

THE MYSTIC'S CHRISTMAS.

"All hail!" the bells at Christmas rang,
 "All hail!" the monks at Christmas sang,
 The merry monks who kept with cheer
 The gladdest day of all their year.

But still apart, unmoved thereat,
 A pious elder brother sat
 Silent in his accustomed place,
 With God's sweet peace upon his face.

"Why sitt'st thou thus?" his brethren cried,
 "It is the blessed Christmas-tide;
 The Christmas lights are all aglow,
 The sacred lilies bud and blow;

"Above our heads the joy-bells ring,
 Without, the happy children sing,
 And all God's creatures hail the morn
 On which the holy Christ was born!

"Rejoice with us; no more rebuke
 Our gladness with thy quiet look."
 The gray monk answered: "Keep, I pray,
 Even as ye list, the Lord's birthday.

"Let heathen Yule fires flicker red
 Where thronged refectory feasts are spread;
 With mystery-play and masque and mime
 And wait-songs speed the holy time!

"The blindest faith may haply save;
 The Lord accepts the things we have;
 And reverence howsoever it strays,
 May find at last the shining ways.

"They needs must grope who cannot see,
 The blade before the ear must be;
 As ye are feeling I have felt,
 And where ye dwell I too have dwelt.

"But now, beyond the things of sense,
 Beyond occasions and events,
 I know through God's exceeding grace,
 Release from form and time and place.

"I listen, from no mortal tongue,
 To hear the song the angels sung;
 And wait within myself to know
 The Christmas lilies bud and blow.

"The outward symbols disappear
 From him whose inward sight is clear;
 And small must be the choice of days
 To him who fills them all with praise.

"Keep while you need it, brothers mine,
 With honest zeal your Christmas sign,
 But judge not him who every morn
 Feels in his heart the Lord Christ born!"

—John Greenleaf Whittier.



EVOLUTION AND REINCARNATION.

"The spark hangs from the flame by the finest thread of Fohat. It journeys through the seven worlds of Maya.

"It stops in the first, and is a metal and a stone; it passes into the second, and behold—a plant; the plant whirls through seven changes and becomes a sacred animal.

"From the combined attributes of these, Manu, the thinker is formed." From the stanzas of Dzayan, Stan. 7, v. 5.

The Book of Dzayan, from which this extract is taken and quoted in "The

Secret Doctrine," is said to be the oldest book in existence. I do not know its exact age, but from what I learned I would have no difficulty in believing that it has existed about 1,000,000 years. It is said to be an esoteric work and is seen only by the initiated. If my guess at its age is near the truth, it will be seen that the idea of evolution is not a new one. There is a widespread impression that it originated with Charles Darwin, but nothing could be further from the truth.

In his introduction to the "Descent of Man" Darwin himself says: "The conclusion that man is the co-descendant with other species of some ancient, lower and extinct form is not in any degree new. Lamarck long ago came to the same conclusion." Lamarck was supported by Goethe and others of his time. In one form or another it has been taught by Aristotle, Anaxagoras, Plato, and indeed all the great sages of the past, and it is common to all the great religions of the world. In short, the idea of evolution is universal both in time and place, wherever the intelligence of man has been active. It was during the so-called mediæval or dark ages of Europe when ecclesiasticism held sway, and endeavoured to make its permanency secure by interdicting thought to all but the priesthood, and, as the faculties of that craft were ill adapted for that function, thought almost became a thing of the past, and the learning of the preceding ages was forgotten, that the very idea of evolution was buried deep in the ruins of the acquired knowledge and wisdom of our earlier ancestors.

The distinctive feature of Darwinism is, that natural selection or the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence operating in conjunction with the inherent tendency in nature to variations of structure and function, are factors in organic evolution, especially in regard to the origin of species. To account for the origin of species was held by Cuvier and others to be the chief defect of the Lamarckian theory. This want, in the opinion of nearly every Scientist of note, Darwin's theory supplied. This is why Darwin's name has become so