

THE PSYCHE—A STUDY IN EVOLUTION.

BY EDWIN MULLER WHEELOCK.

SCIENCE to-day teaches the universal touch and clasp of all organic life, saying in vivid words that in the one loom of a common origin hath time woven all the forms of life; these forms being the sign-posts and mile-stones along the organic march of man. Star-dust, monad, fish, bird and beast are all steps in the stairway which reaches from clod to cloud and terminates in soul!

Every animal has been melted in the vital crucible from which man is made. Every form he uses is a wayside inn along the upward journey of the soul. His outward shell passed through every animal and vegetable body before it took on the human appearance. as in lower nature an analogous chemistry evolves electric bodies and wings from eggs and worms. When matter became organic, man was envisaged, for his psychic nature was once enshrined in flint and platinum: when the spine appeared he was already in view. To become a self-conscious spirit the psyche must first pass through every expression of life from landscape to skyscape; from the glow-worm to the star; from the daisy to the sun; from simia to seraph; from dust to Deity. This measureless cycle is all synthesized in man, who attains self-consciousness only after a countless series of evolutions. The stone becomes a plant, the plant a beast, the beast a man, the man a spirit, the spirit a god. "I said, Ye are Gods," was the large utterance of the Hebrew seer; or, as our Emerson has it,

"And the poor grass will plot and plan
What it will do when it is man."

The world is here because there is an infinite reason for its existence; it is man at last that comes of it. The event reveals the design. Not a wind blew but sang of this wonder that should be. Not a river ran but hastened to have its water turned into the red wine

of his blood, and to run again, burdened with the message of the Infinite, in his veins. He stands in the center and feels all things as a dilation of his own being. He soars with the lark, crawls with the lizard, and shines with the gem or star. Man in nature becomes self-conscious, and thinking aloud. He folds round heaven and hell with equal arms. The cosmos is minimized in him.

It is the human idea that crystallizes the snowflake, veins the leaf, and paints the flower. These objects once carried our lives, and left them higher than they found them. Through all nature one glowing purpose runs—the building-up of man. There is nothing in the world but the human, actual or potential. Says the Kabbala: "If man did not exist there could be no world." He is the brother of all things even as God is the father. Though earth incessantly revolves, yet he is always at the top. Each of the various types in the mineral, plant and animal realms elaborates its mite of the vital principle; and, rising in the stately miracle of life, passes it on to a higher form. In the primal cell is purpose, aim, tendency. No atom can slip from the ligature of law. Prick the skin that is nearest, or the nebula that is farthest, and you draw the life-blood of law. Thought thinks in the atom; each molecule has a brain; each brain-cell has a memory of its own; and the forces of nature are the fingers of God. All thoughts are things, and all things have thoughts. The laws of the universe are circular, and from any arc may be computed the sweep of the circumference. To explore the creation man needs no wings. Let him seat himself on the earth at his feet, and as his eyes open the whole cosmos will swing into his sight. Time and space are the immeasurable continents, and matter the equally measureless content of creative investiture; thus all things wait on man to serve him in his fates.

Man is made of the same stuff as the oyster he eats or the corn he hoes. All the animals are on the King's highway, only at indefinite distances behind us. We are all interlinked in origin, in life and in destiny. If man is a philosopher he is also a polyp. The sage who would disprove his ascent from the ape, still shows in his argument the claws, tricks and tail of his noble ancestor. All creatures and all plants are on the same road. Our kindred stand at every mile-stone, and from the herded beast to Humboldt, from the saurian to Shakespeare, from the stone to the star, is but a step. The circumference of man is the universe, the center of the universe is man. He is the microcosm of the macrocosm. The dog is a barking man; the tree is a rooted man. He has cloaked himself with each astral fossil stored up in the etheric envelope of the earth.

In man are sun and moon, snow and mountain ranges, bud and flower. Many mothers fashion for one child, who yet, in his oneness, comprises myriads. There is nothing but is related to man, tree, sea-shell or crystal, the running river or the waving corn. Whatever is found as form in nature is present by form in him. In his natural degree he is the measure of the material cosmos, for he has grown from the starfish and the chickweed, and "he has prowled, fanged and fourfooted in the woods." Just as the stone feels its way to the flower, and as the acorn out of soils and sunbeams fashions the oak, does the animated dust climb at last to the human brain, and the fluent mountains melt into man.

The slice of beef on the rich man's table has a history that goes back to the dawn of creation, and so has the needle that sews the poor man's rags together. The pauper is brother to the prince. The life of the race circulates in each individual, and the disease of the individual is in the blood of the race. The world is in man as much as man is in the world.

