



H. P. BLAVATSKY
COLLECTED WRITINGS

VOLUME III

1881-1882

THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE
WHEATON, ILL., U.S.A.
MADRAS, INDIA / LONDON, ENGLAND

H. P. BLAVATSKY

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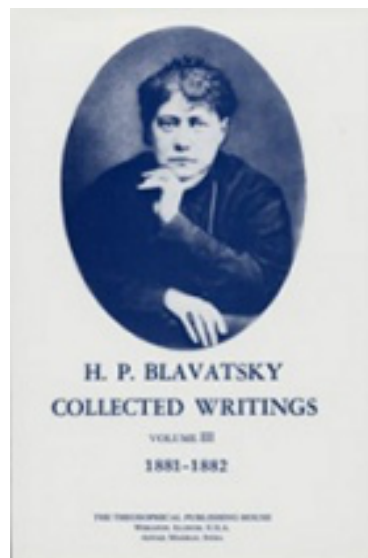
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FOREWORD TO VOLUME THREE

Most of the material in the present Volume appeared in print in collected form for the first time in 1935, when it was published by Rider & Co. in London, under the title of *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*. As was the case with the original Volumes I and II of the Series, a considerable portion of the stock of Volume III perished in the London “blitz” during the second World War. As a result of this, these earlier Volumes have been unobtainable for many years.

Discovery of hitherto unknown writings from H. P. B.’s pen required that the material be somewhat differently distributed, as far as the four original Volumes are concerned. The present Volume is made up of H. P. B.’s writings during the years of 1881 and 1882. It contains therefore some of the material of the original Volume II and most of the material of the original Volume III.

The text contained now in Volume III has been checked with the original sources of publication, and most of the quoted matter compared with the originals and corrected whenever necessary. Some new material has been incorporated from the Archives at Adyar. A number of explanatory notes and comments have been added by the Compiler to clarify points of Theosophical history. Biographical and Bibliographical information has been collected in the Appendix, as is the case with all the Volumes of this Series, and a copious Index has been prepared.

The Compiler wishes to express his gratitude to all those who have helped in the preparation of this Volume. Their continued interest and helpful assistance are gratefully acknowledged. Their names, as given in the Foreword to Vol. II, apply to the present Volume as well.

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF.

Compiler.

Los ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

May 8, 1968.

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

OF THE CHIEF EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY AND

COL. HENRY S. OLCOTT,

FROM JANUARY, 1881, TO MARCH, 1882, INCLUSIVE.

(the period to which the material in the present volume belongs)

1 8 8 1

January 1—Date of Charter of the Prayâg Theosophical Society, Allâhâbâd (Gen. Report of the 31st Anniversary and Convention of the T.S., p. 100), although the Charter was not actually forwarded until July 27 (Theos., II, Suppl. to Sept., 1881) . Bâbû Binee Madhab Bhattachârya has already bought a plot of ground to build a Theosophical Hall. The Branch is to be composed exclusively of the natives of India.

January 4—A. O. Hume is working on the last pages of his forthcoming pamphlet, *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy*, No. 1 (LBS., p. 305).

January 20—Mirza Murad Ali Beg (Godolphin Mitford) comes to see the Founders (ODL., II, 289).

February (approx.)—Damodar's relatives withdraw their support of the T.S. (ODL., II, 291-93; Ransom, 156).

February 17—General Council meeting is held: Rules are revised and simplified; decided by unanimous vote that the President and the Corresponding Secretary will hold office for life; Dâmodar appointed Joint Recording Secretary (Ransom, 155-56) .

February 19—The Adept known as Hillarion Smerdis visits the Founders “en route for Tibet and has been looking over, in and through the whole situation . . . He gave his views on India, Bombay, The Theosophical Society in Bombay, Ceylon, England and Europe, Christianity and other subjects, highly interesting” (Diaries). Leaves as a memento a much-worn gold-embroidered head-covering (ODL., II, 294) .

February 25—H.S.O. has a long consultation with H.P.B., resulting, apparently as a consequence of Hillarion's visit, in agreement to reconstruct the T.S. on a different basis, "putting the Brotherhood idea more prominently forward and keeping the occultism more under cover—in short to have a secret society for it . . ." (Diaries; ODL., II, 294).

February 27—H. S. O. delivers lecture on "Theosophy: Its Friends and Enemies," at Framji Cowasji Hall, Bombay. Circulars slandering the Founders are distributed by Krishnarao (Damodar's brother), Miss Rose Bates and E. Wimbridge (Ransom, 156).

March 13 (1st o.s.)—Assassination of Emperor Alexander II of Russia; this results in grave shock to H.P.B.; she is ill. (Vera P. de Zhelihovsky in *Lucifer*, XV, Feb., 1894, p. 474) .

March 17—H. S. O. receives order to go to Ceylon in April (Ransom, 155).

March—The Sinnetts go to England for a holiday, via Calcutta and Ceylon. A. P. Sinnett works on his *Occult World* which was "mainly written at sea" (Autobiogr.; ED., 29; Vania, 105).

April 22—H. S. O. sails for Ceylon, in company with Aeneas Bruce of Scotland; reach Galle on the 26th. This trip was mainly for the purpose of raising an Educational Fund to start schools with (ODL., II, 295; Ransom, 158; Theos., II, May, 1881, p. 184).

May 5—H. S. O. finishes the first draft of his *Buddhist Catechism*, which he compiled on this trip to Ceylon (ODL., II, 299) .

June—First edition of Sinnett's *Occult World* published by Trübner & Co., London (Theos., II, Suppl. to July, 1881).

June—Approximate time when Mrs. Marie Gebhard makes her first contact with the Theosophical Center in London (ED., 30) .

July 4—A. P. Sinnett returns to India alone, having left his wife in England on account of health. Arrives in Bombay on the P. & O. Company's mail steamer and stays for a short time with H.P.B.; then goes to Allâhâbâd (OW., 176; Autobiogr.; Theos., II, Suppl. to Aug., 1881, p. 1; ED., 33-34, where June is wrongly mentioned).

July 5—Date on which Sinnett receives his first letter from Master K. H. upon returning to India, in reply to one he sent via H.P.B. shortly before leaving London. Beginning of the vast correspondence which ultimately enabled him to write *Esoteric Buddhism*. (ML., No. IX, pp. 38-51; OW., 176, Amer. ed.; Theos., II, Suppl. to Aug. 1881, "The Bombay T.S."; Autobiogr.).

July 13—Date of the Document published in *The Spiritualist* of August 19, 1881 and signed by a number of natives, among them Dâmodar, concerning the fact of seeing the Brothers and knowing them. Coulombs' signatures affixed also.

July 14—Mrs. Patience Sinnett gives birth in England to second child, still-born (Autobiogr.).

July 22—H.P.B. leaves Bombay for Allâhâbâd and Simla to stay for some time with the Humes at Rothnay Castle. It must have been on this visit that Sinnett escorted H.P.B. up the Tonga Road. Hume's gradual discontent seems to date from approximately that time (*Theos.*, II, Suppl. to Aug., 1881, last page, 2nd col. bottom; Ransom, 162; Autobiogr.).

July 24—H. S. Olcott's *Buddhist Catechism* published both in English and Sinhalese. Means for this supplied by Mrs. Ilangakoon of Mâtara. A third edition became necessary before the end of August (*ODL.*, I, 284; II, 301-02; Ransom, 159).

August 21—Formation of the "Anglo-Indian Branch" of The Theosophical Society at Simla, during H.P.B.'s visit there; it became later known as the Simla Eclectic T.S., with A. O. Hume, President, A. P. Sinnett, Vice-President, and Ross Scott, Secretary (*The Pioneer*, Aug. 26, 1881; *Theos.*, II, Suppl. to Sept., 1881, p. 1; Ransom, 162).

September—H.P.B. is at Simla most of the month, as evidenced by several of her letters dated from there.

September—William Q. Judge is in the West Indies on business.

September 27—Most likely date when Master K. H. entered into Samâdhi, in search of "supreme knowledge." He had asked Master M. to continue corresponding with A. P. Sinnett during his absence (*ML.*, Letter XXIX, end; *Hints*, I, 115, 1909 ed.; H.P.B. to Mrs. Hopis-Billings, Oct. 2, in *Theos. Forum*, VIII, May, 1936) .

September 30 (18th old style)—Date of the French letter written by General Rostislav Andreyevich de Fadeyev, H.P.B.'s uncle, to A. P. Sinnett, enclosing affidavit concerning H.P.B.'s family background and antecedents, intended to counteract inimical attacks on her (*Theos.*, III, Suppl. to Jan., 1882; *Collected Writings*, Vol. III).

October—Wm. Q. Judge is at Carupano, Venezuela, on mining business.

October—H.P.B. is still at Simla.

October—First installment of "Fragments of Occult Truth" written by A. O. Hume is published in *The Theosophist* (Vol. III, pp. 17-22).

October 21—Party made up of Col. H. S. Olcott and several Ceylonese workers embark at Colombo and make a trip to Tinnevely to form a Branch there. Return to Ceylon the 27th (ODL., II, 309-14; Them., III, Suppl. to Nov., 1881, p. 2).

October (last week)—Most likely time when H.P.B. went to Lahore and saw Master M. (LBS., VII, p. 9). She starts on an extensive tour in Northern India, apparently on order of her Teacher.

November 1—H.P.B. arrives at Sahâranpur; dines with Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, staying, late at their house (LBS., No. VII).

November 2—H.P.B. spends most of the day with Williams (ditto).

November 3—H.P.B. starts for Dehra Dûn, North of Hardvâr, with Ross Scott who had come from Multân to join her (LBS., No. VII, p. 9) . Arrives late same day (ML., 461) .

November 4 (Friday)—H.P.B. writes from Dehra Dûn a letter to A. P. Sinnett which embodies the so-called “Prayâg Message” (ML., No. CXXXIV, p. 461) .

November 6—Changes effected in the Prayâg Theosophical Society: the word “Psychic” is added to its name and Rules are established; any F. T. S. is eligible to membership in it, and not only natives, as originally conceived. S. J. Padshah assists in this, being on his way from Bombay to Lucknow (Theos., III, Suppl. to Dec., 1881, p. 1; *ibid.*, IV, Suppl. to Feb. 1883, p. 3).

November 6-9—This seems to be the most likely period when H.P.B., being quite ill, receives orders “to, leave the railways and other highways,” and to let herself be guided, by a man sent to her for the purpose, into the jungles of the sacred forest of Deobund; she is to meet there a certain Lama Debodurgai who would heal her. Her illness is greatly relieved on this trip (H.P.B.’s letters to her relatives in *Lucifer*, XV, Feb., 1895, pp. 473-74; *Path*, X, April, 1895, pp. 6-7) .

November 10—H.P.B. is back at Debra Dûn; receives orders to proceed to Meerut on the 12th (LBS., VIII, p. 10) .

November 13—H.P.B. is at Meerut; receives Nov. 14th a telegram from Sinnett, sent by order of Master M., to come to Allâhâbâd (ML., CXIV, p. 449; LBS., IX, p. 12). She stays at Meerut until the evening of the 15th.

November 16—H.P.B. goes to Bareilly, capital of Rohilkhand; meets there S. J. Padshah by pre-arrangement, on his way from Lucknow. Rohilkhand Theosophical Society formed at Bareilly on the 17th (LBS., IX, p. 12; Theos., III, Suppl. to Dec., 1881, p. 1).

Nov. 18 or 19—H.P.B. goes to Allâhâbâd (LBS., p. 13; Ransom, p. 162).

November 29—H.P.B. returns to Bombay Headquarters (Theos., III, December, 1881, p. 86) .

December, 13—H. S. O. sails home from Ceylon, after a very strenuous sojourn there, conventions, trips to many towns, etc., Reaches Bombay on the 19th. Receives a kind message from the Master about his success in Ceylon (ODL., II, 325-26).

December 25—General Council meets to discuss the policy of shifting Headquarters. Founders decide to spend part of each year at Calcutta, Bombay and Ceylon. This was not carried out, however (Ransom, 162-63; Theos., III, Suppl. to Dec., 1881. p. 8 fnote).

December 28—Marriage of Ross Scott, Bengal Civil Service, to Maria Jane Burnby Hume, only daughter of Allan Octavian Hume., C.B., late Secretary to the Government of India; at Rothnay Castle, Simla LBS., p. 5; Theos., III, Suppl. to Feb. 1882, p. 16).

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January (early)—Ross Scott and his wife are in Bombay on their honeymoon; spend most of their time at Crow's Nest, the Theos. Hdqrs. (Ransom, 165).

January 10—Mrs. Patience Sinnett returns to India. Brief visit of A. P. Sinnett to Bombay to meet his wife (ED., 37; Ransom, 165; Autobiogr.). D. M. Bennett, Editor of the Truthseeker, arrives by the same boat; met by H. S. O., Dâmodar and Schroff (ODL., II, 327; Ransom, 165).

January 12—6th Anniversary of the Theos. Soc. celebrated at the Framji Cowasji Hall, Bombay (ODL., II, 331-32; Theos., III, Suppl. to Feb., 1882, pp. 2-12) .

January 17 and 19—Rev. Joseph Cook derides Theosophy and Bennett to a large audience in Bombay; H.P.B., H.S.O., Bennett and Capt. Banon present on the 19th (Ransom, 167; Theos., III, Suppl. to Feb., 1882, pp. 12-16) .

January 20—The T. S. arranges a large meeting at the Framji Cowasji Hall to answer the charges of Rev. Cook; Capt. Banon presides; Cook escapes to Poona (Ransom, 167; Theos., III, Suppl. to Feb., 1882, pp. 15-16) .

January 21—H.P.B., H. S. O. and Capt. Banon go to Poona in pursuit of Rev. Cook. Poona Branch is formed; they stay there four days (ODL., II, 331; Ransom, 168) .

Jan. 28—Parker Pillsbury and 13 others apply for the formation of a Branch at Rochester, N. Y. (Theos., III, Suppl. to April, 1882. p. 1) .

Jan. 31—Prof. John Smith returns to Crow's Nest, Bombay, after a tour of Northern India (Neff, 13).

February—Sinnett receives his first letter from Master K. H, after the latter returns from his initiatory trials (ML., No. XLV, pp. 264-68).

February 14—H. S. O. delivers at Bombay his lecture on "The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion." MSS in H.P.B.'s handwriting in the Adyar Archives shows that he had special help given him in preparing its text. Pârsîs print it in English and Gujarâti, distributing some twenty thousand copies (ODL., II, 333-34; Ransom, 168).

February 17—H. S. O. leaves Bombay with Bhavâni Shankar on a tour of the North. Visits Jeypore (19th), Delhi (22nd), Meerut (24th), Bareilly (28th), Lucknow (Mch. 7th), Cawnpore (8th), Allâhâbâd 13th), Berhampur (17), whence he proceeds to Calcutta (ODL., II, 334-39; Ransom, 168-69; Theos., III, Supplements to Mch., April and May, 1882).

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

Autobiogr.—An Autobiography of A. P. Sinnett, dated June 3rd, 1912, with additions dated May, 1916, and Jan. 2, 1920, which exists in the form of a typewritten MSS. in the Archives of the Mahatma Letters Trust in London.

Diaries—Colonel Henry S. Olcott's original Diaries in the Adyar Archives.

ED—The Early Days of Theosophy in Europe, by A. P. Sinnett. London: Theos. Publishing House, Ltd., 1922. 126 pp.

Hints—Hints on Esoteric Theosophy, No. 1, by A. O. Hume (though publ. anonymously). Issued under the Authority of The Theosophical Society in 1882. Benares and London: Theos. Publ. Society; Adyar, Madras: The Theosophist Office, 1882: 131 pp.—No. 2 was published about a year later. 2nd ed. of both appeared in 1909. Paging differs.

Inc.—Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky, by A. P. Sinnett. London: George Redway; New York: J. W. Bouton, 1886. xxii, 324 pp.

LBS—The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett, and Other Miscellaneous Letters. Transcribed, Compiled, and with an Introd. by A. T. Barker. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1924. xvi, 404 pp.

Lucifer—Monthly magazine started by H.P.B. in London, September, 1887.

ML—The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett (from the Mahatmas M. and K. H.). Transcribed, Compiled and with an Introd. by A. T. Barker. London: T. Fisher Unwin, December, 1923; New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1923. xxxv, 492 pp.; 2nd rev. ed., London: Rider & Co., 1926; 8th impression, Rider & Co., 1948; 3rd. rev. ed., Adyar: Theos. Publ. House, 1962.

Neff—How Theosophy Came to Australia and New Zealand, by Mary K. Neff. Sydney, Austr.: Austr. Section T. S., 1943. xi, 99 pp. Illus.

ODL—Old Diary Leaves, by Henry Steel Olcott. Second Series, 1878-83. Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1900; 2nd ed., Adyar, 1928. The original edition contains nine illustrations, all of them being views of the Theos. Society's Estate at Adyar. Being too faded for further reproductions, eight of these have been eliminated from the 2nd ed. of 1928.

Path—The Path. Published and Edited in New York by W. Q. Judge. Vols. I-X, April, 1886—March, 1896 incl.

Ransom—A Short History of The Theosophical Society. Compiled by Josephine Ransom. With a Preface by G. S. Arundale. Adyar, Madras: Theos. Publ. House, 1938. xii, 591 pp.

Theos. Forum—The Theosophical Forum. New Series. Publ. under the Authority of the Theosophical Society, Point Loma, Calif. Editor, G. de Purucker. Vols. I-XXIX, Sept., 1929-March, 1951 incl. Later edited by Arthur L. Conger.

Theos.—The Theosophist. Conducted by H. P. Blavatsky. Bombay (later Madras): The Theos. Society, October, 1879—, in progress (Volumes run from October to September incl.).

Vania—Madame H. P. Blavatsky, Her Occult Phenomena and the Society for Psychical Research, by K. F. Vania. Bombay, India: Sat Publ. Co., 1951. xiv, 488 pp.

1881

A YEAR OF THEOSOPHY

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 4, January, 1881, pp. 85-86]

The Dial of Time marks off another of the world's Hours. . . . And, as the Old Year passes into Eternity, like a raindrop falling into the ocean, its vacant place on the calendar is occupied by a successor which—if one may credit the ancient prophetic warnings of Mother Shipton and other seers—is to bring woe and disaster to some portions of the world. Let it go, with its joys and triumphs, its badness and bitterness, if it but leave behind for our instruction the memory of our experience and the lesson of our mistakes. Wise is he who lets “the dead Past bury its dead,” and turns with courage to meet the fresher duties of the New Year; only the weak and foolish bemoan the irrevocable. It will be well to take a brief retrospect of those incidents of the year 1880 (A.D.) which possess an interest for members of the Theosophical Society. The more so since, in consequence of the absence from Bombay of the President and Corresponding Secretary, the anniversary day of the Society was not publicly celebrated.

It will not be necessary to enter minutely into those details of administration which, however important in themselves as links, weak or strong, in the general chain of progress, and however they may have taxed the patience, nerve, or other resources of the chief officers, do not at all interest the public. It is not so much explanation as results that are demanded and these, in our case, abound. Even our worst enemy would be forced to admit, were he to look closely into our transactions, that the Society is immeasurably stronger, morally, numerically, and as regards a capacity for future usefulness, than it was a year ago.

Its name has become most widely known; its fellowship has been enriched by the accession of some very distinguished men; it has planted new branch societies in India, Ceylon, and elsewhere; applications are now pending for the organization of still other branches, in New South Wales, Sydney, California, India and Australia; its magazine has successfully entered the second volume; its local issues with the Government of India have been finally and creditably settled; a mischievous attempt by a handful of malcontents at Bombay to disrupt it has miserably failed.* It has made official alliances with the Sanskrit Samaj of Benares, that is to say, with the most distinguished body of orthodox Sanskrit pandits in the world, with the other Sabha of which Pandit Rama Misra Shastri is Manager, and with the Hindu Sabha, of Cochin State; while, at the same time, strengthening its fraternal relations with the Arya Samajes of the Puñjab and North-Western Provinces. Besides all this, we can point with joy and pride to the results of the late mission to Ceylon where, within the space of fifty-seven days, seven branch societies of Buddhist laymen, one Ecclesiastical Council of Buddhist priests, and one scientific society were organized, and some hundreds of new fellows were added to our list.

All this work could not be accomplished without great labour, mental anxiety, and physical discomfort. If to this be added the burden of a correspondence with many different countries, and the time required for making two journeys to Northern India and one to Ceylon, our friends at a distance will see that whatever other blame may properly attach to the Founders, who have never claimed infallibility of any sort, that of laziness assuredly is not to be cast in their teeth.

* Secret letters by former members denouncing its Founders, sent to Paris and other Theosophists and pretending that the Bombay Society was virtually extinct (its best members having resigned), were sent back to us with new protestations of friendship and loyalty and expressions of scorn for the conspirators.—Editor, Theosophist.

Nor, when they learn that the work done since leaving America, the travelling expenses and the fitting and maintenance of the Headquarters establishment has cost some twenty thousand rupees, while the cash receipts of the Treasurer (exclusive of those from Ceylon, Rs. 2,440, which sum is set aside as a special fund to be used in the interest of Buddhism) have been only one thousand two hundred and forty rupees, all told, including one donation of two hundred from the universally respected Maharanee Surnomoyee, and another of twenty rupees, from a well-wisher in Bengal—will those who direct the Society's affairs be regarded by them as making money out of their offices? And these figures, which may most readily be verified, are our only answer to the calumnies which have been maliciously circulated by some who did not, and others who did, know the truth.

The trip to Ceylon occupied seventy-seven days in all, the second one to Northern India one hundred and twenty-five days. Thus, the Founders have been absent from Bombay on duty twenty-nine weeks out of the fifty-two; their travels extending through twenty-five degrees of latitude, from Lahore at the extreme north of India, to Matara, the southernmost point of ancient Lanka. Each of the Indian Presidencies has contributed a quota of new members; and at the former capital of the late lionhearted Runjeet Singh, a branch was recently organized by Sikhs and Puñjabis under the title of the "Puñjab Theosophical Society." During the twelvemonth President Olcott delivered seventy-nine lectures and addresses, a majority of which were interpreted in the Hindi, Urdu, Gujerati, and Sinhalese languages.

Many misconceptions prevail as to the nature and objects of the Theosophical Society. Some—Sir Richard Temple in the number—fancy it is a religious sect; many believe it is composed of atheists; a third party are convinced that its sole object is the study of occult science and the initiation of green hands into the Sacred Mysteries. If we have had one we certainly have had an hundred intimations from strangers that they were ready to join at once if they could be sure that they would shortly be endowed with siddhis, or the power to work occult phenomena.

The beginning of a new year is a suitable time to make one more attempt—we wish it could be the last—to set these errors right. So then, let us again say: —(1) The Theosophical Society teaches no new religion, aims to destroy no old one, promulgates no creed of its own, follows no religious leader, and, distinctly and emphatically, is not a sect, nor ever was one. It admits worthy people of any religion to membership, on the condition of mutual tolerance and mutual help to discover truth. The Founders have never consented to be taken as religious leaders, they repudiate any such idea, and they have not taken and will not take disciples. (2) The Society is not composed of atheists, nor is it any more conducted in the interests of atheism than in that of deism or polytheism. It has members of almost every religion, and is on equally fraternal terms with each and all. (3) Not a majority, nor even a respectable minority, numerically speaking, of its fellows are students of occult science or ever expect to become adepts. All who cared for the information have been told what sacrifices are necessary in order to gain the higher knowledge, and few are in a position to make one tenth of them. He who joins our Society gains no siddhis by that act, nor is there any certainty that he will even see the phenomena, let alone meet with an adept. Some have enjoyed both those opportunities and so the possibility of the phenomena and the existence of “Siddhas” do not rest upon our unverified assertions. Those who have seen things have perhaps been allowed to do so on account of some personal merit detected by those who showed them the siddhis, or for other reasons known to themselves and over which we have no control.

For thousands of years these things have, whether rightly or wrongly, been guarded as sacred mysteries, and Asiatics at least need not be reminded that often even after months or years of the most faithful and assiduous personal service, the disciples of a Yogi have not been shown “miracles” or endowed with powers. What folly, therefore, to imagine that by entering any society one might make a short cut to adeptship! The weary traveller along a strange road is grateful even to find a guidepost that shows him his way to his place of destination.

Our Society, if it does naught else, performs this kindly office for the searcher after Truth. And it is much.

Before closing, one word must be said in correction of an unfortunate impression that has got abroad. Because our pamphlet of Rules mentions a relationship between our Society and certain proficient in Occult Science, or "Mahatmas," many persons fancy that these great men are personally engaged in the practical direction of its affairs; and that, in such a case, being primarily responsible for the several mistakes that have occurred in the admission of unworthy members and in other matters, they can neither be so wise, so prudent, nor so farseeing as is claimed for them. It is also imagined that the President and Corresponding Secretary (especially the latter) are, if not actually Yogis and Mahatmas themselves, at least persons of ascetic habits, who assume superior moral excellence. Neither of these suppositions is correct, and both are positively absurd. The administration of the Society is, unless in exceptionally important crises, left to the recognized officials, and they are wholly responsible for all the errors that are made. Many may doubtless have been made and our management may be very faulty, but the wonder is that no more have occurred, if the multiplicity of duties necessarily imposed upon the two chief officers and the world-wide range of activity be taken into account. Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky do not pretend to asceticism, nor would it be possible for them to practice it while in the thick of the struggle to win a permanent foothold for the Society in the face of every possible obstacle that a selfish, sensuality-loving world puts in the way. What either of them has heretofore been, or either or both may in the future become, is quite a different affair. At present they only claim to be trying honestly and earnestly, so far as their natural infirmities of character permit, to enforce by example and precept the ideas which are embodied in the platform and Rules of the Theosophical Society. Once or twice ill-wishers have publicly taunted us with not having given practical proofs of our alleged affection for India.

Our final vindication must be left to posterity, which always renders that justice that the present too often denies. But even now—if we may judge by the tone of our correspondence, as well as by the enthusiasm which has everywhere greeted us in the course of our journeyings—a palpably good effect has been produced by our appeals to the educated Indian public. The moral regeneration of India and the revival of her ancient spiritual glories must exclusively be the work of her own sons. All we can do is to apply the match to the train, to fan the smouldering embers into a genial warmth. And this we are trying to do. One step in the right direction, it will doubtless be conceded, is the alliance effected with the Benares pandits and attested in the subjoined document:—

Articles of Union between the Sanskrit Sabha, of Benares, and the Theosophical Society, in the interest of Sanskrit Literature and Vedic Philosophy.

At a special meeting held this day—the President, Pandit Bapu-Deva Shastri, in the chair—the Sanskrit Samaj, after listening to an address from Col. H. S. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, in which a proposal was made for co-operation between the two societies, unanimously adopted the following preambles and resolution:—

1. Whereas the interests of Sanskrit Literature and Vedic Philosophy and Science will be eminently promoted by a brotherly union of all friends of Aryan learning throughout the world; and

2. Whereas it is evident that the Theosophical Society is sincerely devoted to the accomplishment of this most worthy object, and possesses facilities which it is desirable to secure; therefore,

3. Resolved that this Samaj accepts the offer made on behalf of the Theosophical Society and hereby declares itself in friendly union with the said Society, for the purpose specified, and offers to render whatever assistance it can for the carrying out of such plans as may be agreed upon between the governing officers of the two Samajas.

Provided, nevertheless, that this act of union shall not be understood as making either of the two societies subordinate to the rule or jurisdiction of the other.

Benares, Margashirsha Shuddha, 13th Samvat 1937, corresponding to 30th November, 1880, Tuesday.

(Sd.) Bapu Deva Shastri, President
 " Bal Shastri, Vice-President
 " Gangadhar Shastri, Secretary
 " Dhundiraja Shastri
 " Rama-Krishna Shastri
 " Damodar Shastri
 " Pandi Yageshwar Shad
 " Babu Shastri
 " Keshava Shastri
 " Govind Shastri
 " Pramada Dasa Mitra,
 Hon. Member.

	अध्यक्षो	बापूदेव शास्त्री
	सहकार्य्यध्यक्षो	बाल शास्त्री
	लेखाधिकारी	गङ्गाधर शास्त्री
} Members.	सभ्याः	दुण्डिराज शास्त्री
		रामकृष्ण शास्त्री
		दामोदर शास्त्री
		पण्डित यागेश्वर शम्मा
		बाबू शास्त्री
		केशव शास्त्री
		गोविंद शास्त्री
	प्रोत्साहकः	प्रमदादास मित्र

Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, Bombay, December 25, 1880. Ratified by unanimous vote by the General Council, and signed and sealed on its behalf by the President-Founder, under a Rosolution this day adopted.

H. S. OLCOTT,

President, Theosophical Society.

These custodians of Sanskrit learning have promised to put in writing the precious treasures of Aryan philosophy, and to co-operate with us to give the facts a world-wide circulation.

The London Spiritualist remarked, the other day, that we were doing much for Spiritualism in India. It might rather be said we are doing much to make known the importance of mesmeric science, for wherever we have been we have spared no pains to show the close and intimate relationship that exists between our modern discoveries in mesmerism, psychometry, and odic force, and the ancient Indian Science of Yoga-Vidya.

We look forward with confidence to a day when the thorough demonstration of this connection will give to both Asia and Europe the basis for a perfect, because experimentally demonstrable, science of Psychology.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 4, January, 1881, pp. 89, 92]

Our long absence from Bombay has prevented our reviewing Mr. C. C. Massey's excellent translation of Professor Zöllner's great work, *Transcendental Physics*, in which are described his experiments with Dr. Slade, the American medium. Dr. Zöllner's contribution to the science of spiritualistic phenomena is one of the most valuable that has ever appeared. Next month it will be properly noticed; as will also Dr. George Wyld's smaller work on the higher aspects of Theosophy and Spiritualism.

The conductor of this Magazine, returning to Bombay late in December, and after the first two forms had been printed off, finds with regret that a description of certain recent phenomena at Simla has been copied from *The Pioneer*. Apart from the questionable taste of reprinting complimentary personal notices into one's own journal—a fault not conspicuously ours—we would have preferred omitting the present article since it has already been widely copied from *The Pioneer* and come back to us from almost the four quarters of the world, and in several different languages. In common with all who have made any study of Occult Science, we have the greatest repugnance to the fame of a worker of wonders or “miracles.”

Since the discussion of the Simla occurrences began, some two months ago, we have been flooded with all manner of absurd requests that we would find missing persons and property of sorts: as though no nobler use could be made of one's time and occult knowledge than the turning of one's self into an "occult retriever"—to use The Pioneer's happy expression. Once, and for all, let it be understood that Madame Blavatsky pays no attention to such idle requests, and that she deserves no credit for the Simla phenomena, which—as a careful reading of The Pioneer letter will plainly show—were understood to have been done by quite a different person.

[From H.P.B.'s Scrapbook, Vol. XI, Part I, p. 31]

[In the Sunday Mirror, in an issue merely identified as of "January, 1881," Sir Richard Temple's words are quoted: "They call themselves Brahmos or Adi-Brahmos, members of the Brahmo-Somaj, and quite recently they have sometimes adopted the name of Theosophists . . ." To this the Editor of the paper says: "The reference to the Theosophists is a mistake. . . ."]

H.P.B. makes the following comment in blue pencil:]

It is, it is—a "mistake"—a wicked slur, moreover—upon the Theosophists; and which every one of them repudiates most indignantly.

[From H.P.B.'s Scrapbook, Vol. XI, Part I, p.32]

[H.P.B.'s blue pencil annotation against articles of an hostile nature published in the New York Times and World of Jan. 4 and 8, 1881, respectively:]

Lies and in addition—a good Libel. Where is the prophet that finds honour in his own country?

A WORD WITH OUR FRIENDS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 4, Supplement to January, 1881, pp. 1-2]

That cause must be weak and desperate indeed, that has to resort to the arts of the slanderer to prop it up and injure its chosen victims. And it is truly lamentable to see people adopting these tactics against the Theosophical Society and its Founders. Soon after we reached India we were obliged to begin legal proceedings against a missionary organ, to compel its Editor to apologize for some base slanders he had indulged in; and the readers of The Theosophist are aware of the conduct of the Christian party in Ceylon, and their utter discomfiture at Panadure. However great our efforts to avoid any conflict with them, some strange fatality seems to be forever urging these good people to adopt questionable measures to hasten their own ultimate ruin. Our Society has been their favourite mark. The most recent shot was fired at Benares by a well-known convert to the Christian faith, who, unable to lay hold upon anything disreputable in our Indian career, did his best to injure us in a certain important direction by sneeringly suggesting to a very high personage that Colonel Olcott was a man of no position in his own country, and had doubtless come to India as an adventurer, to make money out of the people. Happily his venom was poured into unsympathetic ears. Yet, as he is a man of a certain influence, and others of our friends have also been similarly approached by him and other enemies of ours, such calumnies as these cannot be well overlooked. We are quite aware that a document of such a nature as the present, if launched on the public without a word of explanation, would give rise to criticism, and perhaps be thought in bad taste, unless very serious and important reasons can be shown for its appearance.

Such reasons unquestionably exist, even were no account to be taken of the malicious plot of our Benares opponent. When, in addition to this, we reflect that ever since we landed in this country, impelled by motives, sincere and honest—though, perhaps, as we now find it ourselves, too enthusiastic, too unusual in foreigners to be readily believed in by natives without some more substantial proof than our simple word—we have been surrounded by more enemies and opponents than by friends and sympathizers; and that we are two strangers to rulers as well as the ruled—we believe that no available proof should be withheld that will show that, at least, we are honest and peaceful people, if not actually that which we know ourselves to be—most sincere friends of India and her sons. Our personal honour, as well as the honour of the whole Society is at stake at the present moment. “Tell me what your friends were and I will tell you what you are,” is a wise saying. A man at Colonel Olcott’s time of life is not likely to so change in character as to abandon his country where he has such an honourable past and where his income was so large as it was, to come to India and turn “adventurer.” Therefore, we have concluded, with Colonel Olcott’s permission, to circulate the following documents. They are but a few out of many now lying before us, that show his honourable, efficient and faithful career, both as a member of the Bar, a private gentleman, and a public official, from the year 1853 down to the very moment of his departure from the United States for India. As Colonel Olcott is not a man to sound his own praises, the writer, his colleague, may state that his name has been widely known in America for nearly thirty years as a promoter of various public reforms. It was he who founded (in 1856) the first scientific agricultural school there upon the Swiss model; it was he again who aided in introducing a new crop now universally cultivated; addressed three state legislatures upon the subject by invitation; wrote three works upon agriculture, of which one passed through seven editions, and was introduced into the school libraries; was offered by Government a botanical mission to Caffraria, and, later, the Chief Commissionership of Agriculture; and was offered by M. Evangelides, of Greece, the Professorship of Agriculture in the University of Athens.

He was at one time Agricultural Editor of Horace Greeley's great journal, The Tribune, and also American Correspondent of The Mark Lane Express. For his public services in connection with agricultural reform he was voted two Medals of Honour by the National (U.S.) Agricultural Society, and a silver goblet by the American Institute.

The breaking out of the fearful civil war in America called every man to serve his country. Colonel Olcott after passing through four battles and one siege (the capture of Fort Macon), and after recovering from a severe illness contracted in the field, was offered by the late Secretary of War the highly honorable and responsible appointment of Special Commissioner of the War Department; and two years later, was, at the request of the late Secretary of the Navy, ordered on special duty in connection with that branch of the service, additional to his regular duties in the War Department. His services were most conspicuous, as his papers—which include a complimentary report to the U.S. Senate, by the Secretary of the Navy—prove, and as the reader of the following documents will easily infer.

At the close of the war the national army of one million men was quietly disbanded, and was re-absorbed back into the nation as though nothing had happened. Colonel Olcott resumed his profession, and was shortly invited to take the secretaryship and practical direction of the National Insurance Convention—a conference or league of the officials of the various State governments for the purpose of codifying and simplifying the laws affecting insurance companies. Accepting, he was thus for two years or more in the closest contact with, and the trusted adviser of, some of the leading State public functionaries of the Union; and a statute drafted by him, in connection with another well-known legal gentleman (Mr. Abbott), was passed by ten state legislatures and became law.

What his public services were in this connection, and how he was thanked and honoured for them, may readily be seen by consulting the two large volumes of the Convention's Transactions, which are in the Library of the Theosophical Society, at Bombay.*

This brings us down to the year 1872. In 1876 he was deputed by His Honour the Mayor of New York City to collect a public subscription in aid of a charitable object. In 1877 he was one of an International Committee chosen by the Italian residents of New York to erect a monument to Mazzini, in Central Park. The same year he was Honorary Secretary of a National Committee—one member of which was the just elected President of the United States, General Garfield—formed to secure a worthy representation of American arts and industries at the Paris Exposition Universelle, of 1878. In the following year he left New York for India, and just before sailing received from the President and the Secretary of State (whose office corresponds with that held by Mr. Gladstone, in England) a diplomatic passport, such as is only issued to the most eminent American citizens, and circular autograph letters recommending him to the particular favour of all U.S. Ministers and Consuls, as a gentleman who had been requested to promote in every practicable and proper way the mutual commercial relations of the United States and India. And now if the enemies of the Theosophical Society can produce an “adventurer” with such a record and such testimonials of integrity and capacity, by all means let them name their man.†

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

* [These two volumes are now in the Adyar Library. They contain the Official Report of the Proceedings of the National Insurance Convention held at New York, May 24 to June 2, and Oct. 18 to 30, 1871. They were compiled by Col. H. S. Olcott who was Secretary to the Convention, and contain Prefaces from his pen. On page 124 of Volume I, the Colonel has penciled the words: “They gave me \$5,000.”—Compiler.]

† [Pertinent information concerning Col. Henry S. Olcott may be found in the Olcott Centenary Number of *The Theosophist*, Vol. LIII, No. 11, August, 1932, and in a small but very worthwhile pamphlet by Kewal Motwani, entitled *Colonel H. S. Olcott. A Forgotten Page of American History*. Madras, India: Ganesh & Co., 1955. 16 pp.— Compiler.]

TRANSCENDENTAL PHYSICS*

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 5, February, 1881, pp. 95-97]

As was remarked last month, the now world-known work of Professor Zöllner,† on his experimental inquiry into the theory of a fourth dimension of space, with the aid of Dr. Henry Slade, the American spiritual medium, is one of the most valuable that have ever appeared in connection with the mediumistic phenomena. Modern spiritualism has spawned almost as many books as a female herring does eggs; and out of the number all but a few might as well have never appeared. But now and again the enquiry into this subject has begotten some work that is a permanent contribution to the progress of science. And Professor Zöllner's is of that class. It is the record of a series of sittings, or séances, with one of the most strangely endowed "psychics" of our times. Slade is a man who seems to be surrounded with an aura, or magnetic atmosphere, capable of so saturating the objects about him as to make them subject to disintegration and reintegration at the caprice of some intelligent power which hears, consents, wills, and executes. He fancies it is the hovering soul of his deceased wife which, however, is believed to yield its place momentarily to other "spirits" to write their own messages to their own (surviving) friends, in their own languages—languages which neither Slade nor she ever knew.

* Transcendental Physics. An account of experimental Investigations, from the Scientific Treatises of Johann Carl Friedrich Zöllner, Professor of Physical Astronomy at the University of Leipzig; Mem. Royal Saxon Soc. of Sciences, etc., etc., translated from German, with a Preface and Appendices, by Charles Carleton Massey, of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-Law (Vice-President of the Theosophical Society).

† [For a comprehensive biographical sketch of this remarkable scientist, vide Vol V, pp. 265-67, in the present series.—Compiler.]

Most mediums have some one or two forms of phenomena peculiar to themselves. Thus, William Eddy produces walking, and sometimes talking, figures of dead people; Mesdames Thayer,* of America, and Guppy-Volckmann, of England, have showers of flowers; the Davenports showed detached hands from their cabinet window, and musical instruments flying through the air; Foster has names in blood-writing ooze up under the skin of his arm, and picks the same names out of a lot of written ballots strewn on the table; and so on. Slade's chief specialty is to get automatic writing upon slates under perfect test conditions; but he is also, sometimes, clairvoyant, has vaporous figures appear in the room, and under Professor Zöllner's observation, he produced a series of novel and astounding phenomena illustrating the passage of matter through matter. This Leipzig savant, it must be noted, is one of the most eminent among astronomers and physicists. He is also a profound metaphysician, the friend and compeer of the brightest contemporary intellects of Germany. He had long surmised that besides length, breadth, and thickness, there might be a fourth dimension of space, and that if this were so then that would imply another world of being, distinct from our three-dimensional world, with its own inhabitants fitted to its four-dimensional laws and conditions, as we are to ours of three dimensions. He was not the originator of this theory; Kant, and, later Gauss, the metaphysical geometer, had forecast its conceptibility. But, the experimental demonstration lacking, it remained as a mere intellectual speculation until Zöllner was enabled to solve the problem, and to convince his great colleagues Weber, Fechner, and Scheiber. The publication of these experiments has created an intense interest throughout the world of science, and the discussion between the parties of progressive and conservative thinkers is actively and even angrily proceeding.

* [Mrs. Mary Baker Thayer of Boston, Mass., to the examination of whose phenomena Col. Olcott devoted some five weeks in the Summer of 1875. Consult his account in *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. I, pp. 88-100-Compiler]

Our space does not permit a very exhaustive review of Prof. Zöllner's book, and as it should be in the library of everyone who pretends to hold intelligent opinions upon the subjects of Force, Matter, and Spirit, the reader must be left to seek in its pages the major part of its wonderful contents.

Briefly, then, the facts are these: Zöllner started with the proposition that, granting, for argument's sake, the existence of a world of four dimensions with four-dimensional inhabitants, these latter ought to be able to perform the simple experiment of tying hard knots in an endless cord. For the fourth dimension of space—or, shall we say, the fourth property of matter—must be permeability. So, when he knew that the medium Slade was coming to Leipzig he took a cord, tied the two ends together, and sealed them with wax which he stamped with his own signet. Slade came and the Professor sat with him at a table, in broad daylight, their four hands laid upon the table, Slade's feet in sight, and the endless cord with the sealed end lying on the table under the Professor's thumbs, and the loop hanging down and resting upon his lap. It was the first time Slade had heard of that kind of an experiment, and no one had tried it with any medium. In a few seconds the Professor felt a slight motion of the cord—which no one was touching—and upon looking, found to his surprise and joy that his wish had been gratified. Only, instead of one knot, four had been tied in his string. To a scientific mind like his, this result, though infinitely less sensational than hundreds of mediumistic phenomena, was as conclusive and important a proof of the theory of four dimensions, as was the falling of a single apple to Newton in corroborating his immortal theory of gravity. Here was clearly an instance of the passage of matter through matter, in short, the cornerstone of a whole system of cosmic philosophy. This experiment he frequently, and in the presence of several witnesses, had repeated. As a further test he be-thought him of having turned two rings out of solid pieces of wood of different species—one of oak, the other of alder wood—which he strung on a cord of catgut.

He also put on the string an endless band, which he had cut from a bladder. He then sealed the ends of his cord as in the previous experiment, and as before, held the seal on the table under his two thumbs, letting the loop with the two wooden rings and the endless band or ring of bladder, hang down between his knees. Slade and he sat—again in full daylight—at two sides of the table, with all their hands in view, and the medium's feet where the Professor could see them. Just near the farther end of the table stood a small, round-topped stand, or teapoy, with one stout pillar to which the top was permanently attached, and three branching feet. After a few minutes had elapsed a rattling sound was heard at the small stand, as of wood knocking against wood, and this sound was thrice repeated. They left their seats and looked around; the wooden rings had disappeared from the endless catgut cord; the cord itself was found tied in two loose knots, through which the endless bladder band was hanging uninjured. The two solid wooden rings were—where? Encircling the pillar of the small stand, without the slightest solution of the continuity of their fibres or those of the pillar! Here was a permanent, most undeniable proof that matter could be passed through matter; in short, to the vulgar a “miracle.”

