

Orient. In addition, she took an interest in every movement that made for peace and social improvement. The last work of her pen, still unpublished, is her autobiography which bears the title, "The Evolution of a Soul, From the Forests of America to the Vatican Council," and it is to be hoped, in the interest of her numerous friends, that it will be published as soon as the manuscript has been revised and duly prefaced by her son, upon whom naturally devolves this duty of filial piety.

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### THE WORLD CIPHER.

BY EDMUND NOBLE.

[Curvilinear motions and forms have a perennial fascination for the student of nature. They begin in the spheres, circles, ellipses and spirals which the physicist investigates; they impress themselves upon the naturalist in the rounded shapes which are so often associated with function and efficiency in the realm of life. Still more wonderful is their relation to the esthetic sense of man, for when highly organized conscious states arise, the law of power reappears as a law of beauty in the creations of the constructive, plastic and decorative arts. Curved paths and outlines do not exhaust what are known as "intelligent adaptations," but they conspicuously reveal the working of the universe process towards that order—at once the source and anticipation of human reason—in which antagonisms find their reconciliation, and confusion its final harmony. A mystery has long brooded over these evidences of objective plan, until it has seemed to some that Nature resorts to them as her most favorite modes of self-expression. Could such manifestations of cosmic unity be adequately suggested in verse, they would remind us of the sublime astronomical theories of Kant and Laplace; the patient biological studies of Darwin and Pettigrew; but also of the loving insight of Leonardo da Vinci, and even of that poetic fancy of Novalis: "Men travel in manifold paths: whoso traces and compares these will find strange figures come to light—figures which seem as if they belonged to that great cipher-writing which one meets with everywhere, on wings of birds, shells of eggs, in clouds, in the snow, in crystals, in forms of rocks, in freezing waters, in the interior and exterior of mountains, of plants, animals, men, in the lights of the sky, in plates of glass and pitch when touched and struck on, in the filings round the magnet, and the singular conjunctures of chance."]

I'm older far than the lotus'd Nile—  
Than man with his dome and pillared aisle.

My circles spread ere the sands were sphered;  
I bridged the void ere the vault was reared.

I've paved the path for the day-beam's leap,  
And the rushing stars my orbits keep.

With the flame and fume my fingers play;  
I swirl in the magnet's hidden ray.

In the frozen snow you'll find me curled;  
Aglow I coil in the making world.

I round the tear and the joyous sun,  
And the crescent shine when the day is done.

A breath unfolds me from summer dust;  
I wheel in the cyclone's awful gust.

The ether ripples I chase along;  
I bosom the widening tides of song.

I madly dance in th' electrons' heat,  
And whirl in the maze of flying feet.

My ovals murmur in forests hoar;  
I've jeweled the sea's untrodden floor.

I dash from the cascade's sounding peak;  
Silent I lean on the sail's white cheek.

Mine is all magic of wave and wing;  
New charms to the cradled cloud I bring.

I lift the germ to the flower, and wed  
The main to the angry wrack o'erhead.

Through the bending grass I glide and gleam;  
I flow and flash with the winding stream.

My roofs are raised in the woodland glade;  
I curve in the storied colonnade.

Behold me in plume, and beak, and claw;  
The egg and the nest obey my law.

I mount the stair of the twining shell;  
In showers I ride on the rainbow's swell.

I gloom in the arch o'er beauty's eyes,  
And girdle with light the midnight skies.

Snatch me from Chaos, and who shall mould  
The protyle's clash into orbs of gold?

Sift me from Order, and what remains  
Of human hearts with their joys and pains?

Ancient of birth from the flood and storm,  
I sway in the ceaseless drift to Form.

I crown the throes of the primal strife  
With the toil-won harmonies of life.

I am the spell of color and tone—  
Lord of the dreams that blossom in stone.

Mine are all mystic symbols writ  
On the fair robe of the Infinite.

Mine is the art of Nature's vast plan,  
That flows from the Cosmos down to man,

And mine the lure of the deathless grace,  
That smiles by turns on her changing face.

Seek'st thou the rule of the bubbling foam?  
Take the unweighed ocean for thy home.

Will'st grasp the world from atom to soul?  
First span the deeps of the mighty Whole.

Would'st uncipher my riddle? Then be  
The Many, the Weaver, who weaveth me.

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#### LAO-TZE AND CONFUCIUS.

China has produced two indigenous movements of thought which have been antagonistic to each other throughout the history of Chinese civilization and have left no opportunity unimproved of mutual attack and criticism. They go under the names of Taoism and Confucianism.

Taoism is presumably the original religion of ancient China. It is a belief in the Tao or reason, the right method of thought and action, a trust in the mysterious ways of heaven, and a submission to the divine will that governs the world.

Popular Taoism is full of superstition, but its recognized leader Lao-tze is one of the profoundest sages that ever lived. He preached a purity of heart in contrast to the ritualism and ceremonialism of the *literati* who fill all important positions and practically govern China. They recognize Confucius as their leader, and Confucius tried to reform the people by minute rules of propriety.

The story goes—and it is presumably historical—that Confucius once met the venerable philosopher Lao-tze in person. The latter was by almost half a century his senior and must have been an old man when Confucius was in his best years. Lao-tze was then Keeper of the Secret Archives of the state of Cho, and his fame induced Confucius to visit him in order to learn something about the ancient sages and their views of ritual, so as to regulate thereby the rules of decorum for the present generation. But Confucius had knocked at the wrong door. Lao-tze was too much of a philosopher to be guided by the traditions of the buried past, and the ostentatious behavior of the ambitious young scholar was offensive to him. Confucius left him in disappointment.

The shortest and perhaps the most authentic report of this meeting is given by Sze-Ma-Ch'ien, and has been reprinted in the original Chinese text with two English translations, one verbatim, the other in proper English style, on pages 95 and 96 in *Lao-Tze's Tao-Teh-King* (published by the Open Court Publishing Company).

Our frontispiece represents this meeting which if it is not historical is certainly *ben trovato*, for it contrasts these two lines of thought, Taoism represented by the philosophical thinker, Lao-tze, and Confucianism represented by K'ung-tze, the man who preached Ethical Culture pure and simple. Lao-tze is easily recognized by his white beard. He steps forth from the house as the host to meet his guest. Confucius is accompanied by his disciples and approaches with great ceremony. The picture was painted by Murata Tanryō, a modern Japanese painter who preserves the traditional style without being modernized to any extent through Western influence.