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The Congo, Mr. Mencken

BY GERALD W. JOHNSON.

The greatest mystery of religion is expressed by adumbration, and in the noblest part of Jewish types, we find the cherubims shadowing the mercy-seat. Life itself is but the shadow of death, and souls departed but the shadow of the living. All things fall under this name. The sun itself is but the dark *simulacrum*, and light but the shadow of God.

I wish that I could write like that. Some inconvenient remainders of common sense restrain me from trying to do so, but in the bottom of my heart I wish that I could write in the manner of Sir Thomas Browne. It is not that I am especially impressed by the weight of his philosophy, for I am quite sure that I have no more idea of what he meant than he had himself; but the man could boom so!

This may be one of those confidences that should be given to none but the family alienist, but I think not. On the contrary, I begin to believe that it indicates no more than that I come of a family that has lived for a century and a quarter in the United States below the fortieth parallel. It does not indicate that I am insane, but merely that I am Southern; for the Sir Thomas Browne complex lies heavily, not upon me alone, but upon six-