trained observation—and from that moment the future of Scientific Illuminism will be assured.

I must add a paragraph or two on the nature of the mystic process and the general character of the transcendental states of consciousness resulting from its successful practice.

XI

"He maketh the whole World of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth, and of the all-nourishing Ether."—ZOROASTER.

One truth, says Browning, leads right to the world's end; and so I find it impossible to open a subject, however small

in appearance, without discovering an universe. So, as I set myself to discuss the character of mystic states, it is immediately evident that if I am to render myself at all intelligible to English readers, a totally new system of classification must be thought out.

The classical Eight Jhanas will be useless to us; the Hindu system is almost as bad; the Qabalistic requires a preliminary knowledge of the Tree of Life whose explanation would require a volume to itself; but fortunately we have, in the Buddhist Skandhas and the Three Characteristics which deny them, a scheme easily assimilable to Western psychology.

In "Science and Buddhism" I dealt in some detail with these Skandhas; but I will briefly recapitulate.

In examining any phenomenon and analysing it we first notice its Name and Form (Nama and Rupa). "Here is a Rose," we say. In such a world live the entirely vulgar.

Next (with Berkeley) we perceive that this statement is false. There is an optical sensation (Vedana) of red; an olfactory sensation of fragrance; and so on. Even its weight, its space, are modifications of sense; and the whole statement is transformed into "Here is a pleasurable set of sensations which we group under the name of a rose." In such a world lives the sensuous artist.

Next, these modifications of sense are found to be but percepts; the pleasure or pain vanishes; and the sensations are observed coldly and clearly without allowing the mind to be affected. This perception (Saññа) is the world of the surgeon or the man of science.

Next, the perception itself is seen to be dependent on the

nature of the observer, and his tendency (Sankhara) to perceive. The oyster gets no fun out of the rose. This state establishes a dualistic conception, such as Mansel was unable to transcend, and at the same time places the original rose in its cosmic place. The creative forces that have made the rose and the observer what they are, and established their relation to one another, are now the sole consciousness. Here lives the philosopher.

Easily enough, this state passes into one of pure consciousness (Viññanam). The rose and the observer and their tendencies and relations have somehow vanished. The phenomenon (not the original phenomenon, "a rose," but the phenomenon of the tendency to perceive the sensation of a rose) becomes a cloudless light; a static, no longer a dynamic conception. One has somehow got behind the veil of the universe. Here live the mystic and the true artist.

The Buddhist, however, does not stop here; for he alleges that even this consciousness is false; that like all things it has the Three Characteristics of Sorrow, Change, and Unsubstantiality.

Now all this analysis is a purely intellectual one, though perhaps it may be admitted that few philosophers have been capable of so profound and acute a resolution of phenomena. It has nothing to do with mysticism as such, but its rational truth makes it a suitable basis for our proposed classification of the mystic states which result from the many religious and magical methods in use among men.

XII

"The Vast sun, and the brilliant moon."

"O Ether, sun, and spirit of the moon! Ye, ye are the leaders of air!"

"The Principles, which have understood the Intelligible works of the Father, He hath clothed in sensible works and bodies, being intermediate links existing to connect the Father with Matter, rendering apparent the Images of unapparent Natures, and inscribing the Unapparent in the Apparent frame of the World."

"There are certain Irrational Demons (mindless elementals), which derive their subsistence from the Aerial Rulers; wherefore the Oracle saith, Being the Charioteer of the Aerial, Terrestrial and Aquatic Dogs."

"The Aquatic when applied to Divine Natures signifies a Government inseparable from Water, and hence the Oracle calls the Aquatic Gods, Water Walkers."

"There are certain Water Elementals whom Orpheus calls Nereides, dwelling in the more elevated exhalations of Water, such as appear in damp, cloudy Air, whose bodies are sometimes seen (as Zoroaster taught) by more acute eyes, especially in Persia and Africa."

"Let the immortal depth of your Soul lead you, but earnestly raise your eyes upwards."—ZOROASTER.

Nama-Rupa.—Purely material, and therefore shadowy and meaningless, are the innumerable shapes which haunt the mind of man. In one sense we must here include all purely sensory phenomena, and the images which memory presents to the mind which is endeavouring to concentrate itself upon a single thought.

In other systems of mysticism we must include all astral phantoms, divine or demonic, which are merely seen or heard without further reflection upon them. To obtain these it is sufficient to perform the following experiment:

Sit down comfortably; it is perhaps best to begin in the dark.

Imagine as strongly as possible your own figure standing in front of you.

Transfer your consciousness to that figure, so that you look down upon your physical body in the chair.

(This is usually the one difficulty.)

Feeling perfectly at home in your imagined body, let that body rise through the air to a great height.

Stop. Look around you. Probably the eyes of your "astral" body will be closed. It is sometimes difficult to open them.

You will then perceive all sorts of forms, varying as you travel about. Their nature will depend almost entirely on your power of control. Some people may even perceive the phantoms of delirium and madness, and truly go mad from fear and horror.

Let the "astral" body return and sit down, coinciding with the physical body.

Closely unite the two: the experiment is over.

Practice makes perfect.

