

MYSTICISM.

CLEARNESS of thought is the first requirement for the construction of a true philosophy. Most mistakes originate from a confusion of words and a wrong comprehension of their exact significance, but nowhere is a lack of clearness fraught with more consequence than in the domain of psychological questions — involving religion, ethics, and jurisprudence. Mysticism, therefore, is positively dangerous, although we do not deny that under special circumstances it may be beautiful as art and sometimes even wholesome—as wholesome as a medicinal drug would be for a diseased system or a stimulant for one who is tired and cannot easily rouse himself in the moment when all his strength is needed for some good purpose.

THE RETURN OF MYSTICISM.

Some people yearn for mysticism, partly for artistic, partly for sentimental reasons; and there is no harm done, provided common sense cuts off its vagaries; but under all circumstances it would be well to understand the nature of mysticism, the reason of its force, and also its limitations.

We publish in the present number an article by the Rev. John Wright Buckham on “The Return to the Truth in Mysticism.” We do not agree with him, but understand very well why he appreciates mysticism, and we gladly take this opportunity to discuss the problem and

present our own solution partly in further extension of and partly in contrast to his views.

Mr. Buckham says:

“The scientific spirit is admirable until it becomes negating and exclusive, then it proves our bane and blight.”

Science ought to be negating errors only, for then only is it a search for truth. If science becomes exclusive (unless it excludes the irrational) it ceases to be science, for science is broad and catholic. There are no sects in science, and the truths of science are universal.

Mr. Buckham declares that “everything indicates a return to mysticism,” but he wisely distinguishes between false mysticism and true mysticism. The former “revels in ecstasies, eccentricities, visions, special revelations, individual divine communication which substitutes fancy for fact, imagination for reality, which disdains the task for the sake of revery, which scorns the human whole to exalt the ego.” He adds, “the world has too much of it.” Mr. Buckham then declares that “in coming into right relations with mystery lies our salvation.” He praises “the true mysticism, but his only description of it is given in Jowett’s definition who says:

“By mysticism we mean not the extravagance of an erring fancy, but the concentration of vision in feeling, the enthusiastic love of the good, the true, the one, the sense of the infinity of knowledge and the marvel of the human faculties.” (II, 102.)

If mysticism is the love of the good, the true and the one, if it is a sense of the infinity, i. e., the inexhaustibleness and unlimitedness of knowledge, if it is the awe we feel when thinking of the grandeur of the human soul and its faculties, it is most assuredly a mysticism which omits mystification by mystery or anything mystical. I see no mysticism in what Mr. Jowett calls by that name.

Mysticism is opposed to science, and Mr. Buckham

brings out the contrast between the two. But he narrows the meaning of science. He calls it "disillusioned materialism" limiting it to "matter of fact," i. e., the material universe, and speaks of "scientific self-sufficiency." He further commends agnosticism with its doctrine of the unknowable and identifies that term with "the spiritual."

Now we claim that the field of science is unlimited. Anything that exists, be it material or spiritual (i. e., mental, moral, etc.) is a fit object of science, and there is no problem (unless it be wrongly formulated) that can not ultimately be solved. The spiritual is as knowable as the physical, and the wrongly formulated problem is the illegitimate problem which can not be solved because it is based upon a misconception and is a mere pseudo-problem.

The most important pseudo-problem is the question, "why does the world exist?" All the questions of practical life, how, when, where, why, i. e., through which cause and according to which law of nature has a certain thing or condition originated or did a certain event take place, can be fully answered, provided we can ascertain the facts of the case and are sufficiently trained in exact observation as well as in methodical thought. To a mind that could watch the slightest details of the world processes the universe ought to appear as perspicuous and translucent as glass. All the transformations take place with a regularity that—always provided we know the facts in question—admits of an absolutely precise formulation and description. But why there is existence at all, why there is not in its place an empty blank of non-existence, is the only question that can not be answered, and the problem of this question is a pseudo-problem, for it demands an explanation of the reality or actuality of the world. Why is the real real, why is a fact a fact? When we try to derive the notion of existence from non-existence, we will necessarily fail, and

he who does not see that he is confronted with a pseudo-problem, turns agnostic.

The objective world as it presents itself to our senses in its concrete actuality, possesses three aspects, formulated in three generalizations of substance (or matter) space and time; and their actuality, or indisputable and positive existence implies three *nots*, viz.,

1. Substance did *not* originate from nothing.
2. Space is *not* limited.
3. Time has *not* a beginning nor an end.

The *not* in these three propositions lurks in the ideas of persistence or indestructibility, infinitude and eternity and constituted the *knot* of metaphysics.¹

There are people who love the mysterious so much as to positively hate clearness of thought, and I will not deny that there is a charm in haziness. In art for instance a certain chiaroscuro is frequently quite effective,² but what is recommendable in art is not justified in science. The artist represents reality as it appears to our senses, while the scientist describes the world as it is objectively considered. The artist appeals to our sentiments, and represents or reflects our sentiments, and they are rarely clear even to ourselves; but the scientist's duty is to explain phenomena, and the philosopher, if he is of the right type (if his philosophy is scientific) will follow in the wake of science and aspire to clearness of thought.

There is no need of mysticism in philosophy. If we accept the "that" of existence and dispose thus of the pseudo-problem of the three *nots*, we shall find that otherwise the world in all its concrete details is explicable—if not always in fact, on account of our lack of sufficient in-

¹ This is the truth that underlies the doctrine of agnosticism which otherwise is and remains a declaration of intellectual bankruptcy and as a philosophy is suicidal. Compare my little book *Kant and Spencer*, pp. 52-56.

² See the author's article "The Importance of Clearness and the Charm of Haziness," in *The Open Court*, Vol. III, pp. 2923-4.

formation, yet certainly in theory, and thus we can undauntedly trust in the intelligibility of existence. There is nothing that can not be understood and explained. There are problems not yet ripe for discussion, and further, the range of investigation is unlimited. The universe is too rich to be exhausted and life is freighted with too many potentialities to reach an end of interest; but there is no need of falling a prey to mysticism because there are no bounds that can be set to either progress or science.

Another source of many perplexing pseudo-problems is epistemological, for it lies in the method of science itself. The task of science is to render thoughts (i. e., the representation of things) concise and exact, but all our thinking is done by concentrating our attention upon a definite point. If we wish to see some special object we look at it and our eyes converge upon it. Thus one thing is singled out, while the rest of the world is set aside. If we think of a thing, we establish lines of demarkation and exclude all such qualities and relations as do not belong to the idea under consideration, however important they may be otherwise, even for the thing and its existence. These lines of demarkation do not exist in nature, they are the artifice by which we are enabled to grasp the thing. Nature is an immeasurable and inseparably interconnected whole, and so all our mental discriminations and boundaries are almost as artificial as the lines traced on the map of the stars to combine them in groups called constellations.