Numerous other like phenomena were obtained during the thirty sittings which Professor Zöllner had with Slade. Among them the abstraction of coins from a hermetically-sealed box, and their passage through the table onto a slate held flat against the underside of the tabletop; while simultaneously two fragments of slate pencil laid on the slate at the commencement of the experiment, were at the close found to have passed into the sealed box. Again, two separate endless bands of leather laid loosely under the hands of Professor Zöllner on the table, were under his very hands, made to interlock, one with the other, without the breaking of the seals or any injury to the fibre of the material. A work, taken from the library shelf and laid upon a slate which Slade held partly under the edge of the table, disappeared, and after the sitters had vainly searched for it for the space of five minutes all over the room, and then reseated themselves at the table, it presently fell straight from the ceiling of the room onto the table with violence.

The room was light, the séance was at eight in the morning, and the book fell from the direction opposite to that in which Slade was sitting; so no human hand could have thrown it. The small table, or stand previously referred to, on one occasion, no one touching it, began to slowly oscillate. What further happened we will let Dr. Zöllner himself describe:—

The motions very soon became greater, and the whole table approaching the card-table laid itself under the latter, with its three feet turned towards me. Neither I nor, as it seemed, Mr. Slade, knew how the phenomenon would further develop,* since during the space of a minute which now elapsed nothing whatever occurred. Slade was about to take slate and pencil to ask his “spirits” whether we had anything still to expect, when I wished to take a nearer view of the position of the round table lying, as I supposed, under the card-table. To my and Slade’s great astonishment we found the space beneath the card-table completely empty, nor were we able to find in all the rest of the room that table which only a minute before was present to our senses. In the expectation of its reappearance we sat again at the card-table, Slade close to me, at the same angle of the table opposite that near which the round table had stood before. We might have sat about five or six minutes in intense expectation of what should come, when suddenly Slade again asserted that he saw lights in the air. Although I, as usual, could perceive nothing whatever of the kind, I yet followed involuntarily with my gaze the directions to which Slade turned his head, during all which time our hands remained constantly on the table, linked together (*übereinander liegend*); under the table, my left leg was almost continually touching Slade’s right in its whole extent, which was quite without design, and owing to our proximity at the same corner of the table. Looking up in the air, eagerly and astonished, in different directions, Slade asked me if I did not perceive the great lights. I answered decidedly in the negative; but as I turned my head, following Slade’s gaze up to the ceiling of the room behind my back, I suddenly observed, at a height of about five feet, the hitherto invisible table with its legs turned upwards, very quickly floating down in the air upon the top of the card-table.

* The movement of heavy objects without any possible contact by Slade was so common that we looked on the movement of the table as only the beginning of a further succession of phenomena. [Footnote by Zöllner.]

Although we involuntarily drew back our heads sideways, Slade to the left and I to the right, to avoid injury from the falling table, yet we were both, before the round table had laid itself down on the top of the card-table, so violently struck on the side of the head, that I felt the pain on the left of mine fully four hours after this occurrence, which took place at about half-past eleven.*

The English-reading public is under many obligations to Mr. Massey for his translation and synopsis of the German edition of Dr. Zöllner's work. His self-imposed and entirely disinterested (he reaps no pecuniary profit from it) task was the more difficult inasmuch as he was almost entirely self-taught in German, and his satisfactory rendering of his author is all the more to be admired. In a preface of some forty pages, Mr. Massey introduces us to the several personages concerned in the ever-memorable Leipzig experiments, and shows their evident good faith and credibility; while in an appendix of twenty more, he handles with able lucidity the question of the two sides of the proposition that evidence, to command assent, should be proportioned to the probability or improbability of the fact to be proved.

It will interest our readers, and perhaps the public, to learn the circumstances which led to Mr. Slade's visit to Europe in 1877, from which such startling results have happened. In the Winter of 1876-7 the professors at the Imperial University of St. Petersburg, Russia, determined—under the pressure of very august authority—to form a committee for the scientific investigation of the mediumistic phenomena. The Hon. Alexandre N. Aksakoff, Russian Imperial Councillor, and now an officer of the Theosophical Society, having long studied the subject, was invited to lend his help. He, therefore, asked Colonel Olcott and the Conductor of this Magazine, both then in America, to select out of the best American mediums one whom they could recommend to the Committee.

* [Op. cit., pp. 90-92.]

A careful search was accordingly made and Mr. Slade fixed upon for the following reasons: (1) His phenomena all occurred in full light; (2) They were of a character to convince scientific men of the real presence of a force and the absence of charlatanry and sleight of hand; (3) Slade was willing to be placed under any reasonable test conditions and assist in trying scientific experiments—the importance of which he was intelligent enough to appreciate. So, after he had submitted himself for three months to an enquiry by a Special Committee of our fellows, expressly chosen by President Olcott, out of the skeptics in our Society; and the Committee had favourably reported, Mr. Aksakoff was recommended to engage him. In due time the choice was ratified, the necessary mopaney to pay Slade's passage was sent to us, and the medium sailed from New York for Russia, via England. His subsequent adventures, including his arrest and trial at London upon a malicious charge of attempted fraud, release, and triumphant vindication of his psychic powers at Leipzig and other European capitals—are all well known. It is not too much to say that in this one case the agency of the Theosophical Society was productive of an effect upon the relations of exact science with psychological research the importance of which must be felt for long years to come. Not only was Slade originally chosen by Theosophists for the European experiment and sent abroad, but at his London trial he was defended by a Theosophist barrister, Mr. Massey; at St. Petersburg another Theosophist, Mr. Aksakoff, had him in charge; and now Mr. Massey has bequeathed to future generations of English readers the full story of his wondrous psychical gifts.

ELECTRIC AND MAGNETIC AFFINITIES BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 5, February, 1881, pp. 98-99]

Without going too deeply into certain vexed questions based upon what the orthodox men of science please to term the “hypothetical” conclusions of the Psychological School, whenever we meet with discoveries made by the former, coinciding perfectly with the teachings of the latter, we think ourselves entitled to make them known to the world of skeptics. For instance, this psychological, or spiritual, school holds that “every being and naturally-formed object is, in its beginning, a spiritual or monadial entity” which, having its origin in the spiritual or monadial plane of existence, must necessarily have as many relations with the latter as it has with the material or sensuous plane in which it physically develops itself. That “each, according to species, etc., evolves from its monadial centre an essential aura, which has positive and negative megnetoid relations with the essential aura of every other Mesmeric attraction and repulsion exhibiting a strong analogy with magnetic attraction and repulsion. Analogous attraction and repulsion obtains not only between individuals of the same, but of different species, not only in animate, but in inanimate nature.” (Hygienic Clairvoyance, by Jacob Dixon, L.S.A., pp. 20-21.)

Thus if we give our attention but to the electric and magnetic fluids in men and animals, and the existing mysterious but undoubted interrelation between these two, as well as between both of them and plants and minerals, we will have an inexhaustible field of research, which may lead us to understand more easily the production of certain phenomena.

The modification of the peripheral extremities of nerves by which electricity is generated and discharged in certain genera of fishes, is of the most wonderful character, and yet, to this very day its nature remains a mystery to exact science. For when it has told us that the electric organs of the fish generate the electricity which is rendered active by nervous influence, it has given us an explanation as hypothetical as that of the psychologists whose theories it rejects in toto. The horse has nerves and muscles as well as a fish, and even more so; the existence of animal electricity is a well-established fact, and the presence of muscular currents has been found in the undivided as well as in the divided muscles of all the animals, and even in those of man. And yet by the simple lashing of its feeble tail a small electrical fish prostrates a strong horse! Whence this electric power, and what is the ultimate nature and essence of the electric fluid? Whether as a cause or effect, a primary agent or a correlation, the reason for each of its manifestations is yet hypothetical. How much, or how little has it to do with vital power? Such are the ever-recurring and always unanswerable queries. One thing we know, though, and that is, that the phenomena of electricity as well as those of heat and phosphorescence, within the animal body, depend on chemical actions; and that these take place in the system just as they would in a chemist's laboratory; ever modified by and subjected to this same mysterious Proteus—the Vital Principle, of which science can tell us nothing.

The quarrel between Galvani and Volta is well known. One was backed by no less an authority than Alexander Humboldt, the other by the subsequent discoveries of Matteucci, Du Bois-Reymond, Brown-Séquard, and others. By their combined efforts, it was positively established that a production of electricity was constantly going on in all the tissues of the living animal economy; that each elementary bundle of fibrils in a muscle was like a couple in a galvanic battery; and that the longitudinal surface of a muscle acts like the positive pole of a pile, or galvanic battery, while the transverse surface acts like the negative pole.

The latter was discovered by one of the greatest physiologists of our century—Du Bois-Reymond, who, nevertheless, was the greatest opponent of Baron Reichenbach, the discoverer of the Od Force, and ever showed himself the most fierce and irreconcilable enemy of transcendental speculation, or what is best known as the study of the occult, i.e., the yet undiscovered forces in nature.

Every newly-discovered power, each hitherto unknown correlation of that great and unknown Force or the Primal Cause of all, which is no less hypothetical to skeptical science than to the common credulous mortals; was, previous to its discovery, an occult power of nature. Once on the track of a new phenomenon science gives an exposition of the facts—first independent of any hypothesis as to the causes of this manifestation; then—finding their account incomplete and unsatisfactory to the public, its votaries begin to invent generalizations, to present hypotheses based upon a certain knowledge of principles alleged to be at work by reasserting the laws of their mutual connection and dependence. They have not explained the phenomenon; they have but suggested how it might be produced, and offered more or less valid reasons to show how it could not be produced, and yet a hypothesis from their opponents' camp, that of the Transcendentalists, the Spiritualists and Psychologists, is generally laughed down by them before almost these latter have opened their mouths. We will notice a few of the newly discovered electro-magnetic phenomena which are still awaiting an explanation.

In the systems of certain people the accumulation and secretion of electricity, reach under certain conditions to a very high degree. This phenomenon is especially observed in cold and dry climates, like Canada, for instance; as well as in hot, but at the same time, dry countries. Thus—on the authority of that well-known medical journal, *The Lancet*—one can frequently meet with people who have but to approach their index fingers to a gas beak from which a stream of gas is issuing, to light the gas as if a burning match had been applied to it.

The noted American physiologist, Dr. J. H. Hammond, possesses this abnormal faculty upon which he discourses at length in his scientific articles. The African explorer and traveller Mitchison informs us of a still more marvellous fact. While in the western part of Central Africa, he happened at various times in a fit of passion and exasperation at the natives, to deal with his whip a heavy blow to a negro. To his intense astonishment the blow brought out a shower of sparks from the body of the victim; the traveller's amazement being intensified by his remarking that the phenomenon provoked no comments, nor seemed to excite any surprise among the other natives who witnessed the fact. They appeared to look upon it as something quite usual and in the ordinary run of things. It was by a series of experiments that he ascertained at last, that under certain atmospheric conditions and especially during the slightest mental excitement it was possible to extract from the ebony-black body of nearly every negro of these regions a mass of electric sparks; in order to achieve the phenomenon it sufficed to gently stroke his skin, or even to touch it with the hand. When the negroes remained calm and quiet no sparks could be obtained from their bodies.

In the American Journal of Science, Professor Loomis shows that

. . . persons, especially children, wearing dry slippers with thin soles, and a silk or woolen dress, in a warm room heated to at least 70 degrees, and covered with a thick velvet carpet, often become so electrically excited by skipping across the room with a shuffling motion, and rubbing the shoes across the carpet, that sparks are produced on their coming in contact with other bodies, and on their presenting a finger to a gas burner, the gas may be ignited. Sulphuric ether has been thus inflamed, and in dry, cold weather sparks, half an inch in length, have been given forth by young ladies who had been dancing, and pulverized resin has been thus inflamed.

So much for electricity generated by human beings. But this force is ever at work throughout all nature; and we are told by Livingstone in his Travels and Researches in South Africa, that the hot wind which blows during the dry seasons over the desert from north to south:

. . . is in such an electric state that a bunch of ostrich feathers, held a few seconds against it, becomes as strongly charged as if attached to a powerful electric machine, and clasps the advancing hand with a sharp crackling sound . . . By a little friction the fur of the mantles worn by the natives gives out a luminous appearance. It is produced even by the motion communicated in riding; and a rubbing with the hand causes sparks and distinct crepitations to be emitted.

From some facts elicited by Mr. J. Jones, of Peckham, we find them analogous to the experiments of Dr. Reichenbach. We observe that “a magnetoid relation subsists between subjects of a nervous temperament and shells—the outgrowth of living entities, and which, of course, determined the dynamical qualities of their natural coverings.” The experimenter verified the results upon four different sensitive subjects. He says that he

. . . was first drawn to the inquiry by the circumstance of a female, to whom his son was showing his collection, complaining of pain while holding one of the shells. His method of experimenting was simply to place a shell in the subject’s hand: the *purpura chocolatum*, in about four minutes, produced contraction of the fingers, and painful rigidity of the arm, which effects were removed by quick passes, without contact, from the shoulder off at the fingers.

Again, he experimented with about thirty shells, of which he tried twelve, on May 9, 1853; one of these causing acute pain in the arm and head followed by insensibility.

He then removed the patient to a sofa, and the shells to a sideboard. “In a short time,” says Mr. Dixon, from whose book we quote the experiment,

To his astonishment, the patient, while still insensible, gradually raised her clasped hands, turning them towards the shells on the sideboard, stretching the arms out at full length, and pointing to them. He put down her hands; she raised them again, her head and body gradually following. He had her removed to another room, separated from that containing the shells by a nine-inch wall, a passage, and a lath and plaster wall; yet, strange to say, the phenomenon of raising the hands and bending the body in the direction of the shells was repeated. He then had them removed into a back room, and subsequently into three other places, one of which was out of the house. At each removal the position of the hands altered to each new position of the shells. The patient continued insensible. . . for four days. On the third of these days the arm of the hand that had held the shells was swollen, spotted, and dark-coloured.

On the morning of the fourth day these appearances had gone, and a yellow tinge only remained on the hand. The effluence which had acted most potently, in this experiment, proceeded from the cinder murex and the chama macrophylla, which was the most powerful; the others of the twelve were the purpurata cookia, cerethinum orth., pyrula ficordis sea urchin (Australia), voluta castanea, voluta musica, purpura chocolatum, purpura hyppocastanum, melanatria fluminea, and monodonta declives.

In a volume entitled *The Natural and the Supernatural*, Mr. Jones reports having tested the magnetoid action of various stones and wood with analogous results; but, as we have not seen the work we can say nothing of the experiment. In the next number we will endeavour to give some more facts and then proceed to compare the “hypotheses” of both the exact and the psychological sciences as to the causes of this interaction between man and nature, the Microcosm and the Macrocosm.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED ABOUT YOGA-VIDYA

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 5, February, 1881, pp. 103-104]

A Hindu gentleman of the Madras Presidency propounds a number of questions about Occult Science which we answer in these columns, as the information is often demanded of us and we can reach all at once in this way.

Q.—Do you or Colonel Olcott undertake to teach this wonderful Vidya to anyone who may be anxious to learn it?

A.—No; the correspondent is referred to our January number for remarks upon this point.

Q.—Would you like to give proofs of the existence of occult powers in man to anyone who may be sceptically inclined, or who may desire to have his faith strengthened, as you have given to Mr. and Mrs. —— and the editor of *The Amrita Bazaar Patrika*?

A.—We would “like” that everyone should have such proofs who needs them, but, as the world is rather full of people—some twenty-four crores being in India alone—the thing is impracticable. Still such proofs have always been found by those who sought them in earnest, from the beginning of time until now. We found them—in India. But then we spared neither time, trouble, nor expense in journeying round the world.

Q.—Can you give such proofs to one like myself, who is at a great distance; or must I come to Bombay?

A.—Answered above. We would not undertake to do this thing, even if we could, for we would be run down with thousands of curiosity seekers, and our life become a burden.

Q.—Can a married man acquire the Vidya?

A.—No, not while a Grihastha. You know the invariable rule was that a boy was placed at a tender age under his guru for this training; he stopped with him until he was twenty-five to thirty; then lived as a married man fifteen to twenty years; finally retired to the forest to resume his spiritual studies. The use of liquors, of beef, and certain other meats and certain vegetables, and the relations of marriage prevent spiritual development.

Q.—Does God reveal himself by inspiration to a Yogi?

A.—Every man has his own ideas about “God.” So far as we have learned, the Yogi discovers his God in his inner self, his ATMA. When he reaches that point he is inspired—by the union of himself with the Universal, Divine Principle—Parabrahman. With a personal God—a God who thinks, plots, rewards, punishes, and repents — we are not acquainted. Nor do we think any Yogi ever saw such a one—unless it be true, as a missionary affirmed the other day, at the close of Colonel Olcott’s lecture at Lahore that Moses who had murdered a man in Egypt and the adulterous murderer (David), were Christian Yogis!

Q.—If any Adept has power to do anything he likes, as Colonel Olcott said in his lecture at Simla,* can he make me, who am hungering and thirsting after the Vidya, a thorough Adept like himself?

A.—Colonel Olcott is no Adept and never boasted of being one. Does our friend suppose any Adept ever became such without making himself one, without breaking through every impediment through sheer force of WILL and SOUL-POWER? Such adeptship would be a mere farce. “AN ADEPT BECOMES, HE IS NOT MADE,” was the motto of the ancient Rosicrucians.

Q.—How is it that in the presence of such clear proof the most civilized nations still continue to be sceptical?

A.—The peoples referred to are Christian, and although Jesus declared that all who believed in him should have the power to do all manner of wonders (see Mark, xxvi, 17, 18), like a Hindu Yogi, Christendom has been waiting in vain some eighteen centuries to see them. And now, having become total disbelievers in the possibility of such Siddhis, they must come to India to get their proofs, if they care for them at all.

Q.—Why does Colonel Olcott fix the year 1848 as the time from which occult phenomena have occurred?

A.—Our friend should read more carefully and not put us to the trouble to answer questions that are quite useless. What Colonel Olcott did say was that Modern Spiritualism dates from 1848.

Q.—Are there any such mediums in India as William Eddy, in whose presence materialized forms can be seen?

A.—We do not know, but suspect there are. We heard of a case at Calcutta where a dead girl revisited her parents' house in broad daylight, and sat and conversed with her mother on various occasions. Mediumship can be easily developed anywhere, but we think it a dangerous thing and decline to give instructions for its development. Those who think otherwise can find what they want in any current number of the London Spiritualist, the Medium and Daybreak, the Melbourne Harbinger of Light, the American Banner of Light, or any other respectable Spiritualistic organ.

* Colonel Olcott never said anything of the kind. Ed., Theosophist.

Q.—How do these mediums get their powers; by a course of training, or as the result of an accident of their constitution?

A.—Mediums are mainly so from birth; theirs is a peculiar psycho-physiological constitution. But some of the most noted mediums of our times have been made so by sittings in circles. There is in many persons a latent mediumistic faculty, which can be developed by effort and the right conditions. The same remark applies to adeptship. We all have the latent germs of adeptship in us, but in the case of some individuals it is infinitely easier to bring them into activity than in others.

Q.—Colonel Olcott repudiates the idea of spirit agency as necessary to account for the production of phenomena, yet I have read that a certain scientist sent spirits to visit the planets and report what they saw there.

A.—Perhaps reference is made to Professor William Denton, the American geologist, author of that interesting work, *The Soul of Things*. His explorations were made through psychometry, his wife—a very intellectual lady though a great sceptic as to spirits—being the psychometer. Our correspondent should read the book.

Q.—What becomes of the spirits of the departed?

A.—There is but one “Spirit”—Parabrahma, or by whatever other name one chooses to call the Eternal Principle. The “souls” of the departed pass through many other stages of existence after leaving this earth-body, just as they were in many others anterior to their birth as men and women here. The exact truth about this mystery is known only to the highest Adepts; but it may be said even by the lowest of the neophytes that each of us controls his future rebirths, making each next succeeding one better or worse according to his present efforts and deserts.

Q.—Is asceticism necessary for Yoga?

A.—Yoga exacts certain conditions which will be found described at p. 47 of our December number.* One of these conditions is seclusion in a place where the Yogi is free from all impurities—whether physical or moral. In short, he must get away from the immoral atmosphere of the world. If anyone has by such study gained powers, he cannot remain long in the world without losing the greater part of his powers—and that the higher and nobler part. So that, if any such person is seen for many consecutive years labouring in public, and neither for money nor fame, it should be known that he is sacrificing himself for the good of his fellowmen. Some day such men seem to suddenly die, and their supposed remains are disposed of; but yet they may not be dead. “Appearances are deceitful”— the proverb says.

* [In the article entitled “Swami Dayanand’s Views About Yoga” which is signed with the initial O, and might be from the pen of Col. H. S. Olcott.—Compiler.]

NOTHER DISTINGUISHED FELLOW

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 5, February, 1881, pp. 104-106]

A short time since we had the pleasure of announcing that the aged Baron du Potet de Sennevoy had accepted the diploma of Honorary Fellow of our Society, and we published his most encouraging and complimentary letter. There is one more name attached to the splendid career of Magnetic Science in France during the last half century, which the historian of Modern Psychology will not permit to be forgotten. It is that of Alphonse Cahagnet, who charmed the public in 1848 with his Celestial Telegraph, a record of his experiences with certain singularly lucid clairvoyantes, and who is now living, a septuagenarian philosopher, honoured and beloved by all who know him, especially by students of magnetism. He, too, now gives us the right to inscribe his name on our list.

In all, he has published eleven works, in twenty-one volumes, his latest, *Cosmogonie et Anthropologie*, having accompanied his letter accepting the Honorary Fellowship diploma of our Society, of which a translation is appended. It is our ardent desire that a close and intimate relationship should be developed between the Theosophical Society and the French school of Magnetists, for their work runs in parallel lines. If the Western psychologists can throw light upon our Asiatic Yoga-Vidya, so can the latter send its brilliant rays into every corner of the modern field of exploration, to make the shadows disappear and enlighten the path towards the Hidden Truth. Some of our eminent new confrères have promised to come to India one day, in which case they would do good and receive good in return. With a close union between all classes of students of Occult Science—spiritists, spiritualists, magnetists, Indian mystics, and the theosophists—a great advantage would inevitably result to the cause of truth, and the mocking laugh of the sceptic, the ignoramus and the fool would be answered by irrefutable

FACTS.

Our Society for the first time in history offers a broad and easy bridge by which to cross the chasm.

M. CAHAGNET'S LETTER

ARGENTEUIL,

October 25, 1880.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

Esteemed Madame and Fellow-Student,

I beg you to be so kind as to thank for me the General Council of the Theosophical Society for the honour it has done me in admitting me as an Honorary Fellow, upon the nomination of Monsieur Leymarie, of the Psychological Society of Paris.

Deign, dear Madame, to say to the Council—of which you are not one of the least active members—that the foundation of such a society has been the dream of my whole life. To bring together all men without subjecting them to any other burden than that they should group together to offer their homage, in full personal liberty of conscience, to the Universal Parent; to form but one family linked together by fraternal love; to know but devotion and especially justice for each and all: that is an aim, indeed, to strive after, that is worthy of every heart free from egoism and pride!

Alas, is not this aim placed at the very extreme end of our individual education, at the last stage of our painful journey, and perhaps even at that of our successive existences? No matter, it is always good to raise our thoughts towards it, and never to lose sight of it by the way. Roman Catholicism attempts something of this sort; but it does not seem willing to leave each man to take the path of his choice. It offers but a single gate of entrance to the sanctuary that hides the secrets of life; and of it, it claims to hold the only key. Those who would enter must profess but one creed, one faith, and blindly accept its teaching—a teaching which leaves too much to desire to be regarded as unique.

Coquerel the Younger, a Protestant divine, better grasped the religious question when he would have avoided making it obligatory upon the aspirant for a seat at the fraternal board of their churches to believe any more in the divinity of Christ than in that of any other. He regarded the temple as a holy place, which each man entered to pray to the Deity of his own studies and choice. The clergy, assembled to decide upon this modification in dogmatic belief taught by them, remained uncompromising pastors; and poor Coquerel has now gone to submit his proposition in the spheres of thinkers released from the sad necessity of always maintaining their point. Will the theosophists of our time be wiser and more fortunate? Assuredly yes, if their teachings, religious and social, are kept within the following limits. Let us love one another, protect one another, and instruct each other, by example as well as precept. Let us not demand in religion only that which we ourselves believe. Let the same rule apply in questions of politics and social aspirations. Let us not play the tyrant. Let us not dispute, nor quarrel, nor, above all, speculate upon each other. Love, much love; and JUSTICE, to which one and all, without a single exception, shall be subordinated. Help, assistance, without counting which is most needy, him who gives or him who receives; since he who gives with the one hand receives by the other. Who, then, can possess without its having been given to him? Let us desire that the Hottentot and the Parisian may be two men who will take each other by the hand without noticing whether either lacks or has the conventional education or the fashionable dress.

Therein is the law of life, its administration, its preservation, and, let us add, its immortality.

Accept, good Madame and Sister in Theosophy, my fraternal greetings.

ALP. CAHAGNET.

P.S.—Kindly salute for me our brothers of the Society, Col. Olcott especially. This letter is accompanied with a copy of the latest work I have published, under the title of *Cosmogony and Anthropology: or God, the Earth, and Man, studied by Analogy*. I beg your acceptance of it as a mark of my great personal esteem.

An apology is due to Mr. Cahagnet for the non-appearance of this benevolent communication in an earlier issue. In fact it was translated and posted at Benares in time for the December number, but unfortunately the parcel of MSS. was lost in the mails before reaching Bombay.

And now, that we have attentively read his recent work he so kindly sent us, we must add a few words as much respecting the author as his intensely interesting little volume. *Cosmogony and Anthropology: or God, the Earth, and Man, studied by Analogy* is, as above stated, the title of the latest of his long series of works upon the most transcendental subjects. Our respected Brother, Mr. Alphonse Cahagnet, is now in his 73rd year, and one of the earliest, as at present most widely known, spiritists of France. From his youth he has been known as a seer and philosopher. In fact, he is the modern Jacob Boehme of France, humble and unknown at the beginning of his career, like the theosophist of Silesia, his early education was as deficient if we may judge from his own confessions. And as he went on with his writings, self-taught and self-inspired, more than once perhaps, his friends the Reincarnationists might have had good reasons to suspect that the soul of the German mystic had descended once more upon earth, and accepted a new trial under the very same circumstances as before. As in Boehme, so in him the highly contemplative mind, the same rare powers of intuition, and an identical and most exuberant fertility of imagination; while his deep-rooted love of the mysterious workings of nature is the counterpart of that of the poor shoemaker of Goerlitz. The only substantial difference between the two—a decided improvement, though, in the modern mystic—is a total absence in Mr. Cahagnet of anything like a pretension of being divinely inspired. While Boehme ended his too short career (he died hardly forty) by seriously imagining himself in direct communication and conversation with the Divinity, the French seer claims for himself but the faculty of perceiving things spiritually. Instead of grovelling in the formalistic path of modern science, which leaves no margin for the intuitional perceptions, and yet forces upon the world hypotheses which can hardly claim any firmer footing than like hypothetical speculations based upon pure intuition, he prefers to learn as much truth as he can find about all things in the domain of metaphysical philosophy.

Yet both Boehme and Cahagnet have sought “to light a torch for all who are longing for truth.” But while the works of the former, such as *Aurora*, or the *Rising of the Sun*, are full of ideas largely speculated upon by thinkers, such as Hegel, whose fundamental doctrines of speculative philosophy bear a striking resemblance to those of Boehme, the works of Mr. Cahagnet, from the *Celestial Telegraph* to the work under notice, are absolutely original. They have nothing of the crude, enthusiastic and figurative language of the German theosophist, but startling and bold as are the flights of his imagination into the hazy regions of speculative science, his language is always sober, clear, and intelligible. In short, our venerable brother is as much the child of, and the outgrowth of, his century, as Boehme was of the mediaeval ages. Both rebelled against the dead letter of scholasticism and dogmatism, and both view the Divinity not as a personal being, but as an eternal unit, the Universal Substance undefined by any human qualification, the unfathomable, as incomprehensible to human understanding as the “absolute nothing.”

The last work of Mr. Cahagnet as a diametrical deviation from the general hypotheses of Modern Science is so original, and so full of novel ideas—which the author is far from claiming to be infallible—that to take only a short notice of it would be to do an injustice to our readers, especially theosophists. We have, therefore, concluded to give adequate space for a proper presentation of the views of one of our most eminent French theosophists in this “*Journal of the Theosophists*.” Some of his ideas, moreover, so strangely coincide with those taught in the occult, or esoteric schools of the East, that we will try to point out, as we proceed, all such similarities of thought, as well as those which clash with the said philosophy. As the mystic speculations of Boehme—“abstruse and chaotic lucubrations,” as they may appear to many—have been seriously studied and analysed by the greatest thinkers of every century since his days, so the profoundly original teachings of Mr. Cahagnet have already attracted attention and found many an admirer and disciple among the wisest philosophers and mystics of France.

Shunning dogmatism, true and sincere as truth itself, instead of imposing his own views upon the reader, he always modestly acknowledges his ignorance, and liability to err in his “analytical impressions.” He begs that the reader will not allow himself to be influenced by his propositions. “Study, and either accept or reject them”—are his first words; for “these propositions emanate neither from Hermes Trismegistus, nor Zoroaster, nor from Mount Sinai, nor yet from Confucius, nor Socrates, nor Jesus, nor least of all from Ignatius Loyola. . . . They are no more the result of conscious revelations than that of vast and profound meditations, though they do descend on me from the Unknown. Accept them as they are, and think of them what you will, but I would advise you before rejecting them to try and grasp them by analogy, by more closely studying chemistry and physics. . . . I dare not ask you to withdraw within your own self, in order that, acquiring a better knowledge of your ego you might, perchance, discover in yourself such superior faculties as would enable you to become the most skilful of philosophical locksmiths by furnishing you with keys which alone such faculties can give you.” So honest a guide as this, one feels he may safely follow through the devious paths that lead through the mistland of speculation up to the light of truth. We will begin our selection from his work next month.

HINDUSTANI DOMESTIC REMEDIES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 5, February, 1881, p. 106]

[The following introductory note is appended by H.P.B. to an article on Hindustani domestic remedies and methods of cure, by Pandit Jaswant Roy Bhojapatra, a native surgeon.]

The contribution of Pandit Prananath on the efficacy the charm-cure, or the writing of a quinque-angular figure on the extreme or proximal end of the limb bitten by a scorpion, has, we are glad to find, induced the trial of similar experiments elsewhere; among others, by a surgeon of Jaulna, whose evidence was published in the January number, and with unvarying success.* It, therefore, affords us gratification to notice by way of comment that the occult power of an impression, tactile or mental, has in no small number of authenticated cases, proved a blessing to the suffering. The sequence of a cure following a poison-bite, or, to say the least, the relief of agonising pain suddenly caused by the sting of a venomous insect, through mental, or rather psychological, agency, is in itself no small gain to humanity. And if it could be established by experiments conducted elsewhere by faithful and unprejudiced practitioners, in all cases of scorpion bites, we might by and by test the influence of psychological methods of cure in cases of stronger and more venenate poisons, like that of the snake.

* [Article entitled "The Star-Charms for Scorpion-Bite," signed "J.M., Surgeon," in The Theosophist, Vol. II, January, 1881, p. 92—Compiler.]

The apparently real efficacy of the method of treatment attested to by three of our contributors naturally leads us to examine more closely the relations of the symptoms caused by scorpion poisoning to the probable pathological condition temporarily induced by the poison; and to attempt the solution of a question which suggests itself regarding its intimate nature and action on man. We have first to determine whether it is a local irritant, spending its action on the nerves of the part, or a blood poison which produces the symptoms developed by the bite through the blood vessels of the bitten part.

To approach the solution of this problem, it is necessary to analyse the symptoms observed after the bite. Let us, therefore, see what they are. They are found to be an instantaneous feeling of severe burning in the part attacked, as if a live coal were placed on it; an aura proceeding from the part through the limb up to its further extremity, or as far as the junction of the limb with the trunk of the body; this further limit being the armpit if the bite was in the hand or the forearm, and the groin, if it was in the foot or the leg. Then a general stunning of the system followed by cold perspiration all over the body, and a feeling of exhaustion or prostration, due to a shock to the nervous system as well as the mind. The above represents, indeed, the whole train of immediate symptoms following the bite. We need not here refer to the aftereffects, for they are nil in many cases. Most of them are indicative of local inflammation involving the absorbents where the bite is caused by a mature scorpion.

It suffices our present purpose to state that the influence of the poison does not travel beyond the nearest large plexus of lymphatics; and it is also probable that the poison is not immediately absorbed by the blood vessels, for if it were, graver and even fatal symptoms would have more frequently ensued. It is true that no direct experiments have yet been made with the scorpion poison, isolated like the snake poison, on the lower animals; and its venenosity and the mode of death have not been determined. But nevertheless we assume that its operation is that of an irritant and caustic attacking one or two of the tactile Pacenian corpuscles of the rete mucosum, or the true skin, which are highly endowed with sensitive nerves.

The sudden shock caused by the injection of the poison in the intimate structure of the skin becomes intensified, it is probable, from these circumstances, viz., first, in the absence apparently of any visible cause, and secondly, under the wonted fear when the animal is observed, which popular knowledge connects with the action of a scorpion bite. It is, therefore, apparent that any method which will divert the mind from such a notion will mitigate fear, and that that which also combines with it an opposite influence on the nervous currents, must for a time check the aura, neutralize the tendency to congestions, and allay the morbid muscular irritability, which shows itself in the temporary cramps accompanying the aura. Both these effects can be controlled by a strong, positive current artificially thrown over the part from the nearest nerve centre downwards to the part attacked; hence it is probable that a healthy man with a strong will and determination to throw a current of his own vital magnetism on the bitten part must succeed in relieving pain and helping the absorbents to take an increased action and decompose the poison. The poison itself becomes in time chemically disintegrated and carried away through the system by absorbents. But this is an assumption which experiments conducted with the poison will alone separately determine, Relief from suffering, in the meanwhile, can therefore be most certainly derived by the help of the psychological tricks described by our contributors.

THE MISSING LINK

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 5, February, 1881, p. 111]

A good many of the Western papers are terribly excited over a bit of news just arrived in Europe from Saigon. The most radical and freethinking of them crow over the fact, as well they may, in the interest of truth—as though thickest, and hitherto most impenetrable of the veils covering Mother Nature's doings had been removed forever, and anthropology had no more secrets to learn.

The excitement is due to a little monster, a seven year old boy, now on exhibition at Saigon. The child is a native of Cambodia, quite robust and healthy, yet exhibiting in his anatomy the most precious and rare of physical endowments—a real tail, ten inches long and 1½ thick at its root!

The original little sample of humanity—unique, we believe, of his kind—is now made out by the disciples of Darwin and Haeckel to be the bona (bony?) fide Missing Link. Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that the evolutionists (whose colours we certainly wear) are right in their hypothesis, and that the cherished theory of having baboons for our ancestors turns out true. Will every difficulty in our way be then removed? By no means: for, then, more than ever will we have to try to solve the hitherto insolvable problem, which comes first, the Man or the Ape? It will be the Aristotelian egg and chicken problem of creation over again. We can never know the truth until some streak of good chance shall enable science to witness at different periods and under various climates either women giving birth to apes, graced with a caudal appendix or female orangoutangs becoming mothers of tailless and, moreover, semihuman children, endowed with a capacity for speech at least as great as that of a moderately clever parrot or mina.

Science is but a broken reed for us in this respect, for science is just as perplexed, if not more so, than the rest of us, common mortals. So little is it able to enlighten us upon the mystery, that the men of most learning are those who confuse us the most in some respects. As in regard to the heliocentric system, which, after it had been left an undisputed fact more than three centuries, found in the later part of our own a most serious opponent in Dr. Schroepfer, Professor of Astronomy at the University of Berlin, so the Darwinian theory of the evolution of man from an anthropoid, has among its learned opponents one, who, though an evolutionist himself, is eager to oppose Darwin, and seeks to establish a school of his own.

This new “perfectionist” is a professor in the Hungarian town of Fünfkirchen, who is delivering just now a series lectures throughout Germany. “Man,” says he, “whose origin must be placed in the Silurian mud, whence he began evolving from a frog, must necessarily some day re-evolute into the same animal!” So far well and good. But the explanations going to prove this hypothesis which Professor Charles Deezy accepts as a perfectly established fact, are rather too vague to enable us to build anything like an impregnable theory upon them. “In the primitive days of the first period of evolution,” he tells us, “there lived a huge, froglike, mammalian animal, inhabiting the seas, but which, being of the amphibious kind, lived likewise on land, breathing in the air as easily as it did in water; its chief habitat, though, was in the salt sea water. This froglike creature is now what we call—man [!] and his marine origin is proved by the fact that he cannot live without salt.” There are other signs about man, almost as impressive as the above by which this origin can be established, if we may believe this new prophet of science. For instance, “a well-defined remnant of fins, to be seen between his thumbs and fingers, as also his insurmountable tendency towards the element of water:” a tendency, we remark *passim*, more noticeable in the Hindu than the Highlander!

No less does the Hungarian scientist set himself against Darwin’s theory of man descending from the ape. According to his new teaching, “It is not the anthropoid which begot man, but the latter who is the progenitor of the monkey. The ape is merely a man returned once more to its primitive, savage state.” Our Professor’s views as to geology, and the ultimate destruction of our globe, coupled with his notions regarding the future state of mankind, are no less original and are the very sweetest fruit of his Tree of Scientific Knowledge. Provoking though they do general hilarity, they are nevertheless given out by the “learned” lecturer in quite a serious spirit, and his works are considered among the textbooks for colleges. If we have to credit his statement, then we must believe that “the moon is slowly but surely approaching the earth.”

The result of such an indiscretion on the part of our fair Diana, is to be most certainly the following! “The sea waves will, some day, immerse our globe and gradually submerge all the continents. Then man, unable to live any longer on dry land, will have but to return to his primitive form, i.e., he will re-become an aquatic animal—a man-frog.” And the life insurance companies will have to shut up their shops and become bankrupts—he might have added. Daring speculators are advised to take their precautions in advance.

Having permitted ourselves this bit of irreverence about Science—those, rather, who abuse their connection with it—we may as well give here some of the more acceptable theories respecting the missing link. These are by no means so scarce as bigots would like to make us believe. Schweinfurth and other great African travellers vouchsafe for the truth of these assertions and believe they have found races which may, after all, be the missing links—between man and ape. Such are the Akkas of Africa; those whom Herodotus calls the Pigmies (History, II, 32) and the account of whom—notwithstanding it came from the very pen of the Father of History—was until very recently believed to be erroneous and they themselves myths of a fabled nation. But, since the public has had the most trustworthy narratives of European travellers, we have learned to know better, and no one any longer thinks that Herodotus has confounded in his account men and the cynocephaloid apes of Africa.

We have but to read the description of the orangoutang and of the chimpanzee to find that these animals—all but the hairy surface—answer in nearly every respect to these Akkas. They are said to have large cylindrical heads on a thin neck; and a body about four feet high; very long arms, perfectly disproportionate, as they reach far lower than their knees; a chest narrow at the shoulders and widening tremendously toward the stomach which is always enormous; knees thick, and hands of an extraordinary beauty of design (a characteristic of monkey’s hands, which with the exception of their short thumbs have wonderfully neat and slender fingers tapering to the ends, and always prettily shaped finger nails) . The Akka’s walk is vacillating, which is due to the abnormal size of their stomachs, as in the chimpanzee and the orangoutang.

Their cranium is large, profoundly depressed at the root of the nose, and surmounted by a contracting forehead sloping directly backward; a projecting mouth with very thin lips, and a beardless chin—or rather no chin at all. The hair on their heads does not grow, and though less noisy than the orangoutang they are enormously so when compared with other men. On account of the long grass which often grows twice their own size in the regions they inhabit, they are said to jump like so many grasshoppers, to make enormous strides, and, to have all the outward motions of big anthropoids.

Some scientists think—this time with pretty good reason—that the Akkas, more even than the Matimbos of which d’Escayrac de Lauture gives such interesting accounts—the Kimosas, and the Bushin, of austral Africa, are all remnants of the missing link.

HYPNOTISM

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 5, February, 1881, p. 112]

The views of medical men in regard to Hypnotism or self-mesmerization have been greatly strengthened of late. This is evident from the report by Dr. Grishhorn, of St. Petersburg, at the latest meeting of the Society of the St. Petersburg Physicians, on November 18th (December 1st), a report which is full of interest. Until recently, the phenomena of hypnotism have been only accepted under a protest, while mesmerism and clairvoyance were regarded and denounced by the best authorities in Science as pure charlatanism. The greatest physicians remained sceptical as to the reality of the phenomena, until one after the other came to learn better; and these were those, of course, who had the patience to devote some time and labour to personal experiment in this direction.

Still many have thus acquired the profound conviction that there exists in man a faculty—mysterious and yet unexplained—which causes him under a certain degree of self-concentration to become as rigid as a statue and lose more or less his consciousness. That once in such a nervous state, at times his spiritual and mental faculties will seem paralysed, and the mechanical action of the body alone remain; while at others it will be quite the contrary: his physical senses becoming benumbed, his mental and spiritual faculties will acquire a most wonderful degree of acuteness.

Last summer, Dr. Grishhorn made, with Professor Berger, a series of hypnotic experiments and observations in the Breslau Hospital for Nervous Diseases. One of the first patients experimented upon was a young girl of about twenty, who suffered acutely from rheumatic pain. Professor Berger, applying to the tip of her nose a small hammer used for auscultations, directed her to concentrate all her attention upon the spot touched. Hardly a few minutes had elapsed, when, to his utmost astonishment, the girl became quite rigid. A bronze statue could not be more motionless and stiff. Then Dr. Grishhorn tried every kind of experiment in order to ascertain that the girl did not play a part. A lighted candle was closely approached to her eyes and it was found that the pupil did not contract; the eyes remaining opened and glassy, as if the person had been dead. He then passed a long needle through her lip and moved it in every direction; but the two doctors remarked neither the slightest sign of pain, nor, what was most strange, was there a single drop of blood. He called her by her name; there came no answer. But when, taking her by the hand, he began to converse with her, the young girl answered all his questions, though feebly at first and as if compelled by an irresistible power.

The second experiment proved more wonderful yet. It was made with a young soldier, who had just been brought into the hospital, and who proved “what the Spiritualists call a medium”—says the official report. This last experiment finally convinced Drs. Grishhorn and Berger of the reality of the doubted phenomena.

The soldier, a German, ignorant of a single word of Russian, spoke in his trance with the doctor in that language, pronouncing the most difficult words most perfectly, without the slightest foreign accent. Suffering from a paralysis of both legs, during his hypnotic sleep he used them freely, walking with entire ease, and repeating every movement and gesture made by Dr. Grishhorn with absolute precision. The Russian sentences he pronounced very rapidly, while his own tongue he spoke very slowly. He even went so far as to write, at the doctor's dictation, a few words in that language, quite unknown to him, and in the Russian characters.

The debates upon this most important report by a well-known physician, were announced to take place at the next meeting of the Society of the St. Petersburg Medical Practitioners. As soon as the official report of the proceedings is published, we will give it to our readers. It is really interesting to witness how the men of science are gradually being led to acknowledge facts which they have hitherto so bitterly denounced.

Hypnotism, we may add, is nought but the Trataka of the Yogi, the act of concentrating his mind on the tip of the nose, or on the spot between the eyebrows. It was known and practiced by the ascetics in order to produce the final Samadhi, or temporary deliverance of the soul from the body; a complete disenthralment of the spiritual man from the slavery of the physical with its gross senses. It is being practiced unto the present day.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 5, February, 1881, pp. 101, 104]

[Reference having been made to Moses “when he wrote the well-known verse in Genesis, which says: ‘And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters’,” H. P. B. remarks:]

Rather, is alleged to have written.

[The following note is appended by H. P. B. to an extract from The Pioneer, treating of the fact that astronomers begin to suspect “some connection, not unlike that dreamed of by the old astrologers, between the position of the planets and the fortunes of our earth.”]

The next step will be for the modern astronomers to discover that no mere change in atmospheric temperature accompanying the conjunction of planets affects human destinies, but a far more important and occult power, the magnetic sympathy between the various planetary orbs. Astrology may have fallen into contempt under the influence of improved modern science, but undoubtedly the time is coming when it will again have the attention it deserves and recover its ancient dignity as a sublime science. Perhaps the following paragraph from The Banner of Light may serve as a help to those who would understand the occult forces that pervade our globe, and make it sensitive to solar magnetism.