This practice is delusive and even dangerous; it is best to precede and follow it by a carefully performed "Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram."* Better still, have a skilled teacher. The experiment is an easy one; with two pupils only (of some dozens) I have failed, and that completely; with the others the first experiment was a success.

We must include, too, in this section the forms appearing in answer to the rites of ceremonial magic.

* Mr. Haddo's suggestions have been officially taken up and a book of careful instruction compiled. *See* Liber O.—ED.

(Consult "Goetia," the "Key of Solomon," Eliphaz Levi, Cornelius Agrippa, Pietro di Abano, Barrett and others for instructions.)

These forms are more solid and real, much more dangerous, and are excessively difficult to obtain. I have known very few successful practitioners.

All these forms and names are almost infinitely varied. The grosser visual and auditory phenomena of hashish belong to the group. It is not just to suppose that a vision of a Divine being of ineffable splendour is necessarily of higher type than this shadowy form-world. Mistake on this point has led many a student astray. Highest among these things are the three visual and seven auditory phenomena of Yoga. (We omit consideration of the other senses; the subject requires a volume.) These are referred to the Sun, the Moon, and Fire; and their appearance marks the attainment of Dhyana. They are dazzling, and accompanied with such intense though passionless bliss that they partake of the nature of Vedana and may under certain conditions even rise to touch Saññа. Of the auditory are sounds heard like bells, elephants, thunder, trumpets, sea-shells, "the sweet-souled Vina," and so on; they are of less importance and are much more common.

As one would expect, such forms leave little impress upon the memory. Yet they are seductive enough, and I am afraid that the very great majority of mystics live all their lives wandering about in this vain world of shadows and of shells.

All this, too, is the pleasant aspect of the affair. Here belong the awful shapes of delirium and madness, which obsess and destroy the soul that fails to control and dismiss them. Here lives the Dweller of the Threshold, that concen-

tration into a single symbol of the Despair and Terror of the Universe and of the Self. Yet on all the paths is He, ready to smite whoso falters or swerves, though he have attained almost the last height.

How many have I known, like Childe Roland and his peers, who have come to that Dark Tower! One young, one brave, one pure—lost! lost! penned in the hells of matter, swept away in the whirling waters of insane vision, true victims of the hashish of the soul.

What poignant agony, what moaning abjectness, what self-disgust! What vain folly (of all true hope forlorn!) to seek in drugs, in drink, in the pistol or the cord, the paradise they have forfeited by a moment's weakness or a moment's wavering!

This "two-handed engine at the door stands ready to smite" each one of us who has not attained to Arahatship, admission to the Great White Brotherhood. Is it not enough to make us throw away our atheism and exclaim, "O God be merciful to me a sinner, and keep me in the way of Truth!" Nay, for those of us who know what triple silver cord of moonlight binds the red blood of our heart to the Ineffable Crown of Brilliance, who have seen what Angel stands in the moon-ray, who have known the perfume and the vision, seen the drops of dew supernal stand on the silver lamen of the forehead—for us is neither fear nor pride, but silence in the one thought of the One beyond all thought.

The world of phantoms has no terror left; we can take the blood of the Black Dragon for our Red Tincture. We understand the precept *Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenias Occultum Lapidem;* and harnessing to our triumphal car the White Eagle and the Green Lion we voyage at

our ease upon the Path of the Chameleon, by the Towers of Iron and the Fountains of Supernal Dew, unto that black unutterable Sea most still.

XIII

"From the Cavities of the Earth leap forth the terrestrial Dog-faced demons, showing no true sign unto mortal man."

"Go not forth when the Lictor passeth by."

"Direct not thy mind to the vast surfaces of the Earth; for the Plant of Truth grows not upon the ground. Nor measure the motions of the Sun, collecting rules, for he is carried by the Eternal Will of the Father, and not for your sake alone. Dismiss (from your mind) the impetuous course of the Moon, for she moveth always by the power of necessity. The progression of the Stars was not generated for your sake. The wide aerial flight of birds gives no true knowledge, nor the dissection of the entrails of victims; they are all mere toys, the basis of mercenary fraud; flee from these if you would enter the sacred paradise of piety, where Virtue, Wisdom, and Equity are assembled."

"Stoop not down unto the darkly splendid World; wherein continually lieth a faithless Depth, and Hades wrapped in clouds, delighting in unintelligible images, precipitous, winding, a black ever-rolling Abyss; ever espousing a Body unluminous, formless and void."

"Stoop not down, for a precipice lieth beneath the Earth, reached by a descending Ladder which hath Seven Steps, and therein is established the Throne of an evil and fatal force."

"Stay not on the Precipice with the dross of Matter, for there is a place for thy Image in a realm ever splendid."

"Invoke not the visible Image of the Soul of Nature."

"Look not upon Nature, for her name is fatal."

"It becometh you not to behold them before your body is initiated, since by always alluring they seduce the souls from the sacred mysteries."

"Bring her not forth, lest in departing she retain something."

"The Light-hating World, and the winding currents by which many are drawn down."—ZOROASTER.

It may be useful here to distinguish once and for all between false and real mystical phenomena; for in the

previous section we have spoken of both without distinction. In the "astral visions" the consciousness is hardly disturbed; in magical evocations it is intensely exalted; but it is still bound by its original conditions. The Ego is still opposed to the non-Ego; time is, if altered in rate, still there; so, too, is Space the sort of Space we are all conscious of. Again, the phenomena observed follow the usual laws of growth and decay.

