

OCCULT REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INVESTIGATION OF SUPER-NORMAL PHENOMENA AND THE STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS.

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri"

Price SEVENPENCE NET; post free, EIGHTPENCE. Annual Subscription, for British Isles, United States and Canada, SEVEN SHILLINGS (One Dollar seventy-five Cents); for other countries, EIGHT SHILLINGS.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

AMERICAN AGENTS: Arthur Delapierre, 19 Warren Street, New York; The International News Company, New York; The New England News Company, Boston; the Western News Company, Chicago.

Subscribers in India can obtain the Magazine from A. H. Wheeler & Co., 15 Elgin Road, Allahabad; Wheeler's Building, Bombay; and 39 Strand, Calcutta.

All communications to the Editor should be addressed c/o the Publishers, WILLIAM RIDER & SON, LIMITED, 164 Aldersgate Street, London, E.C.

VOL. XII.

AUGUST 1910

No. 2

NOTES OF THE MONTH

"AS a man thinketh" is the title of one of the numerous little books from the pen of Mr. James Allen, of Ilfracombe,* and the aphorism, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," in one form or another seems to run through the whole of Mr. Allen's writings as a sort of refrain, in whatever guise they have been given to the world. "As the fruit to the tree, and the water to the spring, so is action to thought." "Act," he says elsewhere, "is the blossom of thought, and joy and suffering are its fruits. Thus does a man garner in the sweet and bitter fruitage of his own industry." "A noble and god-like character is not a thing of favour or chance, but is the natural result of continued effort in right thinking, the effect of long-cherished association with god-like thoughts. An ignoble and bestial character by the same process is the result of the continued harbouring of grovelling

THE GOSPEL
ACCORDING
TO JAMES
ALLEN.

* *As a Man Thinketh.* L. N. Fowler & Co. *Above Life's Turmoil.* G. P. Putnam's Sons. 3s. 6d. net. *From Passion of Peace.* W. Rider & Son, Ltd. 1s. net.

thoughts. Man is made or unmade by himself." So, Mr. Allen argues, the apparently sudden falling of a man under stress of temptation, is not in reality a sudden process at all. The falling was merely the outworking, the finished result of what commenced in the mind, probably years before. A cherished thought grew until at last it gained sufficient strength to attract to itself the opportunity which enabled it to ripen into action. Pursuing this line of thought our author proceeds to show that from the standpoint of his philosophy "the source and cause of all temptation is in the inward desire . . . the outward object is merely the *occasion* of the temptation, never the cause." "Circumstances are the means by which the soul receives its own." Temptation thus comes from within the man, and "a man is tempted because of the evil that is within him."

WHAT IS TEMPTATION? Mr. Allen appositely quotes the apostle James in saying "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts." The object of temptation is to show a man just where his weaknesses lie, and is a means of urging him on to higher altitudes of knowledge and purity. "When temptation is understood and conquered, perfection is assured." Temptation, then, according to Mr. Allen's creed, is not a lasting condition, as most people imagine. It is a passing phase, an experience which the soul must undergo in its passage to a higher life.

It can scarcely be said of the merely animal man that he is tempted, for the very presence of temptation means that there is a striving for a purer state. Animal desire and gratification is the normal condition of the man who has not yet risen into aspiration: he wishes for nothing more, nothing better than his sensual enjoyments, and is for the present satisfied. Such a man cannot be tempted to fall, for he has not yet risen. . . . He is happy as a beast is happy, because he is not conscious of what he is depriving himself. He suffers as the beasts suffer because he does not know the way out of suffering. He lives in a series of sensations, longings and confused memories which are unrelated to any central idea or principle.

It is in the attempt to emerge from this condition into a higher form of life that man is first brought face to face with temptation properly so called. When animal conditions no longer appear sweet to a man "in his sorrow he thinks of nobler things. When he is deprived of earthly joy he aspires to the joy which is heavenly." It is when impurity turns to suffering that purity is sought. "Truly aspiration rises phoenix-like from the dead ashes of repentance."