[Follows a short extract referring to recent investigations regarding magnetic currents in the earth and the invention of a wireless telephone.]

THE STUDY OF RUSSIAN BY INDIAN OFFICERS

[Bombay Gazette, Bombay, February 21, 1881]

To the Editor of the Bombay Gazette.

SIR:—

In The Pioneer of February 19th, there is a letter from Mr. Walter T. Lyall, H.B.M.'s Consul at Tiflis, Caucasus, which has filled me with delight. This gentleman suggests and even urges, the expediency of the Russian language being studied "by Indian officers and others." He recommends, that the Anglo-Indian Government "should offer a premium of Rs. 2000 or Rs. 3000 for passing, and that the aspirant should reside a year in some part of Russia," the Caucasus preferred, as being the most "proper spot to select, as the aspirant while studying Russian could also ground himself in Turki (or Tartar)." This amiable official closes his liberal and timely suggestion as to the Caucasus (Russia's India) by repeating once more that "It would be better for students to (first) ground themselves thoroughly in these languages by study in India (Lahore) and then to spend a year in the Caucasus by way of finish."

Now this is really a most charming and happy thought! What a sweet picture of reciprocal bliss and welcome, of noble trust—if carried out! The Russian Consul at Bombay ought not to lose time, but issue at once like invitations to officers in the Russian army to "ground themselves thoroughly," and as fast as they can, in the Hindustani, Urdu, and Marathi languages at St. Petersburg and then spend a year at Poona, and in Cawnpore and Kashmir, "by way of finish"; for once Mr. Lyall's suggestion is accepted, I do not believe the Anglo-Indian Government will be so ill-mannered as to remain behindhand in extending a like invitation and offering the same hospitality to Russian officers in India.

H.B.M.'s Consul at Tiflis must have been quite sure of their welcome since he writes so positively and invites them to the Caucasus. That the Russians can never be accused of a lack of hospitality, a feature they have in common with all semi-barbarous Asiatic nations, I am ready to vouch. Nor would be military gentlemen at India find a scarcity of "grass widows" in Tiflis (owing to their heroic husbands being on their Tchengis Khan expedition to Central Asia) to "bow-wow" with, in their quiet intervals of leisure. Nor yet would there be the remotest fear of their being mistaken for "British spies"; for once the nascent linguists were allowed to cross the frontiers of the Empire, such danger would become quite ephemeral. Unblessed with a constitution which would force her, in cases of emergency, to concealed double-dealing and suspicion, and notions of refined *étiquette* having never troubled her dreams, in this respect at least, she is as frankly dishonourable as any British heart might desire her to be. She is a Tartar to her sons, but was ever hospitable and generous to foreigners. Let the Indian officers go to the Caucasus by all means. Russia, with all her large share of "unprincipled dealings" in reference to politics, holds yet to the principle of "honour among thieves." She will never think of visiting upon isolated and well-meaning individuals who trusted themselves within her territory for the purpose of study, the wrath she may nourish against their country, with which she is at political loggerheads.

Thus the picture of the future, in its dovelike character, is positively arcadian, and its soothing effect upon all other nations will be priceless.

Only fancy General Roberts, with Major Butler, the Honourable George Napier, and Captain Gill on his staff, studying Russian on the ruins of Gunib and Daghestan, while General Skobelev, flanked by Colonels. Grodekoff, Kuropatkine, and perhaps Prjevalsky,* like Jupiter with his satellites, after preparing themselves under capable munshis at the Russian Foreign Office,

* [Mihail Dimitriyevich Skobelev (1843-82) was a famous Russia General. After graduating as a staff officer at St. Petersburg, he was sent to Turkestan in 1868, remaining in Central Asia most of the period until 1877. He took a prominent part in the capture of Khiva in 1874. Next year he was given a command in the expedition against Khokand under General Kaufmann. He was soon promoted to be Major-General and appointed the first governor of Fergana. He distinguished himself on several occasions in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, mainly at Plevna and at the surrender of Osman Pasha with Army. In January, 1878, he crossed the Balkans and defeated the Turks at Senova. His personal magnetism produced a tremendous effect upon his soldiers. After the war, he returned to Turkestan and distinguished himself in the capture of Geok-Tepe. In the midst of military action, he was suddenly disavowed and recalled, as the result of intrigues, and given the command at Minsk. For a short time he engaged in political action, in the cause of Panslavism, but was recalled to St. Petersburg. On July 7, 1882, he suddenly died of heart disease. Considering his short life of only thirty-nine years, his record is rather remarkable.

With regard to Colonel Grodekoff, see p. 391 of Volume II for biographical information concerning him.

Alexey Nikolayevich Kuropatkin (1848-1921) was also a famous Russian General who entered the army in 1864. After some diplomatic work in Kashgaria, he took part in military operations in Turkestan and Samarkand. During the Russo-Turkish war he earned considerable reputation as chief of staff to Gen. Skobelev, and wrote a critical history of the operations. After the war he served again in Turkestan and became Major-General at the age of thirty-four. In 1903 he was placed in command of the Russian army gathering in Manchuria. His actions in the 1904-05 conflict with Japan met with failure, and he frankly admitted his mistakes, although much of it was due to friction between other generals. After the Mukden defeat he resigned the command to Gen. Linievich. In the First World War, Kuropatkin fought on the Western Front, and in 1916 became Governor-General of Turkestan. After the Revolution, he was teaching in a village school.

Nikolay Mihaylovich Prjevalsky (or Przhevalsky) (1839-88) was a famous military man, traveller, explorer and geographer. From 1864 to 1866 he taught geography at the military school at Warsaw, having graduated from the Academy of the General Staff. In 1867 he was sent to Irkutsk where he explored the highlands on the banks of the Usuri until 1869. In 1870, accompanied by only three men, he crossed the Gobi Desert, reached Peking, explored the upper part of the Yangtze-kiang and penetrated into Tibet. Returning home in 1873, he started on his second expedition in 1877.

mastering the difficulties of the Bagh-o-Bahar and Baital Pachisi* in the land of Wasudew Bulwant Phadke, or translating the exercise from Hindi into Russian in the “legitimate heir-loom” of the “Prince Ramchandra,” the hapless hero of the Russian Golos—in the North-Western Provinces! Will you kindly inform us whether Mr. Walter T. Lyall’s advice is to be immediately carried out, or must we wait till the Kali Yuga is over?

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Feb. 21st, 1881.

While trying to reach Lhasa through East Turkestan, he discovered Lake Lob-Nor. On his third expedition, 1879-80, he penetrated the Tsai-dam and the valley of the Tibetan river Kara-su, as far as Napchu, 170 miles from Lhasa, where he was turned back by order of the Talay-Lama. He made a fourth expedition in 1883-85. All through his explorations, he made valuable collections of plants and animals. Prjevalsky died at Karakol (renamed for him) on Lake Issyk-kul, while attempting a fifth expedition.

There are two English translations of the accounts of his trips: *Mongolia, the Tangu Country, and the Solitudes of Northern Tibet* (1876) was edited by Sir Henry Yule; and *From Kulja, across the Tian-Shan to Lob-nor*, London, 1879.—Compiler.]

* [This last term which occurs also in *Isis Unveiled*, II, 639, may be a dialectical corruption of *Vetâla-panchavimsâti*, or “Twenty-five Tales of the Vetâla,” a collection of fairy tales about a demon, known as *Vetâla*, who is supposed to occupy corpses. These stories are known to English readers under the title of *Vikram and the Vampire*, translated by Sir R. Burton in 1870.—Compiler.]

THE LEAVEN OF THEOSOPHY

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, pp. 117-118]

Those of us whose duty it is to watch the Theosophical movement and aid its progress, can afford to be amused the ignorant conceit displayed by certain journals in their criticisms upon our Society and its officers. Some seem to think that when they have flung their handful of dirt we must certainly be overwhelmed. One or two have even gone so far as with mock sympathy to pronounce us already hopelessly disrupted. It is a pity we cannot oblige them, but so it is, and they must make the best of the situation. Our Society as a body might certainly be wrecked by mismanagement or the death of its founders, but the IDEA which it represents and which has gained so wide a currency, will run on like a crested wave of thought until it dashes upon the hard beach where materialism is picking and sorting its pebbles. Of the thirteen persons who composed our first board of officers, in 1875, nine were spiritualists of greater or less experience. It goes without saying, then, that the aim of the Society was not to destroy but to better and purify spiritualism. The phenomena we knew to be real, and we believed them to be the most important of all current subjects for investigation. For, whether they should finally prove to be traceable to the agency of the departed, or but manifestations of occult natural forces acting in concert with latent psycho-physiological human powers, they opened up a great field of research, the outcome of which must be enlightenment upon the master problem of life, Man and his Relations. We had seen phenomenalism running riot and twenty millions of believers clutching at one drifting theory after another in the hope to gain the truth.

We had reason to know that the whole truth could only be found in one quarter, the Asiatic schools of philosophy, and we felt convinced that the truth could never be discovered until men of all races and creeds should join like brothers in the search. So, taking our stand upon that ground, we began to point the way eastward.

Our first step was to lay down the proposition that even admitting the phenomena to be real, they need not of necessity be ascribed to departed souls. We showed that there was ample historical evidence that such phenomena had, from the remotest times, been exhibited by men who were not mediums, who repudiated the passivity exacted of mediums, and who simply claimed to produce them by cultivating inherent powers in their living selves. Hence the burden of proving that these wonders were and could only be done by the dead with the agency of passive medial agents, lay with spiritualists.

To deny our proposition involved either the repudiation of the testimony of the most trustworthy authorities in many countries and in different epochs, or the wholesale ascription of mediumship to every wonder-worker mentioned in history. The latter horn of the dilemma had been taken. Reference to the works of the most noted spiritualistic writers, as well as to the newspaper organs of the movement, will show that the thaums, or “miracles” of every “magician,” saint, religious leader, and ascetic, from the Chaldaean Magusti, the ancient Hindu saint, the Egyptian Jannes and Jambres,* the Hebrew Moses and Jesus, and the Mussulman Prophet, down to the Benares Sannyasi of Mr. Jacolliot, and the common fakir of today, who has made Anglo-Indian mouths gape with wonder, have each and all been spoken of as true mediumistic marvels. This was the best that could be done with a difficult subject, but it could not prevent spiritualists from thinking. The more they have thought, read, and compared notes, during the past five years, with those who have travelled in Asia and studied psychological science as a science, the more has the first acrid feeling against our Society abated.

* [Cf. 2 Tim., iii, 8.—Compiler.]

We noticed this change in the first issue of this magazine. After only five years of agitation, without abuse from us or any aggressive propagandism on our part, the leaven of this great truth has begun to work. It can be seen on every side. We are now kindly asked to show Europe and America experimental proofs of the correctness of our assertions. Little by little, a body of persons, including some of the best minds in the movement, has come over to our side, and many now cordially endorse our position that there can be no spiritual intercourse, either with the souls of the living or the dead, unless it is preceded by self-spiritualization, the conquest of the meaner self, the education of the nobler powers within us. The serious dangers as well as the more evident gratifications of mediumship, are becoming gradually appreciated. Phenomenalism, thanks to the splendid works of Professor Zöllner, Mr. Crookes, Mr. Varley, and other able experimentalists is tending towards its proper limits of a problem of science. There is a thoughtful and more and more earnest study of spiritual philosophy. We see this not alone among the Spiritualists of Great Britain, Australasia, and the United States, but also among the intellectual and numerous classes of the Continental spiritists and the magnetists. Should nothing occur to break the present harmony and impede the progress of ideas, we may well expect within another five years to see the entire body of investigators of the phenomena of mesmerism and mediumism more or less imbued with a conviction that the greatest psychological truth, in its most unadulterated form, can be found in the Indian philosophies. And, let it be remembered, we ascribe this great result not to anything we few may personally have done or said, but to the gradual growth of a conviction that the experience of mankind and the lessons of the past can no longer be ignored.

It would be easy to fill many pages with extracts from the journalism of today that sustain the above views, but we forbear. Wherever these lines are read—and that will be by subscribers in almost every quarter of the globe—their truth will not be denied by impartial observers.

Merely to show the tendency of things, let us take the following excerpts from the *Spiritual Notes* and *La Revue Spirite*, organs respectively of the spiritualist and the spiritist parties. The first says:—

From certain delicate yet well-defined signs of the times we are led to believe that a great change is gradually passing over the spirit of that system which, for the last thirty years, has been called by the not altogether happy title of Modern Spiritualism. This change is observable, not perhaps, so much in the popular aspect of the subject, which will, doubtless, always remain, more or less, one of sign and wonder. It is probably necessary that such should be the case. It is very likely a *sine qua non* that there should always be a fringe of the purely marvellous to attract the criers of “Lo here!” “Lo there!” from whose numbers the higher and inner circle of initiates may be from time to time recruited. It is here we discern the great value, with all their possible abuses, of physical manifestations, materializations, and the like. These form the alphabet of the neophyte. But the change which strikes us at the present moment is what we may call the rapid growth of the initiate class as opposed to the neophytes: the class of those who have quite grown out of the need of these sensible wonders (a need through which, however, they have duly passed) and who are prepared to pass to the sublimest heights of the Spiritual philosophy. We cannot but regard this as an eminently happy sign, because it is the evidence of normal growth. We have had first the blade, then the ear, but now we have the full corn in the ear. Among the many evidences of this change we note two especially, each of which has been mentioned already in these columns in its single aspect. One is the publication of Dr. Wyld’s book on Christian Theosophy, the other the formation and development of the secret society, called the Guild of the Holy Spirit. We are not prepared to commit ourselves to all the doctrines of Dr. Wyld’s book.* The Guild would be very probably too ecclesiastical in its structure for many of our readers—it is founded, we may mention, by a clergyman of the Church of England—but in each case we notice what is called a “levelling up.”

* [The book that is most likely meant here is Dr. George Wyld’s *Theosophy and the Higher Life*, London, 1880, 138 pp.; a second ed. was published by Elliott & Co., London, 1894, under the title of *Theosophy, or Spiritual Dynamics and the Divine and Miraculous Man* (vi, 264 pp.). This 2nd ed. contains a Prefatory Note by Dr. Wyld, stating that he resigned from the T.S. after realizing that H.P.B. did not recognize any personal God.—Compiler.]

We perceive that the paramount idea is not to call spirits from the vasty deep—not to force the hand of the Spirit world, so to say, and to compel its denizens to come “down” (or “up”) to us, but so to regulate life as to open up the dormant sense on our side, and enable us to see those who are not in a land that is very far off, from which they have to come up or down to us. This, we happen to know, is pre-eminently the case with the Guild, which, beginning by being regulative of life and worship, includes a margin for any amount of the thaumaturgical element. We may not say more, but we may also point to every page of Dr. Wyld’s book as an indication of a similar method; and we notice the supervention of that method with much satisfaction. It will never be the popular method, but its presence, however secret, in our midst, will work like leaven, and affect the whole mass of Modern Spiritualism.

[For the views of La Revue Spirite, see pp. 72-74 in the present volume.]

CLOSING NOTE TO “SPIRITUAL MIRACLES”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, p. 129]

[Laurence Oliphant’s book *The Land of Gilead* describes “miracles” he witnessed at the home of Sheik Ruslan Abutu, in Damascus. “Miracles” were performed by the Sheik upon himself and Dervish subjects who appeared quite unconscious of pain when pierced with knives and fed with burning charcoal. No blood was drawn and only slight cicatrices remained as evidence of the incisions. The London Spiritualist in reviewing L. Oliphant’s book says: “There are secret circles in India in which, it is whispered, such miracles may be witnessed and very likely Madame Blavatsky could, if she chose, have something to say upon the subject.”]

• * * * Most undoubtedly she would have much to say; and to begin with, that she never saw “miracles”—the very name of which she rejects with scorn—either in such “circles” or in any other. But she has witnessed most wondrous “phenomena,” and far more wonderful than any she has seen in Europe and America.*

* [It is not known whether the three stars which stand at the opening of this Note have any special meaning. We have left them exactly as they occur in the original—Compiler.]

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, pp. 131-132]

Ever since we came to India friends in Europe and America have been asking us to tell them something about the Brahmo Samaj. For their sake the following particulars are given: This new Theistic Church, whose foundations were laid by the banks of the Hooghly and which has been for fifty years spreading its doctrine by press and missionary, has just celebrated its anniversary at Calcutta. Among the religious movements in which our century has been so fertile this is one of the most interesting. We only regret that its salient features could not have been described in these columns by one of its several gifted and eloquent leaders, as the theory of our Society is that no stranger can do full justice to another's faith. We have been promised such an exposition of Brahmoism more than once by Brahmo friends, but until now have received none. We must, therefore, while waiting, make the best of the meagre data supplied in the Official report of the late anniversary, as found in the Samaj's organ, the Sunday Mirror, of January 30. A splendid lecture, by the Rev. Protap Chunder Mozumdar, one of the chief Brahmo apostles, which we were so fortunate as to hear at Lahore, helps us in a degree to understand the real character of the movement. His subject was "The Relations of the Brahmo Samaj with Hinduism and Christianity," and his discourse was fluent and eloquent in a high degree. He is a quiet, self-restraining man, with a pleasant voice, and an almost perfect command of English. Not yet having visited Calcutta, we have not had the good fortune to meet the "minister," or chief apostle, of the "New Dispensation," as it is now styled.

The Brahma Samaj, as is well known, was founded by the late Raja Ram Mohun Roy, a Rarhee Brahmin, son of Ram Khant Roy of Burdwan, and one of the purest, most philanthropic, and enlightened men India ever produced. He was born about 1774, was given a thorough education in the vernacular, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit, and, later, mastered English thoroughly, acquired a knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and studied French. His intellectual power was confessedly very great, while his manners were most refined and charming, and his moral character without a stain. Add to this a dauntless moral courage, perfect modesty, warm humanitarian bias, patriotism, and a fervid religious feeling, and we have before us the picture of a man of the noblest type. Such a person was the ideal of a religious reformer. Had his constitution been more rugged, and his sensitiveness less acute, he might have lived to see far greater fruits of his self-sacrificing labours than he did. One searches the record of his life and work in vain for any evidence of personal conceit, or a disposition to make himself figure as a heaven-sent messenger. He thought he found in the elements of Christianity the highest moral code ever given to man; but from first to last he rejected as unphilosophical and absurd the Trinitarian doctrine of the Christians. The missionaries, instead of hailing him as an ally to win the Hindus from polytheism, and bring them three-fourths of the way towards their own standing ground, bitterly attacked his unitarian views, and obliged him to publish sundry pamphlets showing the weakness of their cause and the logical strength of his own. He died in England, September 27, 1833, and was buried on the 18th of October, leaving behind him a circle of sorrowing acquaintances that included some of the best people of that country. It is said by Miss Martineau that his death was hastened by the anguish he felt to see the awful living lie that practical Christianity was in its stronghold. Miss Mary Carpenter does not touch upon this point in her Memoir of his last days in England, but she prints among other sermons that were preached after his decease one by the Rev. J. Scott Porter, a Presbyterian clergyman of Belfast, Ireland, in which he says that "Offences against the laws of morality, which are too often passed over as trivial transgressions in European society, excited the deepest horror in him."

And this is quite enough to give the colour of truth to Miss Martineau's assertion, for we all know what the morals of Christendom are.

These particulars about the founder of the Theistic Church of India, are necessary if we would understand what Brahmoism was meant to be, in seeing what it now seems—we speak guardedly from a desire to avoid doing any injustice—from its reflection in its organ, the Mirror. We have said that Ram Mohun Roy never proclaimed himself as an apostle or redeemer; the whole tone of the evidence in Miss Carpenter's book shows him to have been humility personified. And now let us turn to the official report of the Brahma anniversary of January 14 and 27, ultimo.

The address of Babu Keshub Chunder Sen was delivered at the Town Hall on the 22nd to some three thousand people, and all accounts agree in saying that it was a masterly display of eloquence. The next morning an utsab, or prayer and conference meeting, was held in the Brahma Mandir, or house of worship. The vedi, or preaching place, was decorated with plantain trees and evergreens, and "the smell of incense was felt everywhere"—reminding us, one would say, of a Catholic church. The service began at 9 and ended at half-past twelve, when there was intermission of half an hour for refreshments, "puris and sweetmeats." At 1 there was a service in Bengali, at 2 one in Hindustani; then followed the reading of essays on the New Dispensation, hymns, and then for an hour Yoga, or silent contemplation. Then came an hour and a half of chanting (sankirtan) and arati, praise giving. At 7 P.M., the event of the day, and apparently one that almost overshadowed the lecture of Mr. Sen, came off. It was the consecration of the "Flag of the New Dispensation," a crimson silken banner mounted upon a silver pole, and for the occasion "fixed on the open space of marble pavement in front of the pulpit." At sunset the ceremony of unfurling this flag began; we will let the Mirror tell us what this was.

A new form of evening worship called Arati, was first gone through. . . . The Brahmos had composed a grand hymn for the occasion glorifying the many attributes of the Supreme Mother in profound language and sentiment. The worshippers held each a lighted candle in his hand, creating a brilliant and picturesque effect. Dozens of musical instruments, from the English bugle and gong to the traditional conchshell, were loudly and simultaneously performed upon. The varied and deafening peals issuing from these instruments, combined with the voices of scores of men, who stood up and went around in a circle with the burning tapers in their hands, heartily chanting the arati hymn, produced upon the immense crowd present an effect which must be felt to be described.

It will occur to everyone acquainted with Hindu national customs to compare the crimson banner of the Brahmos with the one of similar colour and material which is hoisted on the golden flagstaff of the temple of Patmanabhan at Trivandrum at the beginning of Ârati, or bathing festival. If the latter is an appendage of the idol worship which the Founder of the Brahma Church so abhorred, is not the latter? * And is a festival of lights less heathenish in a Brahma Mandir than in a Hindu temple? These things may be innocent enough in themselves, for surely many will see only aesthetic taste in the waving palms, the burning incense, the chanting worshippers marching around the silver-mounted crimson banner, with their lighted tapers. But are there not some well-wishers to the spread of pure theistic religion who will perceive in these the sure signs of the approach of a pompous ritualism, which in the progress of time will stifle what there is of spirit in the new church and leave only a gorgeous formalism in its place? This is exactly what has happened to Christianity and to Buddhism; as one may at once see by contrasting the pontifical pageantry of the Romish and Greek churches with the alleged primitive simplicity of the apostolic age, and the ornate ceremonial of modern exoteric Lamaism with the rigid asceticism and self-restraint of the primitive Buddhistic practice which many of the most learned Lamas now try to restore.

* It is more likely that the last word of the sentence should be "former."—Compiler.]

It is to be hoped that the leaders of the new departure will keep in mind the sensible precept of Ram Mohun Roy (see Monthly Repository [Calcutta] for 1823, Vol. XVIII, p. 430): “If a body of men attempt to upset a system of doctrines generally established in a country and to introduce another system, they are, in my humble opinion, in duty bound, to prove the truth, or at least, the superiority of their own.” In his anniversary lecture Mr. Sen protested against being taken as a prophet or mediator between God and Man, yet at the same time he announced himself and certain of his associates as the Apostles of a New Dispensation, chosen and commissioned to usher it on its conquering career. Calling these colleagues about him in the sight of the congregation, he, as one having the superior authority, imparted to them their divine mission. “You are chosen,” said he, “by the Lord of Heaven to preach his saving truth to the world. Behold the flag of the New Dispensation before you, under the shadow of which is the reconciliation of all things. . . . Go, preach, spread the spirit of universal union which this flag before you represents. . . . In token of your vow of allegiance touch the banner, and bow down to God to give you strength and the light of faith.” Whereupon, says the Mirror, “The apostles then each and all touched the banner, and bowed their heads to God.” Here, besides the contradictions which we have italicized a few lines back, all the dramatic elements of a super-structure of divine inspiration, apostolic commission, infallible teaching, and a dogmatic creed; to arise, perhaps, even before the present “Minister’s” death. In fact, Mr. Sen appears to forecast this already for, answering to the self-formulated question whether the Brahma Samaj is “simply a new system of religion, which human understanding has evolved,” he clearly something far higher for it. “I say it stands upon the same level with the Jewish dispensation, the Christian dispensation, and the Vaishnava dispensation through Chaitanya. It is a Divine Dispensation fully entitled to a place among the various dispensations and revelations of the world. But is it equally divine, equally authoritative?” he asks; and answers, “Christ’s Dispensation is said to be divine. I say that this Dispensation is equally divine. Assuredly the Lord of Heaven has sent this New Gospel unto the world.”

And, again, “Here you see God’s special Providence working out the redemption of the land through the instrumentality of a complete dispensation with its full complement of apostles, scripture, and inspiration.” It is too much to say this is but a poetic figure of speech. Mr. Sen is a master of English and should certainly know the value of these words. The public is therefore fully warranted in recognizing in him one more bidder for the honours and distinction of an inspired apostle and messenger of God upon earth, in short, an avatara. Should his church endorse this claim, future generations of Brahmors may be laying their heads and their gifts at the feet of descendants of the Raja of Kutch-Bihar, as true Mussulmans now do in the cases of lineal descendants of the Prophet’s family, and as do the Sikhs in that of Baba Kheim Singh Vedi, of Rawalpindi District, sixteenth living representative of the line of Guru Nanak.

THE BRAHMO LEADER AND YOGINISM

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, p. 132]

A correspondent asks what we have to say with respect to the following paragraph, which he professes to have copied from the Indian Mirror, the organ of the Brahma Samaj, of January 23, 1881:—

the Theosophists who are now in India profess to bring back those days of Yoga in which holiness was combined with the power of doing supernatural things. We were a little amused to hear the other day of their strong belief that the leader of our movement, whether he will confess it or not, does really possess the occult powers, being a man of Yoga himself. Fortunately for India, those days are past recall. The world will survive supernaturalism of all sorts, and the only miracles which will be believed in are those which result from the extraordinary moral forces and strong resolves of the human will directed by injunctions from the divine spirit above.

We have only to say that some one has apparently imposed upon the good nature of our Brahma friends. Such an idea as that of Mr. Sen's being a Yogi never entered the head of any theosophist whom we have heard express an opinion about that gifted Bengali orator. If he is responsible for the reflections indulged in by the writer of the paragraph upon the general subject of supernaturalism, à propos of miracles and the Theosophical Society, we deeply regret that one of such talents should so grossly misconceive us and our beliefs. The more so, since he claims direct inspiration from God, and presumably should be able to get at the truth. If there is one thing more than another that our Society's Founders do not believe in it is a miracle, whether as a disturbing effect in the laws of matter, or a special divine commission to any individual. There never was a time, in our opinion, when holiness or sinfulness "was combined with the power of doing supernatural things."

FOOTNOTES TO "COSMOGONY AND ANTHROPOLOGY"*

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, pp. 133-134.]

"What are we to understand by the name God? . . . Methinks that it would be far more rational to believe that this fictitious personage is a compound of what we would call mother thoughts; of harmonious ideas forming a center of actions and a center of propulsion, a focus of all the other thoughts of which the universe is composed. . . ."

We may be doubtful whether our Brother Cahagnet means by his "Mother Thoughts" the spiritual transcendental essences which Aristotle calls privations and Plato calls forms, species improperly understood and known as ideas; those eternal, immutable essences removed altogether from the sphere of sense, and cognizable more by intuition than reason.

* [The quoted passages are translations from the original French work by Alphonse Cahagnet, entitled *Cosmogonie et Anthropologie*.—Compiler.]

But whether or not he means that substance of which the world is but the shadow and which gives the latter the little of partial reality it possesses, his definition of the abstract Deity is undoubtedly that of the Vedantins, who define Parabrahm, absolute Intelligence and Force Itself, and hence devoid of either intelligence or force. In such a case his “Mother Thoughts” would under another name take the place of Îśvara, as defined by the modern school of Benares Vedantins, though we doubt that Mr. Cahagnet has the remotest idea of the existence, let alone the philosophy, of Vedantism.

“. . . the great sympathetic law of attractions and aggregations—law divided into a succession of states, forms and different actions, i.e., causing things to succeed, precede, and follow each other.”

This idea besides being the basic principle of the modern Law of Evolution which all the Hindu, Buddhist, and European Theosophists accept in its fundamental teaching, is that of the Heraclitan doctrine in regard to the phenomenal world, that of the “perpetual flow of all things.”

“. . . as a series of thoughts resulting in various modes of appreciating or viewing things are born from one first . . . thought, so the first aggregative potency must have acted in the same manner, and that it could create the material universe, or rather the material state, but in this wise, viz., by unconsciously imposing on it the task to be . . . by a succession of various ways of appreciating or viewing it.”

We do not feel quite sure whether the author adheres to the Aryan doctrine of the negation of the reality of matter, which was also that of Plato, but it does seem as if this conception of the Deity reminds one of the Platonic doctrines of the Cosmos being but “the shadow of The Shadow”; and of the deity of the Eleatics, whose Absolute was not a mere abstraction, a creature of pure fancy, but the totality of the objective universe as discerned by the soul, which itself, as compared with the body, is but a subtler species of matter.

[The author having referred again to what he terms “mother thoughts,” H. P. B. comments as follows:]

Would we not be warranted in thinking that the authors of the Vedas which mention such a legion of deities inferior to, and dependent on, Parabrahm, had also some such “Mother Thoughts” in their spiritual clairvoyance? Hence polytheism or the plurality of gods becomes comprehensible. The anthropomorphisation of these abstract principles is an afterthought; human conception generally dragging down to the level of its own terrestrial, gross perception, every idea, however philosophical and sublime.

“It has been revealed to us . . .”

The author is a spiritist as well as a magnetizer. The revelation must have come either from a clairvoyante, somnambule, or “spirit.” (See *Révélations d’Outre-Tombe*, Vol. I.)

“. . . the only existing God to be found, as we believe, a deity formed of all, without, therefore being of necessity a pantheistic god.”

We do not see how the inference can be well avoided, though, once we admit of a Deity, the God of the pantheists seems the only reasonable one. True pantheists do not say that everything is God—for they would be fetish-worshippers then; but that God is in everything and the whole in God.

“At the ninth [incarnation] Vishnu becomes more reasonable. He assumes the shape and name of Buddha, a god who had four arms and a divine intelligence.”

It is quite evident that Mr. Cahagnet knows nothing of the Hindu religions, less yet of Aryan philosophy. We have omitted translating a page or two as they are full of inaccuracies.

The venerable author having derived his information upon the religions of India from an old book called Religious ceremonies and customs of all the peoples on the globe, by a society of men of Science, and dated 1723,* it becomes clear how he came to mix up the avatars and endow “the Light of Asia”—Gautama Buddha—with four arms. The “men of science,” even in the days of Sir John Williams,† often confounded the son of the king of Kapilavastu with the Scandinavian Odin and many other myths.

* [Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde, etc. Edited by J.-Fr. Bernard and others. Amsterdam: J.-Fr. Bernard, 1723-43, 11 vols. fol. New ed., Paris: Prudhomme, 1807-09, 12 vols. fol. Consists of essays by a large number of scholars.—Compiler.]

† [This is most likely a misprint for Sir William Jones.—Compiler.]

THE SIGNS OF THE TIME

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, pp. 135-136]

How rapidly the salutary leaven of Freethought is working its way into every class of society throughout Europe and America, may be seen in the rapidly succeeding events of the day.

FREETHOUGHT

The great goddess of intellectual Freedom is destined to become the final saviour, the last avatara, to countless millions of bright intellects. Hitherto enslaved, chained by the shackles of enforced and degrading dogmas to the doorsill of the Temple of Superstition, such freed minds are joyously proclaiming the “good tidings,” causing others to welcome that noble, inspiring genius, and each day multiplying their conquests. Many a theological fortress until now believed impregnable, has been shaken to its very foundations by the repeated blasts of the magic-working trumpet of the Joshuas of the day; and its walls like those of old Jericho in the Old Testament fable, have crumbled to the dust. The domain, held for ages by the “Lord’s Elect,” is now invaded from all sides, and no Jehovah appears to wither the sacrilegious hand and say in voice of thunder “touch not mine anointed.”

This domain is now reclaimed and soon will be torn forever from the daily weakening grasp of theology. The multi-coloured monks and Jesuits are being driven out of France in crowds. They who have poisoned for ages the young plastic minds of children, tying them for life to the arid path of one narrow belief, a path hemmed in as by two granite walls by the double belief in a personal national deity and a personal national devil—are gone, and with them their pernicious influence. According to the returns published by the French Government, and which we copy from *The Pioneer*, the religious orders which were dissolved during the past year comprised 2,464 Jesuits 409 Franciscans, 406 Capuchins, 294 Dominicans, 240 Oblates, 239 Benedictines, 176 Carmelites, 170 Fathers of the Company of Mary, 168 Brothers of St. Jean de Dieu, 153 Eudists, 126 Redemptorists, 91 Fathers of St. Bertin, 80 Basilians, 75 Carthusians, 68 Fathers of the Assumption, 53 Missionary Fathers, 53 Fathers of the Missions Almshouses, 51 Priests of the Immaculate Conception, 45 Fathers of the *Enfant de Marie*, 41 Brothers of St. Peter-in-Vinculis, 32 Barnabites, 31 Passionists, 30 Fathers of St. Joseph's Refuge, 28 Fathers of St. Sauveur, 27 Canons of the Lateran, 25 Monks of St. Eden, 20 Fathers of the Company of Mary, 20 Marists, 20 Fathers of Our Lady of Sion, 20 Fathers of the Company of St. Irenae, 18 Bernardins, 14 Somasque Fathers, 12 Fathers of the Congregation of St. Thomas, 11 Trinitarians, 10 Cameliars, 9 Fathers of the Christian Doctrine, 8 Missionaries of St. François-de-Sales, 4 Pères Minimes, 4 Camuldians, and 3 Priests of "the Holy Countenance"; or 5,339 in all. In addition, the Decrees apply to 1,450 Trappists who have not yet been expelled. What Bradlaugh has for years been doing in England by elevating the standard of Freethought among the working classes; and the fearless, indomitable Colonel Robert Ingersoll has done for America, now a whole party does in the hitherto bigoted Papist France. The latest news is about their doings among the young, and it may be seen in the following extract from *The Pioneer*:

INFANTILE FREETHOUGHT

The group of Freethinkers of the Nineteenth Arrondissement convoked their adherents on the 23rd January to a festival, in the shape of a distribution of New Year's gifts to the children of the members of the association, and some 1,500 people responded to the appeal, assembling at the Salle Favier at Belleville.

Before the proceedings, commenced, the children present feasted their eyes on several tables covered with presents, consisting of playthings, books, and bonbons. The chair was taken by M. Rochefort, who was surrounded by several shining lights of the party, including Trinquet and the Laureate, Clovis Hugues. The President's opening speech was short and characteristic. It ran as follows:—"Citoyennes, Citoyens—Until now the words 'childhood and freethought' have appeared incompatible. The Catholic Church understands childhood to mean the transfer of an infant from the arms of the nurse into the hands of the priest. Their playthings are replaced by holy Virgins of wax, while instead of the wolf they are frightened with the devil. With such an education children, prepared for servility, by means of superstition, are ready on entering life to become clericals. It is because you have wished to free yourselves from all stupid traditions that you also wish to keep your children from entering any church. Priests of every sect all row in the same boat—their one doctrine is rascality." When the applause which greeted these words had subsided, M. Rochefort read a letter from Mdlle. Louise Michel, and a speech was delivered by Madame Rousade, a Socialist, and a clever speaker, whose tirades against religion were received with enthusiasm. The children, for whose benefit the fête was got up, and who had anxiously awaited the end of the speechifying, were then called to the platform, where a present was handed to each by M. Rochefort, the poorest in appearance receiving also tickets for clothes and boots.

In view of such an agitation and change in the drift of religious thought, we cannot but wonder at the tenacity, with which some Protestant Christians cling to the dead letter of the Bible, blind to the fact that, however sophistical and clever their arguments, it is impossible for anyone who does not wilfully shut his eyes to truth, not to see that the revised New Testament has thoroughly upset the most important theological strongholds. Even the just remark of the Brahma Sunday Mirror—"If a book which is revelation and is considered infallible at the same time, is capable of revision, including significant omissions and changes, how can the world have faith in any book revelation, and how can Englishmen contentedly stick to the English Bible as an infallible authority on all things?"—has called out two earnest and lengthy protests from well-educated English gentlemen.

There is one ominous fact, though. While the critical onslaught on the Old Testament has destroyed such pet theories as the “miracles” of Moses (opinion of Canon Cook), the prophecies of the coming of Christ in Psalms (Dean Johnson’s opinion) and others, it has reinforced, so to say, and legalized belief in the Devil. In the Lord’s Prayer the words “. . . and deliver us from evil,” are now made to read “. . . deliver us from the evil one” standing now in the Anglican as they stand in the Greek Church. The whole Christian world is now bound to believe in his Satanic Majesty more than ever! The Fiend has been legitimatised.

True, the Scriptures have been cut, added to, and revised since the days of Ezra, times innumerable. And so in a century or two they may be revised once more, until—if themselves are not wholly obliterated—the Devil at least may be made to retire to the cerebral solitudes of theological terrorists whence he ought never to have been conjured up to plague mankind.

CHRISTIAN “BLESSINGS”

It is amusing to find, how those who evidently must be young recruits in journalism, perhaps but of a few years’ standing, shrink horrified before the imprecations frothed at them by certain religious bigots! We almost expected to hear the classical ejaculation of: *Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum!** at the end of the article signed “P.R.” in the *Philosophic Inquirer*, of Feb. 20. After treating his readers to thirty-two Billingsgate words (occurring in fifty-five lines) that had been lavished upon him by the editor of the *Catholic Review*, who proceeds to curse him with bell, book, and candle, P.R. gives up “the controversy in despair.” There certainly is but little hope that any “heathen Chineese,” Hindu, or, in fact, heathen of any sort could ever compete in vile abuse on equal terms with such a literary Polyphemus as this pious opponent seems to be.

* [Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book III, 658: “A monster awful, shapeless, huge, bereft of light,” said of Polyphemus.—Compiler.]

Yet, Mr. P.R., and the editor of that clever and highly honest little Madras weekly—the Philosophic Inquirer—ought not to be so selfish as to deprive their readers at once of such highly entertaining polemics. They must certainly see as clearly as they that any mere filth-throwing opponent is not formidable. He makes it only too plain that being utterly unable to offer a single good argument in defence of his cause, in hurling thirty-two fisherwomen’s objurgations instead, he must feel the ground very shaky under his feet. The shouter and curser is always in the wrong, and his noise is in proportion to his hurt. No amount of textual criticism upon the Bible or exposures of that most cunning of all human schemes—Theology—can disgust so many people perhaps ready to listen to the professed “Word of God,” as the frequent publication of such a defence of religious dogmas as the one under notice. Let then our esteemed colleague of Madras sacrifice himself by all means, for the instruction and good of humanity. For six years have we been collecting in six huge volumes the printed vituperations against us personally and the Theosophical Society by religious bigots.* Were we but to compare notes, the epithets of “wretch,” “blockhead,” “fool,” “stupid, pedantic fool,” “incarnate devil,” “imp of iniquity,” and “offspring of the father of lies” that have stung P.R., would be found only weights, if into the other pan of the scale we were to throw the clerical and other ‘blessings’ bestowed upon us by the charitable Christians. Some years ago Mr. Gladstone took the trouble of collecting into a neat pamphlet under the title of the *Speeches of Pope Pius IX*,† the “flowers of speech” as he calls the choice compliments showered on heretics by the late Vicegerent of God, in his *Papal Discourses*. The vituperations employed by the editor of the *Catholic Review* against P.R., as quoted in the *Philosophic Inquirer*, seem like the love whispers of a fair maiden by comparison with what His Holiness managed to get off.

* [H.P.B. means here her famous Scrapbooks preserved in the Archives of The Theosophical Society, at Adyar.—Compiler.]

† [Published together with two other Tracts under the title: *Rome and the Newest Fashions in Religion*. Collected and Edited by the R. Hon. W.E. Gladstone, with Preface. London, 1875.—Compiler.]

We recommend Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet to the perusal of our colleague if he has not seen it. Let our Madrassee Brother take a veteran's word and experience for it that unmerited abuse by an enemy is the best of advertisements for a paper.

THE ALLEGED REAL MEANING OF EDUCATIONAL MISSIONS IN INDIA

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, pp. 136-137]

We confess to having read with great surprise an authoritative explanation that the real object in view in the establishment of the Christian Vernacular Education Society was—Revenge! In the Wisbeach Advertiser, an English journal of wide circulation—of November 20, 1880, is the report of a public meeting to collect funds for the above-named society. Col. S. D. Young, an old Indian officer, appeared as a delegate from the society in London, the Revs. Littlewood, Bellman, and Hollins attended, and the chair was occupied by the Rev. Canon Scott. Col. Young went on to describe the dark and dreadful heathenism of the Hindus, and said that the Mutiny of 1857 “although a dreadful affair and a time of mourning for England, was the beginning of good for India,” for it was the immediate cause of the organization of the Vernacular Education Society.

Up to 1858 the missionaries had to do all kinds of work, and they were thus burthened and hindered in their efforts to christianize the people. They had had up to that time to sit down and compile the school books, translate them into native languages, etc., which caused them to lose half their time. This state of things caused Dr. Venn and Henry Carr Tucker to originate the Christian Vernacular Education Society as a memorial of the mutiny, a thank offering to God for his goodness to them during that dark period and A CHRISTIAN RETALIATION upon the natives.

Now this is charmingly frank, and we ought to be grateful to the Vernacular Education Society's official delegate, Col. Young, for so liberally showing us the Society's little game. Doubtless, now that the poor blind Hindu heathens know why their dear friends are sending them so many teachers, they will appreciate the delicacy of motive which has begotten such zeal. Pity that Col. Young forgot to mention this before he left India !

THE NEW VIMÂNA

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, pp. 138-39]

A plan has just been submitted for the consideration of the Odessa Branch of the Imperial Technological Society for an aerial ship, which does not require a gas balloon for the purposes of flight. The inventors of the new apparatus, Messrs. Henrizzi and Von Offen, allege that they have discovered a force which can be made to counteract the force of gravitation. The aërostat is of the following dimensions: 40 feet long, 24 feet broad, and 16 feet high. Its general form is conical, it being of the same construction as the ship Boogshprit. It is set in motion by two screws of the machine, the principle of which is still a secret of the discoverers. The whole weight of the apparatus, the engine included, is about 400 lbs. The material for its construction is prepared by Henrizzi and Von Offen, and is also as yet a close secret, and the most important of all the secrets. The engine and the compartment for luggage are situated in the lower part of the ship. The engine is a two-forced one and moves and is claimed to propel the vessel at the rate of 40 feet a second. The greatest advantage of the new air-machine over all others which have been submitted until now, consists in its moving not only with but against the wind; and also that in case of any breakage in the machinery, it does not involve any danger to the passengers, as it never could drop suddenly to the earth, but would, in case of accident, gradually descend, or be made to support itself for a certain time in the air, and even continue moving for a short distance either forward or backward.

The apparatus, it is affirmed, can be raised at will and to any height one likes, and the amount of luggage it takes depends only upon the stowage capacity.

The Odessa Branch of the Technological Society found the idea of the new aerial vehicle very feasible, and, given the above designated force and weight, to promise certain success. The Society confirmed and endorsed the assertions of the discoverers that no injury to the machinery could compromise the safety of the passengers or the principles above enunciated. At the suggestion of the Society, the inventors submitted their project to the Minister of War, the new airship being intended solely for military operations. A considerable sum of money was awarded to the two inventors to enable them to begin the work of construction immediately.

This example of the incessant progress of modern scientific discovery will be all the more interesting to the reader since it comes as a timely supplement to Col. Olcott's lecture on India and emphasises the fact that the Aryans were, indeed, our progenitors in most of the useful arts.

The Russian war authorities in devoting a large sum for the construction of the new war aërostat, show what great importance they give to the invention. But by turning to the Indian lecture and noticing what the Brahmachari Bâwâ says about the Vimâna Vidyâ of the Aryans,* it will be observed that Messrs. Henrizzi and Von Offen have yet a deal to learn before they can supply airships in which contending armies can fight battles in the air, like so many war eagles contending for the dominion of the clouds. And the art of war must be far more perfected than now before an army can be annihilated by artificially induced poisonous mists.