But all true mystical phenomena contradict these conditions.

In the first place, the Ego and non-Ego unite explosively, their product having none of the qualities of either. It is precisely such a phenomenon as the direct combination of Hydrogen and Chlorine. The first thing observed is the flash; in our analogy, the ecstasy or Ananda (bliss) attending the Dhyana. And as this flash does not aid us to analyse the Hydrochloric acid gas, so the Ananda prevents us by startling us from perceiving the true nature of the phenomenon. In higher mystic states, then, we find that the Yogi or Magician has learnt how to suppress it.

But the combination of the elements will usually be a definite single act of catastrophic energy.

This act, too, does not take place in time or space as we know them. I think that for the first time of experiencing a Dhyana it is necessarily single. Certain mystical methods may teach us to retain the image; but the criterion of true Dhyana is the singleness, so totally opposed as it is to the vague and varying phantoms of the "astral plane."

The new consciousness resulting from the combination is, too, always a simple one. Even where it is infinitely complex, as in Atmadarshana or the Vision of the Universal

Peacock, its oneness is the truer of these two contradictory truths.

So for the matter of time and space. All time is filled; all space is filled; the phenomenon is infinite and eternal.

This is true even though its singleness makes the duration of the phenomenon but one minimum cogitabile. In short, it is experienced in some other kind of time, some other kind of space.

There is nothing irrational about this. Non-Euclidean geometries, for example, are possible, and may be true. It is only necessary to a theory of the universe that it should be true to itself within itself; for there is no other thing outside by which we can check our calculations.

Nor is it inconceivable that many of these worlds may exist, interpenetrating. Assume four dimensions, and there is room for an infinite number of them. For though a plane fills a square completely, it must always leave a cube entirely empty.

Concerning the laws which govern this new realm we can say nothing here. The most mystics have been led away from the proper line of research, usually by the baser (*i.e.*, the emotional or devotional) attractions of the Vedana-phenomena which we are about to notice; but perhaps even the best must be baffled by the non-congruity of their Experience with the symbols of language.

One may add that the language difficulty is in some ways an essential one. Language begins with simple expression of the common needs of the most animal life. Hence we see that all sciences have formulated a technical language of their own, not to be understanded of the common people. The

reproach against mystics that their symbols are obscure is just as well founded as a similar reproach against the algebraist or the chemist. A paper at the Chemical Society is often completely intelligible only to some three or four of the odd hundred distinguished chemists in the room.

What is gained to "popular science" is lost to exactitude; and in a paper of this sort I fear rather the reproach of my mystical masters than that of the bewildered crowd.

More important and certain than the mere characteristics of mystic trances in themselves is the great and vital diagnostic that the result of a true trance is to inspire the Yogi with power to do first-rate work in his own department.

People who produce maudlin and hysterical gush, inane sentimentality, who are faddists, fools, drivellers, dodderers—these I refuse to accept as mystics. The true phenomena of mysticism can only occur in a high-class brain and a healthy brain; and their action on that brain is to repose it, to fortify it, to make it more capable of lofty and continuous thought. Beware of the sheep in lions' skins, the asses that bray and think "the tiger roars!"

Physically too, the mystic is to be known by his atmosphere of power, cleanliness and light; by his self-control, his concentration of thought and action, his vigour, his patience.

You will rarely find them at afternoon tea gossiping about clairvoyance, or even "playing Adam."

What? you don't know how to play "Adam"? And you call yourself a sage? Tut!

The game of "Adam" is played as follows.

Take a key, a Bible, an elastic band.

Open the Bible at random till you find a favourable text.

There insert the key, leaving the barrel and ring outside.

Put the elastic band round the book, so as to fix the key firmly in it.

Balance the whole arrangement by putting your thumb and that of the Assistant Magus of Art under the ring, thumb against thumb.

(An important but, as I hold, heterodox school of adepts employ the forefinger.)

Keep very still; and ask your question: "Adam, Adam, tell me true! Shall I——" &c.

If the Bible turns in a dextro-rotary manner the answer is "yes"; if in the opposite direction, "no."

This sublime method of tearing out the heart of destiny is evidently derived from a slightly more elaborate one in the "Key of Solomon" (Book I., chap. ix.) for detecting theft, which is done with a sieve, and which I supposed (until "Adam" advised me to the contrary) to represent the lowest debauchery in which the human intellect could wallow.

The game is, however, much esteemed by charlatan clairvoyants; and I can well understand their indignation at finding that I do not recognise their proficiency in this game and that of swindling and blackmail as entitling them to a seat at the Round Table of the Adepts.

Let us, however that may be, return to our classification.

XIV

"There is a certain Intelligible One whom it becometh you to understand with the Flower of Mind."

"Having mingled the Vital Spark, from two according substances, Mind and Divine Spirit, as a third to these He added Holy Love, the venerable Charioteer uniting all things."

"Filling the Soul with profound Love."

"The Soul of man does in a manner clasp God to herself. Having nothing mortal, she is wholly inebriated with God. For she glorieth in the harmony under which the mortal body subsisteth."

"As rays of Light his locks flow forth, ending in acute points."

ZOROASTER.