Working out the original idea that temptation comes from

TRANS- fight against outward allurements, but merely
MUTATION abandons all desire for them and the power of
OF ENERGY. temptation is thus destroyed at its source. But
the mental force which the desire represented is not
annihilated but transmuted into a purer form of energy. "The law of conservation of energy," observes our author, "obtains universally, in mind as in matter, and the force shut off in lower directions is liberated in higher realms of spiritual activity."

Temptation is a condition of darkness. It follows, therefore, that it is only the knowledge of true enlightenment that can free the soul from its thralldom.

When a man fully understands the source, nature, and meaning of temptation, in that hour he will conquer it, and will rest from his long travail; but whilst he remains in ignorance, attendance to religious observances and much praying and reading of scripture will fail to bring him peace.

MAN MASTER OF CIRCUM- STANCE. The man who obtains self-mastery will *ipso facto* rise superior to circumstance. "The circumstances which a man encounters with suffering are the result of his own mental inharmony. The circumstances which a man encounters with blessedness are the result of his own mental harmony." "Let a man radically alter his thoughts and he will be astonished at the rapid transformation it will effect in the natural conditions of his life." A man thus, though he cannot directly choose his circumstances, can yet by choosing his thoughts, indirectly but none the less surely shape his circumstances. Man must become the master, and when this is so, circumstance will be the slave.

You will be what you will to be;
Let failure find its false content
In that poor word "environment,"
But spirit scorns it, and is free.

It masters time, it conquers space;
It cowers that boastful trickster, Chance,
And bids the tyrant Circumstance
Uncrown, and fill a servant's place.

The human Will, that force unseen,
The offspring of a deathless soul,
Can hew a way to any goal,
Though walls of granite intervene.

Be not impatient in delay,
But wait as one who understands;
When spirit rises and commands,
The gods are ready to obey.

Reason, if rightly employed, will lead a man from the darkness of the purely animal condition of self-indulgence and the sensuous life, to the light of divine consciousness. Although it is perfectly true that reason may be enlisted in the service of the lower nature this is merely the result of its partial and imperfect exercise.

Large numbers of people are possessed of the strange delusion that reason somehow is intimately connected with the denial of the existence of God. This is probably due to the fact that those who try to prove that there is no God usually profess to take their stand upon reason, while those who try to prove the reverse generally profess to take their stand on faith. Such argumentative combatants are governed more by prejudice than either by reason or faith, their object being not to find truth, but to defend and confirm a pre-conceived opinion.

Nothing, it seems to me, is happier than Mr. Allen's observations on this subject. Where Reason has found enemies its assailants have generally been those most in need of its "sweet reasonableness."

Without the aid of reason truth cannot be apprehended. Reason is in reality associated with all that is pure and gentle, moderate and just. It is said of a violent man that he is unreasonable, of a kind and considerate man that he is reasonable, and of an insane man that he has lost his reason.

It is reason which distinguishes man from the brute, and only by obeying the voice of reason and following its dictates does he cease to become brutish.

The *Word of God* is the *Reason of God*, and one of the renderings of Lao Tze's "Tao" is "Reason," inasmuch that in the Chinese translation of our own New Testament the commencement of St. John's Gospel runs: "In the beginning was the Reason" (Tao).

If a man's temptations come from within himself, it is within himself also that he will find the condition that men have described as immortality. "This is a lucid state of consciousness in which the sensations of the body, the varying and unrestful states of mind and the circumstances and the events of life are seen to be of a fleeting and therefore of an illusory character." In this connection Mr. Allen does well to knock on the head one of the favourite illusions of modern preachers, alike orthodox and spiritualistic. The death of the body, he points out, cannot bestow immortality upon a man. "Spirits are not different from

IMMORTAL-
ITY AND ITS
COUNTER-
FEIT.

men, and live their little feverish life of broken consciousness and are still immersed in change and mortality." To desire immortality of this latter kind is not really to desire immortality at all in the true sense, but merely to have a selfish longing for the persistence

of the ego with its pleasure-loving personality and its succession of little lives, "rounded by a sleep," without memory of the past or knowledge of the future.