This method by which it creates artificial units is indispensable, for otherwise we could not bring order into our world of thought, but if we forget what belongs to our method and what to objective reality, we are apt to take our formulas to be the real things. This mistake is so natural that it is actually made, as may be seen from the generally established habit of calling the uniformities of events laws of nature, as if they were ordinances com-

elling things to act in a special way—a conception which introduces many erroneous notions into science and philosophy.

If we did not establish artificial lines of demarkation, our mental picture of the world would be a mere blur, as is exemplified in the kinematograph which shows a clear picture only because by a mechanical contrivance (the main point in its invention), it eliminates the continuity of the light proceeding from the object to be pictured, and cuts it up into a succession of instantaneous views, changing little by little in rapid succession. In this way, and in this way only, can we present pictures; the objective world is continuous, but we break it up into discrete units.

This artifice of our intellect which represents discrete objects where there is the flux of a continuous world, brings it about that scientific representation may, within certain limits and for certain purposes become inadequate. We need not, however, denounce science for that reason, but must only keep in mind its epistemological conditions. We must not attribute to the object what belongs to the thinking subject. We must understand the significance of the artificial lines of demarkation, the assumed units of the objects under investigation and all the complications derived therefrom.

How easily pseudo-problems arise when a continuum must be expressed by a system of discrete units, becomes apparent when we want to express geometrical magnitudes in arithmetical terms. Geometry deals with space which is continuous, arithmetic is the science of numbers, which are discrete units. Take the relation of the diameter to the circumference of a circle which are both definite magnitudes, but when translated into the terminology of arithmetic, we are confronted with a task that can only be approximated and never accomplished in full exactness. Mystics find it difficult to comprehend how the number π

can be of any objective validity, since it can not be expressed in definite numbers, but the reason is that we have two incommensurable systems, one of which is continuous, the other discrete. The mystery would indeed be impenetrable if space consisted of concrete parts, and if we were obliged to think that our arithmetical method were inherent also in geometry.

There are a great number of such instances in which two methods are incommensurable; none of them proves that the objective world is unintelligible, but only that the methods of science must be used intelligently. Other instances are the incommensurability of the diagonal with the two sides of its square; or the relation between the fraction $\frac{1}{3}$ and its value expressed in decimals, which is 0.333. . . ; or the idea of the unit itself as expressed in its parts in the formula

$$1 = \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{8} + \frac{1}{16} + \frac{1}{32} + \frac{1}{64} + \dots \text{ without end.}$$

We grant that the method of science is onesided and will in some cases for good reasons prove insufficient, but there is an additional difficulty which is perhaps of greater importance to the unscientific multitudes. Science is absolutely devoid of sentiment, and in order to accomplish its end, it must be so. There are people who demand too much of science and expect that it should be all in all. Accordingly we will insist that science is not all of life, and that the intellect must be supplemented by sentiment, and sentiment loves to be clothed in a poetic dress. Reason constitutes the humanity of man and science alone can teach him to climb the heights of existence, but without sentiment, without good-will, without love the rationality of man and all its glories would be like a tinkling cymbal. Though science is devoid of sentiment, it should, and it must, and it will, lead to a refinement of man's heart with its wealth of feeling.

Sentiment is the source from which spring mystic con-

temptations and most of the effusions of religious literature. Sentiment dislikes logic and close argument. It does not mind contradictions; on the contrary, it enjoys them; and so we see that mysticism revels in paradoxes. So far no objection can be made; but sometimes sentiment goes further. Sentiment is very powerful in all of us, most so in persons not trained in scientific methods: in them it rules supreme and the ideas which rise from it assume an authority that scorns criticism and rational analysis. The unscientific man believes a certain proposition because it appeals to him. No proof is needed and a refutation is odious. He is intoxicated with his dreams and allows them to take possession of him.

Mysticism, according to our conception of it, is a theory which deems mystification not only allowable but would justify it because it assumes that science is unable to solve the problems of existence and that our sentiments, our imaginations, our flights of fancy will serve the purpose better than any rational analysis of exact science.

Now it so happens that mysticism—at least a certain kind of mysticism—is frequently very useful, but there is no difficulty in explaining the reason. Mysticism is, as it were, a short cut of sentiment to reach a truth which under the circumstances may somehow be unattainable by the intellect. If this truth happens to be a genuine truth, mysticism will be helpful, but if it be an error, a superstition, an aberration, it will be injurious. The shortcomings of mysticism lie in its lack of critical acumen. Sentiment is no proper criterion of truth, and thus it appears that science will after all be indispensable. The best instance of a wholesome mysticism is the conscience of a simple-minded but well-intentioned man. He will instinctively find the right, not by logical argument, but through the guidance of that mysterious inner voice which speaks to him with divine authority.

While conscience appears to be mysterious, its nature, its origin and mode of action are by no means inexplicable.³ It is nothing more nor less than a great number of the verdicts on our own and other people's actions, gathered up by experience and stored up in the subconscious depths of our soul; and we may add that according to the conditions of man's surroundings and education his conscience will be either reliable or subject to fallacies. Conscience is by no means absolutely reliable. There are many instances of an erring conscience, and the man who suffers from it is sure to be haunted by dangerous errors and will make grievous mistakes.

What is true of conscience is true of all mysticism. If mysticism happens to strike the truth, it will offer to people who are as yet incapable of grasping the full truth, a surrogate of the truth sufficient for their needs. In this sense many prophets and priests and preachers (including the German mystics, such men as Eckhart, Tauler, Jacob Böhme and Angelus Silesius, and also Swedenborg) have done good and useful work, and frequently builded better than they knew. They were guided not by a clear comprehension of the truth but by an instinct which made them feel what they could not yet understand.

With all our appreciation of the poetry of mysticism, we must bear in mind the dangers that are engendered by it. A mystic conviction easily becomes the source of superstition and of superstitious practices. It is perhaps not a mere accident that pious preachers such as Eckhart and Tauler proceeded from the same religious brotherhood as Johannes Nider, Jacob Sprenger, and other advocates of both witch prosecution and heresy trials.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF MYSTICISM.

So far we have spoken of mysticism from a general point of view; but there is a special problem which stands

³ For details see *The Ethical Problem*, pp. 120-124.

foremost in the systems of those mystics who range as philosophers. It is the problem of eternity in its contrast to time, of infinity in its contrast to limitation in space, of generality and universality in contrast to the particular thing, of the All and One, to the ego or individual self.

Our mental life becomes possible only by seeing the universal in the concrete and by subsuming all our experiences of things that are in time and space under concepts of types which are independent of, or (as we may express it) above time and space. So space with its definiteness of location is contrasted by infinitude; time which determines the origin and end of things has a counterpart in eternity, and the concrete particular objects that exist in time and space are, from the mental point of view, merely transient instances of general types. This is the basis of all mentality, and our very souls could not have risen into existence, if these contrasts were not true realities in this world of which we form a part. There is nothing mysterious in the ideas of eternity, infinitude and universality; on the contrary they are very simple and clear notions, so simple that men untrained in philosophical or scientific ways of thinking are apt to overlook their significance.