Vedana.—Pertaining to Sensation we may first notice in the beginner's concentrating mind the class of distracting thoughts which refer to the emotions. The taking of pleasure in, or the endurance of pain from, the meditation itself is in particular to be dreaded.

Of mystic phenomena we may notice the immense class of devotional apparitions. Vishnu, Christ, Jehovah and other deities appear in response to long-continued and passionate love. See "Bhagavad Gita," chap. xi., the visions of many Catholic saints, Teresa, Gertrude, Francis and others, Anna Kingsford ("Clothed with the Sun," Part III.), Idra Rabba Qadisha and so on.

The Virgin Mary is a favourite with many; it is all one phenomenon.

Observe, though, that many such apparitions are not of the Dhyana type at all; they are mostly mere hallucinations of the "astral plane." In section xiii. we have indicated the diagnostics.

Methods of obtaining these states are to be found in any book on Bhakta Yoga—Swami Vivekananda's is the best I know of—and in Loyola's "Exercitios Espirituales," whose discipline and method is, in my opinion, unsurpassed.

These phenomena are nearly always tainted with sexuality, and are excessively dangerous from this cause. "Dirt is matter in the wrong place," and to mix, consciously or unconsciously, either morality or immorality with religion is dirty; and dirt makes disease. The victim becomes a fanatic at the best, at the worst and most frequent a driveller.

Of a lower type are the loves of Magi and invoked elementals. As Levi says, "the love of the Magus for such beings is insensate, and may destroy him." It surely will, if he beware not in time.

Higher again because more purely formless and for this reason truer to the Vedana type are the ecstasies of joy and agony experienced by such men as Luther, Fox, Molinos, and others. Professor William James treats most adequately of this matter in his "Varieties of Religious Experience."

The limitations of this stage are first, its absorption in self; secondly, its almost always insuperable tendency to self-limitation and narrowness.

Two mystics, the one wallowing in Jesus and the other in Vishnu, will describe their experiences in almost identical language, yet denounce each other as "heathen" and "Mlechha" respectively.

Among hashish phenomena the correspondences are those of the intense emotions experienced (well described

by de Quincey (opium) and Ludlow in particular). Such are fear, pride, love, laughter, anguish, and the rest.

In the case of Vishvarupadarshana (the vision of Vishnu) and even of such results as those of St. Francis and St. Ignatius, the best mystics may steer clear of the selfishness, narrowness, and emotionalism, and raise their experience to the type of Sañña or even of Sankhara.

The "Bhagavad Gita" certainly reaches the latter height —or at least a reflection from that height—at one or two points.

We must not omit to attribute to this section the lower aspect of what Abramelin the Mage calls the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, another (and less metaphysically pretentious) way of speaking of the "Higher Self" or "Genius." It is indeed but a low aspect, for in truth the phenomenon pertains to Viññanam. Yet in simpler souls this peculiar Grace condescends—may one say?—to this level, just as a father may join in the games of his child, thus gaining its sympathy and confidence as a basis for a higher union.

XV

> "The Mind of the Father riding on the subtle guiders which glitter with the inflexible tracings of relentless fire."
>
> "The Oracles assert that the types of Characters and of other Divine visions appear in the Ether (or Astral Light)."
>
> ZOROASTER.

Sañña.—Chief among the phenomena of Sañña, in the case of the beginner trying to concentrate his mind, are those

disturbing thoughts which analyse the very process itself. Harder to destroy are they than the others, since they come no longer from memory or physical conditions, but from the practice itself, so that they cannot be shut off, but must needs be faced and conquered directly.

In the mystic world, we come to those strange metaphysical ecstasies which (I am convinced) lie behind many philosophical dogmas.

St. Athanasius had probably experienced something of this type when he penned his insane creed. So the Hindus with their attempts to affirm Parabrahma by denying him all qualities, their dogma of the "pairs of opposites," their assertion of Sat-Chit-Ananda as transcending these pairs ; so too perhaps with Herbert Spencer it was direct Samadhic perception of this Sañña type that led him to formulate his irrational doctrine of Transcendental Realism, just as (certainly) Berkeley's doctrine arose from Samadhi of the type of Vedana. For the stigma of this class of mystic experience is undoubtedly first its resolution of all concepts into purely formless and passionless perception, secondly (and above this), its transcendence of the laws of thought, as we have been accustomed to understand them.

(This is only in part true. Keynes' "Formal Logic," profoundly studied, leads one perilously close to the suprarational. The eminent professor is perhaps hardly aware of how his eagle-flights have brushed the sun with their fiery wings.)

If a dweller upon this plane meditate upon a God, his first experience of that God will be no longer of His appearance or of His effect upon himself, but rather of His nature in some

region of pure thought. In the case of the god Osiris, for example, he will no longer express his vision by the name Osiris or by the green face, by the white robes starred with the three active colours, by the crown and by the crook and scourge; nor will he chant wondrous hymns of the descent into Amennti, the death and resurrection of the God; but he will express all this by some pure symbol, such as the cross, the hexagram, or even the number 6. And those upon his plane will understand him.

Here, too, we must class the revelations of the pure Qabalah, and the discovery of the relations between symbols.