Every atom avows life—human life—the kingdom of God in beasts. Man has touched every spherule. The circle of his arm is the girdle of creation. His electric wires have compressed the earth until the elbows of the nations touch, and the winged heels of Mercury come tardy off beside the fleet Ariel of Edison and Bell. All history lies under his hat, and he is the trustee of every past age. Religion is born from him. He makes his Deity in his own image, and from his own heart and brain are shed the Bibles of the race, as the leaves are shed from the tree.

And more or less signifies nothing. The revolving moon and the falling apple move by the same law. The smallest sin helps to warp the earth's axis. The globe is but an enlarged globule. If the lenses of our eyes were differently adjusted the whole universe might come within our plane of vision and the spaces between the planets be no greater than the intervals between adjacent grains of sand. The air-bubble then becomes the star-cluster, and in a glass of water behold the Galaxy!

In the unity of nature all is taken up. The energy that grouped the atoms of the sand grain welded on the same anvil the star. God's word is written in full on every mustard seed. Ourselves and all we touch is, when we look with equal eyes, "God manifest in the flesh." The law that shapes the star-mist into suns outworks the frost-forest on our window-panes. A pebble is a microcosm. The moulds of the stars are used in forming the raindrops, and through each cubic foot of earth shoots the axis of the globe.

“The eye reads omens where it goes,
 And speaks all languages the rose;
 And striving to be man, the worm
 Mounts through all the spires of form.”

Spirit is the great life on which matter rests as rests the ponderous globe on the free and fluid ether. Spirit impregnates matter; matter embodies spirit. Nature is the revelation of spirit in space; history the revelation of spirit in time. Spirit sleeps in the stone, grows in the plant, stirs in the animal, wakes in man, and will work on until the present chaos and old night are taken up into the higher evolution. The mind occupies every corpuscle. Spirit precedes time and space, builds its own structure and makes its own environment. The moral sense has its beginnings in the lower animals, just as the whale has its hind legs inside the skin, and its teeth that never cut the gums.

The psyche is present even in the lowest forms. It exists, but for want of fitting organs it is too dim for our faculties to ken, and increase in mind-force only takes place with ascent of organism. The pebble climbs to a rose, and the rose to a soul. Cosmic unity runs on the broad roadway of law through all the worlds. In every form alike the eternal God-seed comes and goes.

Man is the goal to which all uses run; the harbor where the world's freights come to shore. Man is conscious nature; nature is unconscious man. Her effort is to evolve her own God, who is man. The God of nature is always man. To bring her stupid deity to his senses, she cuffs and beats him as the angry fishermen of Naples do the images of their saints in stormy weather.

Our systems are charged in every fiber with the eternity behind us, and what was done a million of ages ago, when the crystal dreamed of the flower, is vital in us to-day. The laws that hold the world in their orbits are in the mind of man. The desire for a sentient life shows itself in everything from a seed to a sun, and it is a reflection of the divine will that the universe should continue. Things that have life are alive, whether they be atoms or orbs. Every particle in nature is a life, and there is not a finger-breadth of empty space beneath the dome of the sky.

The universe is swallowed up in man and by man all things are spread abroad. He barks in the dog, grows in the tree, murmurs in the passing brook, and his pulse vibrates to the stupendous movement of all the starry scheme. He is Atlas with the globe on his shoulders. He is the philosophers' stone transmuting coarse

matter into creative forces. He is the king of nature, for he knows himself in the midst of a universe that does not yet know itself. All through nebulous and planetary life there was one determined upward movement until man was reached. Form after form was flung aside, one creation after another left stranded until the human appeared. From the appearance of the first and faintest organism man was ideally present on earth, involved in the anatomical snarl. He is brother to the blossom and the tree, and with the same pigment nature paints the apple's and the maiden's cheek. From one form to another the monad has passed on. It was once encased in stone; then it crept out of its prison as a lichen or a moss. From change to change it climbed, until its physical form became that of a man.

In these lengthened processes of evolution the mystic advance of man has drawn into the various lines of the organism through which he has passed, the whole cosmos by minutenesses, till each one holds, mirrored in his structure, constituents and images of the universal All. I, that to-day am man, was yesterday a pine; the day before I sparkled in the crystal or the spar; before that I slept in the world-egg of stone; before that again, I was a rapid, sparkling sprite of the ether and the day, winged but unsouled, and hungry for incarnation; for the psyche desires birth and enfleshment, and the soul craves organism. Each form I use is but the inn where I tarry for a night; for the soul is an incurable nomad, dwelling always in tents. All things strive to ascend, and ascend by striving, so at last we work out the beast and let the tiger die. Tusks change to teeth, and the lion's paw and the jaw of the shark become the tools of culture. Evil in nature is unsubject force, not yet responsive to the human sway. But all evil is self-limited; and when carried too far pain becomes its own anodyne. Evolution is the steady play of the Eternal Will through all these turning and belted worlds, and the death of Pan is his rebirth into humanity.