Here the mystic steps in. He feels that he has a great truth to proclaim. He does not comprehend it himself, but his soul is full of it and so he pours forth his revelations of it in allegories, in symbols, in mysteries.

It is worth while to enter further into details.

An event that takes place is called actual, (i. e., having the faculty to act, being endowed with energy); a thing that exists is called real (i. e., thingish, having the quality of an object, consisting of matter). The real is always actual, and the actual is always real. The actual happens at a definite moment in time and the real exists in a definite spot in space. All actual reality is concrete, i. e., it is somewhere, somewhen and somehow (viz., it is possessed

of a definite form). It would appear now that anything not real must, as a matter of course, be regarded as non-existent, but such is not the case. At any rate here opinions are divided on the subject.

Among our concepts some denote concrete objects (thingish and actual particulars), while others refer to conditions, and the norms of conditions are neither here nor now, but applicable anywhere. Some of them have been formulated as natural laws which cover whole classes of uniformities. The falling stone is the actual fact, but the conditions of the fall are not matter; they are not things, and yet they determine the nature of the fall, they are as the Greek call it, the "causal" element,⁴ or as we now say, following Kant's terminology, "formal"; i. e., they constitute the relational factors. Now it is a peculiarity of reality as well as of our cognition that the conditions of a fall, the formal or relational features of the event, can be formulated in a general statement which is called gravitation, and gravitation is the norm which finds its application in all the innumerable instances of gravitating bodies.

There are some who would say that the gravitating body alone exists while gravitation is a fiction, unreal and therefore non-existent. This is the attitude of most naturalists to-day. But others take the opposite point of view. They say with Plato that all the single cases of gravitating bodies happen and are gone; they are mere instances of the law of gravitation, while the true reality, what Greek philosophers have called "true being" (literally "the beingly being"⁵) is the eternal norm that regulates all single instances of its actualization. The single instances in spite of their concrete reality are to the Platonist purely phenomenal and transient happenings, comparable to a phantasmagoria or to ripples on the ocean of existence.

⁴ τὸ αἰτιώδες.

⁵ τὸ ὄντως ὄν.

We do not mean to renew the strife between the two parties, nor will we attempt to prejudice the reader against either view which can easily be done by the very names given to those two sets of ideas. We will limit ourselves to statements of fact, and be impartial in our nomenclature. We say that concrete things are real and the generalities formulated in so-called natural laws are unreal.⁹ They exist nowhere. But even the most fanatical believer in the unreality of abstractions will grant that these generalities are not useless fictions. They serve a purpose. The ability to think in abstract terms is the characteristic of man and constitutes the backbone of rational thought. The whole fabric of man's reason is woven of abstractions. Reason is not a concrete thing, not an actual event, not a real thing, not a sense-perceptible object, and yet it is a positive factor in man's existence. This indicates that some unrealities possess significance and can not be regarded as indifferent, let alone non-existent.

It must be understood that we do not contradict the statement that the abstract formula of gravitation is a mere generalization of a certain set of facts; nor would we countenance the proposition that natural laws are metaphysical entities or existences in themselves. We will call them simply uniformities, but we claim and do so without fear of contradiction, that the uniformities of the objective world possess significance in the measure that our abstract ideas are important factors in our life, in our experience, in our destiny.

The paramount significance of these wonderful non-

⁹ We use here and in the following pages the terms "real" and "unreal" in their original and limited sense as thingish and not-thingish, i. e., material and unmaterial, but we do not mean to exclude the use of these words in their more general significance. We ourselves have used them in this their common acceptance as signifying anything that possesses objective validity. Thus in the broad sense of the word we would say that space is real, for space is possessed of objective validity and its qualities are quite definite; but in the narrow sense of the word's original and etymological meaning we would have to say, "space is not real," for it is not a concrete and corporeal thing such as stones, bodies, etc.

realities has startled many profound dreamers and in their anxiety to grasp the contrast they propounded paradoxes the keynote of which is the declaration that non-existence is true existence and that all particular existence is sham.

We recognize the contrast that actually exists between realities (i. e., concrete existences or facts) and verities, i. e., significant unrealities: uniformities, eternalities, universalities.

We use the word verity here in the sense of that objective state of conditions which is covered by a truth, i. e., a formula that is true. By truth we understand the subjective idea, by verity that objective condition of things which corresponds to a truth. Both are non-real, one being an idea, the other a general norm; yet both are significant. Truth is a factor in our soul-life and the efficacy of verities is the reason for the importance of truths. The contrast between facts and truths, between the concrete and the general, between the transient actuality and the normative eternity, between what German thinkers distinguish as *Dasein* (reality) and *Sein* (being) finds its typical expression in what may be called the scientific and the religious attitude.

The scientist observes analyses and formulates facts. He deals with the concrete, the real, the actual. The religious man appreciates the significance of the universal and looks upon it not as unreal but as super-real, and his standpoint is perfectly legitimate. The domain of the real is the temporal or secular, of the super-real, the eternal; and the eternal has been pictured by religious poets in the most glowing tints of poetical description as a realm of bliss, as a heaven, as the quintessence of divinity, as God himself, as Nirvana, etc.

The significance of the super-real is well characterized in the first four lines of the concluding stanza of Goethe's Faust, which may here be fitly quoted:

“Things unremainable
 But as symbols are meant;
 The unattainable⁷
 Here grows to event.”

SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF MYSTICISM.

Mysticism appears to have existed since times primordial and may in general be characterized as prescientific religion. It is a conception of the world based not so much on knowledge as on feeling, and we find the main principles of it in all primitive religions of the past and of the present.

The word “mystic” has come down to us from the Greek and denotes one who has been initiated⁸ into the mysteries of a religious cult, whereby one entered into a direct and intimate communion with the deity, through the mediation of Orpheus or Dionysus. It was claimed that the mystic was purified of sin and gained an assurance of the immortality of his soul. When paganism broke down, the ideas of mysticism were preserved among the Neo-Platonists, especially in the writings of Plotinus, while the Christian did not hesitate to picture Christ in the catacombs as Orpheus with lyre in hand.

Plotinus was born in Lycopolis in Egypt in 205 and took up his residence in 244 at Rome where he taught his philosophy until his death in 270. The writings of Plotinus,

⁷ While the general meaning of these lines is clear enough, the word *unzulänglich* may be interpreted in two different ways. *Unzulänglich* is that which is “not sufficient,” and thus Bayard Taylor translates:

“Earth’s insufficiency
 Here grows to event.”