So exalted in truth are the states upon this Sañña grade that the rational man will almost always fail to understand them. Of the Rupa visions he has some experience, if only in analogy; he calls the mystic of Rupa a silly fool; so too of Vedana, whose mystic he calls a besotted ass; but the mystic of Sañña appears to him as a raving lunatic.

The hashish correspondences of this stage are the mental analyses which I have gone into so fully above, sections v. and vii.

The methods for obtaining success in this matter are far more formidable than those previously sufficient. The whole mind must be intended for long unbroken periods, concentrated absolutely upon its own working until this becomes normal to it, when the state called Pratyahara is attained. The first result will be its resolution into disconnected impressions. Following this may occur a terrible experience; the consciousness of the disconnectedness of all phenomena, and of the units of consciousness of the observer. Both the Universe and the Self are insane. The mind may become a

total blank, the only relief (strange as it sounds) being the all but intolerable mental agony of the consciousness. This agony, belonging to the lower stage of Vedana, is the drag, ever pulling back the mystic as he endeavours to break down the blackness of his insanity. Yet the unity of its anguish is the proof of its Selfhood, and the earnest of its resurrection from the abyss. Such a mystic state may last through several days, perhaps through weeks. I should not care to assert limitations. The slightest error in the process would almost certainly result in permanent and hopeless melancholia; suicide might be the most fortunate termination.

XVI

"O how the world hath inflexible intellectual rulers!"

ZOROASTER.

Sankhara.—The reader will notice—I trust with pained sympathy—the increasing difficulty of expressing these results of meditation in language. At this point one almost desires to exclaim with Fichte that if it were only possible to start all over again, one would begin by inventing a totally new scheme of symbolism.

Here in Sankhara, hashish-analogy is somewhat at fault. Possibly the conviction of the irresistibility of the connection of cause and effect, the consciousness of the necessity of subject and object to each other through immutable glyphs may represent it. It may be that my experience of hashish is even more imperfect than I have supposed, and that more gifted experimenters might fill this gap.

In the beginner's concentration—though he is hardly to be called a beginner at this stage—Sankhara presents a terrible obstacle. For the distraction to his even flow of thought is that very flow itself; not as in Saññа, the accidents necessarily arising from that flow, as it were the rocks in the bed of the stream, but the law of gravitation itself, its necessary tendency to follow its own course. So that the good young Yogi finds himself thus awkwardly placed; that having created a mighty engine and removed all conceivable impediments to its smooth working, he is now confronted by the inertia of all that majesty and might.

Frankenstein!

The mystic states of Sankhara are more awful and tremendous than any we have yet noticed. Atmadarshana, for instance, is only to be described feebly (yet I fear unintelligibly, even so) by speaking of a consciousness of the entire Universe as One, and as All, in Its necessary relation to Itself in and out of Time and Space.

Here, too, is the result of Sammasati, a comprehension of one's own self and its relation to, and identity with, everything.

. . . But I feel that I am drivelling. The effort to think of these things, to translate them into the language of philosophy, gives the feeling—I grope and find no other expression—that one's head is going to blow off. One feels inclined to get up and shout for very feebleness, and only the utter fatuity of that or any other method of obtaining relief keeps one quietly writing. One feels, too, like the old woman in Thérèse Raquin, dumb and paralysed even while bursting with the tremendous secret. Small wonder then if the adepts demand years of training before the things themselves are

thought! "Look not upon the Visible Image of the Soul of Nature; for Her Name is Fatality; it becometh not thy body to behold Her, until it be first cleansed by the Sacred Mysteries."

The methods most practical and easy of obtaining these states are principally as follow:

First, the cultivation of the "magical memory." The practice is to remember the events of the day backwards; *i.e.*, first dinner, then tea, lunch, and breakfast. Except, of course, that by this time one has abandoned meals for ever! The memory acquires the habit, and eventually goes on working backwards through sleep, back, back, through birth and previous states until (saith Bhikhu Ananda Metteyya) going ever back through the past one comes right round to the future—"Which is pretty, but I don't know what it means!"

I think it right to mention that I never obtained any sort of success in this meditation, and only give it on hearsay.

The real key to the stage is Sammasati—Right Recollection. One considers all known factors which have gone to make one up such as one is, oneself and not another. Clearly the omission of a single minute item must alter the whole course of events.

Consider then, why thus, and not thus.

"Explore the River of the Soul, whence, or in what order you have come: so that although you have become a servant to the body, you may again rise to the Order from which you descended, joining works to sacred reason."

Why was I born in England, not in Wales?

Why were my parents just who they were and not others?

Why did I take to climbing, not to cricket?

So for every known fact that concerns one—and all known facts concern one, if only to ask, "Why do I know this fact?"

How does it all fit in? It must, for the Universe is not insane—that blackness has been passed.

Who then am I? And why? And why?

Reaching ecstasy or Samadhi through this channel, the riddle of Kamma is answered, and one is able to enter the realm of pure consciousness. The Universe, mastered long ere now in its effects, is at last mastered in its causes; and it is indeed a Magister of the Temple who can say:

Vi Veri Vniversvm Vivvs Vici.

XVII

"All things subsist together in the Intelligible World."

ZOROASTER.

I must insert a short note on the word Samadhi, source of infinite misunderstanding.