At this point, and at a good many other points in his interesting writings, Mr. Allen trenches very closely on the subject of Reincarnation, and it is hard to see how the views he holds can be reconciled with any other form of belief. The question is inevitably brought uppermost in the mind of one who reads, for instance, the chapter "On the Supreme Justice" in a book from which I have already quoted, *Above Life's Turmoil*, just published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. "Is there Justice in the universe?"

IS THERE JUSTICE? is a question which has been put almost as often as Pilate's celebrated query, "What is Truth?" and the orthodox replies have generally failed to satisfy. "There is injustice," says Mr. Allen, "and there is not."

The man who lives in his passions sees injustice everywhere. The man who has overcome his passions sees the operations of justice in every department of human life. Injustice is the confused feverish dream of passion, real enough to those who are dreaming it. Justice is the permanent reality in life gloriously visible to those who have awakened out of the painful nightmare of self.

The good man, according to Mr. Allen (and I suppose we must regard the "good" man as synonymous with the "wise" one), never regards himself as treated unjustly, because he knows that whatever comes to him can only come as the effect of what he himself has formerly sent out. Accordingly, he fulfils the scriptural precept of loving his enemies and blessing those who curse him, as he looks upon them as the blind but beneficent instruments by which he is enabled to pay his moral debts to the Great Law. The good man is well content that it should be so; for he sees justice and love as only two attributes of one beneficent power, and realizes that as certainly as effect follows cause, so the consequences of his deeds will come home to their author.

"As for the gods of the heathen, they are but idols." So sang the psalmist who has long rejoiced in the pseudonym of "King David." The expression "gods of the heathen" to the modern thinker has come to bear a wider interpretation. To what gods, of what orthodox creeds is it not appropriate?

"The little party gods," well says Mr. Allen, "have had their day. The arbitrary gods, creatures of caprice and ignorance, are falling into disrepute. Men have quarrelled over and defended them until they have

grown weary of the strife, and now everywhere they are relinquishing and breaking up these helpless idols of their long worship.

NO GODLETS The god of revenge, hatred and jealousy who gloats over the downfall of his enemies; the partial god who gratifies all our narrow and selfish desires; the god who saves only the creatures of his particular and special creed; the god of exclusiveness and favouritism; such were the gods (miscalled by us 'God') of our soul's infancy, gods base and foolish as ourselves, the fabrications of our selfish self."

Mr. Allen sees the dawn of a new hope in the passing of these false gods, and in the turning of the human race from a faith in the God who can be cajoled and who will subvert the whole order of things to gratify his worshippers to the God of Law.

Those who enter the path of obedience to that Law no longer accuse; entering that path they no longer doubt; entering that path they no longer fret and despond; for they know now that God is right, the universal laws are right; the cosmos is right; and that they themselves are wrong, if wrong there is, and that their salvation depends upon their own efforts, upon their personal acceptance of that which is good, and their rejection of that which is evil. . . . The Law reigns and it reigns in men's hearts and lives, and they have come to understand the reign of Law who have sought out the tabernacle of the true God by the fair pathway of unselfishness.

Mr. Allen sees in selfishness the main cause of the world's misery and in altruism its way of escape. To him, "Being is simple. The universe is simple. Complexity arises in ignorance and self-delusion. If a man puts away egotism he will see the universe in all the beauty of its pristine simplicity." God and the universe are one. The universe is God in manifestation; but through this manifestation comes into being the world of illusions. In this illusory world the progress of the soul of man is made possible through experience and temptation.

Man evolves outward to the periphery of complexity, and then involves backwards to the central simplicity. When a man discovers that it is mathematically impossible for him to know the universe before knowing himself, he then starts upon the way which leads to the original simplicity. He begins to unfold from within and as he unfolds himself he enfolds the universe.

