

sprang up again after his death, and continued in full vigor down to the fall of the kingdom of Judah in 586; nor did that catastrophe extinguish it. We cannot doubt that astrological divination, if not the worship of the heavenly bodies, was one of the strongest temptations of heathenism to the Jews in Babylonia (see Is. xlvii. 13, cp. Dan. ii. 2, etc.).

"The development of theological monotheism involved the assertion of Yahwè's supremacy over the heavenly bodies: he created them, he leads out their host in its full number, calls them all by name, so great is his power not one of them dares be missing (Is. xl. 26, cp. xlv. 12, Gen. i. 14 ff., Neh. ix. 6). They are not mere luminaries set in the sky, but superhuman beings; it is by Yahwè's ordinance that the nations worship them (Dt. iv. 19 f., cp. xxxii. 8 G, Jubilees, xv. 31 f.); the final judgment falls no less upon the high host on high, who guide and govern the nations in history, than on the kings of the earth on earth; they shall together be shut up in prison (Is. xxiv. 21-23; Enoch xviii. 13-16, xxi. 1-6; Rev. ix. 1 f., 11; cp. Dan. viii. 10 f.).

"Philo is therefore in accord not only with Greek thinkers but with the Old Testament in representing the stars as intelligent living beings; they are of a 'divine and happy and blessed nature,' nay, 'manifest and perceptible gods'—expressions which, as he means them, are not incompatible with his monotheism. The Essenes are said to have observed certain religious customs which imply peculiar veneration for the sun; but whatever may have been the origin of the practices, it may be assumed that they had found in them some symbolical meaning in harmony with the fundamental dogma of their Judaism." μ.

SECRECY IN RELIGION.

To the Editor of The Open Court:

The interesting contribution of the Countess E. Martinengo-Cesaresco in the September *Open Court* refers to a condition of Oriental reticence in the presence of aliens of other cults, of which there is a parallel in the existence of a like secrecy in the Far East. Even in the company of compatriots the initiates do not utter the sacred Mantra, or make Mudra manipulations openly. Especially is this so in the esoteric sects, such as the Shin-gon, and the Tendai,—especially in the higher classes of the Order of Yama-bushi, of which there are two branches. The chief monastery of the Shingon branch is at the former imperial retreat of Daigo, "Sam-bo In" (Three Treasures, Tri-ratna), near the Yamashina railway station beyond Kioto. That of the Tendai—now connected with Mii-dera at Otsu—is at the north-east suburb of Kioto, named "Sho-go In," formerly the residence of an imperial prince. The rites are esoteric and do not materially diverge. The writer has been initiated.

In the Tendai and Shingon ritual, on special occasions, the Gayatri—in an esoteric form—occupies a prominent place; the A-a-a-a, U-m-m-m-m, being joined in by the assembled Bonzes, and heard by the votaries who are railed off at a distance from the high altar. The chief abbot performs the secret manipulations facing the altar, with his hands concealed from the gaze of the laity, and reciting (or reading) the litanies meanwhile in a subdued voice, or silently moving the lips.

Circumambulation, the clanging of cymbals, and in special ceremonies the blowing of a conch, form a feature.

At the temples in the mountains, the rendezvous of periodical pilgrimage and assemblies of the Order, there are secret ceremonies for adepts and initiates, the

commonalty of lay pilgrims seeing but little of what takes place, the celebrants of the rites being screened off.

The incantations, exorcisms, and ancient rites are imitated by charlatans who impose upon the credulous for sordid motives, but the Order does not sanction such practices.

C. PFOUNDEN.

FILIAL PIETY IN CHINA.

While sauntering through the Pan-American Exposition, my eye caught a little Chinese store in which among other Chinese curios were displayed wall pendants, ornamental mottos designed to be hung up as decorations in the sitting-rooms of the Celestials. Being interested in the subject, I secured copies of them, and since they are characteristic of the spirit of Chinese moralism, I take pleasure in reproducing them here for the benefit of our readers.

The paper and art work are crude enough to allow the assumption that the prints must be very cheap in China, and are designed not for the rich but for the common people. They may cost in Peking or Hong Kong not more than one or two cents apiece. Evidently they serve two purposes: first of ornament and secondly of instruction.

The Chinese are a moralising people, even more so than we; while we dislike abstract moralising, they delight in it, and do not tire of impressing upon their children the praiseworthiness of filial devotion.

Filial devotion is in Chinese *hsiao*; the character consists of two symbols showing a child supporting an old man, and filial piety is supposed to be the basis of all virtue. The moral relations are regarded as mere varieties of *hsiao*; and the original significance of the word, which means chiefly the devotional attitude of a child toward his parents, includes such relations as the obedience of the subject to his ruler, of the wife to her husband, of the younger brother to his elder brother, and of any one's relations to his superiors, including especially man's relation to heaven or the Lord on high, to God.

The Chinese ornament their rooms, not as we do with pictures of beauty, but with moral sayings; and the two here reproduced are typical of the national character of the Chinese. The former of the two pendants, literally translated, reads:

父子協力山成玉

"When father | and son | combine | their efforts | mountains | are changed | into gems."

The saying, however, is not an admonition to parents to keep in harmony with their sons but to sons to be obedient to their parents.

The second pendant means:

兄弟同心土變金

"When elder brother | and younger brother (or briefly, when brothers) | are harmonious | in their hearts | the earth | will be changed | into an Eldorado."¹

It will be noticed that the letters are pictures containing figures and Chinese characters; and we have here the Chinese peculiarity of utilising their script for illustrations which represent scenes from well-known Chinese stories of filial devotion; all of them being taken from a famous book called *Twenty-four Stories of Filial Devotion*. These stories are known to every Chinaman, for they form the most important text-book of their moral education.

¹Literally, gold.