Etymologically it is composed of *Sam* (Greek συν), *together with*, and Adhi (Heb. Adonai), *the Lord*, especially the Personal Lord, or Holy Guardian Angel.

The Hindus accordingly use it to name that state of mind in which subject and object, becoming One, have disappeared. Just as H combines with Cl, and HCl results, so the Yogi combines with the object of his meditation (perhaps his own heart) and these disappearing, Vishnu appears. It is not that the Yogi perceives Vishnu.* The Yogi is gone, just as the

* The difficulty of showing this makes the author of the "Bhagavad Gita" descend to Rupa-symbols when he ought to have been in Viññanam (chap. xi.). It is quite essential to change the subject of the sentence. Thus the Auto-

Hydrogen is gone. It is not that the Heart has become Vishnu, or that Vishnu has filled the heart. The heart is gone, just as the Chlorine is gone. There is the tube, and it is full of HCl out of all relation to its elements, through the result of their union. (I purposely take the "elementary chemistry" view of the matter.)

Samadhi is therefore with the Hindu a result, the result of results indeed. There are higher and lower forms. That called Nirvikalpa-Samadhi, when the trance results from banishing thought altogether, instead of concentrating on one thought, is the highest kind.

But, with the Buddhist, Samadhi, though the state of mind meant is the same, is not an end, but a means.

The holy-man-of-the-East must keep this state of mind unimpaired during his whole life, using it as a weapon to attack the Three Characteristics (the antithesis of Nibbana) even as one uses one's normal dualistic consciousness to attack that dualism.

But I must observe that this idea is so tremendous that I almost doubt its possibility, and tremble as to my own understanding of it. Samadhi twelve seconds in duration is a phenomenon to shake the soul of a man, to uproot his Kamma, to destroy his Identity—and Bhikku Ananda Metteyya cheerfully talks of practically perpetual Samadhi as the first step to attainment!

The Hindu, too, asks this question.

biography of a Mystic would run: fœtus, babe, child, boy, youth, man, 418. There is no personal identity as a link between the man who is on the brink of "attainment" and the Being who arises in him, annihilating him, and Whom he subsequently remembers as his "Genius."

"I," he says, "define Phenomena as changeful and Atman the Noumenon as without change. When challenged, I merely retort by distinguishing between Atman and Paramatman. You say the same, but for Atman you say 'Nibbana.'"

The Buddhist can only retort, rudely enough: There is no Atman; and there is Nibbana.

The Hindu probably mutters something about criticism of Nibbana having forced some Buddhists to a conception of Parinibbana, simply but neatly defined as That to which none of the criticisms apply! Yet Atman and Nibbana are defined in almost identical terms.

It is clearly idle for us who know neither perfectly to attempt to arbitrate in so delicate an imbroglio. On the contrary, we had better set to and attain them both, and That which combines, denies, and transcends them both. Words are cheap!

XVIII

"In this the things without figure are figured."

"A similar Fire flashingly extending through the rushings of Air, or a Fire formless whence cometh the Image of a Voice, or even a flashing Light abounding, revolving, whirling forth, crying aloud. Also there is the vision of the fire-flashing Courser of Light, or also a Child, borne aloft on the shoulders of the Celestial Steed, fiery, or clothed with gold, or naked, or shooting with the bow shafts of Light, and standing on the shoulders of the horse; then if thy meditation prolongeth itself, thou shalt unite all these Symbols into the Form of a Lion."

"But God is He having the Head of the Hawk."—ZOROASTER.

Viññanam.—If hashish-analogy be able to assist us here, it is in that supreme state in which the man has built himself

up into God. One may doubt whether the drug alone ever does this. It is perhaps only the destined adept who, momentarily freed by the dissolving action of the drug from the chain of the four lower Skandhas, obtains this knowledge which is his by right, totally inept as he may be to do so by any ordinary methods.

In the case of the aspirant to meditation, this stage is even more terrible than the last. He has, to use our previous figures, suspended the law of gravitation ; the stream is still, and the Sun of the soul is faithfully reflected in its brilliance ; the mighty engine is stopped.

But—*there it is!* We have got rid of motion, but matter remains. (Again must I apologise for taking so elementary a view of physics.) And while there is a particle of matter, it must fill the Universe—there is no place for Spirit. His thought is controlled and smooth ; his thought (even !) is stopped : but there the thought is. Immutable it abides, stronger than ever in its silence and vastness ; and—O unhappy one ! *that which can be thought is not true.*

Thou hast taken thee the lies, those little foxes that spoil the grapes. Lie after lie thou hast suppressed ; and what hast thou achieved ?

Thou hast smitten all the illusions—O miserable slave ! All thou hast done is to harmonise and weld all the lies and illusions into one universal lie, one infinite illusion. It is one ; there is nothing to oppose to it. Thou art ten millionfold more in the grip of Maya than ever, thou who callest thyself Parabrahma, Hua, IAO !

The mystic states of this grade are the final and perfect identity of the Self with the Holy Guardian Angel, the Vision

of Pan, the Four Formless States of Buddhism, namely, Samadhi upon Consciousness, Space, Nothing, and that which is neither P nor p′, in logical phraseology. Here, too, we should place Shivadarshana, the Vision of the Destruction of the Universe, the Opening of the Eye of Shiva.