* [In the article: "Some Things the Aryans Knew," in *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, June, 1880, pp. 236-37.—Compiler.]

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 6, March, 1881, pp. 118,139]

The Revue Spirite, edited by that honoured and thoughtful French spiritist, our friend, Mr. Leymarie, F.T.S., has devoted many pages to Theosophy during the past three years, and commended our Society's plans and principles to public notice. In a recent issue appears a review of our progress from the beginning to the present time. "We may say," it remarks, "that even now this Society is on the highroad towards a grand success. Its birth seems likely to be the beginning of a most important philosophical and religious movement in both hemispheres; while at the same time contributing to a moral regeneration among the Hindus, so sadly degenerated by centuries of different oppressions. . . . In our opinion the Theosophical Society is a great centre of research, and its magazine, The Theosophist, the channel through which we (Europeans) may to a certain extent share in the same."

For the magnetists none, of course, are so well authorized to speak as Baron Du Potet and Mr. Alphonse Cahagnet. The former wrote us (see Vol. I, 117): "Receive me, then, as one closely identified with your labours, and rest assured that the remainder of my life will be consecrated to the researches that your great Indian sages have opened out for us." The latter said: "The foundation of such a Society as yours has always been the dream of my life."

History teems with examples of the foundation of sects, churches, and parties by persons who, like ourselves, have launched new ideas. Let those who would be apostles and write infallible revelations do so, we have no new church but only an old truth to commend to the world.

Ours is no such ambition. On the contrary, we set our faces like flint against any such misuse of our Society. If we can only set a good example and stimulate to a better way of living, it is enough. Man's best guide, religious, moral, and philosophical, is his own inner, divine sense. Instead of clinging to the skirts of any leader in passive inertia he should lean upon that better self—his own prophet, apostle, priest, king, and saviour. No matter what his religion, he will find within his own nature the holiest of temples, the divinest of revelations.

In the Sunday Mirror of February 20, we find a paragraph in which Sir Richard Temple's opinion on the Brahma Samaj is quoted from his India in 1880 to the effect that "quite recently they (the Brahmans) have adopted the name of Theosophists." This, one of the many inaccurate statements made in his book by Sir Richard Temple upon India in general and Indian religions especially, seems to have spurred the Brahmans to a quick repudiation of any connection whatever with the Theosophists. The able organ of the New Dispensation says:—"The reference to the Theosophists is a mistake. The Brahmans have never identified themselves with the Theosophists."

Amen. Nor have the Theosophists identified themselves with them. But whether either the one or the other have acted the most wisely in this, is another question. The Theosophical Society includes members of nearly every known religion, sect, and philosophy, none of them clashing or interfering with the other, but each trying to live in peace with his neighbour. The universal tolerance preached by us is but the active protest against mental slavery. We have as is known, purely Buddhistic, purely Christian, and purely orthodox Hindu branches, and societies allied with us; and union is strength. But of this anon. For the present we would be glad to learn from our esteemed friends and Brothers—if unhappily not allies—the Brahmans, why, while hastening to repudiate Sir Richard's connection of them with us, they have allowed to pass unnoticed another still more serious "mistake" made by the ex-Governor of Bombay?

Speaking of them in his lecture (in furtherance of the Oxford mission to Calcutta) he said that the Brahmos “are almost, though not entirely, Christians”. . . “lingering upon the very threshold of Christianity” . . . “almost persuaded to be Christians.” Unless there has been a like repudiation of the uncalled-for charge which has escaped our notice, is it possible that the latter should have been passed over only because Christianity is popular among the British rulers and Theosophy—is not?

THE ROYAL SOCIETY AND SPIRITUALISTIC LITERATURE.—Our esteemed contemporary, *The Spiritualist* (London), notes the fact that the Royal Society has actually condescended to express its thanks for a presentation copy of Zöllner’s *Transcendental Physics*. Until now its practice was to take all such donations, insert their titles in the library catalogue, but never say “Thank you,” for fear of compromising its dignity! Mr. Harrison, the editor, who is fond of a good joke, recalls an anecdote about Sir John Lubbock, which is to the point. Once Sir John exhibited in the theatre of the Royal Institution, a picture of an African savage, armed to the teeth, cowering behind his shield, lest in defiance of popular superstition he should cast eyes upon his passing mother-in-law. Mr. Harrison dryly adds:—“Some Englishmen, it may be remarked in passing, are in a similar state of demoralisation on better grounds. Superstition dies hard, but it is pleasing to see, now that the ground has long been broken by great men, that others are beginning to peep out from behind their shields, and we hope that spiritualists will do nothing to frighten them off again, by suddenly presenting more proved facts of nature than timid creatures are able to bear.”

A RUSSIAN "SYMPOSIUM"

[The Pioneer, Allahabad, March 1, 1881]

[In H.P.B.'s Scrapbook, Vol. XI, p. 51, now in the Adyar Archives, the authorship of this article is indicated by the initials "H.P.B." written in pen-and-ink at the end of it.]

An important triad of Russian writers has lately been engaged on a discussion of British and Russian relations. One of these, Mr. Martens, Professor in the St. Petersburg University, whose article in the *Revue du Droit International*, entitled "The Russians and the Chinese," was quoted at some length in the *Pioneer* of January the 20th, has now brought out another and more interesting pamphlet which has attracted considerable attention. This time the learned Professor discusses the whole subject of "Russia and England in Central Asia," and tries to find in the situation a "solidarity of Anglo-Russian interests." "No well-educated Russian," he says, "would ever dream of the conquest of India." At the same time it does not appear to Mr. Martens absurd to contemplate an attempt of the kind as possibly arising from the development of bad feeling between the two countries. And whatever might be the issue, he fancies that English prestige would suffer; because, in the event of a Russian invasion, the English army would of necessity in the main consist of Indians. All the Indian princes and independent states would be called upon to unite for the defence of their country. Should the invaders be defeated, then the Asiatic allies of Great Britain would ascribe to themselves the whole glory of victory. The larger their numbers, the stronger, of course, their convictions that without their help the British army would have been defeated; hence the spread of a general belief in the weakness of the English Government and of its military power.

“Such a belief is pregnant with danger to the English, for it can but lead to a general rising in India.”

There is a comical mixture in all this of intelligent reasoning applied to a misconception of fundamental facts. When our Russian critic talks about the Indian princes and independent states being called upon to join in the defence of their country, one can realize the extent to which foreigners fail to understand the real condition of India and the relations of the independent states to the paramount power. But Mr. Martens' opponents, those of his own nationality, are equally unable to understand the true character of the facts. Mr. Danevsky, Professor and Principal of the University of Kharkoff, publishes his views in London in a small pamphlet in French. Quite agreeing with Mr. Martens' views as above described, this author is at variance with him as regards the supposed common interests of the two rival powers. In his capacity of Professor of International Rights, having, perhaps, found it monotonous to be always preaching about the harmony and solidarity of international interests, Mr. Danevsky sets himself the special task of proving that “there are no common interests between England and Russia, and that no such interests can ever exist.” “May it be the will of God,” he piously exclaims, “that no such war between the two nations should ever take place,” but none the less he thinks that, “according to all the portents and signs, the chances for peace are very slight,” so he threatens England with the certainty of a Russian campaign to India. Commenting in detail upon the irreconcilability of Russian interests with the Eastern Question, as it now stands, Mr. Danevsky actually rests a part of his case on the commercial interests of Great Britain in Turkey!

After him a third champion enters the arena. The London correspondent of the St. Petersburg *Novoye Vremya* treats the other two writers with contempt, falling heavily upon Mr. Danevsky's disquisitions regarding English commerce in Turkey. “Had the author merely glanced at the British commercial statistics,” he remarks, “he might have seen that for the present, the Turkish markets play a comparatively insignificant part in English export trade.”

What the English do not probably see is how much, on the contrary, their interests are interwoven in those parts with Russian success, hence with Russian interests. "With the liberation of the Balkan populations, and the increase of their prosperity, under a free national Government, the British exports and trade in general can but increase." Further, the correspondent is angry with the Kharkoff Professor, for certain portions of his pamphlet. "Mr. Danevsky confesses," he says, "that the good understanding and perfect entente cordiale in the Eastern Question between Russia and England is sure to last, and to be strongly supported by the British Government so long as the Gladstone Ministry shall last. But Mr. Danevsky also adds that as Mr. Gladstone cannot himself last forever, this cabinet, too, may one day fall, and then will the implacable British interests again raise their voices, and an English war upon Russia become almost a certainty, if not an accomplished fact. Hence, according to Mr. Danevsky," concludes the correspondent, "Mr. Gladstone, in order to keep on good terms with Russia, is made out by the author to sacrifice British interests"! The critic of course conceives that, in saying this, he has accomplished a *reductio ad absurdum*. Perhaps English readers will not see the argument in quite the same light.

We need hardly explain that, in giving an account of this controversy, we aim merely at showing on what inaccurate pictures of the whole situation the public opinion of Russia is nourished—not at reproducing views which have any substantial claims to attention.

MADAME BLAVATSKY

[The Amrita Bazaar Patrika, March 3, 1881] *

SIR.—It appears that the Editor (or Editors?) of that scurrilous English paper at Lahore, the (un) Civil and (more cowardly than) Military Gazette—inasmuch as it is ever ready to attack defenceless women—has again been at its little game. I do not read it, but friends at Lahore tell us that upon the strength of an article published in the New York World by a member of the Theosophical Society, and which quoted from a private joking letter of Col. Olcott's to a most intimate friend (the Recording Secretary of the Theosophical Society of New York) the words: "I have not one cent, neither has Blavatsky," the bullying paper pretending to accept the sentence literally has uttered a column of slanderous insinuations to warn the natives that we are no better than penniless adventurers. These friends implore us to answer the attack in the paper which published it. My answer is: the Gazette seems ever ready—whether the calumnies and idiotic misrepresentations against us come from its Editor (or Editors) or from outsiders—to open its columns to filthy abuse, as though they were so many Indian sewers to carry off the public literary garbage. Such an ambition is quite worthy of the paper. But I appeal to every gentleman and honest man in India, whether Native or British, to decide what name should be given to Editors who will attack in such a cowardly way a woman they do not know, and merely upon the testimony of malicious rumours set afloat by enemies?

* [Transcribed from H.P.B.'s Scrapbook, Vol. VI, p. 24a, by courtesy of The Theosophical Society, Adyar.—Compiler.]

There is not a gentleman who would not say, under these circumstances, that it would demean me to ask them to insert my reply. For six months running, we of the Theosophical Society and especially I have been attacked without the slightest provocation, by dozens of papers, good, bad, and indifferent. The small curs have barked at us, in imitation of the large dogs. Yet, neither Col. Olcott nor I, have become deaf nor struck dumb by this canine cacophony, and their malice never being equal to our contempt for them, we have never answered one single word to their vituperations. Were Col. Olcott and I an Englishman and an English woman, no Editor in India would have dared to say the tenth part of what was said about us. He being an American, and I a Russian, we have to pay the penalty of being born in our respective countries. If the Theosophical Society, on account of its professed views, is collectively slandered and hated by all good Christians, and especially padris (as bound by that alleged religion of mercy and charity) still our "heathenish" views have nothing to do at all with the rest of the people. With the exception of a few of wide circulation, whose Editors being gentlemen have never, even when opposed to our views, insulted us; the Anglo-Indian papers abuse me—because I am a born Russian, and Col. Olcott because, in their eyes, he is guilty of the double crime of being an American and—associated in his work with a daughter of my, to them, hateful country. As to the native papers, few of any standing have ever overstepped the bounds of propriety. Those which have, show that their editors have either totally misunderstood us, or are but sycophants to the opinions of the "Sahibs." I leave Col. Olcott to do as he likes in this particular case. But shall I honour one of such papers and demean myself by answering it directly? Shall I pay attention to the husky voice of every Scottish Editor, who chooses to black-guard me within the too extended boundaries of the law of libels? Never.

To the friends, who are anxious that I should show the truth, prove who I am and whether I am penniless, I have but to point out to my American passport and my Russian papers; send my enemies for information to the St. Petersburg “Book of Heraldry and Nobility”;* refer them to various bankers, and other respectable English and native gentlemen who can prove that my income, derived from perfectly legitimate and private sources, has been ample enough to cover all personal expenses and a large share of the Society’s. Moreover, that not a rupee of it has been given by any Native or Anglo-Indian. These witnesses, as well as the books of the Society, will prove that while the income of the latter, from “Initiation fees” and small donations for the Library, was during these two whole years in India but Rs. 1,560 (one thousand five hundred and sixty), Col. Olcott and I spent up to the 31st of December, 1880, the sum of Rs. 24,951 (twenty-four thousand nine hundred and fifty-one).

No one has a right to put his hand into my pocket and count my money; yet to give my friends a brilliant chance for refutation, a sure weapon against the vile insinuations of the C. and M. Gazette, I advise them to invite the Editors to go to the “Alliance Bank of Simla” and make enquiries at Allahabad. Just before Col. Olcott wrote that joke to his friend, showing “Blavatsky” penniless, out of Rs. 3,200 I had taken with me from Bombay, I placed Rs. 2,100 in the bank I have noticed; and a month later received nearly Rs. 2,000 more from home, the cheque being changed for me by a well-known English gentleman at Allahabad. I will not speak of other monies received—certainly not from natives, but legitimate sums through English hands—for the sum of Rs. 5,000 suffices to show the falseness of the lying charges brought against us by our enemies.

To conclude, I invite the Editor of the C. M. Gazette to leave his cowardly, half-veiled hints and come out boldly with a dishonourable imputation that the law of libel covers—if he dares. Until then, I have a perfect right to abstain from noticing him as not being a gentleman.

* [Most likely what was known in Russia as the Gerbovník, containing the coat of arms of the Nobility and their description. It was published in 1789-99 by the Department of Heraldry.—Compiler.]

And if he goes too far, I yet have confidence enough in the abstract principle of British justice, to believe that it will protect even a Russian domiciled under the shadow of its flag.

Yours fraternally,

Bombay, Feb., 1881. H. P. BLAVATSKY.

A BERLIN MARE'S NEST

[Bombay Gazette, Bombay, March 5, 1881]

To the Editor of the Bombay Gazette.

SIR—

All Europe and America were set laughing over the honest indignation of an Italian critic, who reviewing Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad*, burst out in vehement protests against the besotted ignorance of that famous humorist.

He actually inquired of his guide "Fergusson" at Genoa whether the illustrious Columbus was dead or not! A pretty author to pretend to write a book of travels forsooth! Remembering this, I would now like to verify a suspicion begotten in my mind by a paragraph in today's Gazette that this Italian critic must have changed domicile and be now telegraphing news to the Standard from Berlin. The telegram comes too late alas! The story of the case "unknown to the English people" was told to some of the Anglo-Indian rulers at a public dinner, at Simla, by "the imperious Russo-Hindoo lady" herself. Nor is the pseudonym of "Raddha-Bai" any more a mystery to the Indian Foreign Department than her belief, or rather knowledge, of such "mysterious subterranean passages" (the existence of which she still affirms), for she never made a secret of either.

As to the “Indian letters” if “intensely hostile to the British Government,” the hostility must be passed to the account of Thornton’s Gazetteer of India and sundry “Guide Books” which, as can most easily be proved, supply their author with all the needed political information, except perhaps, occasional clippings from the London and English Indian papers, required as historical ballast to her purely fictitious tales.* “Raddha-Bai” does not pretend to write either history or political news. So long as her geographical, ethnological, psychological facts are correct, she has as perfect a right to evolve heroes and heroines out of her fancy as any other author. They are no more than gilt upholstery nails to hold her descriptive tapestry together. But the Anglo-Indian public will be enabled to judge of the degree of “hostility” exhibited in these Indian letters, as they are being translated by the author into English, and will in due time be issued by an American publisher, simultaneously with a London edition.† The poor correspondent was wise to “give the story for what it is worth,” since the letter about the Cawnpore caves, with an invitation to the Russian public by the “Thakur” to view them and himself, was but a study after Baron Munchausen.

“Raddha-Bai” the author was at Cawnpore in the Summer of 1879, and with a Hindoo gentleman, among others, named Thackersey (since deceased to our regret). The party visiting Jajmow included besides the latter, two English friends, an Assistant Magistrate, a Collector of the N.W.P. and his brother, an Anglo-Indian Engineer: the Political Department detectives, or police (I could never make out which) following us in those days of blessed Conservative trust like hawks poised for a swoop which was never made.

* [“Indian Letters” or “Letters from India” was the sub-title of H.P.B.’s serial stories concerning her travels in India, which had been running for some time in the columns of the *Moskovskiya Vedomosty* (Moscow Gazette), though their actual title was “From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan.” This series was begun with the November 30 (old style), 1879, issue (No. 305) of this newspaper. This serial was later reprinted, and continued with new material, in the pages of the *Russkiy Vestnik* (Russian Messenger), beginning with the issue of January, 1883.—Compiler.]

† [No information is available concerning this English translation of H.P.B.’s Russian stories, apparently undertaken or at least contemplated by her at the time. The first translation of the “Caves and Jungles”—an incomplete one of Part I only—was made by Vera Vladimirovna Johnston and published in 1892.—Compiler.]

That it was not, was significant in itself, since, whatever “hostility” I may ever have had was in those days, when I felt that it was considered almost a crime for a Russian to visit India, however innocent the purpose.

Unhappy Editor of the Standard who has to pay for such important telegrams! Why, I would write for him an original chapter with fresh revelations for half the money! Let us hope that under the new Government, notwithstanding the “Russian-Afghan intrigues” (also stale news, by the way) a repetition of such proceedings—natural enough in Russia, but shameful under a constitutional rule—will not be so easily repeated. The most piquant trait of the situation is, that while being viewed by some pessimistic alarmists in India, as a “Russian Spy” the hapless “Raddha-Bai* was also suspected by her countrymen of Anglican leanings! She sent to the St. Petersburg papers a long article by the advice of some British friends, to correct some erroneous impressions, and inviting the Russians not to make fools of themselves by believing the stories of every little humbug from India, who chose to call himself an “exiled Prince.” The article was rejected as “evidently written under the pressure of the Anglo-Indian officials”! To conclude, though feeling no passionate love for any monarchical Government, and a positive disgust and hatred for the politics of every one of them, I never felt half the hostility for the most despotical as I feel for those sensational mischief-breeding “correspondents” who having no news of importance to send, try to implicate individuals innocent of any guilt toward the country which affords them hospitality, if not any actual protection, by cooking up messes of gossip and conjecture in which the ingredient of common sense furnishes none of the seasoning.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

* [As has been pointed out before, it is uncertain whether H.P.B.’s Russian pseudonym was to be the equivalent of the Sanskrit term rādhâ, “prosperity,” “success,” or of the term rāddha which means “accomplished,” “prepared,” and even “perfect in magical power.”—Compiler.]

THE YEAR 1881

[Bombay Gazette, Bombay, March 30, 1881]

To the Editor of the Bombay Gazette.

SIR,

I believe very few of the millions who began three months since to date their letters "1881" ever gave a thought to the strangeness of this new grouping of figures. Yet, another such combination will not happen in the Christian Chronology before the year 11811 just 9930 years hence. Besides the well-known prophecy of Mother Shipton—which may have a more occult meaning than is generally supposed—our year 1881 offers that strange fact hitherto unnoticed that from whichever of four sides you look at its figures—from right or left if written horizontally, or from top or bottom, if arranged vertically—you will always have before you the same mysterious and kabalistic number of 1881. And truly kabalistic it is, being the correct number of the three figures which have most perplexed mystics and Christians for no less than sixteen or seventeen centuries. Among the rest the great Newton, who worked over the problem a considerable number of years. The year 1881, in short, is the number of the Great Beast, of the Revelation, the number 666 of St. John's Apocalypse—that Kabalistic Book, par excellence.

See for yourself $1+8+8+1$ makes 18:18 divided thrice gives three time six, or, placed in a row, 666, "the number of a man: and his number is six hundred three score and six."

And now "Here is wisdom. . . . Let him who hath understanding" then find out the relation that "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother . . ."—of all sorts of ugly things—has with A.D. 1881.

Those who carry Revelation in their pockets know as little as the “heathen” since they could never tell us what the puzzle meant? And yet the Hebrew Kabalists understood the “Patmos Yogi.” They knew well what he meant by his 666. Rabbi Gorodek who, so far back as 1791, asserted the Apocalypse to be far older than Christianity, and endeavoured to prove John to be no other than Oannes—the Chaldean Dagon or Man-Fish—promised us the solution for this year.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, March 29.

COMMENT ON “YAKSHNI”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, p. 144]

[The writer, Thakur Ganesh Singh, tells the story of a fakir who had for some time frequented the neighborhood of Jahanabad, and owed certain sums of money to the shopkeepers for food supplied to him. He was finally taken into custody by order of the Tehsildar. In order to obtain his release, he commenced to perform such feats as the changing of water into wine or syrup, the materialisation of fresh fruits and flowers, etc. He further promised to cause the appearance of a tiger, whereupon he was threatened that if he continued such performances he would be beheaded. He produced no other phenomena after that. The writer says that he was told such phenomena could be done by obtaining control over Yakshni, and requests an explanation of what this power is, and “whether it is worth aspiring to.”]

It certainly is not worth the while of any sensible man to spend time in learning such puerilities as are above described. These are the baser branches of occultism. A Yogi who gets frightened at any threat is no Yogi, but one of those who learn to produce effects without knowing or having learnt what are the causes. Such men, if not tricksters, are simply passive mediums—not adepts !

A COLUMNAR METEOR

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, p. 147]

Not far from Warsaw (Poland) on January 14, occurred a most extraordinary natural phenomenon. As a matter of religious routine, it was forthwith attributed, even by the higher classes of bigots, to a divine portent—a “sign,” specially sent by Heaven to warn good Catholics (Russian schismatics, of course, excluded) of some extraordinary coming event. Of what nature the latter was to be, has, however, not yet transpired. So, opinions being too divided as to the solution of this riddle of Providence, we may limit ourselves to simply placing the facts on record. At about 2½ P.M. on the day in question, the Sun was hidden by a dark mass of clouds in the western heavens, and two perfectly defined and seemingly solid gigantic pillars, brilliantly iridescent, formed at the same instant at either side of the sombre mass. The distance of each from the Sun was about 35 degrees. The more the luminary descended [to] the west, the more they became polychromatic and opalescent, while a third pillar of a golden hue began projecting itself over the Sun, thus forming a perfect triangle. At 4 o’clock the phenomenon reached its full development and radiancy. It was impossible to fix it for more than a few seconds. The sky was clear, and the breeze gentle. The thermometer marked 14 degrees of frost by Réaumur’s thermometer. Many women flung themselves on their knees before the three fire-pillars and remained for the hour and a half that the phenomenon lasted, in prayer, loudly confessing their sins, beating their breasts, in the full conviction that they saw before them the actual glory of the Holy Trinity!

RAILWAY AND OTHER VANDALS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, p. 148]

We learn from an Italian journal that hardly two years ago “nothing but the intervention of the most distinguished influence prevented a railway company from destroying the venerable remains of the old city wall built by Servius Tullius.”

This is real Vandal work, and every archaeologist will feel deeply grateful to the “distinguished influence”—whatever it was—for the timely intervention. Ethnology, philology, archaeology, as also every other branch of science concerned with the past history of mankind, ought to protest against such ruthless destructiveness. But we feel less inclined to sympathise with the *Diritto* newspaper when it tells us that the Municipal Council of Rome “has just decreed the demolition of the Ghetto—a quarter of the town which is still inhabited for the most part by Jews.” True, the *Diritto* gives some good reasons why it should not be done; but it does not tell us how the municipality of any large city could without causing every municipal nose to rise in rebellion against it, have any longer left intact a pest-breeding stench hole noted throughout the world as being the most malodorous that any city can boast of. We confess that the projected demolition has some rights, though to the world’s regrets, not because as the same paper puts it, “it is probably the oldest ‘Jewry’ in the world”; or, that “it was recognised as a Jewish quarter before the Roman Empire arose on the ruins of the old Republic.” But, simply, for the reason that, “King Herod the Great built a palace there, and the Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, lived within it during their visit to the capital of the empire.”

The Diritto remarks that “modern, utilitarianism has little respect for historic souvenirs.” True, but how can the Diritto say that the Municipality regards St. Peter and St. Paul as historical personages? Many do not.

NEW YORK BUDDHISTS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, pp. 152-153]

About two years ago, the question of Buddhism was greatly discussed in the American, especially the New York, papers. Many an unbeliever in Christianity had turned to the noble philosophy of the Kapilavastu sage, and had declared himself a Buddhist, inasmuch as his own philosophical and scientific convictions responded far easier to the logical, though for many an unintelligent mind too abstruse, metaphysical conceptions of the Tripitaka. What, and who are they who are seeking the Nirvana? Is the Nirvana preferable to the modern Hell? What have the orthodox Christian people to say? These were the questions asked among many other answers appeared one from the pen of an ex-Christian gentleman. The article is not quite free from errors, but there is one idea running clearly through it, and that is that it is high time that the idea of Hell should be given up by the Churches. Unless they want to live to see the day when, without accepting, or even understanding what the religion of Gautama Buddha is, almost every intelligent man—especially since the publication of Mr. Edwin Arnold’s splendid Light of Asia—which has run through any number of editions in America—will declare himself a Buddhist simply in the hope that no belief in hell shall be exacted from him in spite of the recent revision of the Bible and the achievements of the nineteenth century.

That the Nirvana—even as the misconceived doctrine of total annihilation—is preferable to the Christian hell in the eyes of every sensible man, may be seen from the article above referred to which appeared in the New York Telegram. The writer said:—

The followers of Buddha are supposed to occupy a large portion of their time in thinking about the Nirvana—that state of nothingness to which they shall return after their long pilgrimage and multitudinous metamorphoses in the flesh are over. It would occupy too large a space to explain what are all the peculiar tenets of these singular religionists, and we only refer to them here in order to point a moral at which we shall arrive further on. To quote the language of an accomplished writer upon this subject of Buddhism, when an individual dies, the body is broken, the soul is extinguished, leaving merely its deeds with their consequences as a germ of a new individual. According to the germinating power (which is determined by the morality of the actions) the result is an animal, a man, a demon, or a god, and identity of souls is thus replaced by their continuity.

SAMSARA AND NIRVANA

The true Buddhist, therefore, thinks that he ought to act well, not merely on behalf of his own selfish weal, but for the benefit of the new “I” which is to follow him. The final goal of Buddhist salvation is the uprooting of sin, by exhausting existence, that is, impeding its continuance. This life is called the Samsara. By the Nirvana, into which we pass after we have gone through all the metamorphoses of being of which we are capable here, is meant “highest enfranchisement,” and by this vague term is meant what theists would call “absorption into God,” and what atheists would call “nothingness.” It signifies the enfranchisement from existence without any new birth, the cessation from all misery. It is described as the “beyond” of the Samsara, its contradiction; without time, space, or force. Life is considered the summum malum, and annihilation therefore as the summum bonum. Those who accept this faith believe that even in this world a man may rise for a few moments into the Nirvana, provided he cultivates divine meditation and unselfishness. Multitudes of human beings derive comfort from this singular belief. One sometimes loses sight of this fact when dwelling constantly in a Christian country.

THE HELL QUESTION

We have introduced this allusion to the Buddhists, because it seems as though in some respects their belief is happier and more rational than that of many of the extremists among orthodox theologians. The pleasing subject of hell as a region or condition of eternal punishment has now agitated the public for some months, and as much interest seems to be taken in it now as ever. If its existence or its non-existence could be demonstrated it would be the most important theme that could possibly solicit the attention of mankind. But this existence or nonexistence cannot be demonstrated, and consequently, though thousands of people are interested in the subject, comparatively few feel any exceedingly deep and vital concern. Especially since Colonel Ingersoll has been lecturing on the question have millions made it a jest, and the coming essay on the matter by the Count Joannes will probably stimulate jocularly still more. The small class who really feel a vital interest in the matter are the orthodox believers in the various churches.

HELL AND NIRVANA

Of course, the entire body of orthodox clergymen would listen with anger to any attempt to deprive them of the satisfaction of believing in a hot and permanent hell. What this satisfaction consists in we have in vain attempted to analyse and understand. It would seem as though a future which precluded the possibility of unnumbered beings burning in agony forever were preferable to one in which that anguish was a sine qua non. The religion of the Buddhists precludes any such belief as this and therefore recommends itself, so far as that goes, to the religious world in general. When a man cannot exist in happiness, forever, there is nothing unpleasing in the prospect of consciousness being destroyed or only existing in a mild and gentle manner, into which no pain can enter. We are not by any means advocating the religion of the Buddhists, but while so many sects are disputing the question of hell or no hell it is interesting to know that a religion that is embraced by millions of people dispenses with the idea altogether.

Notwithstanding the arguments that time will never come when the Church will be able to dispense with hell, it is idle and hypocritical to argue as we have heard so many persons do, upon this point. "I am a Christian," says one.—"Then you believe in Hell and the Devil?"—"Oh, no, indeed; for this doctrine is ridiculous and long since exploded."—"Then you are not a Christian, and your Christianity is but a false pretence"—is our answer.—"But, indeed, I am one, for I believe in Christ."—"In a Christ god or a Christ man?" "If you believe in him in this latter capacity, then you are no more a Christian than a Jew or a Mohammedan; for both believe in their own way that such a man lived from the year 1 to the year 33; the one holding him as an impostor, and the other condescending to see in Jesus a prophet though far lower than Mohammed. Yet for all that neither of these call themselves Christians—nay, they loathe the very name! And if, agreeing with your Church, you see in the crucified 'Man of Sorrow' your saviour, the very God himself, then are you compelled by this very fact to believe in Hell." . . . "But why?"—we will be asked. We answer by quoting the words of the Chevalier des Mousseaux, in his *Moeurs et pratiques des démons*, a book which has received the approbation of the late Pope and several cardinals. "THE DEVIL IS THE CHIEF PILLAR OF FAITH, he says. He is one of the grand personages whose life is closely allied to that of the Church; and without his speech which issued so triumphantly from the mouth of the Serpent, his medium, the fall of man could not have taken place. Thus, if it were not for him [the Devil], the Saviour, the Crucified, the Redeemer, would be but the most ridiculous of supernumeraries, and the Cross an insult to good sense! For—from whom, would this Redeemer have redeemed and saved you, if not from the Devil, the 'Bottomless pit'—Hell" (p. x).

“To demonstrate the existence of Satan, is to re-establish one of the fundamental dogmas of the Church, which serve as a basis for Christianity, and, without which, Satan would be but a name”—says Father Ventura di Raulica of Rome, the Examiner of Bishops, etc.* This, if you are a Roman Catholic. And if a Protestant Christian, then why should you ask God in the “Lord’s Prayer” to deliver you from “the evil one”—unless there be an evil one inhabiting his hereditary domain of Hell? Surely, you would not presume to mystify the eternal in asking Him to deliver you from something or someone in the existence of which or whom you do not believe!

* [These words of Cardinal di Raulica may be found on p.v. of the Preface to des Mousseaux’s *Les hauts phénomènes de la magie.*—Compiler.]

NATURE’S HUMAN MAGNETS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, pp. 154-156]

If anyone of us nowadays ventures to relate some weird experience or seemingly incomprehensible phenomenon, two classes of objectors try to stop his mouth with the same gag. The scientist cries—“I have unravelled all Nature’s skein, and the thing is impossible; this is no age for miracles!” The Hindu bigot says—“This is the Kali-Yuga, the spiritual nighttime of humanity; miracles are no longer possible.” Thus the one from conceit, the other from ignorance reaches the same conclusion, viz., that nothing that smacks of the supernatural is possible in these latter days. The Hindu, however, believes that miracles did once occur, while the scientist does not. As for the bigoted Christians, this is not a Kali-Yuga, but—if one might judge by what they say—a golden era of light, in which the splendour of the Gospel is illuminating humanity and pushing it onward towards greater intellectual triumphs. And as they base all their faith upon miracles, they pretend that miracles are being wrought now by God and the Virgin—principally the latter—just as in ancient times.

Our own views are well known—we do not believe a “miracle” ever did occur or ever will; we do believe that strange phenomena, falsely styled miraculous, always did occur, are occurring now, and will to the end of time; that these are natural; and that when this fact filters into the consciousness of materialistic sceptics, science will go at leaps and bounds towards that ultimate Truth she has so long been groping after. It is a wearisome and disheartening experience to tell anyone about the phenomena of the less familiar side of nature. The smile of incredulity is too often followed by the insulting challenge of one’s veracity or the attempted impugment of one’s character. An hundred impossible theories will be broached to escape accepting the only right one. Your brain must have been over-excited, your nerves are hallucinated, a “glamour,” has been cast over you. If the phenomenon has left behind it positive, tangible, undeniable proof, then comes the sceptic’s last resource—confederacy, involving an amount of expenditure, time, and trouble totally incommensurate with the result to be hoped for, and despite the absence of the least possible evil motive.

If we lay down the proposition that everything is the result of combined force and matter, science will approve; but when we move on and say that we have seen phenomena and account for them under this very law, this presumptuous science having never seen your phenomenon denies both your premise and conclusion, and falls to calling you harsh names. So it all comes back to the question of personal credibility as a witness, and the man of science until some happy accident forces the new fact upon his attention, is like the child who screams at the veiled figure he takes for a ghost, but which is only his nurse after all. If we but wait with patience we shall see some day a majority of the professors coming over to the side where Hare, De Morgan, Flammarion, Crookes, Wallace, Zöllner, Weber, Wagner, and Butleroff have ranged themselves, and then though “miracles” will be considered as much an absurdity as now, yet occult phenomena will be duly taken inside the domain of exact science and men will be wiser. These circumscribing barriers are being vigorously assaulted just now at St. Petersburg. A young girl medium is “shocking” all the wiseacres of the University.

For years mediumship seemed to be represented in the Russian metropolis but by American, English, and French mediums on flying visits, with great pecuniary pretensions and, except Dr. Slade, the New York medium, with powers already waning. Very naturally the representatives of science found a good pretext to decline. But now all excuses are futile. Not far from Petersburg, in a small hamlet inhabited by three families of German colonists, a few years ago a widow, named Margaret Beetch, took a little girl from the House of Foundlings into her service. The little Pelagueya was liked in the family from the first for her sweet disposition, her hard-working zeal, and her great truthfulness. She found herself exceedingly happy in her new home, and for several years no one ever had a cross word for her. Pelagueya finally became a good-looking lass of seventeen, but her temper never changed. She loved her masters fondly and was beloved in the house. Notwithstanding her good looks and sympathetic person, no village lad ever thought of offering himself as a husband. The young men said she "awed" them. They looked upon her as people look in those regions upon the image of a saint. So at least say the Russian papers and the Police Gazette from which we quote the report of the District Police Officer sent to investigate certain facts of diablerie. For this innocent young creature has just become the victim of "the weird doings of some incomprehensible, invisible agency," says the report.

November 3, 1880, accompanied by a farm servant, she descended into the cellar under the house to get some potatoes. Hardly had they opened the heavy door, when they found themselves pelted with the vegetable. Believing some neighbour's boy must have hidden himself on the wide shelf on which the potatoes were heaped, Pelagueya, placing the basket upon her head laughingly remarked, "Whoever you are, fill it with potatoes and so help me!" In an instant the basket was filled to the brim. Then the other girl tried the same, but the potatoes remained motionless. Climbing upon the shelf, to their amazement the girls found no one there. Having notified the widow Beetch of the strange occurrence, the latter went herself, and unlocking the cellar which had been securely locked by the two maids on leaving, found no one concealed in it.

This event was but the precursor of a series of others. During a period of three weeks they succeeded each other with such a rapidity that if we were to translate the entire official Report it might fill this whole issue of *The Theosophist*. We will cite but a few.

From the moment she left the cellar the invisible “power” which had filled her basket with potatoes, began to assert its presence incessantly, and in the most varied ways. Does Pelagueya Nikolaeff prepare to lay wood in the oven—the billets rise in the air and like living things jump upon the fireplace; hardly does she apply a match to them when they blaze already as if fanned by an invisible hand. When she approaches the well, the water begins rising, and soon overflowing the sides of the cistern runs in torrents to her feet; does she happen to pass near a bucket of water—the same thing happens. Hardly does the girl stretch out her hand to reach from the shelf some needed piece of crockery, than the whole of the earthenware, cups, tureens, and plates, as if snatched from their places by a whirlwind, begin to jump and tremble, and then fall with a crash at her feet. No sooner does an invalid neighbour place herself for a moment’s rest on the girl’s bed than the heavy bedstead is seen levitating towards the very ceiling, then turns upside down and tosses off the impertinent intruder; after which it quietly resumes its former position. One day Pelagueya having gone to the shed to do her usual evening work of feeding the cattle, and after performing her duty was preparing to leave it with two other servants, when the most extraordinary scene took place. All the cows and pigs seemed to become suddenly possessed. The former, frightening the whole village with the most infuriated bellowing, tried to climb up the mangers, while the latter knocked their heads against the walls, running round as if pursued by some wild animal. Pitchforks, shovels, benches and feeding trough, snatching away from their places, pursued the terrified girls, who escaped within an inch of their lives by violently shutting and locking the door of the stables.

But, as soon as this was done every noise ceased inside as if by magic.

All such phenomena took place not in darkness or during night, but in the daytime, and in the full view of the inhabitants of the little hamlet; moreover, they were always preceded by an extraordinary noise, as if of a howling wind, a cracking in the walls, and raps in the window frames and glass. A real panic got hold of the household and the inhabitants of the hamlet, which went on increasing at every new manifestation. A priest was called of course—as though priests knew anything of magnetism!—but with no good results: a couple of pots danced a jig on the shelf, an oven fork went stamping and jumping on the floor, and a heavy sewing machine followed suit. The news about the young witch and her struggle with the invisible imps ran round the whole district. Men and women from neighbouring villages flocked to see the marvels. The same phenomena, often intensified, took place in their presence. Once when a crowd of men upon entering, placed their caps upon the table, every one of these jumped from it to the floor, and a heavy leather glove, circling round struck its owner a pretty sound thump on his face and rejoined the fallen caps. Finally, notwithstanding the real affection the widow Beetch felt for the poor orphan, towards the beginning of December, Pelagueya and her boxes were placed upon a cart, and after many a tear and warm expression of regret, she was sent off to the Superintendent of the Foundling Hospital—the Institution in which she was brought up. This gentleman returning with the girl on the following day, was made a witness to the pranks of the same force, and calling in the Police, after a careful inquest had a *procès verbal* signed by the authorities, and departed.

This case having been narrated to a spiritist, a rich nobleman residing at St. Petersburg, the latter betook himself immediately after the young girl and carried her away with him to town.

The above officially noted facts are being reprinted in every Russian daily organ of note.

The prologue finished, we are put in a position to follow the subsequent development of the power in this wonderful medium, as we find them commented upon in all the serious and arch-official papers of the metropolis.

“A new star on the horizon of spiritism has suddenly appeared at St. Petersburg—one Mlle. Pelagueya”—thus speaketh an editorial in the *Novoye Vremya*, January 1, 1881. “The manifestations which have taken place in her presence are so extraordinary and powerful that more than one devout spiritualist seems to have been upset by them—literally and by the agency of a heavy table.” “But,” adds the paper, “the spiritual victims do not seem to have felt in the least annoyed by such striking proofs. On the contrary, hardly had they picked themselves up from the floor (one of them before being able to resume his perpendicular position had to crawl out from beneath a sofa whither he had been launched by a heavy table) that, forgetting their bruises, they proceeded to embrace each other in rapturous joy, and with eyes overflowing with tears, congratulate each other upon this new manifestation of the mysterious force.”

In the *St. Petersburg Gazette*, a merry reporter gives the following details:

Miss Pelagueya is a young girl of about nineteen, the daughter of poor but dishonest parents (who had thrust her in the Foundling Hospital, as given above), not very pretty, but with a sympathetic face, very uneducated but intelligent, small in stature but kind at heart, well-proportioned—but nervous. Miss Pelagueya has suddenly manifested most wonderful mediumistic faculties. She is a “first-class Spiritistic Star” as they call her. And, indeed, the young lady seems to have concentrated in her extremities a phenomenal abundance of magnetic aura; thanks to which, she communicates instantaneously to the objects surrounding her hitherto unheard and unseen phenomenal motions. About five days ago, at a séance at which were present the most noted spiritualists and mediums of the *St. Petersburg grand monde*,* occurred the following. Having placed themselves with Pelagueya around a table, they (the spiritists) had barely time to sit down, when each of them received what seemed an electric shock.

* We seriously doubt whether there ever will be more than there are now believers in Spiritualism among the middle and lower classes of Russia. These are too sincerely devout, and believe too fervently in the devil to have any faith in “spirits.”

Suddenly, the table violently upset chairs and all, scattering the enthusiastic company to quite a respectable distance. The medium found herself on the floor with the rest, and her chair began to perform a series of such wonderful aerial jumps that the terrified spiritists had to take to their heels and left the room in a hurry.

Most opportunely, while the above case is under consideration, there comes from America the account of a lad whose system appears to be also abnormally charged with vital magnetism. The report, which is from the *Catholic Mirror*, says that the boy is the son of a Mr. and Mrs. John C. Collins, of St. Paul, in the State of Minnesota. His age is ten years and it is only recently that the magnetic condition has developed itself—a curious circumstance to be noted. Intellectually he is bright, his health is perfect, and he enters with zest into all boyish sports. His left hand has become a wonderfully strong magnet. Metal articles of light weight attach themselves to his hand so that considerable force is required to remove them. Knives, pins, needles, buttons, etc., enough to cover his hand, will thus attach themselves so firmly that they cannot be shaken off. Still more, the attraction is so strong that a common coalscuttle can be lifted by it, and heavier implements have been lifted by stronger persons taking hold of his arm. With heavy articles, however, the boy complains of sharp pains darting along his arm. In a lesser degree his left arm and the whole left side of his body exerts the same power, but it is not at all manifest on his right side.

The only man who has thrown any great light upon the natural and abnormal magnetic conditions of the human body is the late Baron von Reichenbach of Vienna, a renowned chemist and the discoverer of a new force which he called Odyle. His experiments lasted more than five years, and neither expense, time nor trouble were grudged to make them conclusive. Physiologists had long observed, especially among hospital patients, that a large proportion of human beings can sensibly feel a peculiar influence, or aura, proceeding from the magnet when downward passes are made along their persons but without touching them. And it was also observed that in such diseases as St. Vitus' dance (chorea), various forms of paralysis, hysteria, etc., the patients showed this sensitiveness in a peculiar degree.

But though the great Berzelius and other authorities in science had urged that men of science should investigate it, yet this most important field of research had been left almost untrodden until Baron von Reichenbach undertook his great task. His discoveries were so important that they can only be fully appreciated by a careful reading of his book, *Researches on Magnetism, Electricity, Heat, Light, Crystallization, and Chemical Attraction, in their Relations to the Vital Force*:—unfortunately out of print, but of which copies may be occasionally procured in London, second hand.

For the immediate purpose in view, it need only be said that he proves that the body of man is filled with an aura, “dynamide,” “fluid,” vapour, influence, or whatever we may choose to call it; that it is alike in both sexes; that it is specially given off at the head, hands, and feet; that, like the aura from the magnet, it is polar; that the whole left side is positive, and imparts a sensation of warmth to a sensitive to whom we may apply our left hand, while the whole right side of the body is negative, and imparts a feeling of coolness. In some individuals this vital magnetic (or, as he calls it, Odylic) force is intensely strong. Thus, we may fearlessly consider and believe any phenomenal case such as the two above-quoted without fear of outstepping the limits of exact science, or of being open to the charge of superstition or credulity. It must at the same time be noted that Baron von Reichenbach did not find one patient whose aura either deflected a suspended magnetic needle, or attracted iron objects like lodestone. His researches, therefore, do not cover the whole ground; and of this he was himself fully aware. Persons magnetically surcharged, like the Russian girl and the American boy, are now and then encountered, and among the class of mediums there have been a few famous ones. Thus, the medium Slade’s finger, when passed either way over a compass, will attract the needle after it to any extent. The experiment was tried by Professors Zöllner and W. Weber (Professor of Physics, founder of the doctrine of Vibration of Forces) at Leipzig. Professor Weber “placed on the table a compass, enclosed in glass, the needle of which we could all observe very distinctly by the bright candlelight, while we had our hands joined with those of Slade” which were over a foot distant from the compass.