But the meaning is obviously the reverse. Goethe wants to say that “the insufficient shall be done away with forever,” and so it seems to me that Goethe used the word *unzulänglich* in the sense of *unerlässlich*, i. e., unattainable, viz., *das wozu man nicht gelangen kann*. Goethe frequently introduced words in an unusual sense; in one poem for instance he introduces the word *Gift*, not in its usual acceptance as “poison,” but as a derivative from *geben*, “to give,” in the same meaning as the English “gift.”

⁸ The word *μυστικός*, “an initiated one,” is derived from *μύειν*, “to shut, to close, which is used here with reference to the eyes. It indicates that blindfolding was an important feature of initiation.

six books of *Enneads*, were edited and published by his disciple Porphyry. His theory is based on the idea that God, the original being, is the One and the Infinite, the absolute Good, the origin whence all creatures come and the goal whither they return. God is essence, matter is non-existence⁹ but, as such, matter is the basis of everything¹⁰ (viz., of all concrete and particular objects).

The more a creature moves away from God, the nearer it comes to non-existence. The soul is not matter, but spirit; it is an emanation from God that has been ensnared by sensuality (i. e., the lust for the material). But the soul need not descend further toward non-existence; it can return to its own essence which is God, and this is done by practicing the virtues, first civic virtues, then purifying virtues (asceticism) and finally divine virtues. Comprehension and intelligence are insufficient, the soul must enter into a perfect communion with God, which is attained by perfect passivity and a surrender of its own being. Finally, the soul reaches a stage of utter forgetfulness of all things, and then losing its own being it beholds in perfect silence the source of existence, the norm of the good, the source of its own being.

A revival of the main ideas of ancient Greek mysticism in Christianity took place in the fifth century and continued to play an important part in the history of the Church. It found expression in certain writings, ascribed to Dionysius Areopagita and first mentioned in the dispute of the Severians with the orthodox Catholics, held at Constantinople in 533 A. D.

Dionysius Areopagita (i. e., a member of the Areopagus) is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles xvii. 34 as one who was converted by Paul. According to Suidas he was a native Athenian, famous for his literary ability and first bishop of Athens. When during his stay at

⁹ τὸ μὴ ὄν.

¹⁰ τὸ βάθος ἐκάστου ἢ ὕλη.

Heliopolis he observed the solar eclipse, said to have taken place at the death of Christ, he exclaimed: "Either the Deity suffers or it suffers in sympathy with suffering."¹¹

The life of such a man would not have been complete without the crown of martyrdom and this is asserted by later authors.

The writings that go under his name are treatises on the Celestial Hierarchy, the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, the Divine Names, Mystic Theology, and a number of epistles. They breathe the spirit of Plotinus and may be characterized as a compromise between Neo-Platonism and Christianity. Their author (whosoever he may have been)¹² spiritualizes the doctrines of the Church by applying them to the individual life and seeking a direct union with God through contemplation and ecstatic visions.

The Church was not only not opposed to the mysticism of Dionysius Areopagita, but did its best to recommend his doctrines and have them propagated, perhaps without knowing them sufficiently, for at sundry times some of them were officially condemned as heretical.

Pope Stephan II sent a copy of the writings of Dionysius Areopagita to Pepin, king of the Franks; Hadrian I to Fulrad, Abbot of St. Denis; and Michael Balbus to King Louis the Pious, son of Charlemagne. John Duns Scotus translated them into Latin, and henceforth they exercised a great influence upon the further development of Christian thought. Among the men whose thoughts were more or less molded by them are Bernard of Clairvaux, Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas.

There has been in Germany a religious movement which is a typical and perhaps the most classical instance of the noblest type of mysticism, springing from purely religious

¹¹ ἢ τὸ θεῖον πάσχει ἢ τῷ πασχόντι συμπάσχει.

¹² He is frequently called Pseudo-Dionysius and is now commonly believed to have written in the fifth century, because he shows too many traces of the influence of Plotinus.

motives. During the troublesome times of the Middle Ages, when the Christian world was greatly harassed by the quarrels between Church and State, between pope and emperor, between Guelph and Ghibeline; when religious institutions were misused for political purposes, and in addition to the troubles created by the authorities themselves, great visitations came upon the people, such as wars, black death, and famines, there were a number of pious people who sought refuge not in the sacraments, not in the means of grace offered by the Church and not unfrequently withheld by interdicts and unjust excommunications, not in the Bible or other religious books, but in the ultimate source of all religious life, in the sentiments of the human heart. They were not antagonistic to the ecclesiastical life and its ceremonies, but they broke through them and tried to dig deeper to the bottom rock of religion. They called themselves *Gottesfreunde*, "friends of God," with reference to the word of Jesus, who in John xv. 15, said:

"Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his master doeth; but I have called you friends for all things that I have heard of my father I have made known unto you."

There were many prominent men among these friends of God, and we may mention of those who were leaders of the movement, Master Eckhart¹³ of Strassburg (about 1260-1300); Nikolaus of Basel (burned at the stake as a Beghard at Vienna about 1387); and his great disciple and friend, Tauler of Strassburg, a Dominican monk (1300-1361); further Henry Suso of Swabia, also a Dominican (died 1366); Johannes of Ruysbroek, surnamed *Doctor Ecstaticus* (died 1381); Henry of Nördlingen; Rulman Merswin (1307-1382), a merchant who retired from the world and founded a monastery; and the author of the

¹³ Also spelled Eckardt.

Theologia Germanica. The religion of these mystics resembles greatly even in important details the doctrines of Buddhism, especially in so far as it insists throughout on the utter surrender of the ego. The idea of self together with all particular existences is regarded to be the cause of all evil, and sin as well as hell would be eradicated if selfhood were done away with.

We are mainly interested in that mysticism which is a religious interpretation of the philosophical problem of life and we will here limit ourselves to a presentation of the leading ideas of the *Theologia Germanica* and the epigrams of Angelus Silesius. The former has been introduced to the English public by Susanna Winkworth through a good English translation, but is by far not as much known as it deserves to be; but Angelus Silesius has to my knowledge never been translated, and there are few who are familiar even with his name.

THEOLOGIA GERMANICA.

Theologia Germanica is the title of a book whose author is unknown, but he must have lived between Tauler and Luther, and was probably one of Tauler's disciples because he quotes a saying of Tauler's in one of his chapters. Luther edited the book and recommends it in high terms, saying that after the Bible and St. Augustine there is no book from which he has learned more about God and Christ and man and all things. The book was written in the middle of the fourteenth century.

According to the *Theologia Germanica*, God, the Perfect, is like the sun, the particular is a brightness or visible appearance which floweth out from the sun. It appeareth to be somewhat, this or that, and it is called a creature but it is not the Perfect. (Chap. I.)

It is peculiar that in his first definition of what the

theologian would naturally call God, the author of the *Theologia Germanica* avoids the word God. He says:

“The things which are in part can be apprehended, known, and expressed; but the Perfect cannot be apprehended, known, or expressed by any creature as creature. Therefore we do not give a name to the Perfect, for it is none of these. The creature as creature cannot know nor apprehend it, name nor conceive it.”

