

Zoroaster: Persian Reformer.

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by any sacrifice or offering, nor even by the free grace of God Himself. The fulfilling of the Law can only be reached through Love.

His teachings contain a clearly defined philosophy in reference to the days or periods of creation. As later in the Jewish religion these were six in number.

In the first, the heavenly canopy was formed; in the second, water was brought into existence; in the third, the earth became solid; in the fourth, vegetation sprang forth; in the fifth, animal life was slowly formed; in the sixth, animals culminated in Man.

The seventh period is the day of the advent of the Messiah, when the sun of our solar system will be extinguished, and Pralaya, a period of rest from all striving, will begin.

A careful comparison of this order of creation with that given in the 1st chapter of Genesis will show that while Zoroaster was more clear, definite and orderly in the expression of his views than is the Jewish account, yet the ideas conveyed are very much alike. Zoroaster stands out among religious teachers in several respects. His thinking was consecutive, self-restrained, practical. His form of expression is tangible and concrete. His system is constructed on a clearly conceived and well defined plan. It is true that for the mass of the people his doctrine was abstract and spiritualistic, but the philosophy he formulated, pure and lofty, has ever evoked the respect, while it has stimulated the mental and spiritual growth of those in all ages who could truly lay claim to be wise and great of soul. Its effect upon the Jewish religion, and through that upon Christian thought, can only be estimated by those who are conversant with the Jewish Scriptures before they were rewritten in the time of Ezra. In the Babylonian Captivity the Jews for the first time learned of the idea of Satan, and this idea, together with the whole teachings necessarily resulting therefrom came from the Persian, or Zoroastrian, evil spirit—Ahri-man.

The following points in his teachings are familiar to us as students of our own Bible. Zoroaster hoped to live and

see the decisive turn of things, the dawn of the new and better aeon.

Ormuzd will summon together all his powers for a final decisive struggle and break the power of evil for ever. By his help the faithful will achieve the victory over their enemies. Thereupon Ormuzd will hold a Universal Judgment upon all mankind and judge strictly according to justice, punish the wicked and assign to the good their hoped-for reward. Satan or Ahri-man will be cast, along with all those who have been delivered over to him to suffer the pains of hell, into the abyss, where he will thenceforward lie powerless. Forthwith will begin the one undivided kingdom of God in heaven and on earth.

Here the sun will ever shine, and all the pious and faithful will live a happy life, that no evil power can disturb, in the fellowship of Ormuzd and his angels for ever.

We find in his teachings, as we would naturally expect to find in a religion so spiritual, ethics of the highest standard. His followers were taught to be pure in deed, pure in word and pure in thought. Thus, and thus only, would they be enabled to ally themselves with the power which worked for good and thus also work out that development of the highest faculties which is the reason for man's existence in a world where the balance of pleasure and pain seems to be on the wrong side.

F. E. THUS.

STILL we say as we go
Strange to think, by the way,
All that there is to know
That we shall know some day.
—Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

STILL we say as we go
Never enquire by the way.
The mysteries here below
Mysteries here must stay.
—Some of our friends.

JUVENILE temperance societies known as Bands of Hope are paralleled in India by Boys' Associations, the members of which take this pledge: "I shall speak truth even at the risk of my life. I shall never take intoxicating drink in any shape. I shall never take an unlawful gain. I shall never take animal food. I shall not take the life of an innocent (probably harmless) creature, be it the lowest form of life." These societies are encouraged by the Theosophical Society, and we hope by the missionaries also.