So great was the magnetic aura discharging from Slade's hands, however, that "after about five minutes the needle began to swing violently in arcs of from 40° to 60° till at length it several times turned completely round." At a subsequent trial, Professor Weber succeeded in having a common knitting needle, tested with the compass just before the experiment and found wholly unmagnetized, converted into a permanent magnet.

Slade laid this needle upon a slate, held the latter under the table . . . and in about four minutes, when the slate with the knitting needle was laid again upon the table, the needle was so strongly magnetized at one end (and only at one end) that iron shavings and sewing needles stuck to this end; the needle of the compass could be easily drawn round in a circle. The originated pole was a south pole, inasmuch as the north pole of the (compass) needle was attracted, the south pole repelled.*

Baron von Reichenbach's first branch of inquiry was that of the effect of the magnet upon animal nerve; after which he proceeded to observe the effect upon the latter of a similar aura or power found by him to exist in crystals. Not to enter into details—all of which, however, should be read by every one pretending to investigate Aryan science—his conclusion he sums up as follows—" . . . with the magnetic force, as we are acquainted with it in the lodestone and the magnetic needle, that force ['Odyle'—the new force he discovered] is associated, with which, in crystals, we have become acquainted." Hence: ". . . the force of the magnet is not, as has been hitherto taken for granted, one single force, but consists of two, since, to that long known, a new, hitherto unknown, and decidedly distinct one, must be added, the force, namely, which resides in crystals."† One of his patients was a Mlle. Nowotny, and her sensitiveness to the auras of the magnet and crystal was phenomenally acute.

* Transcendental Physics, p. 47.

† Reichenbach, op. cit., p. 25 [46 in 2nd ed.].

When a magnet was held near her hand it was irresistibly attracted to follow the magnet wherever the Baron moved it. The effect upon her hand “was the same as if someone had seized her hand, and by means of this drawn or bent her body towards her feet.” (She was lying in bed, sick, and the magnet was moved in that direction.) When approached close to her hand “the hand adhered so firmly to it, that when the magnet was raised, or moved sideways, backwards, or in any direction whatever, her hands stuck to it, as if attached in the way in which a piece of iron would have been.” This, we see, is the exact reverse of the phenomenon in the American boy Collins’ case, for, instead of his hand being attracted to anything, iron objects, light and heavy, seem attracted irresistibly to his hand, and only his left hand. Reichenbach naturally thought of testing Mlle. Nowotny’s magnetic condition. He says:—“To try this, I took filings of iron, and brought her finger over them. Not the smallest particle adhered to the finger, even when it had just been in contact with the magnet . . . A magnetic needle finely suspended, to the poles of which I caused her to approach her finger alternately, and in different positions, did not exhibit the slightest tendency to deviation or oscillation.”

Did space permit, this most interesting analysis of the accumulated facts respecting the occasional abnormal magnetic surcharge of human beings might be greatly prolonged without fatiguing the intelligent reader. But we may at once say that since von Reichenbach proves magnetism to be a compound instead of a simple force, and that every human being is charged with one of these forces, Odyle; and since the Slade experiments, and the phenomena of Russia and St. Paul, show that the human body does also at times discharge the true magnetic aura, such as is found in the lodestone; therefore the explanation is that in these latter abnormal cases the individual has simply evolved an excess of the one instead of the other of the forces which together form what is commonly known as magnetism. There is, therefore, nothing whatever of supernatural in the cases. Why this happens is, we conceive, quite capable of explanation, but as this would take us too far afield in the less commonly known region of occult science it had better be passed over for the present.

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DRINK

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, p. 156]

Recently, during the progress of some excavations at Marseilles (France), a vast Roman necropolis was found. The tomb of the Consul Caius Septimus proved to be the most interesting among the many opened monuments. Besides weapons and old precious coins, an amphora or vase, covered with half-defaced inscriptions and filled to about one-third of its capacity with a thick darkened fluid, was found. The learned archaeologists directing the work of the excavations, proceeded immediately to make out the inscriptions. It was then ascertained that the red fluid was real Falernian wine—that famous wine of Falerno which was so often celebrated by Horace. Decidedly the Consul Caius Septimus must have been a great epicurean. Fond, during life, of good cheer, an amphora, full of the Falernian, had been placed thoughtfully thus beside his body in the tomb. The wine, old as it was, must be excellent! Hence a Professor P—— carrying the amphora and contents to Paris, proceeded to summon friends, the daintiest gourmands of the metropolis, to a regular Gargantuan feast. Speeches were pronounced during the repast in honour of the Roman Consul, and the Falernian wine was drunk to his manes with great enthusiasm. Notwithstanding its rather queer taste, it was found delicious, especially when sipped between mouthfuls of the most rotten of Limburger cheeses—one of the chief délicatesses in gastronomy. The guests had hardly swallowed the last drop of Falernian, when a telegram was received from Marseilles running thus:—“Do not drink the wine.

Other inscriptions have been deciphered. The Falernian in the amphora contains the entrails of the embalmed Consul.”

Alas! too late. The miserable archaeologists and gourmets had already quaffed off the deceased Roman in solution. For one moment at least, they must have deeply regretted not to have pledged themselves in a Temperance Society.

**NOTES TO “RADIANT HEAT, MUSICAL VAPOURS,
AND FAIRY BELLS”**

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, pp. 157-158]

An intelligent and ingenious friend in Europe has sent to Col. Olcott a letter of which portions are by permission given below. The paper upon the “Action of an Intermittent Beam of Radiant Heat upon Gaseous Matter,” read by Professor Tyndall, F.R.S., at the Royal Society on the 13th of January, was duly published in Nature, for February 17, 1881, and should be read in this connection. It seems as though Mr. Crookes, in the department of Radiant Matter, and Professor Tyndall, in that of the action of Radiant Heat upon Vapours, were running, hand-in-hand, right towards the territory of arcane science. They have not far now to go before coming to where we stand and wait.

[The writer of the letter to which H. P. B. refers, calls attention to a paper read by Prof. Tyndall, on “the production of musical notes in the vapours of various acids, of water and other substances, by a beam of radiant heat.” Prof. Tyndall found that the passage of beams or pulses of heat through the particles of atmospheric vapour produces sound. The writer continues: “Is it, therefore, too violent a stretch of fancy to suppose that Mme. Blavatsky having learned the exact nature of these atmospheric constituents . . . their relation to the ether or akaśa and their responsiveness to impulses of the human vital magnetism . . . produces her air bells by a process analogous in principle, with that employed by Prof. Tyndall?. . .”]

It is not for us to say just how near Col. Olcott's correspondent is treading to the limits of exact truth; but he is on the right path and not very far away from his goal. If we were permitted, we might be more explicit.

A HINDU PROFESSOR'S VIEWS ON INDIAN YOGA

[The Theosophist, Vol. II., No. 7, April, 1881, pp. 158-159]

We lay aside other matter already in type to give place to the essential portions of an "Introduction to Indian Yoga" which is found in the January number of Professor M. M. Kunte's Saddarshana-Chintanika. In this period of almost total spiritual eclipse in India, it is well worth the while of every student of Aryan Science to cull corroborative testimony from every source. We are (spiritually speaking) passing once more through the Stone Age of thought. As our cave-dwelling ancestors were physically perfect, if not even gigantic, while at the same time intellectually undeveloped, so this our generation seems to evince but a very rudimentary spiritual grasp while apparently developed in intellect to the utmost extent possible. It is, indeed, a hard, materialistic age: a fragment of sparkling quartz is its appropriate symbol. And yet of what "age" and "generation" do we speak? Not of that of the masses, for they change but little from generation to generation: no, but of the educated class, the leaders of thought, the controllers or stimulators of the opinions of that great middle social group lying between the highly cultured and the brutishly ignorant. They are the sceptics of today who are as incapable of rising to the sublimity of Vedantic or Buddhistic philosophy as a tortoise to soar like the eagle. This is the class which has derided the founders of the Theosophical Society as imbeciles, or tried to brand them as falsificators and impostors as they have also done with their greatest men of science.

For six years now, we have been publicly asserting that Indian Yoga was and is a true science, endorsed and confirmed by thousands of experimental proofs; and that, though few in number, the true Indian Yogis may still be found when the right person seeks in the right way. That these affirmations should be challenged by Europeans was only to be expected, inasmuch as neither modern Europe nor America had so much as heard of the one thing or the other until the Theosophists began to write and speak. But that Hindus—Hindus, the descendants of the Aryas, the heirs of the ancient philosophers, the posterity of whole generations that had practically and personally learnt spiritual truth—should also deny and scoff, was a bitter draught to swallow. Nevertheless, we uttered our message, and not in a whisper, but boldly. Our voice came back to us almost echoless from the great Indian void. Hardly a brave soul stood up to say we were right, that Yoga was true, and that the real Yogis still existed. We were told that India was dead; that all spiritual light had long since flickered out of her torch; that modern Science had proved antiquity fools; and, since we could hardly be considered fools, we were virtually asked if we were not knaves to come here and spread such foolish lies! But when it was seen that we were not to be silenced by counter-proof, and that no such proof could be given, the first signs appeared of a change of the current of opinion. The old Hindu philosophies acquired fresh attractiveness, their mythological figures were infused with a vital spirit which, like the light within a lantern, shone out through their many-coloured fantasies. One of the best known Bengalis in India writes (March 3):—“You are now universally known and respected by our people, and you have performed a miracle! Why, the other day, in a company of friends, the question was raised how it was that the educated Babus generally should now be showing so strong an inclination towards Hinduism. I said it was owing to the Theosophists, and it was so admitted by all present.” Let us say that this is but the partiality of a friend—though, indeed, the writer is one of the leading publicists among the Hindus—it matters not.

We care nothing for the credit, we only care for the fact. If this Aryanistic drift continues it will end in a thorough revival of ennobling Hindu philosophy and science. And that implies the collapse of dogmatic, degraded forms of religions, in India and everywhere else.

Some time ago our friend Sabhapathy Swami, the “Madras Yogi,” publicly endorsed the truth of all that the Theosophists had said about Yoga and Yogis. Recently, the practical Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy by Dr. N. C. Paul, in which the scientific basis of Patañjali’s Sutras was shown, has been republished in these columns. Today we add the testimony of one of the most learned of living Hindus to the reality of the science and the existence of real Yogis among us. According to Prof. Kunte “the Vedic polity culminated, and the Buddhistic polity originated in the Yoga system of Patañjali—a system at once practical and philosophical.” He observes that “disgusted with objective nature and his environment, the Arya in the Middle Ages of Indian History—that is, about 1,500 years B.C.—began to look in on himself, to contemplate the inner man, and to practice self-abnegation.” This is a terse summary of the facts, and a just one. “All religions,” he continues,

declare that God is omnipresent. Some mysterious spiritual power pervades the universe. Well—this the Yoga-philosophy calls Chaitanya. All religions declare that God is Spirit, and is allied to that in man which can commune with Him; yes, that which the Holy Ghost influences—the Holy Ghost or God dwelling in the Spirit of man. Well—these the Yoga philosophy characterizes as the Supreme Spirit and the human spirit—the Paramâtmâ and Jîvâtmâ. The relationship between the Supreme Spirit and the human spirit varies according to the Vedic creed and Yoga-philosophy. And because of this variance, the standpoint and the outlook of each is distinct. The standpoint and the outlook are, however, the outcome of historical conditions and environment. Hence the Yoga system of philosophy, on the interpretation and explanation of which we are about to enter, has two sides—historical and philosophical, and we will carefully point out the bearings of both.

Unhappily Prof. Kunte has had no practical experience with modern Spiritualism and, therefore, totally fails to give his readers any proper idea of its wonderful phenomena.

It would also seem as if he were equally unfamiliar with what the Theosophists have written upon the subject, for he could scarcely have failed, otherwise, to note that gentlemen not merely of “some scientific reputation” but of the very greatest scientific rank, have experimentally proved the actual occurrence of mediumistic phenomena. We take and have always taken the same position as himself, that the phenomena are not attributable to “spirits of the dead,” and in so far as they pretend otherwise are a delusion. But it will need more than the few passing words he flings at spiritualists to “sap the foundations” of the broad fact upon which his “rhapsodists” have raised their superstructure. “Is Yoga modern spiritualism?”—he quite superfluously asks, since no one ever said it was—and answers “No, no.”

What is it then? Modern spiritualism imagines strange sights which it dignifies by the name of phenomena, and by calling in the aid of the spirits of the dead, attempts to explain them. The rhapsodies of girls, whose brains are diseased, have often amused us. But what has astonished us is that gentlemen of some scientific reputation have lent their aid to the propagation of strange stories. Reader, an Indian Yogi knows for certain that this sort of spiritualism is positive deceit, let American spiritualists write and preach what they like. The spirits of the dead do not visit the living, nor do they concern themselves in our affairs. When the foundations of American and European Spiritualism are thus sapped, the superstructure raised by mere rhapsodists is of course demolished. But Indian Yoga speaks of spiritual powers acquired by the Yogis. Yes, it does and does so reasonably. Indian Yoga is occult transcendentalism which has a history of its own.

A sad truth he utters in saying:—

At present Yoga is known by name only, except in the presence of some Yogis, who inherit the warmth, the depth, and grasp, and aspirations of the Upanishads.

In concluding the portion of his introduction that is contained in the present issue of his serial, he gives us the credentials upon which he claims attention as a competent analyst of the Patañjali Sutras. It must be noted that he affirms not only to have personally met and studied with a real living Yogi who, “when due preparation [of the public mind] is made, will reveal himself,” but also concedes that an identical faith in the reality of the Yoga siddhis—presumably based upon observed facts—survives among Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and Mussulmans.

The following passages will be read with interest in Europe and America:—

The reader has a right to enquire, as to what preparation we have made for interpreting and explaining the occult transcendentalism of the Indian Yoga system. Our answer to this query is simple and short. We sit first in the presence of one who knows Indian Yoga, has practised its principles, and whose spirit is imbued with its realities, and then we note down his utterances. We have traveled through India and Ceylon in quest of the knowledge of Yoga, have met with Yogis, have gleaned with care truths from them, have sat at the feet of eminent Buddhists in remote Ceylon, have admired their aspirations and have obtained some insight into their standpoint. We have actually served some eminent Sufis for some time, and obtained glimpses of their doctrines on the bank of the Jumna. We have prostrated ourselves before the Yogis and, by a series of entreaties and humiliations, have succeeded in securing the means of interpreting and explaining the Yoga-sutras of Patañjali. At present we cannot directly mention the name of the Yogi to whom we have referred. When due preparation is made, he will reveal himself.

But for what purpose is all this labour? Quo bono? The reply is—pro bono publico. Whether we sit down on the bank of the tank in Amritsar, listening to the Sikhs, as they talk gravely of Brahma; or mix with the Palavur Roman Catholic Christians near Cape Comorin as they speak of the miraculous powers of their saints; whether we see a Moslem saint in one of the hundreds of tombs of Delhi, or a mendicant devotee in Madura in the South, we find that the Indian population has supreme faith in the Yoga-philosophy. . . .

LOGIC VERSUS PERIPATETIC

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, pp. 159-160]

It is hardly the province of our journal to notice the fugitive vagaries of occasional correspondents in daily papers, unless by chance some article happens to contain some useful or very interesting and quite impersonal information. We have held to the good rule till now, and hope to continue. On this principle we would have hardly given any attention to a certain paragraph in the Bombay Gazette (March 16, 1881) signed "your Peripatetic," and headed "Current Philosophy," were it not for the strong illustration it affords us of that perverse spirit, called "respectable deference to public opinion," but which "for short" we call hypocrisy. The writer in question throws stones into our garden and, but for our having by this time grown somewhat indifferent to that sort of thing, we might well find in his personality alone abundant excuse for retorting upon him. But we have a far more serious object in view, and this once the speculative lucubrations of the "current" philosopher will do us better service than his party have perhaps, bargained for. For, for us, "Peripatetic" decidedly represents a party. He is the mouthpiece of that majority in our modern-day society which has worked itself out an elaborate policy full of sophistry and paradox, behind which every member clumsily hides his own personal views. The words of their Revelation, "I would thou wert cold or hot" apply to our modern society far better than to the church of the Laodiceans; and knowing their works and that they are "neither cold nor hot," but like a faithful thermometer follow the changing moral temperature of the day, we will now analyse some of the desultory rhapsodies of the writer on "Current Philosophy."

When we have done that, he is at liberty to go on chuckling over his pen which traced his rather stale denunciation of the “simplicity” of Mr.— and the Simla “Occultists”! The “simplicity” of the gentleman whom the “Peripatetic” names in the Gazette in full—an example of bad breeding we shall surely not follow—being an adjective applied by him to a man of the most acute and remarkable intellect, and one whose ability and talents are universally recognized throughout India and Europe, speaks ill, by the by, for his own powers of discrimination. When one presumes to sign himself a “Peripatetic,” he ought to honour his classical pseudonym by at least borrowing some logic for the occasion if he has none himself to spare. Having thus cursorily noticed the poor fling at the Simla “simpletons,” we will now lay before our readers a sample of the logic of that alleged pupil of Aristotle, which “Peripatetic” so paradoxically assumes to be.

Quoting Carlyle’s famous proposition (who may have had such “Peripatetics” in mind) that the population of Great Britain consists of “thirty millions mostly fools,” and having offered by way of self-incense on the altar of patriotism his own postulate that “the intellect of the average Briton is, however, certainly higher than the average intellect of general humanity,” the critic proceeds—if we may be forgiven the Americanism—to scalp believers in phenomena. The simplicity of the “Simla occultists,” however, he confesses, “is outdone by the innocence of some ‘titled people’ who, according to the evidence of a witness in the Fletcher trial, ‘will believe anything’—a statement which appears strictly accurate.”

Fletcher and Company, together with two-thirds of the trading professional mediums, we may leave to his tender mercies. Having denounced these for the last six years, we even heartily agree in some respects with the writer; as, for instance, when he deprecates those who “would believe anything.” No one of the overcredulous who recognize so readily in dark séances, in every shadow on the wall or in the medium’s pocket handkerchief, their “aunt, or uncle, or somebody” has any right to complain if they are regarded as “fools” though even in such cases, it is far more honourable to be found out to be an honest fool, than a cheating medium.

Nor do we blame the writer for laughing at those who so trustingly believe “. . . that when it pleased the medium to wind up the music box, one of this intellectual audience asserted that he felt that virtue had gone out of him, and that this magnetism was winding up the box”; uncharitable though it be, it is yet natural. And were “Peripatetic” to stop his philosophical disquisitions with the just remark . . . “And yet probably these ‘titled fools’ would be ready enough to talk of the dark superstitions of the benighted Hindoo, or indeed, if they happened to be fervent Protestants, of the superstitions of their Catholic neighbours, while doubtless believing that they themselves were making a scientific investigation,” this review of his “Current Philosophy” need never have seen print. We would not have even noticed the ridiculous blunder he falls into, with so many other critics, in confusing phenomena for which the agency of “disembodied spirits” is claimed, with natural phenomena for which every tittle of supernaturalism is rejected. We might have overlooked his ignorance, as he was, perhaps, never told that natural are the only phenomena Theosophists accept, and the only way they are trying to fathom the mystery; and that their object is precisely to put down every element of superstition or belief in the miraculous or the supernatural, instead of countenancing it as he believes. But what are we to think of a philosopher, an alleged Peripatetic, who after exercising his acute reasoning upon the “folly” of the superstitious beliefs of the spiritualists and the occultists, winds up his arguments with the most unexpected rhetorical somersault ever made. The proposition which he emits in the same breath seems so preposterously illogical and monstrous, that we can characterize it but in the felicitous words of Southey, viz., as “one of the most untenable that ever was advanced by a perverse, paradoxical intellect.” Listen to him and judge ye, logicians and true disciples of Aristotle: “No, no!” exclaims our philosopher.

“. . . Religious beliefs which are imbibed with our mother’s milk, and which most around us accept, cannot be regarded as superstitions. It is natural to the human mind to regard doctrines presented to it with the authority of bygone generations as probable and natural. Earnest belief of this nature may not always command our respect, but it must invariably attract our sympathy. The superstitious follies of ‘table-turners’ and ‘spiritists’ of all sorts can only command our hearty contempt. How much exposure will be necessary to teach persons of this sort that secrets of nature which have been hidden from investigators like Newton, Davy, Faraday, and Tyndall are not likely to be opened to them?” And we beg leave to tell him, that he, who does not believe in Spiritualism cannot believe in Christianity, for the very foundation of that faith is the materialization of their Saviour. A Christian if he has any right at all to attack spiritual phenomena, can do so but on the ground of the dogmas of his religion. He can say—“Such manifestations are of the devil”—he dare not say “they are impossible, and do not exist.” For, if spiritualism and occultism are a superstition and a falsehood, then is Christianity, the same Christianity with its Mosaic miracles and witches of Endor, its resurrections and materialization of angels, and hundreds of other spiritual and occult phenomena.

Does “Peripatetic” forget, that while there are many real inquirers among well-known men of science, like Messrs. Wallace, Crookes, Wagner, Butleroff, Zöllner, Hare, Fichte and Camille Flammarion, who have thoroughly investigated and hence thoroughly believe in the phenomena called “spiritual” till a better name is found, and in some cases are even spiritualists themselves; no Tyndall, no Huxley, no Faraday, no investigator yet since the world was created, has ever been able to prove, let alone one of the religious human dogmas but even the existence of a God or of the soul? We are not “Spiritualists,” and, therefore, speak impartially. If religious “earnest belief invariably attracts our sympathy even without commanding our respect,” why should not as earnest a belief in spiritual phenomena—that most consoling, most sacred of all beliefs, hope in the survival of those whom we most loved while on earth—“attract our sympathy” as well?

Is it because it is unscientific and that exact science fails to always prove it? But religion is far more unscientific yet. Is belief in the Holy Ghost, we ask, less blind than belief in the “ghosts” of our departed fathers and mothers? Is faith in an abstract and never-to-be-scientifically-proven principle any more “respectable” or worthy of sympathy than that other faith of believers as earnest as Christians are—that the spirits of those whom they loved best on earth, their mothers, children, friends, are ever near them, though their bodies may be gone? Surely we “imbibe with our mother’s milk” as much love for her as for a mythical “Mother of God.” And if one is not to be regarded as a superstition then how far less the other! We think that if Professor Tyndall or Mr. Huxley were forced to choose between belief in the materialization of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes or Knocke, and that of their own mothers in a séance-room, they would rather risk to pass for “fools” in the latter locality. For phenomena, however rarely, have yet more than once been proved real and so announced by men of undoubted authority in science. Phenomena are based upon scientific grounds; on facts pertaining to exact science—upon physiology, pathology, magnetism, all correlating into psychological manifestations. Physical as well as psychological phenomena court experiment and the investigations of science; whereas, supernatural religion dreads and avoids such. The former claims no miracles, no supernaturalism to hang its faith upon, while religion imperatively demands them, and invariably collapses whenever such belief is withdrawn. Personally, as we said before, we do not believe in the agency of “disembodied spirits” in the physical mediumistic phenomena, but it gives us no right for all that, to dogmatise and try to force others to reject their belief. All that we can say now is, that the last word has not yet been told of these phenomena; and that as theosophists, i.e., searchers after truth who claim no infallibility, we say that the Spiritualists after all may be as right in their way as we think we are right in ours. That no spiritualist has ever believed in “miracles” or supernatural interferences, their immense literature well proves.

Can “Peripatetic” say as much of Christian belief? Hear the Bishop of Bombay proclaim publicly his professions of faith: “We,” he says to his clergy, “who by professional honour are bound to maintain and to set forth the supremacy of the supernatural over the natural . . . have staked our very social existence on the reality and the claims of the supernatural. Our dress, our status, our work, the whole of our daily surroundings, are a standing protest to the world of the importance of spiritual things; that they surpass, in our eyes at least, the more aggressive pretensions of what is temporal. We are bound then for our own self-respect to justify what we daily proclaim.” And so is every believer bound to do in whatsoever he may believe, if he be but honest. But the whole status of modern faith is reflected in these jesuitical words of “Peripatetic.” Belief in the “supernatural” may not command his respect, but he feels obliged to sympathize with it; for it is that of those around him, and considered respectable; in short, it is the bread-and-cheese State religion, and perchance—that of his principals and superiors. And yet for as honest and earnest a belief as spiritualism, he has “but contempt.” Why? Because it is unpopular; because his society people who were forced into such a belief by the evidence of facts hide it from the others, and Nicodemus-like they run to its professors but under the cover of night. It is not fashionable. Religion and spiritualism are in society relatively like peg-drinking and cigarette-smoking. A lady who will not blush to empty in the view of all a tumbler of stiff brandy and soda, will stare, in shocked amazement, at another of her sex smoking an innocent cigarette! Therefore, is it too that the writer in the Gazette who ought to have called himself a “Sophist,” signs himself a “Peripatetic.” He is certainly not a Christian, for were he one, he would never have ventured upon the lapsus calami which makes him confess that Christianity “may not always command our respect”; but still he would pass for one. Such is the tendency of our nineteenth century that a man of the educated, civilized world, will rather utter the most illogical, absurd sophism than honestly confess his belief either one way or the other!

“It is natural,” he finds “to the human mind to regard doctrines presented to it with the authority of bygone generations as probable and natural.” If this be so, we invite all the Peripatetics, past, present and future, to point out to us a doctrine half as tenacious of life, or more universally believed in by countless “bygone generations,” in every corner of the world, than the faith in “ghosts” and “spirits.” Really and indeed, we prefer a thousand times an honest, abusive, uncompromising bigot to a mild-spoken, sneering hypocrite.

THE MOST ANCIENT OF CHRISTIAN ORDERS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, pp. 160-161]

Bent upon searching for the origin of all things, the etymology of names included, and giving every religious and philosophical system, without prejudice, stint, or partiality its due, we are happy to inform the world of a new discovery just made in that direction by a young Christian subscriber of ours. Evidently a biblical scholar of no meagre merit—an ex-pupil of St. Xavier’s College, Bombay, his gratitude to the “good Jesuit Fathers” led him, as it appears, to devote his time and labour to discover means, the most conducive to the greater glorification of his late professors. He collects “as many historical and unimpeachable facts” as he can possibly find; facts destined to form, as he says “at some distant future [when money is less scarce in India, and the rupee more appreciated in Europe?] the requisite materials for a new and more ample biographical and genealogical sketch of that most remarkable body of clever men than has been hitherto possessed by their admirers.” Meanwhile, having discovered one “of the utmost importance,” he kindly sends it to us for insertion in our “estimated journal.”

We hasten to comply with his innocent and just desire; the more so, as the subject runs parallel with the line of study we pursue most devotedly, i.e., the glorification and recognition of everything pertaining to, and respected by hoary antiquity, but now rejected, vilified, and persecuted by the ingrate humanity of our own materialistic age. He finds, then, on the authority of the Holy Bible, that the Societas Jesu, that most famous and influential of all the religious orders, was not founded, as now generally but wrongfully supposed, by Ignatius Loyola, but only “revived and restored under the same name” by that saint, and then “confirmed by Pope Paul III, in 1540.” This promising young etymologist, vindicating the antiquity of the order, hence its right to our respect and to universal authority, shows it looming up through the mists of what he calls the “first historical census,” made at the command of the Lord God himself, in consequence of “Israel’s whoredom and idolatry.” We beg our readers’ pardon, but we are quoting from the letter which quotes in its turn from the Holy Scriptures (Numbers, xxv). Our pious young friend must not take offence if, out of regard for the reader we sift the simple facts from his long communication.

It appears then, that the Lord God having said to Moses, “Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the Sun [?], that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel,” then Phinehas (the grandson of Aaron, the priest) taking a javelin, thrust it, agreeably to the Lord’s desire, through “the man of Israel” and the Midianitish woman “through her belly”; and the plague which had carried away 24,000 people was immediately “stayed from the children of Israel.” This direct interference of the hand of Providence had the happiest results, and we commend the javelin plan of sanitation to the Board of Health. By this meritorious act of thrusting the weapon through the woman’s body (whose guilt, we understand, was in being born a Midianite), having made “an atonement for the children of Israel,” Phinehas, besides “the covenant of peace” received on the spot “even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God.” And this led to further historical and politico-economical developments.

The Lord God commanding Moses “to vex the Midianites, and smite them,” as they were so disagreeable as to “vex” the chosen people, “with their wiles . . . in the matter of Cosbi,” the slain woman and—“daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister”—forthwith ordains a census.

Now there is nothing very extraordinary in a census except that it is more or less a nuisance to the enumerated. We have just safely passed through one at Bombay, ordered by a less divine, yet equally imperative authority. Nor would it be safe to prophesy that it will not furnish as startling developments as its Hebraic prototype. The discovery which our correspondent has lighted upon will doubtless afford to Dr. Farr, who, we believe, is the Registrar-General of Great Britain and Ireland, a fresh proof of the importance of statistical science, since it enables us at once to afford needed help to our archaeologists, and prove the vast antiquity of the Jesuit maxim that “the end justifies the means.” But what is for real importance in the Mosaic census is the undoubted service it has enabled our young scholar to render to the Roman Catholic world, and the old French marchionesses of the Faubourg St.-Germain, in Paris—those pious aristocrats, who have so recently been submitted to the inconvenience of a lock-up at the station for having *propria manu* knocked down and furnished with a black eye or two the policemen who were expropriating the reticent sons of Loyola from their fortified domiciles.

To furnish the Jesuit religious world with such a proof of ancient descent is to give them the strongest weapons against the infidels, and deserve all the blessings of the Holy See. And that our friend has done—this no sceptic will dare deny in the face of the following evidence:

When Moses and Eleazar, the son of Aaron, proceeded to number the children of Israel, all that were “able to go to war,” they took “the sum of the people,” including all the descendants of those “which went forth out of the land of Egypt.” After enumerating 502,930 men, we find them (Numbers, xxvi) counting up the sons of “Asher” (verse 44); “of the children of Asher after their families: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites: of Jesui, the family of the JESUITES”!!

These numbered 53,400 men, and are included in the “six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty” (verse 51) that “were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho” (verse 63).

The inference from the above is simply crushing—to the Protestants, the good Jesuit Fathers’ natural-born enemies. Not only do we see that the holy order of the Jesuits had the honour of originating, on the authority of the Revealed Book, near and coming from Jericho, while the fatherland of the reformed faith can boast but of a Baron Munchausen, but the text gives a fatal blow to the work of Protestant proselytism likewise. No lover of antiquity, or respecter of ancient and noble lineage will care to link his fate with a denomination which has only the quasi-modern Luther or Calvin for its founder, when he can espouse the cause of the sole surviving descendants of one of the “lost tribes,” which “went forth out of the land of Egypt.” Nor can they recover this irreparably lost ground unless—we hardly dare suggest it—they make friends and ally themselves with some of the theosophical archaeologists. For, then, indeed, in our well-known impartiality to, not to say utter indifference for, both Catholics and Protestants, we might give them the friendly hint to claim kinship for their revered Bishop Heber with the family of the “Heberites,” the descendants of “Heber, the son of Beriah” (verse 45), whose reckoning follows just after that of Jesui and the “Jesuites”; and in case the noble bishop of Transvaal should refuse to have his ancestors summed up in such motley company, our friends, the Protestant Padris, can always claim that the dissector of the Pentateuch has pulled to pieces this chapter in the Numbers along with the rest, which—we verily believe he has.

NOTE TO “THE BISHOP’S MANIFESTO”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 7, April, 1881, p. 163]

[In a letter to the Editor the writer who signs himself P.A.P., draws attention to an alleged danger which hangs over The Theosophist. He says: “While His Excellency, our liberal Viceroy . . . was receiving lately the Mussulman deputation at Calcutta, and reiterated to them the assurances of ‘strict religious neutrality’ guaranteed to the people of India, by the Queen’s Proclamation of 1858 . . . , the Christian priesthood through one of its Bishops openly preaches the necessity of religious aggression against ‘the false religions’ of India.”

The Bishop of Bombay to whom the writer refers, is quoted as having said: “whatever adumbrations of positive truth may have been vouchsafed to other religions, they are so far diabolic and pernicious as they keep men from believing in Christianity. . . .”

The writer, himself a Hindu, says: “We as a class neither think nor persecute our brothers of another faith, nor do our priesthood urge us to aggression. ‘Live and let live’ is our motto. . . . I finish this letter by suggesting to the Christians the expediency of keeping what they have, before they direct their efforts and thoughts to those which they may never get. A religion which has not enough vitality in it to keep true to itself its best-educated sons . . . can hardly in decency ask us to prefer it to our veteran religions.”]

The above temperate and logical argument from one of the least bigoted Hindus of our acquaintance should be thoughtfully considered by all Asiatics. In fact, it reflects the common sense of both Eastern and Western observers. The promised “strict neutrality” seems to amount to this—“You Heathen fellows shall not ask us to favour either of your religions, nor shall you say a word when we take the money, all you have paid into the Treasury to support our priests—that few of us either care to hear—and build our Churches—that as few of us care to worship in.

As for your devilish and pernicious faiths, if you don't see what they really are, the Bishop of Bombay does, and we pay him with your money to abuse you and your religions. What are you going to do about it?"

THE YEAR 1881

[Bombay Gazette, Bombay, April 7, 1881]

To the Editor of the Bombay Gazette.

SIR,

The Methodist organs are very fond of me. So foolishly fond, I am afraid, that rarely a month passes away but my Scytho-Sarmatian heathen name appears on their columns like a fly in a communion cup. This time again my letter in your Gazette upon the year 1881, has called forth in the Bombay Guardian of April 2, a Bibloarithmetical and critical review. I am called in it, "another candidate for the honour of interpreting the number of the name of the Beast spoken of in Revelation, xiii." Unfortunately, for the Guardian, it shot at a pigeon, and killed but a stray crow, I feel really ashamed at such an easy victory. I blush, yet must beg you to permit me to proclaim my triumph over the veteran Methodist organ. Misunderstanding entirely my meaning, and saying that "there are many other things said about the Beast in the Revelation," it demands that "Madame Blavatsky should see that these all have their fulfillment in the number 1881." Having never bargained for the office of interpreter of dreams, I must decline the offer. What I said was:—"our year 1881 offers that strange fact that from whichever of four sides you look at its figures—from right or left if written horizontally, or from top or bottom if arranged vertically, you will always have before you the same mysterious number of 1881.

”To this the Guardian rejoins: “Well, take 2772: has it not identical proportion here ascribed to 1881?”

I am afraid not. The year 2772 will legibly present the same number but from three instead of four sides. And while our year 1881 will remain the same (fancy type excluded) even were one to look at it from the back by holding the paper up to the light, the figures 2772, when the paper is turned upside down will appear to the eyes thus 2772!

The Guardian has, no doubt, come very near catching more than one heathen during its long existence. This time though it “caught a Tartar.”

It has not squared the circle, and I repeat that such another combination of figures will not happen in the Christian Chronology before the year 11811.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

BOMBAY, April 3.

THE ASSASSINATION OF THE CZAR

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT)

[The Pioneer, Allâhâbâd, April 9, 1881]

[This article is pasted in H.P.B.’s Scrapbook, Vol. XI, p. 67, now in the Adyar Archives. Though unsigned, it is most likely from her own pen.]

The great voice of the Giant Bell of the Kremlin at Moscow, called “Ivan Velikiy,” whose heavy tongue has uttered no sound for the last twenty-six years, was heard once more on the morning of March 2nd (14th).

It appears from the Moscow Gazette and other papers that the masses of the people had heard of the attempted assassination, but were not yet aware of the Emperor's death. They were accordingly thrown into great panic upon hearing the first of the bell's three long and solemn peals; and thick crowds at once began to gather round the eminence, in the heart of the ancient metropolis where the Kremlin stands. Before the third and last stroke—immediately echoed by the four hundred gold-domed churches of the “holy, white-walled mother city,” as Moscow is called by the patriots—had died out in the air, there had collected a compact mass of bareheaded, haggard, “black people,” as the peasants and poorer classes are called, which surged to and fro, completely blocking the adjacent streets and squares. The voice of Ivan Velikiy (the great) had resounded three times, and it meant the death of the Emperor. The Czar-kolokol (Czarbell) speaks only to announce imperial deaths and coronations.

It is in the midst of such large and spontaneous popular gatherings that the national pulse of Russia can be best felt. Here, there is no premeditation, no organized loyalty, no forcible assembling by the police. A crowd of fifty thousand men can never act a part. The descriptions given below are not taken from official papers, but are extracts from letters written by private individuals and very moderate patriots as regards the Imperial family, as almost all the ruined Russian nobility now are. One of these writers says: “Never did I witness such a sincere, unanimous grief. Never did I think that a ragged crowd, 50,000 men strong, composed mostly of our working factory heads, peasants, and beggars, vicious and half-starved as the Moscow populace now are, could stand for two long hours, suffocating each other around the many Kremlin churches and weep, as I have seen them weep today. . . . It seemed as if their hearts were breaking. . . . It was a terrible strain upon one's nerves. ‘We are orphans, orphans! . . . Our father has left us!’ were the exclamations most heard. ‘To whom hast thou abandoned us!’ was the cry of a thousand voices in simple forgetfulness of their traditional duty to shout *le Roi est mort—vive le Roi!* . . .



COUNT DE SAINT-GERMAIN

From a copper-engraving by N. Thomas, Paris, 1783, made from an oil painting attributed to Count Pietro dei Rotari (1707-1762), in the collection of the Marquise d'Urfé. The engraving is now in the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.



WILLIAM EGLINTON
1857-1933

Reproduced from J.S. Farmer, Twixt Two Worlds.

There was hardly a street beggar in Moscow today while the solemn Liturgy for the Dead was chanting but dragged out a long-hidden copper to buy a wax taper with, and placed it lighted with tearful prayers before the image of St. Alexander Nevsky, the patron saint of the dead Emperor—‘for the eternal rest of Father Czar’s soul.’ . . .”

Whatever, then, the secret feelings of the better classes—and the sympathy of even those, we are sure, was in most cases sincere—the grief of the millions of serfs liberated by the late unhappy reformer was profoundly sincere. It is already evident that Alexander II is destined to figure in the calendar of Russian Saints. The elements are not wanting. He is certainly followed to the tomb by a loving popular adoration, which will speedily make his weaknesses of character to be forgotten. The term “martyr” is already applied to him. He has fallen a victim to his kindness of heart. Instead of seeking safety in the shelter of his closed carriage as supplicated, his chief thought was for the mangled guards and other victims that strewed the pavement. An officer of the guards, who was an eyewitness, reports the following conversation with Count Gendrikoff, who was in attendance on the Emperor. After the explosion of the first bomb, the Count rushed to the Czar, and finding upon inquiry that he was uninjured, he exclaimed, “Sire, Sire! don’t leave the carriage!” The Emperor replied, “Don’t disturb yourself about me. I am safe. I must get out to see the wounded: it is my duty!”

A sinister fate seems to have pursued the Romanoffs, of whom not one, as alleged, has met a natural death, since Peter the Great. Peter II died in youth, poisoned. Anna, his successor, died under very suspicious circumstances. Ivan VII, a child of only a few months, was dethroned by Elizabeth and—disappeared. Elizabeth Petrovna, Peter the Great’s daughter, died very suddenly, and was succeeded by Peter III, her sister’s son, who, after a reign of only a few months, lost his life by a court revolution headed by his own daughter Catherine II. That Empress, as public rumour—always restrained in Russia—gives it, though not altogether a Romanoff by blood, died of slow poison. Her son, the Emperor Paul, was strangled in his bed.

Alexander I died poisoned, in 1825, at Taganrog.* Nicholas I forced his confidential physician, Dr. Mandt, to give him the poison he needed, and committed suicide, sacrificing his life to Russia, that his son and heir might end the disastrous Crimean war, which his sense of dignity and pride prevented him from doing himself. And now the tragic event of March 1st (13th) closes the dreary list of Imperial catastrophes. There is a superstition in Russia that none of the family can survive his sixty-fifth year. The late Czar, it is known, lived under perpetual apprehension from this idea—one now seen to be too well-founded.

Among the sympathetic telegrams that came pouring in, from all parts of the world, was one, couched in very eloquent terms, from Mr. Blaine, the present American Secretary of State.

* [This is most unlikely. It is not at all certain that Alexander I did actually die at Taganrog on November 30, 1825, as has been alleged. Did he die or did he disappear, with the connivance of his wife and a few close friends, after arranging that some other body should be placed in his alleged coffin and buried as his? Was he the hermit Feodor Kusmitch, who died in Siberia in 1864, as many persons, including several members of the Imperial Family, believed? When the Soviet Government opened the sarcophagus in the Cathedral of the Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg, where the Emperors lay buried, it was found that the coffin was empty. Rumor has it that Alexander III had had the previous coffin removed (with whatever body was in it), and another coffin substituted.

As to Feodor Kusmitch, after some years of wandering in various localities, like the Province of Perm, for instance, he later settled in the vicinity of Tomsk, and was visited on many occasions by very influential people with whom he is reported to have talked in some foreign language.

There exists considerable evidence to the effect that Alexander I was very tired of his responsibilities and greatly discouraged; he also experienced deep-seated remorse for having indirectly contributed to the assassination of his own father, Emperor Paul I, an event which he could have forestalled. It would appear that he had decided to withdraw from the outer world and devote the rest of his life to religious contemplation and self-study. See in this connection the following works: *Le Mystère d'Alexandre I*, by Prince Vladimir Baryatinsky (Paris, 1925; 2nd ed., 1929; there exist also two Russian editions: St. Petersburg, 1912 and 1913); and *Emperor and Mystic*, by Francis Gribble (New York E. P. Dutton, 1931).—Compiler.]

With good taste and tact, Mr. Blaine made it a condolence from “the millions of free American citizens to the Russian millions made free, in their great bereavement for the loss of their liberator.” Those who love to study coincidences must be deeply impressed by the fact that both Lincoln and Alexander, the liberators of the enslaved, died the same wretched death at the hands of assassins.

COUNT DE SAINT-GERMAIN

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, pp. 168-170]

At long intervals have appeared in Europe certain men, whose rare intellectual endowments, brilliant conversation, and mysterious modes of life have astounded and dazzled the public mind. The article now copied from *All the Year Round** relates to one of these men—the Count de Saint-Germain. In Hargrave Jennings’ curious work, *The Rosicrusians*, is described another, a certain Signor Gualdi, who was once the talk of Venetian society. A third was the historical personage known as Alessandro di Cagliostro, whose name has been made the synonym of infamy by a forged Catholic biography. It is not now intended to compare these three individuals with each other or with the common run of men. We copy the article of our London contemporary for quite another object. We wish to show how basely personal character is traduced without the slightest provocation, unless the fact of one’s being brighter in mind, and more versed in the secrets of natural law can be construed as a sufficient provocation to set the slanderer’s pen and the gossip’s tongue in motion. Let the reader attentively note what follows:—

* [Vol. XIV, June 5, 1875, pp. 228-34. New Series. This journal was conducted by Charles Dickens, and published in London by Chapman Hall from 1859 to 1895.—Compiler.]

