

that mist whereon the sun of the soul casts up, like Brocken spectre, certain vast and vague images of the beholder himself, with or without a glory encompassing them. The function of the facts is then quite passive : it matters little or nothing whether the cloud be the red mist of Christianity, or the glimmering silver-white of Celtic Paganism ; the hard grey dim-gilded of Buddhism, the fleecy opacity of Islam, or the mysterious medium of those ancient faiths which come up in as many colours as their investigator has moods'.

If the student has advanced spiritually so that he can internally, infallibly perceive what is Truth, he will find it equally well symbolized in most external faiths.

It is curious that Browning never turns his wonderful faculty of analysis upon the fundamental problems of religion, as it were an axe laid to the root of the Tree of Life. It seems quite clear that he knew what would result if he did so. We cannot help fancying that he was unwilling to do this. The proof of his knowledge I find in the following lines.

" I have read much, thought much, experienced much,
Yet would die rather than avow my fear
The Naples' liquefaction may be false.....
I hear you recommend, I might at least

1. "In order to get over the ethical difficulties presented by the naïve naturalism of many parts of those Scriptures, in the divine authority of which he firmly believed, Philo borrowed from the Stoics (who had been in like straits in respect of Greek mythology), that great Excalibur which they had forged with infinite pains and skill — the method of allegorical interpretation. This mighty "two-handed engine at the door" of the theologian is warranted to make a speedy end of any and every moral or intellectual difficulty, by showing that, taken allegorically or, as it is otherwise said, "poetically" or "in a spiritual sense", the plainest words mean whatever a pious interpreter desires they should mean." Huxley. *Evolution of Theology.*