It is further stated that the “creature-nature” of the creatures is “that by which it saith ‘I and myself,’ but if we wish to be saved, the self and the like must all be lost and done away with. . . . So long as we think much of these things, cleave to them with love, joy, pleasure or desire, so long remaineth the Perfect unknown to us.”

The creatures, especially the self, the ego, etc., are called accidents, and the Perfect alone is true substance, or essence.

It will be noticed that the words “substance” and “essence,” and also “accident,” which are philosophical terms of the schoolmen borrowed from Aristotle, play an important part in Spinoza’s system where they are used in the same, or approximately the same, sense.

Our author reverts again and again to the subject that the source of all evil is separate existence. We read in Chap. II:

“What did the devil do else, or what was his going astray and his fall else, but that he claimed for himself to be also somewhat, and would have it that somewhat was his, and somewhat was due to him? This setting up of a claim and his I and Me and Mine, these were his going astray, and his fall. And thus it is to this day.”

The same idea is expressed in Chap. XXXIV:

“Be assured, he who helpeth a man to his own will, helpeth him to the worst that he can. For the more a man followeth after his own self-will, and self-will groweth in

him, the farther off is he from God, the true Good. For nothing burneth in hell but self-will. Therefore it hath been said, 'Put off thine own will, and there will be no hell.' ”

And further down, in Chap. XLIX, we read:

“If there were no self-will, there would be no devil and no hell. When it is said that Lucifer fell from heaven, and turned away from God and the like, it meaneth nothing else than that he would have his own will, and would not be at one with the Eternal Will. So was it likewise with Adam in Paradise. And when we say Self-will, we mean, to will otherwise than as the One and Eternal Will of God willeth.”

There is no pessimism about this conception, for the world itself should not be surrendered, but only self-will. We read in Chap. L:

“What is Paradise? All things that are; for all are goodly and pleasant, and therefore may fitly be called a Paradise. It is said also, that Paradise is an outer court of heaven. Even so this world is verily an outer court of the Eternal, or of Eternity, and specially whatever in Time, or any temporal things or creatures, manifesteth or remindeth us of God or Eternity; for the creatures are a guide and a path unto God and Eternity. Thus this world is an outer court of Eternity, and therefore it may well be called a Paradise, for it is such in truth. And in this Paradise, all things are lawful, save one tree and the fruits thereof. That is to say: of all things that are, nothing is forbidden and nothing is contrary to God but one thing only: that is, self-will, or to will otherwise than as the Eternal Will would have it. Remember this. For God saith to Adam, that is, to every man, 'Whatever thou art, or doest, or leavest undone, or whatever cometh to pass, is all lawful and not forbidden if it be not done from or according to thy will but for the sake of and according to

My will. But all that is done from thine own will is contrary to the Eternal Will.' ”

On this contrast between selfhood and allhood is based the Christology of the *Theologia Germanica*. The Saviour must partake of both, natural manhood and Godhood, otherwise we can not be healed. We read in Chap. III:

“By whom, and on what wise was that healing brought to pass? Mark this: man could not without God, and God should not without man. Wherefore God took human nature or manhood upon Himself and was made man, and man was made divine. Thus the healing was brought to pass. So also must my fall be healed. I cannot do the work without God, and God may not or will not without me; for if it shall be accomplished, in me, too, God must be made man; in such sort that God must take to Himself all that is in me, within and without, so that there may be nothing in me which striveth against God or hindereth His work. . . .

“And in this bringing back and healing, I can, or may, or shall do nothing myself; but just simply yield to God, so that He alone may do all things in me and work, and I may suffer Him and all His work and His divine will. And because I will not do so, but I count myself to be my own, and say ‘I,’ ‘Mine,’ ‘Me’ and the like, God is hindered, so that He cannot do His work in me alone and without hindrance; for this cause my fall and my going astray remain unhealed. Behold! this all cometh of my claiming somewhat for my own.”

Like Christ, man partakes of two natures. He is a particular being and as such belongs to the earth, and he is divine and as such he is like God. As the former he is Adam, and as the latter he is Christ. Adam is also called the old man and Christ the new man. We read:

“All that in Adam fell and died, was raised again and made alive in Christ, and all that rose up and was made

alive in Adam, fell and died in Christ. But what was that? I answer, true obedience and disobedience. But what is true obedience? I answer, that a man should so stand free, being quit of himself, that is, of his I, and Me, and Self, and Mine, and the like, that in all things, he should no more seek or regard himself, than if he did not exist, and should take as little account of himself as if he were not, and another had done all his works. Likewise he should count all the creatures for nothing. What is there then, which is, and which we may count for somewhat? I answer, nothing but that which we may call God. Behold! this is very obedience in the truth, and thus it will be in a blessed eternity. There nothing is sought nor thought of, nor loved, but the one thing only."

Christ himself, so long as he lived in the flesh, was not free from the evils of particularity. He was subject to suffering on the one hand, yet on the other hand he was perfect above all things. We read in Chapter VII that Christ had two eyes, one eye of the spirit wherewith he looked into eternity and another eye on account of his humanity wherewith he looked into time; and one of them was a hindrance to the other.

The created soul of man has also two eyes, and these two eyes can not both perform their work at once. If the soul shall see with the right eye into eternity, then the left must close itself and refrain from working, and be as though it were dead. (Chap. VII.)

The spiritual man will have troubles so long as he lives, in the same way as Christ had troubles. We read in Chapter XVIII:

"Of a truth we ought to know and believe that there is no life so noble and good and well pleasing to God, as the life of Christ, and yet it is to nature and selfishness the bitterest life. A life of carelessness and freedom is to

nature, and the Self and the Me, the sweetest and pleasantest life, but it is not the best; and in some men may become the worst. But though Christ's life be the most bitter of all, yet it is to be preferred above all."

In Chapter XXXVII we read that the cause of the sorrow of the God-man was sin, and we can not avoid the same fate even unto death. We read:

"And therefore where God is made man, or when He dwelleth in a truly Godlike man, nothing is complained of but sin, and nothing else is hateful; for all that is, and is done, without sin, is as God will have it, and is His. But the mourning and sorrow of a truly Godlike man on account of sin, must and ought to last until death, should he live till the Day of Judgment, or for ever."

There are three stages of salvation. The first is purification; the second, enlightenment; and the third, union. The union with God consists in love, the importance of which is treated in the forty-first chapter:

"Thus may we perceive that knowledge and light profit nothing without Love. . . . Let a man know much about God and divine things, nay, dream that he seeth and understandeth what God Himself is, if he have not Love, he will never become like unto God, or a 'partaker of the divine nature.' But if there be true Love along with his knowledge he cannot but cleave to God, and forsake all that is not God or of Him, and hate it and fight against it, and find it a cross and a sorrow.

"And this Love so maketh a man one with God, that he can nevermore be separated from Him."