The primal nucleoid holds the soul-seed of man—the offspring of dust and of spirit. In every type the soul-force has a corresponding material house—"to every seed its own body." The forms which he inhabits at any epoch in his organic march are only the record of his spirit's unfoldment up to that date. A death is a birth; a corpse is a seed; a cadaver is a genesis; and every green grave is a cradle: "from form to form he maketh haste."

If God is great He is also little. He dwells in the small man-seed by powers of fate, and weaves upon it shape on shape in being's loom. He is dim in rock, flower and bird. In human flesh he is most himself, and in human eyes we look most closely into

the eyes of God. God is not a mind but the cause of a mind; not a spirit but the cause of a spirit; He is felt and known as the only creative life, and man as the creaturely form in which that life becomes fully expressed and glorified. Each human innermost is a gemmule of God; and over every cradle shines the "star in the east." The Creation is that God the One may become God the Many. Man stands in the doorway of the planet; God can enter nature only through him. He unbinds himself in man and gives his being outness and relief. The evolution of man is the slow growth of the divine in us from infancy and nonage to kingship and rule. The road is a long one. Man lurks in the lichen and sleeps in the stone. Nature has cunningly wiredrawn him through all her products from flower-bud to planet-bud, from the airy cope to the granite calyx of the globe.

In man, the divine impersonal becomes personified. The psyche is the God-element which, divided from Deity, is yet divine and human. The scale of humanity ranges from atom to archangel—hunger for food is at one pole, and at the other hunger for God. Evolution moving backward does not leave us in the lap of the monkey—it traces us to the infinite arms. The long-evolving chain stretches not only from protoplasm to man, but from spirit to spirit. The way we have come hints at the way we are to go. The road behind us begins with the Infinite; vanward it ends only with the Infinite again. God creates Himself in man. Man completes himself in God. Man finds being in God; God attains existence in man. The universe is intelligence infinitely individualized. The creation is a thought discreted from the thinker's mind. It is the separateness of the personal entity or soul from the aggregate of soul in the cosmos. Nature holds the seeds and forms of all life in potency; in this way the primal slime becomes fish, bird, mammal, man; but all this stream of existence flows from the divine life, through every ancestral link, and is God's from end to end. An infinite force from first to last propels the eternal whole. Man has been crystaled, metaled, herbed and incarned. He will be unbeasted, humanized, godded. In his spiritual deeps all gospels lie in germ. To evolve at length a self-conscious personality is the end in view of the entire process. Thus "the word becomes flesh."

The long series of forms through which the psyche ascends furnish the curbing power that it needs to compress its action into orderly channels, and to endow it at length with self-control. Spirit must mount on the shoulders of matter, for man is a perpetual becoming, and the matter is the vehicle of all becoming. Before a

seed can grow it must be taken from the shelf and planted in the soil; so nature furnishes the soil for the growth of the soul.

The mermaid, the syren, the sphynx are parables of evolution. Those human-headed gods, with bodies of reptile, fish, bird or beast, are the pictures or object-lessons by which the Magi of the East taught the truth of the evolutionary ascent of the germ of man. Nature is the evolution of spirit in matter. History is the evolution of the Godhead, and each little child, like the holy babe of Bethlehem, intercedes for every person born.

MISCELLANEOUS.

OUR FRONTISPIECE.

Max Klinger died on the 28th of July. As a frontispiece to this number we reproduce his "Christ on Mt. Olympus," one of his most celebrated creations which was completed in 1897 and is now placed in the Modern Gallery of Vienna.

Klinger was born in Leipsic in 1857. After studying in Berlin, Brussels and Munich he spent almost ten years of his life in Paris and Rome. From 1893 on he lived again in Leipsic.

It is impossible to do justice to Klinger's work in a short note, for he excelled as an etcher, as a sculptor and as a painter. In a number of his greatest works he has combined the art of the chisel with the art of the brush; in "Christ on Mt. Olympus" the two figures to the right and left of the predella are marble.

Most characteristic of his art, however, is the philosophical penetration with which he treats his subjects, giving depth to his cult of beauty. In the picture which we reproduce, symbolizing the entry of Christianity in the antique world, it is Psyche that seeks refuge at the feet of a humanized Christ, while the gods and goddesses of Homer look on amazed—but not abashed.