“This famous adventurer,” says the writer in *All the Year Round*, meaning the Count de Saint-Germain, is supposed to have been an Hungarian by birth, but the early part of his life was by himself carefully wrapped in mystery. His person and his title alike stimulated curiosity. His age was unknown, and his parentage equally obscure. We catch the first glimpse of him in Paris, a century and a quarter ago, filling the court and the town with his renown. Amazed Paris saw a man—apparently of middle age—a man who lived in magnificent style, who went to dinner parties, where he ate nothing, but talked incessantly, and with exceeding brilliancy, on every imaginable topic. His tone was, perhaps, over-trenchant—the tone of a man who knows perfectly what he is talking about. Learned, speaking every civilised language admirably, a great musician, an excellent chemist, he played the part of a prodigy, and played it to perfection. Endowed with extraordinary confidence, or consummate impudence, he not only laid down the law magisterially concerning the present, but spoke without hesitation of events two hundred years old. His anecdotes of remote occurrences were related with extraordinary minuteness. He spoke of scenes at the Court of Francis the First as if he had seen them, describing exactly the appearance of the king, imitating his voice, manner, and language—affecting throughout the character of an eyewitness. In like style he edified his audience with pleasant stories of Louis the Fourteenth, and regaled them with vivid descriptions of places and persons. Hardly saying in so many words that he was actually present when the events happened, he yet contrived, by his great graphic power, to convey that impression. Intending to astonish, he succeeded completely. Wild stories were current concerning him. He was reported to be three hundred years old, and to have prolonged his life by the use of a famous elixir. Paris went mad about him. He was questioned constantly about his secret of longevity, and was marvellously adroit in his replies, denying all power to make old folks young again, but quietly asserting his possession of the secret of arresting decay in the human frame. Diet, he protested, was, with his marvellous elixir, the true secret of long life, and he resolutely refused to eat any food but such as had been specially prepared for him—oatmeal, groats, and the white meat of chickens. On great occasions he drank a little wine, sat up as late as anybody would listen to him, but took extraordinary precautions against the cold. To ladies he gave mysterious cosmetics, to preserve their beauty unimpaired; to men he talked openly of his method of transmuting metals, and of a certain process for melting down a dozen little diamonds into one large stone. These astounding assertions were backed by the possession of apparently unbounded wealth, and a collection of jewels of rare size and beauty. . . .

From time to time this strange being appeared in various European capitals, under various names—as Marquis de Montferrat; Count Bellamare, at Venice; Chevalier Schoening, at Pisa; Chevalier Weldon, at Milan; Count Saltikoff, at Genoa; Count Tzarogy, at Schwabach; and, finally, as Count de Saint-Germain, at Paris; but, after his disaster at the Hague, no longer seems so wealthy as before, and has at times the appearance of seeking his fortune.

At Tournay he is “interviewed” by the renowned Chevalier de Seingalt, who finds him in an Armenian robe and pointed cap, with a long beard descending to his waist, and ivory wand in hand—the complete make-up of a necromancer. Saint-Germain is surrounded by a legion of bottles, and is occupied in developing the manufacture of hats upon chemical principles. Seingalt being indisposed, the Count offers to physic him gratis, and offers to dose him with an elixir which appears to have been ether; but the other refuses, with many polite speeches. It is the scene of the two augurs. Not being allowed to act as a physician, Saint-Germain determines to show his power as an alchemist; takes a twelve-sous piece from the other augur, puts it on red-hot charcoal, and works with the blowpipe. The piece of money is fused and allowed to cool. “Now,” says Saint-Germain, “take your money again.” —“But it is gold.”—“Of the purest.” Augur number two does not believe in the transmutation, and looks on the whole operation as a trick, but he pockets the piece nevertheless, and finally presents it to the celebrated Marshal Keith, then governor of Neuchâtel.

Again in pursuit of dyeing and other manufacturing schemes, Saint-Germain turned up at St. Petersburg, Dresden, and Milan. Once he got into trouble, and was arrested in a petty town of Piedmont on a protested bill of exchange; but he pulled out a hundred thousand crowns’ worth of jewels, paid on the spot, bullied the governor of the town like a pickpocket, and was released with the most respectful excuses.

Very little doubt exists that during one of his residences in Russia, he played an important part in the revolution which placed Catherine the Second on the throne. In support of this view, Baron Gleichen cites the extraordinary attention bestowed on Saint-Germain at Leghorn in 1770, by Count Alexis Orloff, and a remark made by Prince Gregory Orloff to the Margrave of Anspach during his stay at Nuremberg.

After all, who was he?—the son of a Portuguese king, or of a Portuguese Jew? Or did he, in his old age, tell the truth to his protector and enthusiastic admirer, Prince Charles of Hesse-Cassel? According to the story told his last friend, he was the son of a Prince Rakoczy, of Transylvania, and his first wife a Tékély. He was placed, when an infant, under the protection of the last of the Medici. When he grew up, and heard that his two brothers, sons of the Princess Hesse-Rheinfels, or Rothenburg, had received the names of Saint-Charles and Saint-Elizabeth, he determined to take the name of their holy brother, Sanctus Germanus. What was the truth? One thing alone is certain, that he was a protégé of the last Medici.

Prince Charles, who appears to have regretted his death, which happened in 1783, very sincerely, tells us that he fell sick, while pursuing his experiments in colours, at Eckernförde, and died shortly after, despite the innumerable medicaments prepared by his own private apothecary. Frederick the Great, who, despite his scepticism, took a queer interest in astrologers, said of him, "This is a man who does not die." Mirabeau adds, epigrammatically, "He was always a careless fellow, and at last, unlike his predecessors, forgot not to die."*

And now we ask what shadow of proof is herein afforded either that Saint-Germain was an "adventurer," that he meant to "play the part of a prodigy," or that he sought to make money out of dupes? Not one single sign is there of his being other than what he seemed, viz., a gentleman of magnificent talents and education, and the possessor of ample means to honestly support his standing in society. He claimed to know how to fuse small diamonds into large ones, and to transmute metals, and backed his assertions "by the possession of apparently unbounded wealth, and a collection of jewels of rare size and beauty." Are "adventurers" like this? Do charlatans enjoy the confidence and admiration of the cleverest statesmen and nobles of Europe for long years and not even at their deaths show in one thing that they were undeserving? Some encyclopedists (see *New Amer. Cyclop.*, Vol. XIV, p. 267) say:—"He is supposed to have been employed during the greater part of his life as a spy at the courts at which he resided!" But upon what evidence is this supposition based? Has any one found it in any of the state papers in the secret archives of either of these courts? Not one word, not one fraction or shred of fact to build this base calumny upon, has ever been found. It is simply a malicious lie. The treatment that the memory of this great man, this pupil of Indian and Egyptian hierophants, this proficient in the secret wisdom of the East, has had from Western writers is a stigma upon human nature. And so has the stupid world behaved towards every other person who like Saint-Germain, has revisited it after long seclusion devoted to study, with his stores of accumulated esoteric wisdom, in the hope of bettering it and making it wiser and happier.

* [This article ends with the following words: "What was this man? An eccentric prince, or a successful scoundrel? A devotee of science, a mere schemer, or a strange mixture of all?—a problem, even to himself."—Compiler.]

One other point should be noticed. The above account gives no particulars of the last hours of the mysterious Count or of his funeral. Is it not absurd to suppose that if he really died at the time and place mentioned, he would have been laid in the ground without the pomp and ceremony, the official supervision, the police registration which attend the funerals of men of his rank and notoriety? Where are these data? He passed out of public sight more than a century ago, yet no memoir contains them. A man who so lived in the full blaze of publicity could not have vanished, if he really died then and there, and left no trace behind. Moreover, to this negative we have the alleged positive proof that he was living several years after 1784. He is said to have had a most important private conference with the Empress of Russia in 1785 or 1786, and to have appeared to the Princesse de Lamballe when she stood before the tribunal, a few moments before she was struck down with a bullet, and a butcher-boy cut off her head; and to Jeanne du Barry, the mistress of Louis XV, as she waited on her scaffold at Paris the stroke of the guillotine in the Days of Terror, of 1793. A respected member of our Society, residing in Russia, possesses some highly important documents about the Count de Saint-Germain, and for the vindication of the memory of one of the grandest characters of modern times, it is hoped that the long-needed but missing links in the chain of his chequered history, may speedily be given to the world through these columns.*

[After reading the above, the student should consult the Bio-Bibliographical Appendix in the present Volume, s.v. SAINT-GERMAIN, for pertinent information concerning this remarkable personage, the correction of some errors and a selective bibliography of the subject.—Compiler.]

* [The individual hinted at by H.P.B. was most likely her aunt, Miss Nadyezhda Andreyevna de Fadeyev. No information is available at this time as to what became of these documents.—Compiler.]

AN IMPORTANT BIBLICAL ERROR

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, p. 170]

An important Biblical error is alleged to have been discovered by Mr. Charles T. Bake, the learned author of a well-known work called *Origines Biblicae*, and exposed in a new pamphlet of his bearing the title of *The Idol in Horeb*. He proves therein that the “golden calf” made by Aaron and worshipped by the Israelites was, in fact, no calf at all but a globe. This would be a curious yet trifling error in a book which is now proved to be more full of errors and contradictions than any other work in the whole world; but in this instance, we are afraid, the mistake is rather that of the author himself. We have not yet seen the pamphlet, and therefore, judge but by the reviews of it. The mistaken use of the word “calf” for “globe” is due, he says, to the incorrect translation of the Hebrew word “*agel*” or “*egel*.” The Israelites despairing of the return of Moses from Mount Sinai, made and worshipped not a “molten calf”* but a globe or disc of molten gold which was in those days a universal symbol of power. Later on, the word “*egel*” was translated “calf,” because both terms “calf” and “globe” are synonymous and pronounced alike in the Hebrew language. We do not question the correctness of the author’s philological demonstration as to the word itself, but rather whether he is right in calling it a mistake in its symbolical rendering. For if both “calf” and “globe” are synonymous words, so also the symbology of the globe and the ox was identical.

* [Exodus, xxxii, 4, 8; Neh., ix, 18.—Comp.]

The winged globe of the Egyptians, the Scarabaeus, or “stellar disc”; the circle or globe of the Phoenician Astarte; the Crescent of Minerva; the disc or globe between the two cow’s horns, on the brow of Isis; the winged disc, with pendant-crowned Uraei, carrying the cross of life; the solar globe or disc, resting upon the outspread horns of the goddess Hathor; and the horns of the Egyptian Amon; the deifying of the ox—all have the same meaning. The globe and the horns of the ox speak the same story: they are the emblem of the eternal divine power. Was not Amon or “the hidden one,” the greatest and highest of the Egyptian gods, the “husband of his mother, his own father, and his own son,” the One in Three (i.e., identical with the Christian trinity), according to the interpretation of the best Egyptologists, including the piously Christian George Ebers and Brugsch-Bey—represented with a ram’s head as Amon-Chnemu?* Before, therefore, the Biblical scholars lay such stress upon the dead letter meaning of the Biblical words, they should in all fairness turn their attention to more serious questions. They ought, for instance, to prove to the satisfaction of all—Christians and infidels alike—the reason why in ancient Hebrew coins and elsewhere, Moses is likewise represented with horns; and why such “horns” should be also found on the monotheistical Levitical altar. . . .

* [Also Khnemu, Khnum, and Chnum.—Compiler.]

A FALSE “WITNESS”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, pp. 174-176]

The Lucknow Witness, it appears, indulged some time since in a bit of casuistical morality at the expense of the “Theosophists.” The term used by that organ of piety is very vague, for “Theosophists” are many and various, and as many and various are their opinions and creeds. Still, as the hit seems suspiciously like others that have been made at us, we assume the unpleasant duty of rejoinder, though the bolts have not reached the mark.

Says the Witness (the italics being ours):—

The Theosophists complain, in the last number of their periodical, that “ever since we landed in this country, impelled by motives, sincere and honest—though perhaps, as we now find it ourselves, too enthusiastic, too unusual in foreigners to be readily believed in by natives without some more substantial proof than our simple word—we have been surrounded by more enemies and opponents than by friends and sympathizers.” They have themselves chiefly to blame for the opposition they have met. What their motives may be, we do not feel called upon to pronounce, but their actions have been in many respects discreditable. They began by setting forth the most scrupulous and untruthful charges against the missionaries, and by exhibiting such a rabid hatred of Christianity as to make their subsequent pretensions to universal love and brotherhood ridiculous. Their professions have been high and their practice low, and it is no wonder that a large part of their adherents have fallen away disappointed and disgusted. Their occult performances [?], whether due to sleight of hand or to some special gifts in the line of animal magnetism, have not been of character to raise them in the estimation of thoughtful people or to show that they could accomplish any important or useful ends. We shall not be surprised to hear before long that they have left the shores of India not to return, sadder and somewhat wiser than when they came. Meanwhile the foundation of God standeth sure, and His Church advances [sic] in its triumphant march to certain victory.

Now really, this is kind! There is then “balm in Gilead” even for “theosophists,” who will vanish from these shores “sadder and somewhat wiser”? So inexcusably ignorant are we of the names of the numerous Christian sects and subsects that labour in India, that we really do not know by what particular sect the Lucknow paper’s editor is paid to witness for. The name of these sects is Legion. For, disregarding the direct command—“Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds, lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown . . . be defiled” (Deut., xxii, 9), they one and all seek to transform palm-covered Aryavarta into their “Lord’s Vineyard,” make the Brahman who drinks of their wine, like Noah, “drunken,” and so cause their fruit to be “defiled.” But we love to think it is a Methodist organ. It is but these philanthropic dissenters who have the generosity to offer a “possible salvation for the whole human race.”

Only whether the Witness be a primitive Methodist, a New Connection Methodist, a Church Methodist, a Calvinistic Methodist, a United Free Church Methodist, a Wesleyan Reformer, a Bible Christian Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, or any other sectarian, we are sorry that we are compelled to refuse its Editors the gift—let alone—of divine prophecy, but even that of simple mediumistic soothsaying. The “theosophists”, i.e., the founders of the Theosophical Society, do not intend to leave “the shores of India, not to return.” They are truly sorry, but really find themselves unable to oblige their good friends of Lucknow and other missionary stations.

And now a “word to the wise.” Indulging in his broad and catholic criticisms, our censor (whoever he may be) evidently “forgot to take counsel of his own pillow” as the saying goes. He jumps, therefore, at conclusions, which to say the least, are dangerous for himself and brethren, as the weapon is a two-edged one. Of no other class, the world over, are the “professions (so) high” and the “practice (so) low,” as of our benevolent friends, the padris—with, of course, honourable exceptions. Because we have said that we were “surrounded by more enemies and opponents than by friends and sympathizers,” he declares that “a large part” of our adherents “have fallen away disappointed and disgusted.” To begin with, if we include a modest half-a-dozen of “adherents” at Bombay who left us for motives purely personal and selfish, and with which “theosophy” had nothing to do whatever, just nine in all left the Society in the year 1881—all its branches inclusive. Then our critic psychologizes himself into the belief that if we have met “opposition” it is on account of (1) our actions having been “in many respects discreditable”; (2) of our “most scrupulous [?] and untruthful charges against the missionaries”; and (3) of our “exhibiting such a rabid hatred of Christianity as to make their (our) subsequent pretensions to universal love and brotherhood ridiculous:”—three charges, the first of which is a malevolent, wicked, and uncalled-for slander, which we would ask the writer to substantiate by some unimpeachable fact; the second, an untruthful and sweeping assertion; the third, a most impudent identification of what we would call a confusion of “centre with circumference,” Christianity being one, and Christians quite another, thing. “Many are called but few are chosen,”—the axiom applies to missionaries and the clergy with far more truth than to theosophy.

Must we repeat for the hundredth time that whether we do or do not believe in Christ as God, we have no more “hatred of Christianity” than we have of any other religion in which we do not believe? And we blindly believe—in none. It is not against the teachings of Christ—pure and wise and good, on the whole, as any—that we contend, but against dogmas and their arbitrary interpretations by the hundreds of conflicting and utterly contradictory sects, calling themselves “Christians,” but which are all but power-seeking, ambitious, human institutions, at best. That the “foundation of God”—if by God, Truth is here meant—“standeth sure,” is perfectly true. Truth is one, and no amount of misinterpretations of it, even by the Lucknow Witness or The Theosophist, will ever be able to prevail against the One Truth. But, before our very virtuous contemporary indulges in further brag that the “Church advances in its triumphant march to certain victory” (church meaning with them their own only, of course), we must insist that it proves that its sect and none other of the hundreds of others is right; for all cannot be. To make good our words and show that the “Church,” instead of advancing to “certain victory” has in this century come not only to a dead stop, but is more and more vanishing out of sight, we will quote here the confession of a Christian clergyman. Let the Lucknow Witness contradict it, if it can.

The following is an extract from a speech recently delivered in Paisley, Scotland, by the Rev. David Watson, a minister of the Presbyterian Church, and which can be found in Mr. Tyerman’s *Freethought Vindicated*.

The great, and the wise, and the mighty, are not with us. That I fear we must all own to, however much we may grieve to say so; and the more we read of the history, the poetry, the biography, and the literature of the age, the more we think so. The best thought, the widest knowledge, and the deepest philosophy have discarded our Church.

Not that they have taken up a hostile attitude towards us—some have, but not all—but they have turned their backs upon us with a quiet dislike, unspoken disapproval, and a practical renunciation, greatly more conclusive than a wordy man would be. I do not mention names, it would be unfair to do so, for there is still a social stigma thrown at the man who ventures to disconnect himself from the common creed. But that does not alter the case one whit—the great, the wise, and the mighty are not with us. . . . They are not even nominally with us. They look not for our heaven; they fear not our hell. They detest what they call the inhumanities of our creed, and scorn the systematized Spiritualism we believe in. They step out into speculative Atheism, for they can breathe freer there. . . . But, mark you, they do not pass over into practical Atheism, for however they hate the name of orthodoxy and everything theological, their hearts are too large and their souls are too religious—instinctively religious—to forget that reverence that is due, that is meet and fit. Some become practical philanthropists and philosophic friends of man by helping industry, extending knowledge, advocating temperance, inaugurating institutions that incarnate Christianity, furthering society, in a thousand ways, reforming the manners, and making the men of time and clime. . . . They are all big with a faith in the ultimate salvation of man—a faith that inspires them to toil and shames our whining cant. And yet these men—the master minds and imperial leaders amongst men—the Comtes, the Carlyles, the Goethes, the Emersons, the Humboldts, the Tyndalls, and Huxleys if you will, are called by us Atheists; are outside our most Christian Church; pilloried in our Presbyterian orthodoxy, as “heretics” before God and man. Why are these and such like men without the pale of the Christian Church? Not that they are unfit—we own that; not that they are too great—we know that; but that we are unworthy of them, and by the mob force of our ignorant numbers, have driven them out. They shun us because of our ignorant misconceptions and persistent misrepresentations of heaven, man, and God. They feel our evil communications corrupting their good manners; they feel our limited vision narrowing the infinitude of the horizon, and, therefore, as an indispensable condition to the very existence of their souls, they separate themselves from us, and forsake—and greatly unwilling are many of them to do so—the worship with us of our common God.

This is the confession of an honest and a noble-hearted man—of one who is alike fearless in his speech and sincere in his faith and religion. For him this religion represents truth, but he does not confound it with the personality of its clergy. Heaven forbid that we should ever go against such a truthful man, however little we personally may believe in his God! But until our dying day will we loudly protest against the Moodys and Sankys, and their like.

“We were all guilty of high treason to Christ, and we should all go to him with ropes around our necks, knowing that we were deserving of hell-fire,” is the remark, as reported by one of the Sydney daily papers, of Mr. Thomas Spurgeon, in an address given by him in the Protestant Hall, under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A.

These are the men and missionaries we go against. As to “scrupulous [?] and untruthful charges against” the latter, it is an unscrupulously untruthful charge of the Lucknow Witness against us. We never publish anything against our friends, the padris, without giving authorities. Can our reverend critic give the proofs of one of our “discreditable actions”? If he cannot—as in fact, he cannot—then how shall we call his action?

The Lucknow Witness—a false “witness” in our case—says that our “occult performances . . . have not been of a character to raise them [us] in the estimation of thoughtful people, or to show that they [we] could accomplish any important or useful ends.” Having never made “occult performances,” but only experiments in occult forces before a few personal friends and in private houses, and the Lucknow Witness knowing no more of them than it has seen in newspaper heavy jokes—we might decline altogether to notice the remark. But we may as well remind the editors that in experimental science there are no phenomena of a high or a low character; all discoveries of natural law are honourable and dignified. The Witness refers so grandiloquently, we suppose, to our experiments with the “cigarette papers” and others, of which he has heard. Well; the duplication of a bit of paper, or a “cup,” or anything else is as scientific and of no lower character, at any rate, than the instantaneous transformation “of the dust of the land” into “lice” or “frogs,” which dying, “the land stank”; and more useful and certainly less dangerous or conducive to evil than the transformation of water into wine. Ours were but inoffensive, and scientific experiments, without the slightest claim to either divine or satanic origin, but on the contrary, having a determined object to dispel any belief in “miracle” or “supernaturalism”—which is shameful in our century of science.

But the occult performances “of Moses in lice” and such like “miracles” besides their intrinsically low character have resulted in fifty millions of persons being put to death by sword and fire, during a period of eighteen centuries, for either not believing in the genuineness of the alleged “miracle” or desiring to repeat the same on more scientific principles. But then, of course, our “performances,” being neither public nor yet “miracles” at all, but being scientifically possible, if not yet “probable” in the opinion of sceptics, are not calculated to raise us “in the estimation of thoughtful people”—meaning, doubtless, those who edit and the few who read the Lucknow missionary paper. Very well, so be it. Our “pretensions to universal love and brotherhood” are “ridiculous” because we denounce some ignorant, bigoted missionaries, who would far better stay at home and till the ground, than live upon the labour earnings of poor foolish servant girls whom they frighten into fits with their stories about hell. One thing at least not even the Lucknow Witness can gainsay. We do not live upon extorted or voluntary charity; but work for our personal support and preach theosophy gratis. Nor have we accepted or asked for one penny from those who do believe in and have seen our “occult performances”; nor do we claim infallibility for our teachings or ourselves. Can the Christian missionaries say as much?

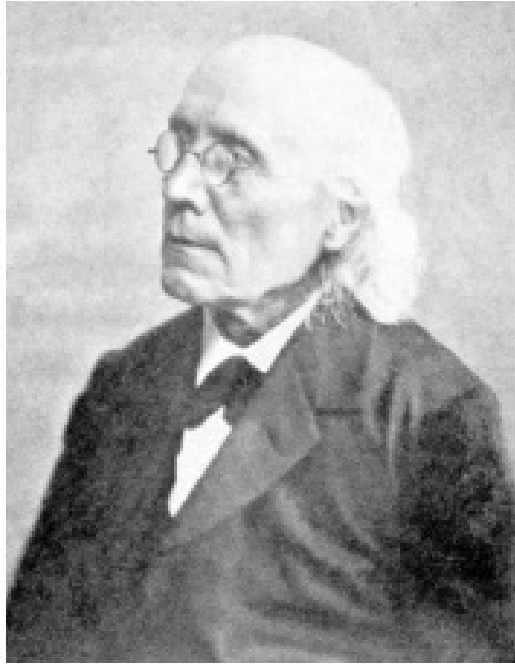
Far wiser would it be for the would-be Christianizers of India, were they to follow the example of some of their more intelligent brethren in America and England! Were the Padris to confess the truth as Rev. David Watson did in the above-quoted extract, or treat their opponents in religious belief as the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher does that most mortal enemy of Christianity—Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll—then would the “theosophists” be their friends and show for their opinions and Christian views no more animosity than they now do to the orthodox Brahmans, whose dogmas and views they also reject, but whose Vedas as the oldest philosophy and book on the globe, they profoundly respect. The field for human conceptions, philosophical and religious, is vast, and there is room for all without our taking to breaking each other’s heads and noses. The following is characteristic of the age.

We copy it from our esteemed Australian contemporary, the Harbinger of Light, whose learned editor is a representative of our Theosophical Society at Melbourne:—

Henry Ward Beecher and Ingersoll, “the American Demosthenes,” have, it appears, been fraternising in a manner calculated to shock many religious souls and to astound others. Says the New York Herald:—“The sensation created by the speech of the Rev. H. W. Beecher at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn, when he uttered a brilliant eulogy on Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll and publicly shook hands with him, has not yet subsided.” Subsequently, both gentlemen were independently interviewed by a Herald reporter anxious to elicit the opinion entertained by each of the other. “I regard Mr. Beecher,” the Colonel is described as saying, “as the greatest man in any pulpit in the world. . . . I told him that night that I congratulated the world it had a minister with an intellectual horizon broad enough, and a mental sky studded with stars of genius enough, to hold all creeds in scorn that shocked the heart of man. . . . Mr. Beecher holds to many things that I most passionately deny, but in common we believe in the liberty of thought. My principal objections to orthodox religion are two—slavery here and hell hereafter. I do not believe that Mr. Beecher on these points can disagree with me. The real difference between us is—he says God, I say Nature. The real agreement between us is—we both say Liberty. . . . He is a great thinker, a marvellous orator, and in my judgment, greater and grander than any creed of any Church. Manhood is his greatest forte, and I expect to live and die his friend.”

Mr. Beecher’s estimate of Ingersoll may be gathered from the following remarks: “I regard him as one of the greatest men of this age. I am an ordained clergyman and believe in revealed religion. I am therefore bound to regard all persons who do not believe in revealed religion as in error. But on the broad platform of human liberty and progress I was bound to give him the right hand of fellowship. I would do it a thousand times over. I do not know Colonel Ingersoll’s religious views precisely, but I have a general knowledge of them. He has the same right to free thought and free speech that I have. . . . I admire Ingersoll because he is not afraid to speak what he honestly thinks, and I am only sorry that he does not think as I do. I never heard so much brilliancy and pith put into a two hours’ speech as I did on that night. I wish my whole congregation had been there to hear it.”

Bravo, Atheist and Clergyman! That is what we might call the wolf and the lamb lying down together.



GUSTAV THEODOR FECHNER
1801-1887

Founder of modern Experimental Psychology.
Reproduced from Max Wentscher, Fechner und Lotze, München, 1925.



RANGAMPALLI JAGANNATHIAH (seated)
AND T.S. SWAMINATHA AIYAR
Two devoted workers in the early days of the Movement in India.

COMMENT ON “A HINDU STORY OF REINCARNATION”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, p. 177]

[According to this story, told by a Kshatriya lady, Tej Râm, son of a Brâhmana, was bitten by a snake and died. Near the home of the Brâhmana was a pipal tree which became shortly after the death of the young man the scene of the death of two birds; first a crow that was shot, and second a cock sparrow which struck with its bill the forehead of a woman of low caste, and immediately thereafter fell dead. Nine months later the woman gave birth to a son who upon reaching the age of four years, declared himself to be a Brâhmana and not a man of low caste. One day, upon seeing his former home, he said he was Tej Râm and related the story of his death and that of the two birds.

The writer asks, in closing, whether “the above case is an example of the transmigration of soul—a case in which it has retained its individuality.”]

We have the above pretty tale from a gentleman of character and credibility who certainly tells it in good faith. Upon reflection he will no doubt see, however, that he could not seriously expect us to answer his concluding question, as the narrative comes to us fourth-hand and facts of this kind ever lose by circulation. For one thing, it does not seem to have occurred to the respected Kshatriya lady to enquire how it was that Tej Râm reincarnate had not proved his identity, even with the money-findings, the circumstantial accounts of his death and transmigrations, and the snake-bite scar—that had accompanied him through the episodes of his crow and cock sparrow lives—so clearly as to induce his Brahman castemen to recognize and adopt him. Was a screw loose somewhere, after all?

HUMAN LIFE AT HIGH ALTITUDES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, p. 180]

Doubt has been expressed of the correctness of the statement that Indian Yogis have lived and still reside at extreme altitudes in the Himalayas. It has been averred that the rarefication of the atmosphere is so great at the high plateaux of 15,000 and more feet above sea level that no human beings could exist there for any length of time. Still in the Sabhapati Swami's little treatise on Raja-Yoga* he declares that he was permitted to visit some of these holy recluses in the snowy peaks, and at p. 92 of our Vol. I [The Theosophist], another Swami, known to us as a man of credibility, states (see article on "Badrinâth, the Mysterious") that from that sacred temple may sometimes be seen far up the icy and inaccessible heights men of venerable presence who are permanently engaged there in "sacred pursuits . . . quite unknown to the world." Science has now happily determined that life can be supported there without serious discomfort after a course of preparative training. In Nature for March 17, 1881, a recent lecture of Mr. Edward Whymper, the daring explorer of Chimborazo and Cotapaxi, is reported. He says that he spent twenty-one nights above 14,000 feet above the level of the sea; eight more above 15,000 feet; thirteen more above 16,000 feet; and one more at 19,450 feet. At first he experienced "mountain sickness," an extreme physical lassitude, feverishness, intense thirst, difficulty of swallowing, an impediment in breathing.

* [Entitled: Om. The Philosophy and Science of Vedânta and Râja-Yoga. 3rd ed. by Sirsh Chanda Vasu, Lahore, 1895.—Compiler.]

But by the exercise of dogged pluck (will power) these symptoms were eventually overcome, and he and his party finished their memorable explorations in safety.* These facts are not cited because they were needed to fortify the belief of students of Indian Yoga science, but to show the Asiatic public in general that modern physical discovery is daily bringing to light fresh proofs that the assertions of Aryan philosophers respecting the reserved powers of man were not loosely and ignorantly made. Let us only wait patiently and we will all see these bold infidels of the West confessing that their grandest discoveries were anticipated many ages ago by these ancients whom they now dare to stigmatise as ignorant theorists.

* [This account may be found in Vol. XXIII of the English Journal Nature, under date given above, entitled "On the Practicability of Living at Great Elevations above the Level of the Sea," being excerpts from E. Whymper's lecture to the Society of Arts, in the Theatre at So. Kensington, March 9, 1881.—Compiler.]

FOOTNOTES TO "TRUE RELIGION DEFINED"

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, pp. 181-182]

[In this article, the writer, Vishnu Bawa, says, among other things, that "the Sanskrit word dharma radically implies Duty and Nature. Dharma is the Duty and Nature co-existent with the very living or existence of a being in the universe." To this H.P.B. remarks:]

"Duty" is an incorrect and unhappy expression. "Property" would be the better word. "Duty" is that which a person is bound by any natural, moral, or legal obligation to do or refrain from doing and cannot be applied but to intelligent and reasoning beings. Fire will burn and cannot "refrain" from doing it.

[“. . . the highest, the best, the most beneficial . . . and omnipresent Religion or dharma of a rational being . . . is not only to know, but also to experience . . . personally, i.e., to feel this . . . unconscious immateriality, or Paramatma—the Infinity and Eternity of Existence and Happiness.”]

This teaching is the highest stage of Philosophical ultra-Spiritual Pantheism and Buddhism. It is the very spirit of the doctrines contained in the Upanishads wherein we would vainly seek for Ívara—the afterthought of the modern Vedantins.

[“This state of unconscious immateriality . . . is the true or eternal state of every being, for saving it there can be found no other true existence; therefore, every rational being’s dharma or natural duty and Religion is first to acquire the dhyana (knowledge) or vidya of its real Self, the Paramatma, and then by the annihilation of its atma, or worldly self or soul to experience the infinity of Happiness prevalent in its unconscious Immateriality.”]

We draw the attention of the theoristic and dogmatic Spiritualists to the passage. The late Vishnu Bawa was, perhaps, the greatest Philosopher and most acute metaphysician and seer of India in our present century.

A “MEDIUM” WANTED

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, pp. 182-183]

We extract the following from a letter, dated April 7—from an esteemed friend of ours, a native gentleman and a Fellow of our Society at Allahabad:—

An idea has recently sprung up in my mind which I state for your kind consideration. In India there are no regular mediums, hence people anxious to satisfy themselves of the truth of spiritual phenomena or any other occult manifestations cannot do so except by reading books. Cannot some such medium as Dr. Slade or anyone in Europe be induced to pay India a visit, if the expenses of his journey are paid? If so, persons interested may raise a sum for the purpose. If you approve of the plan it might be notified in the next issue of The Theosophist. I am willing to subscribe to the extent of Rs. 100 toward this fund.

Once before, while in America, we were entrusted with the selection of a reliable medium for physical manifestations and had but to congratulate ourselves with the success obtained. The St. Petersburg Committee of Spiritualists had asked us to choose one who would be willing to undertake the voyage, and our choice fell upon Dr. Henry Slade, the best medium we had ever met. It was he whose wonderful phenomena made a proselyte of one of the greatest men of science in Germany—Professor Zöllner. We are willing to do the same for our Indian and Anglo-Indian friends, provided we are promised not to be held responsible for any possible failure, nor asked to have anything to do with any funds that may be collected. We can answer personally for but two mediums in the world—Mrs. Mary Hollis-Billing, a Fellow of our Society in America, and Dr. Slade. There may be others as good, but we do not know them. There is one though, who has just gone to America. He comes as a third candidate with recommendations from some of our most esteemed Fellows and Brothers of England who have subjected him personally to the most crucial tests and found in him everything that is desirable. We speak of Mr. William Eglinton, a young gentleman well known in London, and who has been frequently invited to the houses of the most respectable and eminent among the English Spiritualists. We read of a most satisfactory séance with that medium at the British National Association of Spiritualists when wonderful “test materialisations,” it seems, have taken place in his presence.

The *Spiritualist* (London) for March 3, 1876, records that an interesting séance took place at the residence of Mrs. Macdougall Gregory, whereat Sir Garnet Wolseley (commander of the Ashantee expedition), the Hon. Mrs. Cowper Temple, Gen. Brewster, Algernon Joy, Esq., J. M. Gully, M.D., and others, were present. The same issue gives the following testimony from Miss E. Kislingbury, the then Secretary of the British National Association.

A most satisfactory test séance, with Mr. Eglinton as medium, was held at 38 Great Russell Street, on the 12th instant. It was attended by Mr. Alexander Tod, of Peebles; Mr. Robert S. Wyld, LL.D., Edin.; Mr. Gustave de Veh, of Paris; Mr. Collingwood; Mrs. Fitzgerald, and Mrs. D. G. Fitzgerald; Mrs. Potts and Mrs. Michael; Miss Kislingbury on behalf of the Séance Committee of the British National Association of Spiritualists.

As preliminaries, the cabinet was duly scrutinized, the medium enclosed therein, and instructions in the direct voice were obtained from Joey—the intelligent and practical spirit “control”—to the effect that he (the medium) should be secured and seated as on the last occasion when he gave a séance at these rooms. Accordingly Dr. Wyld and Mr. Collingwood, being investigators, were requested to constitute “a tying committee.” These gentlemen performed their duty in a very thorough manner; first tying the medium’s wrists together behind him with tape; then seeing that his coat sleeves were securely sewn together with white cotton; then tying his wrists to the back of the chair within the cabinet; then tying his neck to the chair; and lastly passing the free end of the tape used for the last mentioned purpose through an aperture in the cabinet, so that Dr. Wyld might hold it in his hand whilst he was seated in the “circle.” When the tying was completed the medium was requested to place his feet upon a hassock; the curtains of the cabinet were drawn so as to leave his feet and knees in view, and a stringed musical instrument was placed in his lap, constituting a kind of table on which were placed a book and a hand bell.

In about half an hour the book was distinctly and repeatedly seen to open and close again. Then a finger was seen in proximity to the book; and in a short time afterwards a hand was several times protruded between the curtains. Joey now requested that someone should come forward and ascertain, immediately after a hand had been shown, whether the medium was still secured as at first. This challenge was taken up by Dr. Wyld and Mr. Collingwood and these gentlemen, at the conclusion of the séance, gave their individual testimony as to the result.

On two occasions, immediately after seeing the “spirit” hand protruded from the cabinet, I examined Mr. Eglinton’s bonds and found them perfectly secure.

(Signed) R. S. WYLD.*

I also, on one occasion, did the same.

(Signed) J. FRED COLLINGWOOD.

* Dr. R. S. Wyld is a brother to George Wyld, M.D., now re-elected President of the British Theosophical Society of London for another year. Miss Kislingbury is a highly esteemed lady, whose truthfulness no one who knew her would ever doubt; then also a Fellow of our Society.

Miss Kislingbury then asked Joey whether Dr. Wyld could be to stand behind the medium, inside the cabinet, while the materialized hand was shown to the sitters outside. This enquiry was answered in the affirmative; and accordingly, Dr. Wyld entered the cabinet and took up a position behind the medium, who moaned and shivered as though “power” were being drawn from him to an unusual extent. In relation to this test, I obtained the following very brief but sufficient testimony, bearing in mind the value of evidence on the spot and at that time:

“We saw that hand whilst Dr. Wyld was in the cabinet.

G. DE VEH, E. KISLINGBURY,
ELLEN POTTS, E. FITZ-GERALD.”

Dr. Wyld also expressed himself as being perfectly satisfied with the test.

Were Mr. Eglinton to accept the invitation and come to India, the native Mussulman gentlemen may be gratified, perhaps, upon seeing the “spirit” of one of their own co-religionists appear through that medium. The following is over the signature of no less a man of science than Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.S., who vouches for the reality of the “materialized spirit.”

The sitting took place in the first-floor front room. Across one corner of this room there was hung a curtain of black calico, which one of us (Mr. Tebb) helped to put up, while we all examined the enclosed corner and found that it was absolutely free from any means of concealing anything. About twelve ladies and gentlemen were present, who sat in a curve opposite the curtain, and about eight or ten feet from it. . . .

Shortly afterwards the fine figure of “Abdullah” appeared, and after several entrances and exits, came out into the circle close up to where Mr. Wallace was sitting under the gas light, turned down low, but sufficient to allow of the features being distinctly seen by him. The appearance was that of a tall man draped in pure white robes which trailed on the ground, and with a white turban on the front of which sparkled a jewel-like diamond. His face was dark, with fine features and prominent nose, and an enormous black moustache mingling with a comparatively scanty beard gave it a striking individuality. He resembled some of the Mahometans of Northern India. . . .

After “Abdullah” had retired, a female figure also draped in white, came out, but was indistinctly seen.

Then appeared another male figure, not so tall as “Abdullah.” He was similarly dressed, but had no moustache, and his features were of a more European cast.

Unlike “Abdullah” who glided about with a graceful, noiseless motion, this figure came out suddenly, with a loud, stamping noise, yet the long robes which flowed two or three feet on the ground about his feet, seemed never to impede his motion.

The white drapery which covered “Abdullah’s” tall figure from head to foot, and trailed amply on the floor, and which, from the way in which it hung and waved, must have been of stout and heavy material, together with his turban and the quantity of fine material exhibited by “Joey,” would have formed a parcel of considerable bulk, which a far less rigid search than ours could have easily detected. We may add that we examined the walls, which were papered, the carpet, which was securely nailed down, and the chair on which the medium sat, and are satisfied that nothing was or could be concealed in or about them.

(Signed)

ALFRED R. WALLACE.

WILLIAM TEBB.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS CLARK.

We quote the above from Mr. Eglinton’s credentials as published by The Banner of Light of Boston (March 19, 1881). Should a sufficient number of volunteers be found, in India, who would subscribe for the proposed fund, we believe that the best plan would be to place the sum as well as the management of the transaction in the hands of Mrs. A. Gordon, F.T.S., now at Simla, or some other prominent Spiritualist. We can only promise co-operation and help as regards writing to America and other preliminary arrangements. As far as the manifestations are concerned we again repeat that we firmly believe in their occurrence and reality from our personal knowledge; and we should be glad to prove their existence to the sceptics and thereby turn the laugh at many a scoffer we know. But beyond expressing our firm and unwavering belief in the genuineness of most of the mediumistic phenomena and the frequent occurrence of such, independently of any medium whatever, we venture to say no more. Let everyone build his own theory as to the agency at work, and then we may be able to compare notes with better success than heretofore.

ANCIENT DOCTRINES VINDICATED BY MODERN PROPHECY

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, pp. 183-184]

The German press has recently attempted in numerous editorials to solve what seems a mystery to the ordinary and sceptical public. They feel that they are evidently betrayed by one of their own camp—a materialist of exact science. Treating at length of the new theories of Dr. Rudolph Falb—the editor of the Leipzig “popular astronomical journal,” the Sirius—they are struck with the faultless accuracy of his scientific prognostications, or rather to be plain, his meteorological and cosmological predictions. The fact is, that the latter have been shown by the sequence of events, to be less scientific conjectures than infallible prophecies. Basing himself upon some peculiar combinations and upon a method of his own, which, as he says, he has worked out after long years of researches and labour, Dr. Falb is now enabled to foretell months and even years in advance every earthquake, remarkable storm, or inundation. Thus, for example, he foretold last year’s earthquake at Zagreb. At the beginning of 1868, he prophesied that an earthquake would occur on August 13, in Peru, and it did take place on that very day. In May, 1869, he published a scientific work entitled *The Elementary Theory of Earthquakes and Volcanic Eruptions*,* in which, among other prophecies, he foretold violent earthquakes at Marseilles, at Utah, along the shores of the Austrian possessions in the Adriatic Sea, in Colombia and the Crimea, which five months later—in October—actually took place.

* [Grundzüge zu einer Theorie der Erdbeben und Vulcanausbrüche, etc., Graz, 1869-71. 8vo.—Comp.]

In 1873, he predicted the earthquake in Northern Italy, at Belluno, which event occurred in the very presence of Dr. Falb, who had gone there to witness it himself, so sure was he of its taking place. In 1874, he notified to the world the then unforeseen and quite unexpected eruptions of Etna; and notwithstanding the chaff of his colleagues in science, who told him there was no reason to expect such a geological disturbance, he went to Sicily and was able to take his desired notes on the spot, when it did happen. He also prognosticated the violent storms and winds between the 23rd and the 26th of February, 1877, in Italy, and that prediction was also corroborated by fact. Soon after that, Dr. Falb went to Chili, to observe the volcanic eruptions in the Andes which he had expected and predicted two years before and—he did observe them. Immediately upon his return, in 1875, appeared his most remarkable work known as *Thoughts on, and Investigations of, the Causes of Volcanic Eruptions**—and which was immediately translated into Spanish and published at Valparaiso in 1877. After the predicted event at Zagreb had taken place, Dr. Falb was immediately invited to lecture in that city, where he delivered several remarkable discourses in which he once more warned the inhabitants of other forthcoming smaller earthquakes which, as is well known, did take place. The fact is that as was recently remarked by the *Novoye Vremya*, he has really “worked out something, knows something additional to what other people know, and is better acquainted with these mysterious phenomena of our globe than any other specialist the world over.”

What is then his wonderful theory and new combinations? To give an adequate idea of them would require a volume of comments and explanations. All we can add is, that Falb has said all he could say upon the subject in a huge work of his, called *Von den Umwälzungen im Weltall*, in three volumes.

* [*Gedanken und Studien über das Vulcanismus, etc.*, Graz, 1875. 8vo.—Comp.]

In Vol. I, he treats of the revolutions in the stellar world; in Vol. II, of the revolutions in the regions of clouds, or of the meteorological phenomena; and in Vol. III, of the revolutions in the bosom of the earth, or earthquakes. According to Dr. Falb's theory our Universum is neither limitless nor eternal, but is limited to a certain time and circumscribed within a certain space. He views the mechanical construction of our planetary system and its phenomena in quite a different light than the rest of the men of science. "He is very original, and very interesting (eccentric) in some respects, though we cannot trust him in everything"—seems the unanimous opinion of the press. Evidently, the doctor is too much of a man of science to be treated as a "visionary" or a "hallucinated enthusiast"; and so he is cautiously chaffed. Another less learned mortal would surely be, were he to expound the undeniably occult and cabalistic notions upon the Cosmos that he does. Therefore, while passing over his theories in silence as if to avoid being compromised in the propagation of his "heretical" views, the papers generally add:—"We send the reader who may be curious to fathom the doctrines of Dr. Rudolph Falb to the latest work of this remarkable man and prophet." Some add to the information given the fact that Dr. Falb's theory carries back the "Universal" deluge to 4000 years B.C., and presages another one for about the year 6,500 of the Christian era.

It appears that the theories and teaching of Dr. Falb are no new thing in this department of science, as two hundred years ago, the theory was propounded by a Peruvian named Jorie Baliri, and about a century ago by an Italian called Toaldo. We have, therefore, a certain right to infer that Dr. Falb's views are cabalistic, or rather those of the mediaeval Christian mystics and fire-philosophers, both Baliri and Toaldo having been practitioners of the "secret sciences." At the same time—though we have not yet been so fortunate as to have read his work—that calculation of his, in reference to the Noachian deluge and the period of 6,500 A.D. allotted for its recurrence, shows to us as plain as figures can speak that the learned doctor accepts for our globe the "Heliacal" Great Year, or cycle of six saros, at the close and turning point of which our planet is always subjected to a thorough physical revolution.