The love of the mystic is not limited to God but is embracing all things. There is nothing that he hateth except sin, as we read in Chapter XLVI:

"Now he who shall or will love God, loveth all things in One as All, One and All, and One in All as All in One; and he who loveth somewhat, this or that, otherwise than

in the One, and for the sake of the One, loveth not God, for he loveth somewhat which is not God.”

As Christ has not been spared hell, so all his followers must pass through the same ordeal. We read:

“Christ’s soul must needs descend into hell, before it ascended into heaven. So must also the soul of man.

“This hell and this heaven are two good, safe ways for a man in this present time, and happy is he who truly findeth them.

“For this hell shall pass away,
But Heaven shall endure for aye.”

In his explanation of the sayings of Christ, we find that the author of *Theologia Germanica* falls back upon truth itself, and by truth he means his inner consciousness or his intuitive and immediate conception of truth. He says in regard to Christ’s demand to forsake and part with everything:

“Though this had never been declared unto us, yet the truth herself sayeth it, for it is so of a truth. But so long as a man clingeth unto the elements and fragments of this world (and above all to himself), and holdeth converse with them, and maketh great account of them, he is deceived and blinded, and perceiveth what is good no further than as it is most convenient and pleasant to himself and profitable to his own ends. These he holdeth to be the highest good and loveth above all.”

Throughout these expressions we find the contrast between good and evil as based in the universal and the particular. God as well as the devil denote this contrast, and sometimes one, sometimes the other takes possession of man. Chapter XXII expresses this contrast in plain terms:

“It is written that sometimes the devil and his spirit do so enter into and possess a man, that he knoweth not what he doeth and leaveth undone, and hath no power over himself, but the Evil Spirit hath the mastery over him,

and doeth and leaveth undone in, and with, and through, and by the man what he will. It is true in a sense that all the world is subject to and possessed with the Evil Spirit, that is, with lies, falsehood, and other vices and evil ways; this also cometh of the Evil Spirit, but in a different sense.

“Now, a man who should be in like manner possessed by the Spirit of God, so that he should not know what he doeth or leaveth undone, and have no power over himself, but the will and Spirit of God should have the mastery over him and work, and do, and leave undone with him and by him, what and as God would; such a man were one of those of whom St. Paul saith: ‘For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,’ and they ‘are not under the law, but under grace,’ and to whom Christ saith: ‘For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.’”

“For the Self, the I, the Me and the like, all belong to the Evil Spirit, and therefore it is that he is an Evil Spirit. Behold one or two words can utter all that hath been said by these many words: ‘Be simply and wholly bereft of Self.’ But by these many words, the matter hath been more fully sifted, proved, and set forth.”

This movement of the friends of God takes its stand, not upon church authority, but upon the factors of religious life, without however being hostile to the Church, for it regards its institutions as means of salvation which are important though not indispensable. They are educational, and those souls which have not yet attained to perfect truth should not abandon them too soon. Tauler is quoted as having said:

“There be some men at the present time, who take leave of types and symbols too soon, before they have drawn out all the truth and instruction contained therein.”

And our author adds:

“Hence they are scarcely, or perhaps never, able to understand the truth aright.”

The quoted passages are samples of the mystic's attitude, and the same ideas are repeated again and again, but they are even more forcibly and poetically expressed by Angelus Silesius in his *Cherubinean Wanderer*.¹⁸

ANGELUS SILESIUS.

Johannes Scheffler, better known under the name of Angelus Silesius, was born in 1624 in Breslau, of Protestant parents, and his family belonged to the aristocracy of the country. He went to the universities of Strassburg, Leiden, and finally Padua, to study medicine, and took his doctor's degree at the latter place in the year 1647. He served three years as court physician to Duke Silvius Nimrod of Oels, 1649-1652, and in 1653 he became a convert to the Roman Catholic Church. He had become dissatisfied with Protestantism, which in those days was more than ever before and after, given to dogmatic speculations. Having found some friends among the Jesuits of Breslau, he was attracted by the artistic and mystical atmosphere of their faith and, as is habitual with converts, he repudiated Protestantism as zealously as he espoused the cause of the Church of Rome. In the year 1661 he joined the order of Minorites, and on July 9, 1677, he died of consumption in his fifty-third year.

When Johannes Scheffler turned Catholic he adopted the name of Angelus Silesius, and called himself forthwith Scheffler Johannes Angelus Silesius. His “Cherubinean Wanderer” was printed by the Society of Jesus at Vienna in 1657 and received the imprimatur of the Roman Catholic Church.

Angelus Silesius (as he is commonly called, omitting his original name Johannes Scheffler) is very little known

¹⁸ *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*.

to English readers; and we must grant that a perusal of all the 1676 little poems of his book would be extremely monotonous, but among the chaff there are grains of gold, and we have selected the most striking verses, and offer them here to our readers as some of the most beautiful expressions of the thought that has been produced by mysticism, not the mysticism of vagaries and vain speculations but the noble mysticism of Eckhart and Tauler, which is founded upon a deep philosophical conception.

It will be noticed that the God-conception of Angelus Silesius would appear to many, if it were expressed in a dry dogmatic formula, as pure atheism. He speaks of God as a mere naught, and even less than naught; he denies that the deity thinks; he does not believe in providence because God can not see ahead. God is nowhere, and the expression "God is" is a mere *soi disant*, a trope, i. e., an expression which can not be taken literally, in the sense in which we speak of ourselves as existing.¹⁴ If God could be said to be something he would be such only in name. The views of self in the *Cherubinean Wanderer* of Angelus Silesius, like the views of the author of *Theologia Germanica*, are quite Buddhistic, and salvation consists in freeing one's self from the egotism and all the narrowing limitations of selfhood. We are saved by self-annihilation. Nevertheless the soul of man is divine, provided the idea of selfhood be overcome. Indeed, it is as great as God himself, yea it may be more than God. The soul is infinite and heaven and earth are too small for it.

In this sense the creation is an actualization of God, and the actualized God may be greater than the God who

¹⁴The use of *eigentlich* in the line here referred to is very idiomatic. When Angelus Silesius says: "*Gott ist nur eigentlich*," he means: "If we say 'God is,' the words are to be taken as true, *nur eigentlich*, i. e., only in a particular sense." The word *eigentlich* is derived from *eigen*, i. e., "own," and conveys the ideas of all qualities belonging to or being self, i. e., property, proper, properly, and particular. Thus its derivative *eigentlich* has acquired the sense of "properly speaking"; e. g., the phrase *nicht eigentlich* means "not exactly," and *nur eigentlich*, "only in a special sense."

is still a mere naught. God is within his creatures, and he is God everywhere. From the standpoint of this mystic contemplation all creatures are alike before God; the fly is as important as man himself, and to Him the frog's croaking is as beautiful as the lark's song.

