

betrayed a bloodthirsty tendency, as Malchus might testify, or many of us would be cut off in the flower of our fabrications. Peter, if the narrative be true, proved himself an unworthy custodian of the occult powers he had been entrusted with, for it could only be through the agency of Peter that the death of the unfortunate couple could have been brought about. To suppose that the ETERNAL directly visited with death a petty deception about a real estate deal is more than even the average Toronto Christian believes in his heart. That death may have occurred in both cases as described is perfectly credible, but to seek to establish a relation between the falsehood and the fatality is not only misleading but immoral. If death occurred it was for deeds worthy of death wrought in that or previous lives. Lying will be visited on the plane of the deception in every case. "He that doeth wrong shall receive again the wrong that he hath done; and there is no respect of persons" (Colossians iii: 25). If Peter wrought the death of Ananias and Sapphira he thereby incurred the death penalty which he is said to have endured. "Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord."

February 14. Acts v: 17-32.

The anecdote in this passage owes its picturesque Sunday school quality to the general impression that the "Angel of the Lord" of verse 19 was one of the white-winged denizens of another sphere who came to earth for the purpose described. An "angel" simply means a "messenger," and there is nothing in the context to indicate any more extraordinary intervention than the usual Eastern methods of jail-delivery. It is observable that Peter's example of breaking jail is not commended to the prisoners of the present day, even when they account themselves as innocent as Peter.

February 21. Acts vi: 8-15—vii: 54-60.

Stephen is one of the most romantic characters in the whole Christian history. Yet Paul, who apparently must have heard his last dying speech, never once refers to him in his preserved writings,

and by implication in Galatians i: 11-12, even seems to deny having heard him. Stephen means "crown," and he was the leader among seven who were chosen to represent the church or society in their business. His career sums up and parallels the career of the Master in his work, his teaching, his martyrdom, and even his last words "Lay not this sin to their charge." His transfiguration, verse 15, is also significant. That Saul was consenting to the death of Stephen, the "crown," if it be interpreted as the mystic death, may also be suggestive, but the mysticism of the Acts certainly appears to be somewhat far-fetched.

February 28. Acts viii: 1-17.

The appearance of Simon Magus in the story of the Acts is an interesting testimony to the existence of the science of magic in Apostolic times. The English translation says Simon "used Sorcery." The Greek says he "was practising magic." The word *Magos* is rendered "wise men" in Matthew ii: 1. The version of the Acts is naturally a garbled account of Simon's life, which must be investigated in independent and unprejudiced records to be appreciated. A perusal of the surviving fragments of his philosophy will indicate the exceeding improbability of the story of verses 18-23, though the spirit exhibited in verse 24 can hardly be objected to. As the chapter stands it affords a valuable contrast of the different estimation in which the Raj and Hatha Yoga systems were even then regarded.

THE closer the approach to one's *Prototype* "in Heaven," the better for the mortal whose personality was chosen by his own *personal* deity (the seventh principle), as its terrestrial abode. For, with every effort of will toward purification and unity with that "Self god," one of the lower rays breaks and the spiritual entity of man is drawn higher and ever higher to the ray that supercedes the first, until, from ray to ray, the inner man is drawn into the one and highest beam of the Parent-Sun. — *Secret Doctrine I., p. 639.*