

ible to us as the men and women whom we love around us. The incarnation of Jesus does this for us.

The revelation, then, of God to the world in the person of Jesus, is the chief subject of the poem. But there are three other studies :

First—The study of the character of Karshish.

Second—The study of the way in which the Arab physician regards the miracle of the raising of Lazarus and the mystery of the Incarnation. Browning here deals with the present day attitude of men of science toward these same subjects.

Third—The study of the effect of Lazarus' strange experience on himself. Browning uses the incident of Lazarus' rising from the dead to put forth a certain aspect of his philosophical ideas, namely, that it is the vision of spiritual perfection and the means of reaching it and not material success which is the great thing in life.

We now proceed to the study of the poem. As in his other monologues Browning makes the circumstances such that the speaker (or in this case the writer) will reveal his thoughts without reserve. Karshish is an Arab physician travelling in Palestine and he sends frequently to Abib, his former teacher and a famous physician and scientist, specimens of the *materia medica* of the country and accounts of the means employed there for the cure of certain diseases. The letter which Browning gives us is the twenty-second. Its opening is in the formal style of an old Epistle. In these lines a rather fantastic mode of expression is employed to give us the right temporal and local color. It is to be noticed that Karshish is not a sceptic nor a materialist. He believes in God and in the existence of the soul separate from the body. In l. 28 the time of the incidents is marked. It is just before the destruction of Jerusalem. L. 37 gives us the physician's peculiar mode of measuring distance and in l. 60

we have a humorous touch which indicates the enthusiastic scientific spirit of the man. Also, we may notice here his belief in charms, a belief which is not very consistent with his prejudices against the supernatural.

After mentioning matters of general scientific interest our physician comes to the subject which, in reality, most interests him, though, all through the letter he makes the pretence that he regards the matter (as a scientist ought) of no importance at all. He professes fear, that, if he does not write of it at once, the case of Lazarus, which he wishes to describe to Abib will escape his memory. He hastens therefore to state the case and to give his own explanation of it. He accounts for it all in a natural way and in scientific terminology :

" 'Tis but a case of mania, subinduced
By epilepsy, at the turning point of
trance."

And when the disease left the body whole and sound again the mind's gates were flung too wide so that the first conceit that entered took possession of the mind and would not give place.

By his own reasoning in the following lines the physician shews his sense of the fact that his diagnosis is insufficient and the account which he further proceeds to give of Lazarus' case and state of mind is really Browning's own view. Lazarus is like a beggar who has suddenly found a treasure and does not know how to use it. He has had experience of the infinite and cannot make use of his knowledge in the life which he has to live, in the finite he is witless of the size, the sum, the value in proportion of all things. The great and small events alike of external history do not interest him. The death of his child even would excite in him no emotion of sorrow because he knew its death would only mean its passing to a better and higher sphere of which he had had experience. But a glance from that same