The indifference of God toward all implies that before Him the saint and the sinner are alike, but our deeds are not for that reason indifferent. The divinity of God is realized in us according to the life we lead. Nor must we wait for another life but do our duty here. We conquer the evils of life through not having our own will, but doing God's will. Death is called our best friend, because he is the liberator from selfhood, and the thought of self—nothing else—is hell. When body and soul are healed (i. e., at the termination of our life) we become God ourselves.

Though Angelus Silesius was a zealous Roman Catholic it is very difficult to conciliate his mysticism with Church doctrines, unless it be granted that the Christian dogmas are exoteric and admit of an esoteric interpretation. We find that, in the same way as in the mysticism of the friends of God, Christian dogmas loom up in the background, but the dogma becomes indifferent in comparison to its meaning: We feel that to the mystic it is of no consequence whether the facts of the life of Jesus are true or not, but it is of paramount importance to him that God should be born in our own soul. Our own deification is the whole burden of the story of Christ, and in the same way all the dogmas have no other purpose than to symbolize spiritual truths and to help us actualize them in our lives.

In spite of the practical significance of Angelus Silesius's mysticism, he entered deeply into philosophical speculations and we notice that he anticipates Kantian idealism. Not only lies the center of the world and all its wealth within ourselves, but even time and space are declared

to be functions of the soul. They are parts of our *Weltbegriff*, i. e., our conception of the world .

There is a thoughtful pun in one of the epigrams on time. The balance-wheel of a watch is called *Unruhe* in German, which literally translated means "unrest." Time is made, says Angelus Silesius, by the clock-work of our senses; if we stop the balance-wheel, which is the restlessness of our heart, we stop time itself and live in eternity.

Yet Angelus Silesius would be no mystic if he rated comprehension higher than sentiment. It is true he prizes only that simplicity of heart which is accompanied with wisdom; he scorns that simplicity which is mere stupidity, but he places love higher than knowledge and science, for through love only we gain an immediate admission into God's presence.

We must bear in mind the German original with its crude rhymes and archaic language if we want to appreciate Angelus Silesius in an English translation, and a close study of these epigrams has convinced us that the naiveté of the style is particularly adapted to the thought, both of which we have endeavored to preserve in our English version.

No one can read these lines, be he religiously inclined or not, without being interested in the man and in his attitude towards the world. By the side of the pious fervor which permeates his poems, there is an undercurrent of the most radical thought which, if it were expressed in prose and without the religious intent, would be regarded by many as sheer infidelity.

After these comments we let Angelus Silesius speak for himself.¹⁵

¹⁵ We were unable to procure for the preparation of our present version an original edition of the *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*, and had to be satisfied with Otto Erich Hartlebens little book of extracts. On going to press Mr. Francis C. Russell, of Chicago, calls our attention to a translation of some epigrams, culled from Angelus Silesius, by Mr. A. F. Kroeger, and published in the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. IV, pp. 31-37. Most of them

EXTRACTS FROM THE "CHERUBINEAN WANDERER."

We say God needeth naught,
For gifts He doth not pine;
If that be true, why wants
He this poor heart of mine?

We pray, "O Lord my God,
Thy will be done, Thy will!"
And yet no will He hath;
For e'er and aye He's still.

God resteth not himself,
Nor in exertion irketh.
His very work is rest,
Yet when He rests, He worketh.

God is the purest naught,
He hath nor now, nor here.
The more thou grop'st for Him,
The more He'll disappear.

The tender Deity
Is naught and less than naught.
Who naught in all things sees,
He finds God whom he sought.

God thinketh naught; for if
He thought, or planned, or wot,
His mind would vacillate,
And that behooves him not.

God never looks ahead;
And thus it is a lie,
Whene'er to measure Him
By providence you try.

Mere trope to say God *is*!
Nor loves, nor thinketh He
As creatures, such as I
And you, are said to be.

Who asketh gifts of God,
How piteously he strayeth!
He to a creature, not
To the Creator prayeth.

Think'st thou, poor man, if thou
In song thy voice loud raisest,
That in the proper way,
The quiet God thou praisest?

The uncreated God
In time grows here to be
What ne'er He could become,
In all eternity.

This all is but a play
Made by the Deity,
Who for His very sake
Designed creatures to be.

What in eternity
God wants and has devised,
His thoughts in me He now
Beholdeth symbolized.

A heart that to God's will
Submits in patience mute,
Loves to be touched by Him:
It serves God as His lute.

God is indeed pure naught,
Yet if He something were,
He'd only be in me,
His chosen minister.

How blessèd is the man
Who willeth not nor knoweth,
And who—hear me aright!—
On God no praise bestoweth.

are different from those contained in our collection, but all bear the same character.

Whoever with one glance
Above himself can soar,
He with God's angels can
Sing *Gloria* evermore.

The Godhead is the sap
By which I grow and blow;
Its holy spirit 'tis
That me inspireth so!

God is in me the fire,
And I, beam of his light.
Thus we together are,
And closely we unite.

God is eternal rest,—
For naught e'er willeth He.
If naught thou willest, thou
As much as God shalt be.

Above thee lifteth thee
But nihilatedness.
Who most is turned to naught
Will most of God possess.

Who without feeling loves,
Without cognition knoweth:
He is more God than man
And by that name he goeth.

Whoso immovable
In joy and pain hath proved,
From God's own likeness he
Can not be far removed.

I am (What majesty!)
Eternity's own son;
By birth a noble king,
God's glory on a throne.

Am not outside of God
Nor He outside of me!

Am his effulgent light;
Source of my glory He.

Here, flow I still in God,
A brook of time, ywis;
There, I myself shall be
The sea of lasting bliss.

I am as great as God,
He is as small as I.
He can't above me stand,
Nor I beneath Him lie.

To what thou lov'st thou shalt
Be changed through thine own
dearth,
To God, if thou lov'st God,
To earth, if thou lov'st earth.

I know, deprived of me,
God could not live a wink.
Were I annulled, He too,
Must needs to nothing sink.

The world too narrow is
For me, and Heav'n too small.
Where then for this my soul
Shall I find room at all?

Man never will possess
Perfect beatitude,
Until what single is
Swallows all otherhood.

Rain rains not for itself,
Nor to himself adorn
Shineth the sun; so thou
Not for thyself art born.

Communion giveth rest.
It is from ownhood's state
That pains and woes arise,
War, persecution, hate.

Naught else will ever thee
To hell's deep jaws consign,
Than the curs'd heinous thought,
Take heed!—"The mine and
thine."

The more thou thine own self
Out of thyself dost throw,
The more will into thee
God with his Godhood flow.

Walk out, God walketh in;
To God live, die to thee;
Do naught, thy duty's done;
Be not, and God will be.

No exit but t'will cause
To enter a new start;
I empty mine own self,
God comes to fill my heart.

A man of mind composed
Is always one and free.
How, between God and him,
Can there a diff'rence be?