The man who has won his way back to the PURE GOODNESS is called "the slayer of illusions." Mr. Allen has interpreted the philosophy of the East in terms of morality and in doing so has pointed the pathway that leads forward from the most rudimentary consciousness to divine self-knowledge. The law of his "God of Law" is inherent in the essential attributes of the divine nature. The secret of attainment is involved in the

truism that the divine must not do violence to the principles of its own being.

Mr. Allen's writings are steeped in Theosophical thought and



MR. JAMES ALLEN.

conceptions; but whereas Theosophy takes the form in the main of a philosophy, Mr. Allen's opinions express themselves as a code of ethics. He has, in fact, if I may so phrase it, given a religion to Theosophy. In other words, he has shown the bear-

ing of the main tenets of Theosophy upon life and conduct, and in doing so he seems to me to have filled a gap in the Theosophical ideal. The criticism, rightly or wrongly, has been levelled against Theosophy that whatever the Theosophist believes, he is in the main free to follow his own inclinations where life and conduct are concerned, and that for this reason he cannot be regarded from the point of view of good citizenship as the equal of his Christian brother. Mr. Allen has taught a high morality and a morality that is in harmony with, if it is not the natural outcome of, the noblest conceptions of Oriental faiths.

It is obviously easier to live the ideal life that Mr. Allen upholds, in the peaceful seclusion of Ilfracombe than in the crowded streets of London or New York. It is no easy matter for those who are immersed in the varied cares and worries of a business life to rise "above life's turmoil." The aspiration may be there, but the means of attainment may not always appear very obvious. It was, however, in a crowded centre of England, in the town of Leicester, that our author was born on November 28, 1864. Apparently the conditions did not suit him, for he suffered much ill-health as a child. At the age of fourteen he lost his father, and straitened circumstances compelled him

then to begin to earn his own living and help to support his mother. From his earliest years he was a voracious reader, being specially fond of the poets, dramatists, religious and philosophical writers, and of Shakespeare in particular. Religions interested him, but no special religion had his whole-hearted sympathy. Mr. Allen claims to have experienced in the first instance what is described as the *Cosmic Vision* at the age of twenty-four, after reading Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*. This was only a momentary illumination; but the experience returned in a more permanent form after an interval of ten years. Mr. Allen married at thirty years of age, and as he himself expresses it, "is blessed with a dear and devoted wife." He did not, however, write his first book, *From Poverty to Power*, until the age of thirty-five, as a direct result of his second experience of the *Cosmic Vision*. The writing of other books followed in quick succession. As may be readily understood, Mr. Allen's ambitions are not on the material plane, and he has never set himself to make money beyond what his modest requirements demand. Nor, again, has ambition any attractions for him, and he has invariably preferred a simple life in the country to publicity and self-advertisement. Mr. Allen's latest

publication, *Above Life's Turmoil*, contains a portrait of the author, and a reproduction from the same photograph is here given for the benefit of readers of the OCCULT REVIEW.

I am sorry that I misled my readers in one particular instance with regard to the series of misadventures recorded in the Notes of the Month of the OCCULT REVIEW as having followed various people who incurred the displeasure of the supposed Priestess of Amen Ra, who is reported to haunt the mummy case at the British Museum. I refer to the record of "S. L. Morewood," and the challenge to the mummy which appeared under

this signature in the pages of the *Daily Express*.
 THE MUMMY—A CONTRADICTION. The story of the sequel to this challenge was narrated in the columns of the *Week End* and was quoted by me in all good faith from that paper. I now discover, however, through the medium of Miss S. L. Morewood herself (it is a lady, after all, and not a gentleman), that the *Week End* got hold of the wrong end of the stick. The Morewoods who met with misadventures at sea were not identical with Miss S. L. Morewood, but were cousins of that lady. They did nothing to call down upon themselves the wrath of the mummy Priestess, and Miss S. L. Morewood herself resents the insinuation that her challenge has been taken up by the mummy, of whose power she continues to express total scepticism. I trust this explanation will serve to put me right both with Miss Morewood and with the readers of the REVIEW, even if it fails to create a *modus vivendi* between Miss Morewood and the mummy.