(Which is why adepts of this stage wear an eye as a badge.)

Of this vision what can one say, save that the Universe, as previously known through Atmadarshana, is annihilated? Yet the negation of this phrase is only apparent; the sense is that all that negative Atmadarshana is destroyed; it is only an illusion that goes. Yet there is indeed Nothing in its place—and the only way to express the matter is to spell that Nothing with a capital N.

If the rationalist reader has had the quite super-Stylite patience to read to this point, he will surely now at last throw down the book with an ethically justifiable curse.

Yet I beg him to believe that there is a shade of difference between me and a paradox-monger. I am not playing with words—Lord knows how I wish I could! I find that they play with me!—I am honestly and soberly trying to set down that which I know, that which I know better than I know anything else in the world, that which so transcends and excels all other experience that I am all on fire to proclaim it.

Yet I fail utterly. I have given my life to the study of the English language; I am supposed by my flatterers to have some little facility of expression, especially, one may agree, in conveying the extremes of thought of all kinds.

Yet here I want to burn down the Universe for lack of a language. So the angry mood passes, and one understands how one's predecessors, in the same predicament, got out of it by quietly painting a "Heart girt with a Serpent," or a "Winged Globe" or some similar device.

If I persist, seeing that my little gift of language must be mine for some purpose, and therefore for this purpose, since no other purpose can there be, let my rationalist friends excuse me, as the agony of my impotence most terribly avenges them.

Concerning the methods of obtaining these particular states, I am almost at one with Sri Parananda, my godly friend, when he talks of "the Grace of the Lord Shiva," and with my ungodly friend Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya, when he hints that the accidental coincidence of the circumferences of the Nibbana-Dhatu and the Samsara-Chakra with the Brahmarandra of the sphere of the 99-year-old-Talipot-palm-like sucking Arahat may have something to do with it.

Plainly, we know so very little; so few ever attain this class of experience that one is perhaps hardly justified in maintaining (as I always have maintained and that stoutly) that the reward is according to the work. It may conceivably be that work does not affect the question, as it clearly does in the lower grades, it may be that an outsider may pull off the big thing—Agnosco!

Still, I advise people to work at it.

Perhaps the most direct method is that of sitting in your Ajna Chakra (that point in your brain where thoughts rise, a point to be discovered and rendered self-conscious by repeated

experiment) and without thinking of anything whatever, killing the thoughts as they rise with a single smack, like a child killing flies. The difficulty is of course to kill them without thinking of the killing, which thought is naturally just as bad as any other thought. I never got any good out of this method myself. It may, I believe, happen with fair frequency that in the course of any advanced meditation or invocation this particular type of spiritual experience may suddenly arise without apparent cause.

Anyway, let us hope so!

As a matter of practical politics, I think that a judicious mixture of the methods of East and West is likely to give the best results.

Let the young Adept, for example, master thoroughly the groundwork of the Hindu system.

Let him master Asana, posture, so that he can sit motionless for hours without any message from his body reaching and so disturbing his brain. Let him include in his accomplishments Pranayama, control of the breath and of the vital nervous currents which react in sympathy with it.

Let him then exalt to the utmost his soul by the appropriate ritual of ceremonial magic; and when by this means he has most thoroughly identified himself with the Supreme, let him, as that Supreme One, continue to meditate with intense force upon Himself, until his sphere is entirely filled with the single Thought.

Lastly, if this, the male energy, suffice not, let him transform it into a pure and perfect emptiness and passivity, as of one waiting for the Beloved One, with intense longing rendered passionless by the certainty that He will come.

Then, it may be, the Eye will open upon him, and the tomb of his Pyramid be unsealed.

It is impossible in a few words to explain thoroughly this eclectic system; for each act and thought of the ritual demands an expert teacher, and even a good pupil might study for years before mastering the method. By which time he might not impossibly have discovered one of his own.

Howbeit, I must do my best; and if by that best I can help "the least of these little ones," so much the better.

XIX

"The Intelligible subsisteth beyond Mind."—ZOROASTER.

Nerodha-samapatti.—It must be very satisfactory, you will probably be thinking, to wear that Eye as a badge, to have got so near to the End.

And that is where the joke comes in. Yet to the adept the Anglo-Indian proverb, "A jok's a jok (leech) but a jok up your nose is no joke" (Nose is not the word; but no matter!), may occur with painful intensity.

For he is no nearer to Nibbana than when he started. Though he has stripped off all the husks of Thought and touched Thought itself, even attaining to Negation of thought; yet he is still upon the plane of Thought. And—that which can be thought is not true.

All his righteousness is as filthy rags; even his eternity of Shivadarshana, his stored crores of Mahakalpas in the Arupa-Brahma-Lokas must pass; he must come back to his horses—and this time as a horse-fly.

So then he must abandon the whole series of ecstasies ; all this time he has been on the wrong road. For the Three Characteristics are true of Viññanam as they are of Rupa ; Change, Sorrow, Unsubstantiality.

He has only one asset ; the habit of One-pointedness—Ekâgrata. He may be all kinds of a black magician ; but at least he has learnt to concentrate his mind. But what is he to aim at? Hashish-analogy is better than ever here ; for Nibbana stands to the attainment of the Eight Jhanas, the Four Formless States κ.τ.λ. as the Decalogue does to any of his hashish-states. It has nothing whatever to do with it.