This teaching has been propounded from time immemorial and comes to us from Chaldea through Berosus, an astrologer at the temple of Belus at Babylon. Chaldea, as is well known, was the one universal centre of magic, from which radiated the rays of occult learning into every other country where the mysteries were enacted and taught. According to this teaching—believed in by Aristotle if we may credit Censorinus—the “great year” consists of 21,000 odd years (the latter varying) or six Chaldean saros consisting of 3,500 years each. These two decimillenniums are naturally halved, the first period of 10,500 years bringing us to the top of the cycle and a minor cataclysm; the latter decimillennium to a terrible and universal geological convulsion. During these 21,000 years the polar and equatorial climates gradually exchange places, “the former moving slowly towards the Line, and the tropical zone. . . . replacing the forbidden wastes of the icy poles. This change of climate is necessarily attended by cataclysms, earthquakes, and other cosmical throes. As the beds of the ocean are displaced, at the end of every decimillennium and about one neris [600 years], a semi-universal deluge like the legendary Noachian flood is brought about” (see *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 30-31) .

It now remains to be seen how far Dr. Falb’s theory and the old antediluvian teaching mentioned by the author of *Isis Unveiled* agree. At all events, as the latter work antedated by three years, his *Von den Umwälzungen im Weltall* which was published in 1881 (but two months ago), the theory was not borrowed from the Leipzig astronomer’s work. We may add that the constant verification of such geological and meteorological predictions besides its scientific value is of the utmost philosophical importance to the student of theosophy. For it shows: (a) that there are few secrets in nature absolutely inaccessible to man’s endeavours to snatch them from her bosom; and (b) that Nature’s workshop is one vast clockwork guided by immutable laws in which there is no room for the caprices of special providence.

Yet he, who has fathomed the ultimate secrets of the Proteus-nature—which changes but is ever the same—can, without disturbing the LAW, avail himself of the yet unknown correlations of natural Force to produce effects which would seem miraculous and impossible, but to those who are unacquainted with their causes. “The law which moulds the tear also rounds the planet.” There exists a wealth of chemical force—in heat, light, electricity, and magnetism—the possibilities of whose mechanical motions are far from being all understood. Why then should the theosophist who believes in natural (though occult) law be regarded as either a charlatan or a credulous fool in his endeavours to fathom its secrets? Is it only because following the traditions of ancient men of science the methods he has chosen differ from those of modern learning?

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, pp. 180,184]

The Bombay Guardian, an organ of the Methodist sect, recently expressed in strong terms the decided opinion that the Government of India should “demand of the Native Governments that they shall cease from the injustice” of interfering with men’s “convictions in the matter of religion”; affirming that the former did not do so. Its strictures were in this instance specially directed against the action of H.H. the Holkar, in banishing from Indore all Christian colporteurs and converts. If this is not an appeal for the protection of Christian propagandism by armed intervention—for the interference of the Paramount Power, even by remonstrance, is simply that—then we must be very obtuse in perception. The Guardian virtually begs that the Viceroy shall hold the Maharaja *vi et armis*, while the missionaries run through Indore and lead into apostacy as many as they can.

No wonder His Highness should wish to keep Christianity out of his territory as long as possible, when he can see how it has demoralized its converts in the Presidencies; causing brothels and drinking shops to spring up like mushrooms, and making the name of Native Christian in many places synonymous with all that is bad. What, we wonder, would the Guardian say if the shoe were on the other foot and Europeans were being converted “by trick and device” to idolatry? Does it recollect how one such “convert”—an English Captain, was treated some years back; how he was bundled off twice home as a lunatic so as to destroy, if possible, the effect of his example?* The mission house, gentlemen, men, is a glass house, and the fewer stones its occupants throw while still in India, the better.

* [This has reference to a Captain Seymour, regarding whom H.P.B. gives the following account in her serial story “From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan” (Chapter xxii in the original installments as published in the *Russkiy Vestnik* in 1883):

“. . . Some twenty-five years ago, this Captain gave rise in India, and more particularly in the army, to an unprecedented scandal. Captain Seymour, a wealthy and well-educated man, took up the Brahmanical creed and became a yogin! He was of course declared to be insane and, having been caught, was sent back to England. Seymour escaped and returned to India dressed as a sannyâsin. He was caught once more, placed on a steamer, taken to London and locked in a lunatic asylum. Three days later, in spite of bolts and watchmen, he had disappeared from the institution. Some time later he was seen by his acquaintances in Benares, and the Governor received from him a letter from the Himâlayas. He declared in it that he had never been insane, in spite of having been placed in a hospital. He advised the Governor not to meddle in his private affairs any longer, and stated he would never return again to civilized society. “I am a yogin,” he wrote, and expect to obtain before I die what has been the aim of my life, namely, to become a râja-yogin.” The Governor did not understand, but dropped the matter. After that no European ever saw him except Dr. N. C. Paul, who, it is reported, was in communication with him until his last days, and even went twice into the Himâlayas, ostensibly for botanical excursions. . . .”

Dr. N. C. Paul was the author of a rare pamphlet entitled *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy* spoken of elsewhere in the present volume.

It is quite possible that Captain Seymour may have been one of the three Englishmen who, according to Master Koot Hoomi’s statement (*The Mahatma Letters*, p. 19) had been “brought across the threshold” during the nineteenth century, one of them being a Captain Remington.—
Compiler.]

You had better leave the Holkar alone—unless you court troubles. You are here only on sufferance. The Government has not yet forgotten what share of the Mutiny it owes to the missionary editors of the *Friend of India*, who also clamoured for protection to missionary interests. The later instance of the Zulu War is fresh, and the goings-on of the flogging missionaries of Blantyre fresher still in the public mind. The Editor of the *Guardian* is a respected, good, and devoted man, though a missionary; like ourselves he is, we believe, an alien. If he would but reflect a moment he would see that if he is a well-wisher of the Government of India, and would avoid throwing any heavier burdens upon its already over-burdened hands, he ought to abstain from such expressions as those above cited, which plainly tend to stir up discontent and breed perhaps bloody disturbances among a naturally docile and loyal people, passionately devoted to their ancestral religions and intolerant of Governmental interference with the same.

The learned principal of Benares college—Dr. G. Thibaut—has laid us under obligations by the presentation of a copy of the paper “On the *Sûryaprajñapti*”, which he contributed to the journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Vol. XLIX, part I). Dr. Thibaut’s essay upon the curious Jaina cosmological and astronomical system displays all that painstaking elaboration of the details of a subject under study, which is the characteristic of a true man of science, and—a marked trait of German scholars. It is probably within the truth to say that so careful a paper as the present can find but a very small number of appreciative readers in India, where officialism seems to destroy in a great measure the inclination for serious research. If such ripe minds as his would have sympathetic approval and aid they must seek them at home. Here, Badminton holds sway.

Complying with the pressing invitations of our Buddhist brothers, our President, Colonel Olcott, is again on his way to Ceylon. He sailed on April 22, by the steamer Khiva, accompanied by Mr. H. Bruce. F.T.S. (late of Shanghai), a Scotch gentleman connected with the educational line, who will inspect the several Theosophical Buddhist schools, and, perhaps, be induced to remain on the island as Educational Superintendent. The thorough acquaintance of that estimable gentleman with school systems makes it desirable that our Buddhist brethren should not lose such an opportunity; the more so as Mr. Bruce—a freethinker of forty years' standing—is very much opposed to padri proselytism, which in this country is rarely, if ever achieved, through sincere conviction. In Ceylon, converts bribed over to Christ, whether by the prospect of employment, ready cash, or any other worldly boon, are pertinently called “belly Christians.” We doubt whether the confiding victims “at home” who are made to swell the “poor missionary” fund would be much gratified to find out that instead of helping the heathen convert to “Jesus” they helped him to “Mammon.” Out of the two fresh and educated catechumen, we hear, one was coaxed over to “Salvation” by the means it afforded him to cast off his non-Christian wife and marry again, and the other by the prospect of becoming the happy possessor of the few rupees of his padri baptizer by taking his daughter in the bargain. Being a thoroughly honourable man, we trust Mr. Bruce will help to expose such evil practices. We may give some account of the joint work of both the travellers in our next.

THE STATE OF RUSSIA

(From a Correspondent)

[The Pioneer, Allâhâbâd, May 4, 1881]

[In H.P.B.'s Scrapbook, Vol. XI, pp. 81-83, now in the Adyar Archives, there is a pen-and-ink notation at the end of this article which says: "H.P.B.'s article."]

"Heaven save us from beholding a Russian insurrection, senseless and merciless. Those who in our country would bring about all manner of violent revolutions, are either very young men who do not know our people, or they are hardhearted men who value their own necks at a grosh (pie), and other people's at less"; so wrote the great poet Alexander Pushkin fifty years ago, though the words are new, being taken from a fragment of a novel, lately discovered among his unpublished papers.

Letters from the most widely separated regions of Russia, dated during the last days of March, show that a period of three weeks had done but little towards even blunting the impression of March 1st (13th). The national wound gapes as wide, and the feelings of horror and consternation are as acute as on the very day of the crime. If public opinion as to the socialists was divided before, it has now become unanimous, and the Nihilists are doomed by their own people. Thus one correspondent writes:—

Russia is hit to the very depths of her soul. To this day we are unable to familiarize ourselves with the terrible reality! The Czar is killed!! and by whom, great God! By the lowest and the meanest of his empire, by the most dishonourable set of ruffians that ever trod the earth, and in comparison with whom the bloodthirsty Robespierre and Marat appear as the noblest knights, the souls of honour. . . .

Never before did Russia groan under such opprobrium and infamy. There have been “palace regicides” before now—as in the case Peter III and Paul—committed secretly and within the four walls. But the killing of a Czar in full daylight, in his own metropolis, amidst his guards and under the very eyes of a population entirely devoted to him, is a crime hitherto unknown in the annals of Russian history—a crime which covers the whole land with disgrace. Had he died his natural death, then perhaps but few would have sincerely regretted him; for immense as were his benefactions to Russia, great also were his wrongs before his people. . . . It is to his weakness and misplaced indulgence that Russia owes the origin and development of that band of madmen. . . . Instead of destroying them as venomous reptiles, he encouraged them, and forgave them as if they were so many mischievous schoolboys, who had to be brought to repentance by kindness and caresses instead of by severe punishment. And when these favoured children began to murder right and left and ended by stealthily approaching his own person then, hoping that the example of a few would prove a sufficient and a salutary warning to all others, these few were hanged, and every one around the Emperor rested on his laurels. Even those of the Nihilists who had been sentenced to Siberia, were nearly all pardoned and allowed to return, for which act of mercy Europe sent us her high approval. Well, it is they who have now thanked the Czar. Grinevitsky, who threw the second bomb which killed him, and Zhelyabov are both ex-convicts, who, upon being pardoned, had returned but recently from Siberia. Luckily for him the Emperor did not suffer. The nervous system was entirely killed by the shock of the explosion, and he bled to death before they had even reached the palace. But if so happily saved from physical torture, what must have been his mental agony, if but for a few seconds! . . . Two witnesses are there to tell the story. One, Colonel Dvorzhitzky, who was at his heels when he approached Rissakoff, and one of the cadets who lifted up his shattered body into the sleigh. Looking the murderer between the eyes, the Emperor was heard to pronounce in a half-audible whisper . . . “A Russian. . . . Oh God! Again a Russian!” . . . And repeated the words to the Grand Duke Michael when expressing his desire to be taken to die in his own palace.*

* [The individuals referred to in this excerpt are: Nikolay Ivanovich Rissakov (1861-81) who threw the first bomb; I. I. Grinevizky (1856-1881), who threw the second bomb; and Andrey Ivanovich Zhelyabov (1850-81). The latter and Rissakov were executed, while Grinevizky died as a result of the explosion.—Compiler.]

Did the poor victim think at that moment of the terrible secret divulged during the last trial of the sixteen Nihilists—Nov. 6th (Oct. 25th, 1880), known as the Kropotkine murder trial? There was a Pole, one Kobilyansky, among the young criminals; and he had been baffled by his brother conspirators in his ambition to be chosen as the one who would lay low the exalted Imperial head—his nationality alone having been judged a sufficient objection, as the Nihilists did not wish the crime to be attributed to national animosity. And there was the Jew—Goldenberg—Kropotkine’s murderer, who had vainly offered himself as a substitute for Solovioff. But they would not have him on account of his Hebrew nationality and religion. They feared that so desperate a deed might throw too great an odium upon his whole race, which had been held by Christians but too often responsible for crimes committed by individual members belonging to it. “None but a Russian hand should be raised against the head of the Russian people, that the world, well aware how deeply the almost religious feeling of loyalty is rooted in every Russian heart, might, from the enormity of the deed, judge of the magnitude of the provocation and the deadliness of the resolve”. . . . And so he who so loved his people perished by the hand of one of his children.

The other letter is from a high military official attached to the Emperor’s staff. He writes:—

Dreadful and ignominious for all Russia was the end of the defunct Sovereign, yet it seems like one marked by destiny itself, and bears evident signs of fatality upon its face. Those near the late Czar have been quite struck by it, as it is one of those events which impresses a forcible conviction on one’s mind, that each of us has his last hour marked out beforehand, and that come it will, whatever we may do to avert it. . . . Three days previous to the tragic event, the chief leaders of all the previous conspiracies—those who had guided the recent attempts in the mining works and explosions on the Moscow railway and other places—had been discovered and secured, at the same time the plan of a new attempt was divulged. The arrests had led to the fear that the runaway “servant-executioners,” as they are termed, deprived of their chiefs and already armed with dynamite, might hurry on to the achievement of their nefarious object upon their own responsibility: hence it was considered absolutely necessary that the police should be allowed a few more days for the apprehension of the last criminals.

Loris-Melikoff supplicated the Emperor to refrain from quitting the palace for four or five days; he represented the great danger to the Princess Yurievsky (Dolgoroukov), and she in her turn conjured the Czar not to risk his life. Strange to say, even the prayers of the latter were rejected: the Emperor refused. Besides the general sketch of the danger, minute details of the Nihilists' plan were reported by Count Loris-Melikoff to the Czar as already divulged by one of the chiefs. He learnt that it had been decided to stop his carriage by bringing on some accident which would compel him to alight from it, and then to make the last attempt to murder the Czar, the regicide giving up his own life in it of course. All that and much more he knew before leaving the palace. Aware of these details, and warned as he was, how easy, it now seems, to have avoided the catastrophe and frustrated the plot partially, if not wholly. But it so happened that the Emperor went of his own free will to meet, as it were, every step in the premeditated murderous programme; hence his fate. Not only did he drive to the Riding School, but when the first bomb exploded, injuring the carriage, though not disabling it from proceeding further, notwithstanding the supplications of the coachman and the Police Master, who had received beforehand their instructions from Loris-Melikoff to drive, in case of any accident, at full speed to the Palace, and disregarding their remarks that the conspirators were probably numerous, not only did the Czar alight, but he actually walked the distance of about 25 steps from the carriage, mixing with the crowd which had apprehended and surrounded Rissakoff. It was then that the second conspirator, who had already offered his own life in sacrifice to the terrible deed, had a chance of approaching him, and threw the second bomb at his feet. The only neglect that Loris is charged with is, that upon finding the Emperor inexorable in his determination to drive out, he should have insisted upon His Majesty taking not six, but no less than fifty Cossacks in his escort, so as to prevent anyone from approaching the carriage too close, these bombs having to be thrown at a very small distance on account of their weight. But who knew then anything of their nature? And fate does seem unavoidable. The greatest pressure is now being brought on the new Emperor to induce him to shift his headquarters for next Summer, if not for ever, to one of the Moscow suburb palaces. During that time, and when once the new Czar's safety is ensured, Loris-Melikoff hopes to completely rid Russia of that troop of murderous beasts.

It is significant that the people of Moscow and the adjoining provinces, having sent through their representatives their humble supplications to Alexander III to place himself under their protection, are now thronging the churches of "Moscow the Holy," and, blessed and led by the priests, come by thousands to pledge their solemn vows before the holy ikons of their patron saints never to rest so long as there will remain in the Empire one Socialist. And that means an inexorable chase to everyone suspected—death and immediate "Lynch Law" at the hands of the infuriated crowd.

Yet the professed object of the Russian Nihilists, as constantly brought forward by the arrested leaders of the deadly secret organization called “the terrorizing faction,” is the salvation of the Russian people. “The idol we sacrifice to is not self, not personal passion, nor profit,” says Goldenberg in his confessions, alleged to have been written prior to his committing suicide in the Petropavlovskaya Fortress (November 1880), but “the good of society in our beloved Russia.” Often, and unjustly indeed, has the Russian populace been suspected of secret sympathy with their would-be benefactors and redeemers; whereas the truth is that these modern Sardanapali, who, prior to perishing themselves, never fail to destroy dozens of innocent victims, were ever abhorred by the lower classes. For long years have many of these educated young men and women, masqueraded in the garb of working people or peasants, and adopting the ways and language of the working classes of Russia, mixed with their “younger brethren.” By sowing dissatisfaction and filling their heads with revolutionary ideas, they hoped to bring about the much desired result—a revival of the days of terror in our own century—but with no effect. That they have signally failed to convert to, or even impress the lower classes with, their own ideas, is no fault of theirs, but is owing to reasons which Europe does not seem to have well realized yet. The mutual relations between the Czars of Russia and the people are unparalleled in history French Bretagne alone, in its undeviating loyalty and devotion to the Bourbon family throughout the great revolution—nay, even now, amidst Republican France—can afford us a point of comparison. But in neither country does that loyalty rest on the individual merits of the sovereign or the personal affection he inspires. Its cause is to be sought for in their religious fanaticism with which that feeling of loyalty is so deeply intermingled, that to weaken the one is to kill the other. Coronation was in France, and is still in Russia, one of the chief Church Sacraments, and the Czar in the people’s sight is more even than any of the Kings of France ever was—“a Lord’s Elect and His Anointed:” he is thrice sacred.

Religion is the Czar's chief stronghold, without which he would have but a poor chance of security. And that perhaps is the secret of so much outward piety, but too often combined with the greatest moral depravity in the Imperial families. The Russian people were as devoted to Ivan the Terrible, the Russian Nero, and to the half-insane and cruel Paul, as they were to Alexander II, the "Blessed." The infuriated masses sought after and demanded the life of Dr. Mandt, who, as they erroneously supposed, had poisoned Nicholas I; and in the same manner, if only permitted, they will seek now, and pitilessly take the life of every man or woman suspected of Socialism. Only, in the present case, their fury against the sacrilegious regicides is tenfold intensified by the sincere devotion and personal gratitude they feel for him who was their liberator and benefactor. There have been, Russian enthusiasts who, though shuddering at the thought of crime, have not hesitated to regard the criminals as great heroes.

Russia, says Mme. Z. Ragozhin, "has been visited by a virulent paroxysm of that form of political aberration which made so great a patriot and so pure a man as Mazzini an advocate of political murder, and armed the gentle hand of the romantic, tender-souled boy, Sand, with the political dagger." (The last trial of the Nihilists.) The comparison is not a happy one. The murder of Kotzebue involved the death but of one isolated victim, and that of the murderer. But the Russian Nihilists with their last bomb have thrown the spark into the very heart of Russia. They have aroused the sleeping monster—the blind vengeance of the unreasoning masses, and thousands of innocent victims may perish yet. Already two men have been beaten to death in the streets of Moscow for tearing the Emperor's photograph; and the house of Rissakoff's father, in a small provincial town near Moscow, has to be surrounded night and day by a battalion of armed soldiers to protect it from being razed to the ground, and his parents and household from being killed, though the poor old man is on the verge of insanity, and has several times attempted to commit suicide.

The following scene from the preliminary examination of Sophia Perovsky (Hartman's paramour and confederate at the railway attempt at Moscow and the chief conspirator now involved), taken from the St. Petersburg Official Gazette, will illustrate both the national feeling and the broken hopes of the Nihilists.* Owing to the unprecedented nature of the case, the judges appointed are armed with unlimited powers.

The young lady [says the Gazette] showed herself extremely insolent and daring before her judges. Their attempts to elucidate from her some details of the crime with which she is connected, proved utterly useless. Looking them fearlessly in the face, she burst out laughing. When pressed to explain the cause of her hilarity, she exclaimed, "I laugh at your tribunal! You will remain as blind now as your police, before whose very nose I waved my pocket handkerchief while giving the signal to my friends to throw the bomb on the day of Emperor's execution. . . . Having done my work, I quietly retired, and went home without their ever remarking my participation in the final scene. . . . I laugh at you and your police." . . .

"But think of what lies in prospect before you!" . . .

"Gallows? I know that well, and am prepared for it from the first. I laugh at your gallows as I do at you! "

"But think of God. . . . He. . . ."

"I laugh at your God likewise . . . I do not believe in God."

"Woman"!—sternly remarked the Judge—"hold you nothing sacred in the world! What is there, then, you do not laugh at?"

She became suddenly serious. "My people"—she said—"The Russian people—is the only object I do not laugh at; it is my sole divinity and idol!"

* * * * *

The judges after consulting returned—"Prisoner! We will now act according to your own desires. We will put an end to your examination and will not sentence you to any punishment—neither gallows nor even simple exile. We will exempt you altogether from our tribunal; but, taking you to the Palace Square, we will deliver you into the hands and justice of your idol—the Russian people. Let it be your only judge. . . . Gendarmes! Lead the prisoner away."

* [Sophia Lvovna Perovsky (1853-81) was the daughter of the Governor of the St. Petersburg Province. She was executed as a result of the trial of the Nihilists.

Official Gazette, later spoken of as Government Gazette, was the Pravitelstvennaya Gazeta which was the official Journal of the Government at the time.—Compiler.]

A quarter of an hour later, Sophia Perovsky was writhing at the feet of the Imperial Procureur. Outside, near the gates of the Tribunal, the agitated masses of populace were howling, cursing, and threatening, at the prison van which brought the political prisoners for their examination, the soldiers vainly trying to keep the threatening crowds at a distance. "Yes! Yes!" she cried ringing her hands—"I will tell you all, all. . . . Sentence me to whatever torture and death you will. . . . But do, oh, do not deliver me unto the people! . . ."

"What a fearful irony in that popular fury directed against their would-be saviours"—remarks the Gazette. "What a mockery in the presence of these unasked-for, self-constituted patriots and leaders of the people. What a depth of Satanic lying in their high ringing phrases about the people being their only 'idol,' and of idiotic credulity in those who believe in such like phrases!"

THE STATE OF RUSSIA

(From a Correspondent)

[The Pioneer, Allâhâbâd, May 18, 1881]

[In H.P.B.'s Scrapbook, Vol. XI, pp. 85-86, now in the Adyar Archives, there is a pen-and-ink notation at the end of this article which says: "H.P.B.'s article."]

The trial of the regicides is over, and four men, from the scum of Russian society, and one woman belonging to the nobility, have paid the penalty of death. But has the mystery of the tragedy of March 1st (13th) been cleared up by their execution? There is reason to seriously doubt whether anything beyond the personality of the murderers is known to Europe. The Russian Press reporter has to lock up his hard-earned information, with little chance of producing it unless he would bring down disgrace upon himself and his journal; and the foreign "special correspondents," the most hopeless and easiest misled individuals in the Russian metropolis, were permitted to know of the great trial just as much as the Senate would suffer them to learn and no more.

They were only allowed admission on certain days in all the preceding trials, and they found themselves especially unfortunate at the last one. They were forewarned to abstain from publishing reports from their shorthand notes, and had to limit themselves to reproducing the official report of the daily numbers of *Pravitelstvennaya* (Government Gazette). No further back than the last foreign mail, among the numbers of the *Moscow Gazette* for the first week in April (old style)—a paper supposed to contain the fullest and best reports of the trial—we find a copy with two out of its four pages entirely white. Page 3 begins with a word from the middle of a sentence, the preceding columns having been obliterated by the censor. Great and unusual were the precautions taken to ensure secrecy and an undisturbed course of action to the judicial authorities; and though favoured persons, duly warned and furnished with tickets, were admitted in numbers sufficient to fill the vast hall, they were all military and civil officials. Nor should we lose sight of the fact that all the preliminary and most important examinations of criminals and witnesses had been taken secretly, and within the impenetrable precincts of the Chief Justice's office.

Under these circumstances we can never be sure that the news received today will not be fully contradicted tomorrow. Hence, one feels more ready to give credence to information gathered from private letters than to the contradictory, foggy reports we find in most of the papers. The following comes from an eyewitness of the daily events rapidly accumulating and succeeding each other in the "Imperial Chamber of Horrors," as the correspondent expresses it. Strange and incredible as the news may appear, it will not take students of Russian history by surprise, as it is but the continuation of a rumour spread fifteen years back, which has never entirely died out. Owing to new and ugly facts, that rumour now comes out stronger and louder than ever.

It is simply this:—the secret and wealthy hand, one which has constantly eluded grasp and which was always supposed to hold and guide the strings of the miserable and generally foredoomed marionettes known as the “executive agents of the Terrorizing Faction of the Russian Socialists,” is at last recognized. The various gangs of boys and girls—and they are hardly anything else, since out of the sixteen prisoners tried for the Kropotkine murder all were under thirty years, and eight of them under twenty-five—whenever arrested, were found to consist chiefly of penniless students, burghers, and working men; and yet, further investigation discovered invariably that these lads were possessed of very large sums of money. People can hardly be supposed to carry on secret publications on a large scale, to prepare costly mining works in various parts of the country, bombs and infernal machines pronounced by the specialists as expressing “the last word of science,” to journey from end to end of so vast an empire, to foreign countries and back, to buy houses wherein to conspire and prepare their destructive engines, and finally to maintain a host of subaltern agents—all this cannot be done, without having a banker of the Rothschild kind at their backs. The cost of the several chief mining works had been roughly calculated and found enormous. The problem, where could all that money, all these funds which seemed inexhaustible, come from, became lately very perplexing. When once a million of roubles was discovered in the portmanteau of a prisoner, the problem occupied an important place in police investigations, and became the most important one of the day. And now that the question seems answered, there is more than ever a probability that Europe will never know of it; for:

—That unanimous, persistent rumour names unhesitatingly the Grand-Duke Constantine, the late Emperor’s own brother, as the direct and chief conspirator of the regicide. . . .* What object he had in view, or what could be his personal hopes, is hard to tell. The same *vox populi* assures us that at the bottom of that unrelenting, cruel persecution of which the defunct Czar had been chosen the victim, there lay the hope of somehow provoking a general rise, bringing things to a revolution, during which the Grand Duke would first proclaim himself a dictator and then—well, Napoleon the III’s coup d’état was as good a model as any.

* [Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolayevich (1827-1892), second son of Emperor Nicholas I, married to Alexandra Iossifovna, daughter of Prince Saxen-Altenburg.—Compiler.]

And if—adds the same rumour—the ever-watchful, seemingly never discouraged Hydra of Russian Socialism had ever an extra head to raise as soon as the previous one was crushed, it is because of the untold generosity of the man who furnished the funds. Enormous sums of money have been secretly capitalized of late in foreign markets and traced to the Grand Duke, and even the priceless stones from the family ikons in his private chapel, a theft but just discovered, were taken out by no hand of a common thief, but by that of their owner.

It is hard to believe, or even to realize, the dreadful accusation, but such is the unanimous and persistent rumour. And fratricide is no uncommon stepping stone to power in Russian history; ugly facts of the most crushing character have lately transpired which would seem to preclude even the possibility of any further doubt. In the middle of April the circulation of the St. Petersburg Vedomosty was stopped, and its office pounced upon and sealed by the police, only because it had significantly advised these police “instead of making useless perquisitions in small grocery shops and the metropolis dens, to carefully examine and search the cottage on the Millionnaya,” the latter appellation being a nickname for the Grand Duke Constantine’s palace in that locality. It is positively known, too, that General Trepoff, the would-be victim of Vera Zassulitch,* acting on what he considered unimpeachable testimony, had repeatedly insisted that the late Emperor should grant him permission to make a secret search in his brother’s palace, but that the Czar had most emphatically refused, telling Trepoff that he was mad. At last, the latter managed to procure and bring the Emperor’s letter, in which the Grand Duke was so seriously compromised that upon reading it the unfortunate sovereign granted him the long-sought-for permission. But it came too late. Evidently there were spies on the Emperor’s premises; for, when General Trepoff went to the suspected palace in the dead of the night, and but a few hours after the permission had been granted, he found that the inner portions of a large cupboard and of an iron safe inside it, in which the Grand Duke kept his private correspondence, had been in some mysterious way, burnt to ashes.

* [Vera Ivanovna Zassulich (1851-1919) who was acquitted in connection with the attempted assassination of General D.Th. Trepov (1855-1906).—Compiler.]

When in the presence of his select agents Trepoff opened it, there was nothing to be seen but a thick cloud of smoke, and the seekers merely burnt their fingers with the heated metal of the safe. This manoeuvre served to obliterate every vestige of damaging proof; and the episode had to be hushed up. Another no less significant, though not a direct proof, is furnished by the Grand Duke's son. When he had robbed his mother of her diamonds, and had fought a fist duel in which he successfully thrashed his father—for which double feat of valour he was banished and remains to this day in exile—he wrote to the Emperor pleading for mercy, which was refused. Since then he wrote several letters to the late Czar, his uncle, as well as to his cousin, the present Emperor. They were read by Princess Dolgoroukov; and, as she never was distinguished for either tact or discretion, their contents were blurted out by her in a family broil, and thus became the joint property of the court gossip. The young Grand Duke, while pleading guilty of the theft, said that he had only saved the diamonds from worse hands than his—those of the Nihilists. He declared that he personally was and would ever remain His Majesty's most faithful and loyal subject, while his father and mother were but two traitors who conspired against the Czar's life. It is now proved for a certainty that on the day of regicide the Emperor, yielding to the entreaties of both Loris-Melikoff and Dolgoroukov, would probably have remained at home, had not the Grand Duke Constantine's wife suddenly thwarted Loris-Melikoff's plans. The Grand Duchess Alexandra Iossifovna, or "Madame Constantine" as she is called, touched the Czar's pride to the quick by remarking that "were he to abstain from showing himself on that day, the people might suspect His Majesty of being a coward." That was enough, and the Emperor drove to his doom. It is a well-known fact that ever since March 5th (17th) she has been kept a prisoner in her palace, no one being allowed to see her but in the presence of a high official, who is said to sleep in a room next to her own bed chamber.

Then there is the fact of their eldest son, the Grand Duke Nikolay Constantinovitch being publicly arrested on the open accusation of being implicated with the Nihilists. Moreover the high office of the Amiralen-Chef held by the Grand Duke Constantine since his very childhood has been suddenly abolished, and the official Government paper has notified all Russia of it. Again, at the time when the dining room in the Winter Palace was blown up, the whole of the Imperial family was present during the catastrophe except the Grand Duke Constantine; who had, on the pretext of some business two hours before, left for Cronstadt. Nor was he at St. Petersburg on March the 1st (13th), having most unexpectedly gone again to the same place on the previous night, returning to the metropolis but three days later, pretending as an excuse a sudden and serious attack of illness upon hearing of the fearful event. Lastly, Zhelyabov is said to have made at the last hour, and hoping thereby to save his own life, a most positive and unequivocal revelation that the funds of the Russian Socialists were furnished to them by the Grand Duke.

Among other erroneous information given out by the St. Petersburg Press is the statement that Princess Yurievsky (Dolgoroukov), the late Czar's wife, had been banished.*

* [Princess Katherine Mihailovna Dolgorukova was born November 14/26, 1847. She was the daughter of Prince Mihail Mihailovich Dolgoroukov and his wife Vera Gavrilovna, née Vishnevitzky, being therefore a direct descendant of Prince Rurik through the canonized Princes Vladimir (d. 1015) and Mihail of Chernigov (c. 1179-1246); she belonged to the same Elder Line of the Dolgoroukov Family as H.P.B.'s own grandmother, Princess Helena Pavlovna Dolgoroukov. Princess Katherine was therefore a distant relative of H.P.B.

Emperor Alexander II had known her since she was a child of only ten years. After the death of her parents, Katherine and her sister Marie were educated in the famous Smolny Institute at St. Petersburg at the expense of the Emperor himself, who had taken personal charge of the welfare of the entire family (the girls had four brothers). Very soon after her graduation, the strong tie which had existed between the Emperor and Katherine from the very first ripened into love. The story of this rather remarkable union is quite unique.

The story told in the letters we quote is quite different. Half insane with terror after the announced death of the Emperor, ordering her winter carriage, she rushed into it alone, unperceived in the great tumult, and commanded the coachmen to drive her “across the frontier”—anywhere but near the palaces. After hours of aimless driving the old and faithful coachman, perceiving that she had fallen from exhaustion and weeping into a kind of stupor, quietly drove her back to the Winter Palace and delivered her safely to her affrighted ladies-of-honour, who knew not where she had gone. An hour later the young Emperor, who had heard of her attempt to escape, came to her room and begged for admission. The poor woman was terribly frightened, but soon found out her mistake.

It withstood all criticism, enmity and even scandal. Princess Katherine gave birth to three children, one son and two daughters, by the Emperor, and acted for many years as his counsellor and refuge in times of stress and trials. Hardly a month after the death of his legitimate wife, the Empress Marie Alexandrovna, in June of 1880, the Emperor married Princess Katherine and by Imperial Ukaz secured for her the name of Princess Yuryevsky which was to be the name of their descendants as well. There is ample historical and documentary evidence to support the belief that the Emperor was about to crown Katherine as an Empress, when he fell the victim of a terrorist's bomb.

Eventually, Princess Yuryevsky and her three children went to Paris where she was completely absorbed in their education. In later years she lived a great deal of her time at Nice, France, where she died February 15, 1922, hardly noticed at all.

The role which Princess Katherine played in the enlightened and liberal policies and plans of Emperor Alexander II was far-reaching and constructive, and it is obvious that her influence upon him was of a nature which smoothed many an asperity in his life and provided a haven from the outrageous accusations and enmity which were piled upon a ruler who was at heart humane and idealistic, often the victim of those whose utter selfishness could not be dispelled by either ideals or generous action.

While very little has ever been written about Princess Yuryevsky attention should be drawn to the following two works: *Le Roman tragique de l'Empereur Alexandre II*, by Maurice Paléologue, French Ambassador to Russia (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1923; 154 pp., illus.) and *Katia*, by Princess Marthe Bibesco (transl. by Priscilla Bibesco. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1939; xix, 256 pp., illus.).—Compiler.]

When the old Czar, sinning against all social and religious laws, had married her on the fortieth day after the death of the Empress, great had been the public indignation. His children felt terribly annoyed, though it is now urged that the poor man must have been feeling there was no time to lose; and the prospect of the Princess being soon publicly recognized and crowned, she having prevailed upon the Emperor to fix the ceremony for next May—a determination declared by the Czar himself—was not likely to smooth the ill-feeling between the parties. But now, when the terrible blow had fallen alike upon the guilty and the innocent and Alexander III had nothing more to fear, his feelings underwent a total change. In the sincerity of his filial grief he determined to honour the memory of the martyred Czar, by showing respectful and friendly feelings to his widow, the woman his father had so devotedly loved. And so, no sooner had he entered the room than he went to the hysterically-screaming Princess, and tenderly embracing her he pledged his word of honour to forget the past and love and honour her as his father's widow. "I solemnly promise to you to do all I can for you and your children—my brothers," he added. The young Empress was also summoned, and a full reconciliation ensued on that day. And now the morganatic Empress is installed in the Winter Palace for ever, and made sole mistress of it; the Emperor deciding to remain in "Anitchkoff," while the Imperial abode is to be used only on the great Court ceremonies and festival days.

Meanwhile the state of Russia is as bad, and its future as black and uncertain as ever. That neither the Nihilists, nor the people they are supposed to work for, will benefit by the murder may be inferred from the words pronounced by Alexander III a short time before the catastrophe:—"I will not follow in the steps of my father when I become the Czar, but rather in those of my grand-father," he was heard to say.

"And now the public is in ceaseless agony," concludes the correspondent, "lest they should also kill our new Emperor.

The death of the late Czar—monstrous infamy, a dishonour and an eternal disgrace as it was for Russia—cannot yet be looked upon as a national misfortune. But if his son is murdered the crime is sure to fall as a most terrible calamity upon the whole land. For the present Czarevitch being but a boy, we would have as Regent the Grand Duke Vladimir; and regency in Russia is historically known to have never brought aught else but public disasters. . . . Our Emperor is frightfully changed. . . . Last night I saw him coming down from his apartments. Pale, thin, and careworn, he already looks more like his shadow than the hale strong fellow he used to look two months ago, and the young Empress looks still worse. A regular panic has seized even upon the little children. One night the little Grand Duke George, late in the evening, escaped from his nurses and came running all in tears to his father, loudly screaming, ‘Papa, papa, let us go away! Oh! do let us run away to England and to aunt Alexandra; but not by rail—or we shall be blown up in the air as grandfather was. . . . Let us escape in a balloon, and they will not reach us.’ The nurses and ladies-in-waiting were all silently weeping around the child. And such scenes occur daily!”

COMPILER’S NOTE

[It is to this period that belongs chronologically H.P.B.’s Russian story, “Durbar v Lahore” (Durbâr in Lahore) which was published in the Moscow journal *Russkiy Vestnik* (Russian Messenger).

The first installment of this serial story was published in Vol. 153, May, 1881, pp. 5-38. The publication was continued in the June issue of the same Volume, pp. 584-613, and concluded in Vol. 154, July, 1881, pp. 171-218.

The complete English translation of this story may be found, together with the translation of other Russian stories from the pen of H.P.B., in separate volumes of the present Series.—Compiler.]



ALEXANDER II, EMPEROR OF RUSSIA
1818-1881

Reproduced from Velikaya Reforma, Moscow, 1911, Vol. V.



PRINCESS KATHERINE MIHAILOVNA DOLGORUKOV
1847-1922

Given by Imperial Decree the name of Princess Yuryevsky.

A PSYCHIC WARNING

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 9, June, 1881, pp. 187-188]

[Mr. A. Constantine of Agra wrote to the Editor asking for enlightenment as to the following psychic phenomenon: he and a very close and intimate friend were employed in the same Government office. They had arranged to go together during the next holiday for a visit to Meerut; but at the last moment the friend backed out on the ground that he had, for health reasons, to take his family to Rambagh (a sanitarium on the other side of Agra). On parting the friend shook hands with Mr. Constantine and again expressed his regret, saying that though absent in body, he would be present with him in thought and spirit. Mr. Constantine duly went to Meerut; but on the morning of the third day of his stay there, a curious sensation came suddenly over him; he felt dull and melancholy, and told his brother-in-law, at whose house he was staying, that he must return to Agra immediately. In spite of the remonstrances of his relatives, his urge to return made him insist on going straight home, to find on arriving at Agra that his friend had died suddenly at Rambagh that very morning, about the time when the impulse to return had first seized him.]

Note by the Editor.—No need of attributing the above “warning” to anything supernatural. Many and varied are the psychic phenomena in life, which unintentionally or otherwise are either attributed to the agency of disembodied “spirits” or entirely and intentionally ignored. By saying this we do not intend at all depriving the spiritual theory of its *raison d’être*. But beside that theory there exist other manifestations of the same psychic force in man’s daily life, which are generally disregarded or erroneously looked upon as a result of simple chance or coincidence for the only reason that we are unable to forthwith assign for them a logical and comprehensive cause, though the manifestations undoubtedly bear the impress of a scientific character, evidently belonging, as they do, to that class of psycho-physiological phenomena which even men of great scientific attainments and such specialists as Dr. Carpenter are now busying themselves with.

The cause for this particular phenomenon is to be sought in the occult (yet no less undeniable for it) influence exercised by the active will of one man over the will of another man, whenever the will of the latter is surprised in a moment of rest or a state of passiveness. We speak now of presentiments. Were every person to pay close attention—in an experimental and scientific spirit, of course—to his daily action and watch his thoughts, conversation and resultant acts, and carefully analyse these, omitting no details, trifling as they might appear to him, then would he find for most of these actions and thoughts coinciding reasons based upon mutual psychic influence between the embodied intelligences.

Several instances, more or less familiar to everyone through personal experience, might be here adduced. We will give but two. Two friends or even simple acquaintances are separated for years. Suddenly one of them—he who remained at home and who may have never thought of the absent person for years, thinks of that individual. He remembers him without any possible cause or reason, and the long forgotten image sweeping through the silent corridors of MEMORY brings it before his eyes as vividly as if he were there. A few minutes after that, an hour perhaps, that absent person pays the other an unexpected visit. Another instance—A lends to B a book. B having read and laid it aside thinks no more of it, though A requested him to return the work immediately after perusal. Days, perhaps months after that, B's thought occupied with important business, suddenly reverts to the book, and he remembers his neglect. Mechanically he leaves his place and stepping to his library gets it out, thinking to send it back without fail this once. At the same moment, the door opens, A enters, telling that he had come purposely to fetch his book, as he needed it. Coincidence?

Not at all. In the first case it was the thought of the traveller, which, as he had decided upon visiting an old friend or acquaintance, was concentrated upon the other man, and that thought by its very activity proved energetic enough to overpower the then passive thought of the other. The same explanation stands good in the case of A and B. But Mr. Constantine may argue, “my late friend’s thought could not influence mine since he was already dead, when I was being irresistibly drawn to Agra.” Our answer is ready. Did not the warmest friendship exist between the writer and the deceased? Had not the latter promised to be with him in “thought and spirit”? And that leads to the positive inference that his thought was strongly preoccupied before his death, with him whom he had unintentionally disappointed. Sudden as may have been that death, thought is instantaneous and more rapid still. Nay, it surely was a hundredfold intensified at the moment of death. Thought is the last thing that dies or rather fades out in the human brain of a dying person, and thought, as demonstrated by science, is material, since it is but a mode of energy, which itself changes form but is eternal. Hence, that thought whose strength and power are always proportionate to its intensity, became, so to say, concrete and palpable, and with the help of the strong affinity between the two, it enveloped and overpowered the whole sentient and thinking principle in Mr. Constantine, subjecting it entirely, and forcing the will of the latter to act in accordance with his desire. The thinking agent was dead, and the instrument lay shattered for ever. But its last sound lived, and could not have completely died out, in the waves of ether. Science says, the vibration of one single note of music will linger on in motion through the corridors of all eternity; and theosophy, the last thought of the dying man changes into the man himself; it becomes his eidôlon. Mr. Constantine would not have surprised us, nor would he have indeed deserved being accused by the skeptical of either superstition or of having labored under a hallucination had he even seen the image, or the so-called “ghost” of his deceased friend before him. For that “ghost” would have been neither the conscious spirit nor the soul of the dead man; but simply his short—for one instant—materialized thought projected unconsciously and by the sole power of its own intensity in the direction of him who occupied that THOUGHT.

APOLLONIUS TYANAEUS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 9, June, 1881, pp. 188-189]

In the History of the Christian Religion to the Year Two Hundred, by Charles B. Waite, A.M., announced and reviewed in the Banner of Light (Boston), we find portions of the work relating to the great thaumaturgist of the second century A.D.—Apollonius of Tyana, the rival of whom had never appeared in the Roman Empire.

[“Apollonius Tyanaeus was the most remarkable character of that period. . . . Before his birth, Proteus, an Egyptian god, appeared to his mother and announced that he was to be incarnated in the coming child.”]*

This is a legend which, in days of old, made of every remarkable character a “son of God” miraculously born of a virgin. And what follows is history.

[In his youth, Apollonius was famous for his personal beauty, his mental powers and his ascetic life. When nearly 100 years old, he was brought before the Emperor at Rome, accused of being an enchanter; he was thrown into prison from which he vanished, and was met that same day by his friends at Puteoli, three days’ journey from Rome.]

Some writers tried to make Apollonius appear a legendary character, while pious Christians will persist in calling him an impostor. Were the existence of Jesus of Nazareth as well attested by history and he himself half as well known to classical writers as was Apollonius, no sceptic could doubt today the very being of such a man as the Son of Mary and Joseph.

* [pp. 90, 92.]