The sea is sea throughout,
E'en finest spray of sea.
Say how in God pure souls
Aught else but God may be!

My spirit's deep abyss
Clamors with much ado
For God's abyss. Now which
Is deeper of the two?

Creatures are more in God
Than in themselves they be.
When gone, they still remain
In Him eternally.

Naught is without a voice;
And God in million ways

In all His creatures hears
The echoes of His praise.

The nightingale will not
The cookoo's note deride,
But if my song be not
Like yours you scoff and chide.

Why can we humans not
Like unto little birds
Shout all harmoniously
Our different songs and words?

All creatures are the voice
Of the eternal Word.
With grace or wrath it sings
Itself, and thus 'tis heard.

God hath no preference,
With all He is in tune.
As gladly with the fly
As thee, doth He commune.

Unto the croak of frogs
With equal care God harks,
As to the joyous song
Of soaring meadow larks.

All works are same to God;
He loves the saint while drinking
As much as when in prayer
Upon his knees he's sinking.

From first beginning 'til
To-day, a creature's quest
Has never been aught else
Than its creator's rest.

Friend, envy not the world!
Although its fate, you see,
Is its own wish and deed,
It is a tragedy.

The circle in a point
Is centered, fruit in seed,
The world in God. Who seeks
Therein is wise indeed.

Whoe'er his senses turns
Within his soul, he findeth,
He hears what is not said,
He sees when night him blindeth.

Naught 'tis that pusheth thee—
Thyself, thou art the wheel
Which turneth by itself
And never rest will feel.

Oh run for wisdom not,
Nor wit, across the sea.
On love alone depends
The soul's true dignity.

Thy wealth in thee must lie.
What thou hast not in thee,
Were it the whole great world,
A burden would it be.

Yourself you make the time,
Your senses are the clock.
You stop the balance wheel,
And time at once you block.

They say that time is swift.
Whoever saw it fly?
Within our world of thought
Unmoved we find time lie.

Who time takes not as time,
Whose sorrow is no sorrow,
Whose yest'reen is to-day
And whose to-day is morrow,
Who counteth all the same:
He e'en in time will be
In the longed for estate
Of sweet eternity.

Thou art not in a place,
The place thou'lt find in thee.
Discard it, and e'en now
Appears eternity.

No after nor before!
What shall to-morrow be
In its true essence, God
Sees in eternity.

All accident must go,
And false appearance, too.
Essence thou must become
Without an earthly hue.

Go where thou can'st not walk;
See what thou canst not see;
Hear what is without sound,
And where God speaks, thou'lt be.

Stop man! where dost thou run?
Heav'n lies within thy heart.
If thou seek'st God elsewhere,
Misled, in truth, thou art.

Rest is the highest good;
And if God were not rest,
For Him I'd close mine eyes
To make Him truly blessed.

The rose is without why.
It blows because it blows,
It thinks not of itself,
And no display it shows.

The rose which here unto
Thine outer eye is shown,
From all eternity
Thus in God's sight hath blown.

Descend, man, sink thee down:
Thy rising hath begun.
Cease thou from further walk:
Then will thy race be run.

What I become I was
 What I have been I'll be.
 Such, soul and body healed,
 I'll be eternally.

Naught stronger is than God,
 Yet can He not forfend,
 That I whate'er I will
 Should not will nor intend.

Man should essential be;
 For, when this world is gone,
 All accident is past,
 The essence still lives on.

Here must our deeds be done!
 I don't believe such thing
 That who no kingdom wins
 Can ever be a king.

If thou art great, my friend,
 Then do not stop nor stay;
 From one light, thou must go
 Unto another day.

Thy bundle throw away!
 Who wants to war and fight,
 Must bear no bag of gold;
 His shoulders must be light.

There's need of solitude!
 But if thou not commune,
 Then thou shalt lonely be
 As in a desert soon.

You will have heav'n on earth,
 The sweetest life to live,
 If you yourself with love
 To contemplation give.

Let mediation go!
 If I'm to see my light,
 I want before my face
 No wall to check my sight.

Becom'st thou not a child,
 Thou enter'st not at all
 Where God's own children are;
 The door is much too small.

Simplicity I prize
 If God hath giv'n it wit;
 Unwise simplicity
 Deserves the name no whit.

Simplicity means, not
 To be on baseness bent;
 But in the cause of good
 Humbly be diligent.

Of sleep there are three kinds:
 Sinners are death-oppressed,
 The faint in nature lie,
 In God true lovers rest.

Love is the sage's stone;
 It takes gold from the clod
 It turns naught into aught,
 Transforms me into God.

Like unto Death is Love;
 It deadens all my sense,
 It breaks in me my heart
 And leads my spirit hence.

Would'st thou discern which Love
 Be false, which true and pure,
 Observe: false love seeks self—
 Will not in grief endure.

Young love storms like new wine
 In wildest fermentation.
 Old love is still and clear,
 Strong through tranquilization.

With but one kiss the bride
 Deserveth more of God,
 Than hirelings may earn
 However much they plod.

If thy soul virgins be,
 And like Maria pure,
 It soon will pregnant be
 As God's own paramour.

I don't believe in death.
 Though hour for hour I die,
 Each time upon each death
 To better life I hie.

God as a child is born
 In stillest, darkest night,
 Whereby He has restored
 What's lost by Adam's plight.
 Thus in a creature dark,
 Here in thy soul so still,
 God is becoming man
 And that will mend all ill.

I do declare that death,
 Because it makes me free,
 The best thing in the world,
 The very best must be.

Into God's presence Love
 Quite unannounced will burst,
 While wit and learnedness
 Must antechamber first.

We sum up. If mysticism claims any superiority over science, if it undertakes to check man's endeavor to attain to clearness of thought, if it declares the mysterious, the mystical, the unknowable, the unthinkable or anything irrational to be the highest reality or the foundation of all existence, if it would try to oust science, or reason, or methodical inquiry from its office as the ultimate criterion of truth, we must protest. But in doing so we do not mean to discard mysticism as useless.

We acknowledge the truth that science does not exist for its own sake but serves an ulterior purpose, which is its application to practical life, and finds its ultimate fulfilment in the actualization of our moral ideals, truthfulness, justice and universal goodwill. Irrational sentiment is worthless, but, on the other hand, any knowledge that excludes the cultivation of sentiment and does not prove helpful as a guidance for conduct is not of the right kind. It is obvious that the head, the heart and the hand must always cooperate, and not any one of these three factors can be neglected with impunity. But even if mysticism remains antagonistic to scientific aspirations we still recognize in it a force which if it happens to tend in the right direction, may very well serve as a surrogate for truth it-

self and will be of great service to many—to all those who are incapable of thinking the truth with scientific exactness and must be taught in parables. It will allow them to “see as through a glass darkly,” which is far better for them than to be entirely blind, and it will prepare them for the time when they shall see “face to face.”

EDITOR.