All this time he has been walking round the circumference of a wheel, cheerfully singing "Nearer, my God, to Thee ; Nearer to Thee!" while his God is in the centre. He has done the medicine-man trick, and wasted a lot of maidens in the hope of making rain.

So—one must suppose, for here I reach a point where, as Mr. Waite jeers, we are driven to take refuge in portentous darkness and irretrievable mystery (because we don't know anything about it)—he sits down and contemplates the Three Characteristics. This will presumably be very difficult to do because he is probably (for all the "Grace of the Lord Shiva" business) an expert in the Viññanam trances, and having thus created an eternal Universe and an even more eternal Absence of Universe, both of which, too, are probably mere masses of Sat—Chit—Ananda (Being—Knowledge—Bliss) while he is trying to think of Change—Sorrow—Unsubstantiality.

At last, as I imagine, probably without foundation, he succeeds in seeing first the truth and then the falsity of the Three Characteristics—and that is Nibbana.

(One may explain, as with Samadhi, that the man is not "in" Nibbana; the Characteristics are not "in" Nibbana: but—Nibbana is.)

It would be easy to string up a paradox-scheme in which Change, not-Change, both-Change-and-not-Change, and neither-Change-nor-not-Change were all four perceived at once; and indeed some authors have done something very like this; but, between you and me, I don't believe they knew anything about it; and as I certainly don't know anything myself, if it's all the same to you, I'd rather leave the subject alone. We really can't have another Hargrave Jennings on "The Rosicrucians: their Rites and Mysteries."

So there the matter must rest. I have added this section for the sake of completeness; but it is all hearsay. I am too blind to see the necessity of the section at all; I am far from convinced that the Viññanam phenomena do not represent finality; so stupendous are they that even to one who is accustomed to them it must always be difficult to imagine a state not merely beyond them but out of their dimension. Yet? . . . Perhaps that which I now urge is indeed the Great Illusion. . . .

At least, having adopted the Buddhist Skandhas as the basis of my classification, I was bound in mere courtesy to give the Buddhist doctrine as I have heard it from the one man who really understands it, Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya.

If I could only understand Him. . .!

XX

"If thou extendest the Fiery Mind to the work of piety, thou wilt preserve the fluxible body."

"For three days and no longer need ye sacrifice."—ZOROASTER.

We are at the end of our little digression upon mystic states, and may cheerfully return to the consideration of Scientific Illuminism. We have had, you may say, a poor half-pennyworth of Science to an intolerable deal of Illuminism. Well, that is what I wanted you to say. Were it not so, I would not have spent these two nights over this paper, when I want to be fresh every morning to go to the Prado and gloat over Velasquez!

Here, gentlemen, are a number of genuine mystic states; some home-grown, some imported. Please tell us what they are! (You are fond of telling us what things are.)

It is useless to label the whole lot as insane: nor are they unimportant.

In my view, most of the great men of the world have known them; themselves attributed their greatness to these experiences, and I really do not see why admittedly lesser men should contradict them. I hope to argue this point at greater length when I am better documented; but at the very least, these states are of the most extraordinary interest. Even as insanities, they would demand the strictest investigation from the light they throw upon the working of the brain. But as it is! All the sacred literature of the world is full of them; all the art and poetry of all time is inspired by them; and, by the Lord Harry! we know nothing about them. Nothing but what vague and troubled reflections the minds

of the mystics themselves, untrained in accuracy of observation, bring back from the fountains of light; nothing but what quacks exploit, and dotards drivel of.

Think of what we claim! That concentration and its results can open the Closed Palace of the King, and answer the Riddle of the Sphinx. All science only brings us up to a blind wall, the wall of Philosophy; here is your great Ram to batter a breach and let in the forlorn hope of the Children of the Curse to storm the heights of heaven.

One single trained observer with five years' work, less money than would build a bakehouse, and no more help than his dozen of volunteer students could give him, would earn himself a fame loftier than the stars, and set mankind on the royal road to the solution of the One great problem. Scientific Illuminism would have deserved its name, or mysticism would have received a blow which would save another young fool like myself from wasting his whole life on so senseless a study and enable him to engage in the nobler career of cheating and duping his fellows in the accredited spheres of commerce and politics, to say nothing of the grosser knaveries of the liberal professions.

But I have no doubts. Let the investigator study his own brain on the lines I have laid down, possibly in the first place with the aid of hashish or some better physical expedient, to overcome the dull scepticism which is begotten of idleness upon ignorance; it is useless to study the no-brain of another, on the strength of a reputation for fraud, as the spiritualist investigators seem to do. Your own brain is the best; next, the trained and vigorous brains of clever and educated men, in perfect health, honest and wary.

You will get more from them than you will from some maudlin hysteric professional mountebank. All talk to the contrary is the merest froth; Mohammed was a great law-giver and a great fighter; try your experiment with the sane, and not with the crazy!

True, you will get hallucinations more easily with the unsound; but you will never, never, never find a woman or a degenerate who is capable of any trance of type higher than Vedana. Take my word for it!

No! take my word for nothing: try all things; hold fast that which is good!

MADRID,
August 1908, O.S.

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