Apollonius of Tyana was the friend and correspondent of a Roman Empress and several Emperors, while of Jesus no more remained on the pages of history than as if his life had been written on the desert sands. His letter to Abgarus, the prince of Edessa, the authenticity of which is vouchsafed for by Eusebius alone—the Baron Munchausen of the patristic hierarchy—is called in *A View of the Evidences of Christianity* “an attempt at forgery” even by Paley himself, whose robust faith accepts the most incredible stories. Apollonius, then, is a historical personage; while many even of the Apostolic Fathers themselves, placed before the scrutinizing eye of historical criticism, begin to flicker and many of them fade out and disappear like the “will o’-the-wisp” or the ignis fatuus.*

* [The most impartial and friendly account of the life and work of Apollonius of Tyana is the one by G.R.S. Mead, H.P.B.’s helper and renowned scholar, whose work is entitled *Apollonius of Tyana. The Philosopher of the First Century A.D.* (London and Benares: Theos. Publ. Society, 1901, 160 pp. 8vo.; 2nd ed., New York: University Books, 1966, xxii, 168 pp., with a valuable Foreword by Leslie Shepard.) Mead’s work analyses the value of Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius*; summarizes the worth of the various accounts that have come down to us from ancient days, and gives all pertinent bibliographical data on the subject. It is well documented, written in an easy style, and presents a well-rounded picture of the epoch in which Apollonius lived.

The reference to Eusebius is to his *Ecclesiastical History*, I, 13, where the spurious exchange of letters between Jesus and Abgarus is mentioned.—Compiler.]

LAMAS AND DRUSES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 9, June, 1881, pp. 193-196]

Mr. L. Oliphant’s new work *Land of Gilead* attracts considerable attention. Reviews appeared some time since, but we had to lay the subject aside until now for lack of space. We will now have something to say, not of the work itself—though justice can hardly be sufficiently done to the writings of that clever author—but of what he tells us respecting the Druses—those mystics of Mount Lebanon of whom so little is known. We may, perchance, shed some new light on the subject.

The Druse [Mr. Oliphant thinks] has a firm conviction that the end of the world is at hand. Recent events have so far tallied with the enigmatical prophecies of his sacred books, that he looks forward to the speedy resurrection of al-Hakim, the founder and divine personage of the sect. In order to comprehend this, the connection between China and Druse theology has to be remembered. The souls of all pious Druses are supposed to be occupying in large numbers certain cities in the west of China. The end of the world will be signalized by the approach of a mighty army from the East against the contending powers of Islam and Christianity. This army will be under the command of the Universal Mind, and will consist of millions of Chinese Unitarians. To it Christians and Mohammedans will surrender and march before it to Mecca. Al-Hakim will then appear, at his command the Kaaba will be demolished by fire from Heaven, and the resurrection of the dead will take place. Now that Russia has come into collision with China, the Druses see the fulfilment of their sacred prophecies, and are eagerly waiting for an Armageddon in which they believe themselves destined to play a prominent part.—The Pioneer

Mr. Lawrence Oliphant is, in our opinion, one of England's best writers. He is also more deeply acquainted with the inner life of the East than most of the authors and travellers who have written upon the subject—not even excepting Captain and Mrs. Burton. But even his acute and observing intellect could hardly fathom the secret of the profoundly mystical beliefs of the Druses. To begin with al-Hakim is not the founder of their sect. Their ritual and dogmas were never made known, but to those who have been admitted into their brotherhood. Their origin is next to unknown. As to their external religion, or rather what has transpired of it, that can be told in a few words. The Druses are believed to be a mixture of Kurds, Mardi-Arabs, and other semi-civilized tribes. We humbly maintain that they are the descendants of, and a mixture of, mystics of all nations—mystics, who, in the face of cruel and unrelenting persecution by the orthodox Christian Church and orthodox Islamism, have ever since the first centuries of the Mohammedan propaganda, been gathered together, and who gradually made a permanent settlement in the fastnesses of Syria and Mount Lebanon, where they had from the first found refuge.

Since then, they have preserved the strictest silence upon their beliefs and truly occult rites. Later on, their warlike character, great bravery, and unity of purpose which made their foes, whether Mussulmans or Christians, equally fear them, helped them toward forming an independent community, or, as we may term it, an imperium in imperio. They are the Sikhs of Asia Minor, and their polity offers many points of similarity with the late “common wealth” of the followers of Guru Nanak—even extending to their mysticism and indomitable bravery. But the two are still more closely related to a third and still more mysterious Community of religionists, of which nothing, or next to nothing, is known by outsiders: we mean that fraternity of Tibetan Lamaists, known as the Brotherhood of Khelang,* who mix but little with the rest. Even Csoma de Körös, who passed several years with the Lamas, learned hardly more of the religion of these Chakravartins (wheel-turners) than what they chose to let him know of their exoteric rites; and of the Khelangs he learned positively nothing.

The mystery that hangs over the scriptures and religion of the Druses is far more impenetrable than that connected with the Amritsar and Lahore “Disciples,” whose Granth is well known, and has been translated into European languages more than once. Of the alleged forty-five sacred books† of the Lebanon mystics, none were ever seen, let alone examined, by any European scholar.

* [This Brotherhood has not been identified, in spite of considerable research. It is not definitely known what H.P.B. meant by this term, which she uses in several places, among them in *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 618.—Compiler.]

† The work presented by Nasr-Allah to the French King as a portion of the Druse Scriptures, and translated by Pétis de la Croix in 1701—is pronounced a forgery. Not one of the copies now in the possession of the Bodleian, Vienna, or Vatican Libraries is genuine, and besides, each of them is a copy from the other. Great was always the curiosity of the travellers and greater yet the efforts of the indomitable and ever-prying missionary, to penetrate behind the veil of Druse worship, but all have resulted in failure. The strictest secrecy as to the nature of their beliefs, the peculiar rites practiced in their subterranean Khalwehs, and the contents of their canonical books was enjoined upon their followers by H’amza and Boha-eddin, the chief and first disciple of the former.

Many manuscripts have never left the underground Khalwehs (place of religious meeting) invariably built under the meeting-room on the ground floor, and the public Thursday assemblies of the Druses are simply blinds intended for overcurious travellers and neighbours.

Verily a strange sect are the “Disciples of H’amza,” as they call themselves. Their ‘Uqqâls or spiritual teachers besides having, like the Sikh Akâli, the duty of defending the visible place of worship, which is merely a large, unfurnished room, are also the guardians of the Mystical Temple, and the “wise men,” or the initiates of their mysteries, as their name of ‘Uqqâl implies; Aql being in Arabic” intelligence” or “wisdom.” It is improper to call them Druses, as they regard it as an insult; nor are they in reality the followers of Darazi, a heretical pupil of H’amza, but the true disciples of the latter. The origin of that personage who appeared among them in the eleventh century, coming from Central Asia, and whose secret or “mystery” name is “al-Hamma,” is quite unknown to our European scholars. His spiritual titles are “Universal Source, or Mind,” “Ocean of Light,” and “Absolute or Divine Intelligence.” They are, in short, repetitions of those of the Tibetan Taley-Lama, whose appellation “Path to the Ocean,”* means, Path or “Way to the Ocean of Light” (Intelligence) or Divine Wisdom—both titles being identically the same. It is curious that the Hebrew word Lamad should also mean “the God-taught.”

* “Lama” means path or road in the vulgar Tibetan language, but in that figurative sense it conveys the meaning of way; as the “way to wisdom or salvation.” Strangely enough it also means “cross.” It is the Roman figure X or ten, the emblem of perfection or perfect number, and stood for ten with the Egyptians, Chinese, Phoenicians, Romans, etc. It is also found in the Mexican secular calendars. The Tatars call it lama from the Scytho-Turanian word lamh, hand (from the number of fingers on both hands), and it is synonymous with the Yod of the Chaldees, “and thus it became the name of a cross and of the high priest of the Tatars, and of the Lamaic Messenger of God,” says the author [E.V.H. Kenealy] of *The Book of God: An Introduction to the Apocalypse* [p. 458]. With the Irish, luam signifies the head of the Church, a spiritual chief.

An English Orientalist recently found that the religion of Nanak had a good deal of Buddhism in it. (Art. "Diwali" in *Calcutta Review*.) This would be only natural since the Empire of Hindostan is the land of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. But that the religion of the Druses, between whose geographical and ethnological position and that of the Hindus there is an abyss, should be so, is far more incomprehensible and strange. Yet it is a fact. They are more Lamaists in their beliefs and certain rites, than any other people upon the face of the globe. The fact may be contradicted, but it will be only because Europe knows next to nothing of either. Their system of government is set down as feudal and patriarchal, while it is as theocratic as that of the Lamaists—or as that of the Sikhs—as it used to be. The mysterious representation of the Deity appears in H'amza, whose spirit is said to guide them, and periodically reincarnate itself in the person of the chief 'Uqqâl of the Druses, as it does in the Guru-Kings of the Sikhs, some of whom, like Guru Govind, claimed to be the reincarnations of Nanak, while the Taley-Lamas of Tibet claim to be those of Buddha. The latter, by the way, are loosely called Shaberons and Hubilgans (both in various degrees reincarnations, not of Buddha, the MAN, but of his Buddha-like divine spirit) by Abbé Huc and others without any regard to the difference in the appellation: al-Hamma or H'amza came from the "Land of the Word of God." Where was that land? Swedenborg, the Northern seer, advised his followers to search for the LOST WORD, among the hierophants of Tartary, Tibet and China. To this we may add a few explanatory and corroborative facts. Lhasa, the theocratic metropolis of Tibet, is commonly translated as "God-land," that is to say, this is the only English equivalent that we can find.*

* And a most unsatisfactory term it is, as the Lamaists have no conception of the anthropomorphic deity which the English word "God" represents. Fo or Buddha (the latter name being quite unknown to the common people) is their equivalent expression for that All-embracing, Superior Good, or Wisdom from which all proceeds, as does the light from the sun, the cause being nothing personal, but simply an Abstract Principle. And it is this that in all our theosophical writing, for the want of a better word, we have to term "God-like" and "Divine."

Though separated by the Karakorum range and little Tibet, the great Tibet is on the same Asiatic plateau in which our Biblical scholars designate the tableland of Pamir* as the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of the mythical Adam. Tibet or Ti-Boutta, will yield, etymologically, the words Ti, which is the equivalent for God in Chinese, and Buddha, or wisdom: the land, then, of the Wisdom-Deity, or of the incarnations of Wisdom. It is also called “Bod-Yid.” Now “Yid” and “Yod” are synonymous apocalyptic and phallic names for the Deity—YOD being the Hebrew name for God. G. Higgins shows in his *Celtic Druids* the Welsh Druids altering the name of Bod-Yid into Budd-ud which with them meant the “wisdom of Yid” or what people now call “god.”†

The religion of the Druses is said to be a compound of Judaism, Mohammedanism and Christianity, strongly tinged with Gnosticism and the Magian system of Persia. Were people to call things by their right names, sacrificing all self-conceit to truth, they might confess things otherwise. They could say, for instance, that Mohammedanism, being a compound of Chaldeism, Christianity and Judaism; Christianity, a mixture of Judaism, Gnosticism and Paganism; and Judaism a wholesale Egypto-Chaldean Kabalism, masquerading under invented names and fables, made to fit the bits and scraps of the real history of the Israelite tribes—the religious system of the Druses would then be found one of the last survivals of the archaic Wisdom-Religion. It is entirely based on that element of practical mysticism of which branches have from time to time sprung into existence.

* There are several Pamirs in Central Asia. There is the Alichur Pamir which lies more north than either—the Great Pamir with Victoria Lake in its vicinity, Taghdumbash Pamir and the Little Pamir, more south; and eastward another chain of Pamir dividing Muztagh Pass and Little Guhjal. We would like to know on which of these we have to look for the garden of Eden?

† The name in Hebrew for sanctuary is Thebah, which also means a “vessel,” the “ark” of Noah and the floating cradle of Moses.

[As to the derivation of the term Tibet, it should be borne in mind that the land is known to the natives as Bod or Bod-yul. In colloquial pronunciation the word is aspirated into Bhöd or Bhöt. The term Tö-bhöt means “high plateau-land.—Compiler.]

They pass under the unpopular names of Kabalism, Theosophy and Occultism. Except Christianity which, owing to the importance it gives to the principal prop of its doctrine of Salvation (we mean the dogma of Satan), had to anathematize the practice of theurgy—every religion, including Judaism and Mohammedanism, credits these above-named branches. Civilization having touched with its materialistic, all-levelling, and all-destroying hand even India and Turkey, amid the din and chaos of crumbling faiths and old sciences, the reminiscence of archaic truths is now fast dying out. It has become popular and fashionable to denounce “the old and mouldy superstitions of our forefathers”; verily even among the most natural allies of the students of theurgy or occultism—the Spiritualists. Among the many creeds and faiths striving to follow the cyclic tide, and helping it themselves to sweep away the knowledge of old, strangely blind to the fact, that the same powerful wave of materialism and modern science also sweeps away their own foundations—the only religions which have remained as alive as ever to these forgotten truths of old, are those which from the first have kept strictly aloof from the rest. The Druses, while outwardly mixing with Moslems and Christians alike, ever ready to read the Koran as well as the Gospels in their Thursday public meetings, have never allowed an uninitiated stranger to penetrate the mysteries of their own doctrines. Intelligence* alone communicates to the soul (which with them is mortal, though it survives the body) the enlivening and divine spark of the Supreme Wisdom or al-Tamîmî—they say—but it must be screened from all non-believers in H’amza. The work of the soul is to seek wisdom, and the substance of earthly wisdom is to know Universal Wisdom, or “God,” as other religionists call that principle.

* The Druses divide man into three principles: body, soul and intelligence—the “Divine Spark,” which Theosophists call “spirit.”

This is the doctrine of the Buddhists and Lamaists who say “Buddha” where the Druses say “Wisdom”—one word being the translation of the other.* “In spite of their external adoption of the religious customs of the Moslems, of their readiness to educate their children in Christian schools, their use of the Arabic language, and of their free intercourse with strangers, the Druses remain even more than the Jews a peculiar people”—says a writer. They are very rarely if ever converted; they marry within their own race; and adhere most tenaciously to their traditions, baffling all efforts to discover their cherished secrets. Yet they are neither fanatical, nor do they covet proselytes.

In his *Travels in Tartary, Thibet and China*, Huc speaks with great surprise of the extreme tolerance and even outward respect shown by the Tibetans to other religions. A grand Lama, or a “Living Buddha,” as he calls him, whom the two missionaries met at Choang-Long, near Kumbum, certainly had the best of them in good breeding as well as tact and deference to their feelings. The two Frenchmen, however, neither understood nor appreciated the act, since they seemed quite proud of the insult offered by them to the Hubilgan. “We were waiting for him . . . seated on the kang . . . and purposely did not rise to receive him, but merely made him a slight salutation”—boasts Huc (Vol. I ch. xii). The Grand Lama “did not appear disconcerted” though; upon seeing that they as “purposely” withheld from him “an invitation to sit down,” he only looked at them “surprised,” as well he might. A breviary of theirs having attracted his attention, he demanded “permission to examine it”; and then, carrying it “solemnly to his brow,” he said: “It is your book of prayer; we must always honour and reverence other people’s prayers.” It was a good lesson, yet they understood it not. We would like to see that Christian missionary who would reverently carry to his brow the Vedas, the Tripitaka, or the Granth, and publicly honour other people’s prayers!

* [This statement is apt to lead to some confusion. The verbal root budh means to enlighten, to know; Budha means a wise man. Buddha the past participle-form of budh, means “enlightened.” The term bodha means innate understanding and intelligence, the capacity of spiritual perception, and is derived from the verb-root budh which also means “to awaken.” It is the term bodhi, derived from the same root, which means “illumination” or “perfect wisdom.”—Compiler.]

While the Tibetan “savage,” the heathen Hubilgan, was all affability and politeness, the two French “Lamas of Jehovah,” as Abbé Huc called his companion and himself, behaved like two uneducated bullies. And to think that they even boast of it in print!

No more than the Druses do the Lamaists seek to make proselytes. Both people have their “schools of magic”—those Tibet being attached to some la-khang (lamasery), and those among the Druses in the closely guarded crypts of initiation, no stranger being even allowed inside the buildings. As the Tibetan Hubilgans are the incarnations of Buddha’s spirit, so the Druse ‘Uqqâls—erroneously called “Spiritualists” by some writers—are the incarnations of H’amza. Both peoples have a regular system of passwords and signs of recognition among the neophytes, and we know them to be nearly identical since they are partially those of the Theosophists.

In the mystical system of the Druses there are five “messengers” or interpreters of the “Word of the Supreme Wisdom,” who occupy the same position as the five chief Bodhisattvas, or Hubilgans of Tibet, each of whom is the bodily temple of the spirit of one of the five Buddhas. Let us see what can be made known of both classes. The names of the five principal Druse “messengers,” or rather their titles—as these names are generic, in both the Druse and Tibetan hierarchies, and the title passes at the death of each to his successor—are:

(1) H’amza,* or al-Hamma,” (spiritual wisdom) considered as the Messiah, through whom speaks Incarnate Wisdom.

* Very curiously the Druses identify their H’amza with Hemsâ, the Prophet Mohammed’s uncle, who, they say, tired of the world and its deceitful temptations, simulated death at the battle of Ohod, A.D. 625, and retired to the fastnesses of a great mountain in Central Asia where he became a saint. He never died in spirit. When several centuries after that he appeared among them it was in his second spiritual body, and when their Messiah had, after founding the brotherhood, disappeared, Salâma and Boha-eddin were the only ones to know the retreat of their Master. They alone knew the bodies into which he went on, successively reincarnating himself—as he is not permitted to die until the return of the Highest Messenger, the last one of the ten avatars. He alone—the now invisible but expected one—stands higher than H’amza. But, it is not, as erroneously believed, “al-Hakim,” the Fatimite Khalif of bad name.

(2) Ismail—al-Tamîmî—the universal soul). He prepares the Druses before their initiation to receive “wisdom.”

(3) Mohammed—the Word). His duty is to watch over the behaviour and necessities of the brethren—a kind of Bishop.

(4) Salâma, (the “Preceding”) called the “Right Wing”

(5) Mokshatana Boha-eddin, (the “Following”) named the “Left Wing.”

These last are both messengers between H’amza and the Brotherhood. Above these living mediators who remain ever unknown to all but the chief ‘Uqqâls stand the ten Incarnates of the “Supreme Wisdom,” the last of whom is to return at the end of the cycle, which is fast approaching—though no one but al-Hamma knows the day—that last “messenger” in accordance with the cyclic recurrences of events being also the first who came with H’amza, hence Boha-eddin. The names of the Druse Incarnations are Ali A-llal who appeared in India (Kabir we believe); Albar in Persia; Alya in Yemen; Moill and Kahim, in Eastern Africa; Moessa and Had-di in Central Asia; Albou and Manssour in China; and Buddea, that is, Boha-eddin* in Tartary, whence he came and whither he returned. This last one, some say, was dual-sexed on earth. Having entered into al-Hakim—the Khalif, a monster of wickedness—he brought him to be assassinated, and then sent H’amza to preach and to found the Brotherhood of Lebanon. Al-Hakim then is but a mask. It is Buddea, i.e., Boha-eddin they expect.†

* One of the names of Minerva, Goddess of Wisdom, was Budea.

† In the Druse system there is no room for a personal deity, unless a portion of the divine impersonal and abstract wisdom incarnates itself in a mortal man. The deific principle with them is the essence of Life, the All, and as impersonal as the Parabrahm of the Vedântins or the Nirvana State of the Buddhists, ever invisible, all-pervading and incomprehensible, to be known but through occasional incarnations of its spirit in human form. These ten incarnations or human avatars, as above specified, are called the “Temples of al-Tamîmî” (Universal Spirit).

And now for the Lamaic hierarchy. Of the living or incarnate Buddhas there are five also, the chief of whom is Taley-Lama—from Tale, “Ocean” or Sea; he being called the “Ocean of Wisdom.” Above him, as above H’amza, there is but the “SUPREME WISDOM”—the abstract principle from which emanated the five Buddhas—Maitreya Buddha (the last Bodhisattva, or Vishnu in the Kalki avatara), the tenth “messenger” expected on earth—included. But this will be the One Wisdom and will incarnate itself into the whole humanity collectively, not in a single individual. But of this mystery—no more at present.

These five “Hubilgans” are distributed in the following order:

(1) Taley-Lama, of Lhasa, the incarnation of the “Spiritual passive wisdom,”—which proceeds from Gautama or Siddhartha Buddha, or Fo.

(2) Ban-dhe-chan Rim-po-che, at Tashi Lhünpo. He is “the active earthly wisdom.”

(3) Sa-Dcha-Fo, or the “Mouthpiece of Buddha,” otherwise the “word” at Ssamboo.

(4) Guison-Tamba—the “Precursor” (of Buddha) at the Grand Kuren.

(5) Tchang-Zya-Fo-Lang, in the Altai mountains. He is called the “Successor” (of Buddha).

The “Shaberons” are one degree lower. They, like the chief ‘Uqqâls of the Druses, are the initiates of the great wisdom or Bodhi, esoteric religion. This double list of the “Five” shows great similarity at least between the polity of the two systems. The reader must bear in mind that they have sprung into their present visible conditions nearly at the same time. It was from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries that modern Lamaism evolved its ritual and popular religion, which serves the Hubilgans and Shaberons as a blind, even against the curiosity of the average Chinaman and Tibetan. It was in the eleventh century that H’amza founded the Brotherhood of Lebanon; and till now no one has acquired its secrets!

It is supremely strange that both the Lamas and Druses should have the same mystical statistics.

They reckon the bulk of the human race at 1,332 millions. When good and evil, they say, shall come to an equilibrium in the scales of human actions (now evil is far the heavier), then the breath of “Wisdom” will annihilate in a wink of the eye just 666 millions of men. The surviving 666 millions will have “Supreme Wisdom” incarnated in them.* This may have, and probably has, an allegorical meaning. But what relation might it possibly bear to the number of the “great Beast” of John’s Revelation?

If more were known than really is of the religions of Tibet and the Druses, then would scholars see that there is more affinity, between Turanian Lamaists and the Semitic “al-Hammities,” or Druses, than was ever suspected. But all is darkness, conjecture, and mere guesswork whenever the writers speak of either the one or the other. The little that has transpired of their beliefs is generally so disfigured by prejudice and ignorance that no learned Lama or Druse would ever recognize a glimpse of likeness to his faith in these speculative fantasies. Even the profoundly suggestive conclusion to which came Godfrey Higgins (*Celtic Druids*, Part I, 101), however true, is but half so. “It is evident,” he writes, “that there was a secret science possessed somewhere (by the ancients) which must have been guarded by the most solemn oaths . . . and I cannot help suspecting that there is still a secret doctrine known only in the deep recesses of the crypts of Tibet. . . .”

* The Hindus have the same belief. In the “Deva-Yuga” they will all be devas or gods. See *Lamrim-chin-po*, or “Great Road to perfection”; a work of the fifteenth century. The author of this book is the Great Reformer of Lamaism, the famous Tsong-Kha-pa, from whose hair sprang up the famous Kumbum letter tree—a tree whose leaves all bear sacred Tibetan inscriptions, according to the tradition. This tree was seen by Abbé Huc some forty years ago, and was seen last year by the Hungarian traveller Count Széchenyi; who, however, begging his pardon, could not, under its physical surroundings, have carried away a branch of it, as he pretends to have done.



H. P. BLAVATSKY AROUND 1877-78
Photo by Sarony, New York.



DÂMODAR K. MÂVALANKAR
1857—?

To conclude with the Druses: As Salâma and Boha-eddin—two names more than suggestive of the words “Lama” and “Buddha”—are the only ones entrusted with the secret of H’amza’s retreat; and having the means of consulting with their master, they produce from time to time his directions and commands to the Brotherhood, so, even to this day do the ‘Uqqâls of that name travel every seventh year through Bussora and Persia into Tartary and Tibet to the very west of China and return at the expiration of the eleventh year, bringing them fresh orders from al-Hamma.” Owing to the expectation of war between China and Russia, only last year a Druse messenger passed through Bombay on his way to Tibet and Tartary. This would explain the “superstitious” belief that “the souls of all pious Druses are supposed to be occupying in large numbers certain cities in China.” It is around the plateau of the Pamirs—they say with the Biblical scholars—that the cradle of the true race must be located: but the cradle of initiated humanity only; of those who have for the first time tasted of the fruit of knowledge, and these are in Tibet, Mongolia, Tartary, China and India, where also the souls of their pious and initiated brethren transmigrate, and re-become “sons of God.” What this language means every Theosophist ought to know. They discredit the fable of Adam and Eve, and say that they who ate first of the forbidden fruit and thus became “Elohim” were Enoch or Hermes (the supposed father of Masonry), and Seth or Sat-an, the father of secret wisdom and learning, whose abode, they say, is now in the planet Mercury,* and whom the Christians were kind enough to convert into a chief devil, the “fallen Angel.” Their evil one is an abstract principle, and called the “Rival.”

* Buddha is son of Maya; and (according to Brahmanic notion) of Vishnu; “Maia” is mother of Mercury by Jupiter. Budha means the “wise” and Mercury is God of Wisdom (Hermes); and the planet sacred to Gautama Buddha is Mercury. Venus and Isis presided over navigation, as Mary or Maria, the Madonna, presides now. Is not the latter hymned to this day by the Church:

“Ave Maris Stella. . . .

Dei Mater Alma,”

or “Hail. Star of the Sea, Mother of God,” thus identified with Venus?

The “millions of Chinese Unitarians” may mean Tibetan Lamas, Hindus, and others of the East, as well as Chinamen. It is true that the Druses believe in and expect their resurrection day in Armageddon, which, however, they pronounce otherwise. As the phrase occurs in the Apocalypse it may seem to some that they got the idea in St. John’s Revelation. It is nothing of the kind. That day which, according to the Druse teaching “will consummate the great spiritual plan—the bodies of the wise and faithful will be absorbed into the absolute essence, and transformed from the many, into the ONE.” This is pre-eminently the Buddhist idea of Nirvana, and that of the Vedantin final absorption into Parabrahm. Their “Persian Magianism and Gnosticism” make them regard St. John as Oannes, the Chaldean Man-Fish, hence connect their belief at once with the Indian Vishnu and the Lamaic Symbology. Their “Armageddon” is simply “Ramdagon,”* and this is how it is explained.

* Rama, of the Solar race, is an incarnation of Vishnu—a Sun-God. In “Matsya,” or the first Avatara, in order to save humanity from final destruction (see Vishnu-Purana), that God appears to King Satyavrata and the seven saints who accompany him on the vessel to escape Universal Deluge, as an enormous fish with one stupendous horn. To this horn the King is commanded by Hari to tie the ship with a serpent (the emblem of eternity) instead of a cable. The Taley-Lama, besides his name of “Ocean,” is also called Sha-ru, which in Tibetan means the “unicorn,” or one-horned. He wears on his headgear a prominent horn, set over a Yung-dang, or mystic cross; which is the Jaina and Hindu Swastika. The “fish” and the sea, or water, are the most archaic emblems of the Messiahs, or incarnations of divine wisdom, among all the ancient people. Fishes play prominently a figure on old Christian medals; and in the catacombs of Rome the “Mystic Cross” or “Anchor” stands between two fishes as supporters. “Daghdae”—the name of Zarathushtra’s mother, means the “Divine Fish” or Holy Wisdom. The “Mover on the Waters,” whether we call him “Narayan” or Abathur (the Kabalistic Superior Father and “Ancient of the World”), or “Holy Spirit,” is all one. According to the Codex Nazaraeus, Kabalah and Genesis, the Holy Spirit when moving on the waters mirrored himself—and “Adam Kadmon was born.” Mare in Latin is the sea. Water is associated with every creed. Mary and Venus are both patronesses of the sea and of sailors—and both mothers of Gods of Love, whether Divine or Earthly.

The sentence in Revelation is no better interpreted than many other things by Christians, while even the non-Kabalistic Jews know nothing of its real meaning. Armageddon is mistaken for a geographical locality, viz., the elevated tableland of Esdraelon or Armageddon, “the mountain of Megiddo,” where Gideon triumphed over the Medianites.* It is an erroneous notion, for the name in the Revelation refers to a mythical place mentioned in one of the most archaic traditions of the heathen East, especially among the Turanian and Semitic races. It is simply a kind of purgatorial Elysium, in which departed spirits are collected, to await the day of final judgment. That it is so is proved by the verse in Revelation. “And he gathered them together into a place called. . . . Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air” (xvi, 16-17). The Druses pronounce the name of that mystical locality “Ramdagon.” It is, then, highly probable that the word is an anagram, as shown by the author [E.V.H. Kenealy] of *An Introduction to the Apocalypse*. It means “Rama-Dagon,”† the first signifying [the] Sun-God of that name, and the second, “Dagon” or the Chaldean Holy Wisdom incarnated in their “Messenger,” Oannes—the Man-Fish, and descending on the “Sons of God” or the Initiates of whatever country; those, in short, through whom Deific Wisdom occasionally reveals itself to the world.

The mother of Jesus is called Mary or Mariah—the word meaning in Hebrew mirror, that in which we find but the reflection instead of a reality, and 600 years before Christianity there was Maya, Buddha’s mother, whose name means illusion—identically the same. Another curious “coincidence” is found in the selections of new Taley-Lamas in Tibet. The new incarnation of Buddha is ascertained by a curious ichthyomancy with three goldfishes. Shutting themselves up in the Buddha-La (Temple), the Hubilgans place three goldfishes in an urn, and on one of these ancient emblems of Supreme Wisdom shortly appears the name of the child into whom the soul of the late Taley-Lama is supposed to have transmigrated.

* It is not the “Valley of Megiddo,” for there is no such valley known. Dr. Robinson’s topographical and Biblical notions being no better than hypotheses.

† Ram is also womb, and valley; and in Tibetan “goat.” “Dag” is fish; from Dagon, the man-fish, or perfect wisdom.

NATIVE ASTROLOGERS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 9, June, 1881, pp. 198-199]

[Mr. K. D. Dosabhoy wrote to The Theosophist, saying that his faith in astrology had been destroyed as the result of the failure of the astrologers he had consulted to make correct predictions. H. P. Blavatsky's editorial comment on this was as follows:]

Our esteemed Brother and correspondent was unlucky in his astrological researches, and that is all he can say. Because half-educated astronomers in one country may fail to correctly predict an eclipse, is it a reason why its inhabitants should decry astronomy and call it a visionary science? Besides the great neglect into which astrology has fallen during the last two centuries, it is a science far more difficult to master than the highest of mathematics; yet, notwithstanding all, we assert again that, whenever studied conscientiously, it proves the claims of its proficient correct. No more than Mr. Darasha Dosabhoy do we believe astrology capable of predicting every trifling event in our life, any accidental illness, joy or sorrow. It never claimed as much. The stars can predict (?) no more unforeseen events than a physician a broken leg to a patient who never stirs from his house. They show a lucky or unlucky life, but in general features, and no more. If our friend was unsuccessful with every astrologer he met, we know at least a dozen of well-educated men who were forced to believe in astrology as its predictions came to pass in every case. A large volume would be necessary to explain in detail the understanding of this ancient science, yet a few words may serve to correct one of the most glaring errors concerning it, not only current among the masses, but even among many who understand and practice astrology, namely, that the planets make us what we are, their good and evil aspects causing fortunate and unfortunate periods.

Says a Professor of Astrology, W. H. Chaney: “Take to the unphilosophical astrologer the horoscope of a boy born with Sagittarius rising, Jupiter in the same, on the ascendant, in exact trine to the Sun and Leo, with other favourable configurations, and instantly he would declare that the boy would become a great man, a Prince, a President—and so would I. But the astrologer might insist that all this good fortune was caused by the boy having been born under such fortunate aspects, whereas I should look beyond the birth for the cause, and should probably discover, that, before his conception, his parents had been away from each other for weeks or months, during which both lived a life of perfect chastity; that they were very harmonious, in excellent bodily health, their intellects clear, their minds cheerful, and their moral natures strong.”

The Egyptian episcopo (“overseer”; our English word “episcopal” is derived from the name of this ancient pagan stargazer) discovered that in the morning, shortly before sunrise, in June, he could see in the east the brightest fixed star in the heavens, and immediately after thus seeing the star the Nile would overflow. Having witnessed the phenomenon for many successive years, he laid it down as an axiom that this star indicated the overflow of the Nile, no one thinking of disputing him; for the cause should be traced to the melting of the snow in the mountains of Africa. Now, suppose someone—a sceptic—had heard of this idea of a star causing the Nile to overflow, what an opportunity it would have afforded for heaping scorn and ridicule upon the poor episcopo! Yet the episcopo would have continued to observe the same phenomena year after year; and being called “moon-struck,” a “fool,” etc., would not have changed his opinion in the least. Now all the hubbub on this point would arise from ignorance on the part of the sceptic just as nine-tenths of all the disputes and quarrels arise. Teach the man that the appearance of that star at a particular time and place in the heavens indicated, not caused the overflow of the Nile, and he would have ceased to call the episcopo an idiot and liar.

The intelligent reader must now see the point at which we aim—namely, that in astrology the stars do not cause our good or bad luck, but simply indicate the same. A man must be a psychologist and a philosopher before he can become a perfect astrologer, and understand correctly the great Law of Universal Sympathy. Not only astrology but magnetism, theosophy and every occult science, especially that of attraction and repulsion, depend upon this law for their existence. Without having thoroughly studied the latter, astrology becomes a superstition.

The article “Stars and Numbers” which follows was written before we received the above letter. We draw our esteemed correspondent’s attention to it.

STARS AND NUMBERS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 9, June, 1881, pp. 199-201]

Ancient civilization saw nothing absurd in the claims of astrology, no more than many an educated and thoroughly scientific man sees in it today. Judicial astrology, by which the fate and acts of men and nations might be foreknown, appeared, nor does it even now appear, any more unphilosophical or unscientific than does natural astrology or astronomy—by which the events of so-called brute and inanimate nature (changes of weather, etc.) might be predicted. For it was not even prophetic insight that was claimed by the votaries of that abstruse and really grand science, but simply a great proficiency in that method of procedure which allows the astrologer to foresee certain events in the life of a man by the position of the planets at the time of his birth.

Once the probability, or even the simple possibility, of an occult influence exercised by the stars upon the destiny of man admitted—and why should the fact appear more improbable in the case of stars and man than in that of the sunspots and potatoes?—and astrology becomes no less an exact science than astronomy.

The earth, Prof. Balfour Stewart, F.R.S., tells us—“is very seriously affected by what takes place in the sun” . . . a connection is strongly suspected “between epidemics and the appearance of the sun’s surface.”*

And if, as that man of science tells us, “a connection of some mysterious kinds between the sun and the earth is more than suspected” . . . and the problem is a most important one “to solve,” how much more important the solution of that other mystery—the undoubted affinity between man and the stars—an affinity believed in for countless ages and by the most learned among men! Surely the destiny of man deserves as much consideration as that of a turnip or a potato. . . . And if a disease of the latter may be scientifically foretold whenever that vegetable crops out during a “sunspot period,” why should not a life of disease, or health, of natural or violent death be as scientifically prognosticated by the position and appearance of the constellation with which man is as directly connected and which bears the same relation to him as the sun bears to the earth?

In its day, astrology was greatly honoured, for when in able hands it was often shown to be as precise and trustworthy in its predictions as astronomical predictions are in our own age. Omens were studied by all imperial Rome, as much, if not more than they are now in India. Tiberius practiced the science; and the Saracens in Spain held star divination in the greatest reverence, astrology passing into Western Europe through these, our first civilizers.

* “One of the best known vegetable epidemics is that of the potato disease. The years 1846, 1860, and 1872 were bad years for the potato disease. Now, those years are not very far from the years of maximum sunspots . . . [there is a] curious connection between these diseases affecting plants and the state of the sun. . . . The disease that took place about three centuries since, of a periodical and very violent character, called the ‘sweating sickness’ . . . took place about the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century. It took place in the following years: 1485, 1506, 1517, 1528, and 1551, about a period of eleven years intervening between the outbreaks. Now, this is exactly the sunspot period . . .” (The Sun and the Earth. Lecture by Prof. Balfour Stewart).

Alphonso, the wise king of Castile and Leon, made himself famous in the thirteenth century by his “Astrological Tables” (called Alphonsine),* and his code of Las Siete Partidas; and the great astronomer Kepler in the seventeenth, the discoverer of the three great laws of planetary motions (known as Kepler’s laws), believed in and proclaimed astrology a true science. Kepler, the Emperor Rudolph’s mathematician, he to whom Newton is indebted for all his subsequent discoveries, is the author of *The Principles of Astrology*,† in which he proves the power of certain harmonious configurations of suitable planets to control human impulses. In his official capacity of Imperial astronomer, he is historically known to have predicted to Wallenstein, from the position of the stars, the issue of the war in which that unfortunate general was then engaged. No less than himself, his friend, protector and instructor, the great astronomer Tycho Brahe, believed in, and expanded the astrological system. He was forced, moreover, to admit the influence of the constellations on terrestrial life and actions quite against his will or wish, and merely because of the constant verification of facts.

Closely related to astrology is the Kabala and its system of numerals. The secret wisdom of the ancient Chaldees left by them as an inheritance to the Jews relates primarily to the mythological science of the heavens and contains the doctrines of the hidden or occult wisdom concerning the cycles of time. In the ancient philosophy, the sacredness of numbers began with the great FIRST, the ONE, and ended with the naught or Zero, the symbol of the infinite and boundless circle, which represents the universe.

* [Strictly speaking, they are astronomical tables produced at Toledo, Spain, in 1252 by fifty astronomers under the patronage of Alphonso X (1252-84), known as El Sabio, “the Learned.” Vide the Bio-Bibliographical Index, s.v. ALPHONSO.—Compiler.]

† [Reference is most likely to Kepler’s *De Fundamentis Astrologiae*. In the Charles Frisch edition of his *Opera Omnia*, published in 1858 by Heyden and Zimmer at Frankfurt a. M., it may be found in Vol. I, pp. 417-438.—Compiler.]

All the intervening figures, in whatever combination, or however multiplied, represent philosophical ideas relating either to a moral or a physical fact in nature. They are the key to the archaic views on cosmogony, in its broad sense, including man and beings, and relate to the human race and individuals spiritually as well as physically. “The numerals of Pythagoras,” says Porphyry, “were hieroglyphical symbols, by means whereof he explained all ideas concerning the nature of all things.”* In the symbolical kabala—the most ancient system left to us by the Chaldeans—the modes of examining letters, words and sentences for hidden meaning were numerical. The gematria (one of the three modes) is purely arithmetical and mathematical, and consists in applying to the letters of a word the sense they bear as numbers—letters being used also for figures in the Hebrew as in Greek. Figurative Gematria deduces mysterious interpretations from the shapes of letters used in occult manuscripts and the Bible.

Thus, as shown by Cornelius Agrippa, in Numbers (x, 35), the letter Beth means the reversal of enemies. The sacred anagrams known as Zeruph yield their mysterious sense by the second mode named Themura, and consist in displacing the letters and substituting them one for another and then arranging them in rows according to their numerical value. If, of all operations in the occult sciences, there is not one that is not rooted in astrology, arithmetic and especially geometry are a part of the first principles of magic. The most recondite mysteries and powers in nature are made to yield to the power of numbers. And let this not be regarded as a fallacy. He who knows the relative and respective numbers or the so-called correspondence between causes and effects will alone be able to obtain of a certainty the desired result. A small mistake, a trifling difference in an astronomical calculation and—no correct prediction of a heavenly phenomenon becomes possible.

* [Porphyry, *Pythagorae vita*, Amsterdam, 1707. Cf. H. Jennings, *The Rosicrucians*, 1870, p. 49 (p. 35, 3rd ed.).—Compiler.]

As Severinus Boethius puts it, it is by the proportion of certain numbers that all things were formed. “God geometrizes,” saith Plato, meaning creative nature. If there are so many occult virtues in natural things, “what marvel if in numbers, which are pure and commixed only with ideas, there should be found virtues greater and more occult?” asks Agrippa. Even Time must contain the mystery number; so also does motion, or action, and so, therefore, must all things that move, act, or are subjected to time. But “the mystery is in the abstract power of number, in its rational and formal state, not in the expression of it by the voice, as among people who buy and sell” (*De Occulta Philos.*, cap. iii, p. cii). The Pythagoreans claimed to discern many things in the numbers of names. And if those who having understanding were invited to “compute the number and name of the beast” by the author of St. John’s Revelation it is because that author was a Kabbalist.

The wiseacres of our generation raise daily the cry that science and metaphysics are irreconcilable; and facts prove as daily that it is but one more fallacy among the many that are uttered. The reign of exact science is proclaimed on every housetop, and Plato, who is said to have trusted to his imagination, is sneered at, while Aristotle’s method built on pure reason is the one accepted by Science. Why? Because “the philosophic method of Plato was the inverse of that of Aristotle. Its starting point was universals. the very existence of which was a matter of faith,” says Dr. Draper, “and from these it descended to particulars, or details. Aristotle, on the contrary, rose from particulars to universals, advancing to them by inductions” (*History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, p. 26). We humbly answer to this, that mathematics, the only exact and infallible science in the world of sciences proceeds from UNIVERSALS.

It is this year especially, the year 1881, which seems to defy and challenge sober, matter-of-fact science, and by its extraordinary events above as below, in heaven as upon earth, to invite criticism upon its strange “coincidences.” Its freaks in the domains of meteorology and geology were prognosticated by the astronomers, and these everyone is bound to respect.

There is a certain triangle seen this year on the horizon formed of the most brilliant stars which was predicted by them, but none the less left unexplained. It is a simple geometrical combination of heavenly bodies, they say. As to that triangle, formed of the three large planets—Venus, Jupiter and Saturn—having aught to do with the destinies of either men or nations—why, that is pure superstition. “The mantle of the astrologers is burnt and the predictions of some of them, whenever verified, must be attributed to simple and blind chance.”

We are not so sure of that; and, if permitted, will further on tell why—meanwhile, we must remind the reader of the fact that Venus, the most intensely brilliant of the three above-named planets, as was remarked in Europe and for all we know in India also—suddenly parted company with its two companions and, slowly moving onward, stopped above them, whence it goes on dazzling the inhabitants of the earth with an almost preternatural brilliancy.

The conjunction of two planets happens but rarely; that of three is still more rare; while the conjunction of four and five planets becomes an event. The latter phenomenon took place in historical times but once, 2449 years B.C., when it was observed by the Chinese astronomers and has not recurred since then. That extraordinary meeting of five large planets forebode all kinds of evils to the Celestial Empire and its peoples, and the panic then created by the predictions of the Chinese astrologers was not in vain. During the following 500 years, a series of internal broils, revolutions, wars, and changes of dynasty marked the end of the golden age of national felicity in the Empire founded by the great Fu-hi.

Another conjunction is known to have happened just before the beginning of the Christian era. In that year, three large planets had approached so closely together as to be mistaken by many for one single star of an immense size. Biblical scholars were more than once inclined to identify these “three in one” with the Trinity, and at the same [time] with the “Star of the wise men of the East.”

But they saw themselves thwarted in such pious desires by their hereditary enemies—the irreverent men of science, who proved that the astronomical conjunction took place a year before the period claimed for the alleged birth of Jesus. Whether the phenomenon forebode good or evil is best answered by the subsequent history and development of Christianity, than which, no other religion cost so many human victims, shed such torrents of blood, nor brought the greater portion of humanity to suffer from what is now termed the “blessings of Christianity and civilization.”

A third conjunction took place in A.D. 1563. It appeared near the great nebula in the constellation of Cancer. There were three great planets and—according to the astronomers of those days—the most nefarious: Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. The constellation of Cancer has always had a bad reputation; that year the mere fact of its having in its neighbourhood a triune conjunction of evil stars, caused the astrologers to predict great and speedy disasters. These did come to pass. A terrible plague broke out and raged in all Europe, carrying off thousands upon thousands of victims.

And now, in 1881, we have again a visit of three other “Wanderers.” What do they forebode? Nothing good, and it would seem, as if of the great evils they are likely to pour on the devoted heads of hapless humanity, the fatal prelude is already being played. Let us enumerate and see how far we are from the truth. The nearly simultaneous and certainly in some cases unexpected death of the great and most remarkable men of our age. In the region of politics, we find the Emperor of Russia, Lord Beaconsfield, and Aga Khan;* in that of literature, Carlyle and George Eliot; in the world of art, Rubinstein, the greatest musical genius. In the domain of geology—earthquakes which have already destroyed the town of Casamicciola on the Island of Ischia, a village in California and the Island of Chios which was laid entirely waste by the terrible catastrophe—one, moreover, predicted for that very day by the astrologer Raphael.

* H. H. Aga Khan was one of the most remarkable men of the century. Of all the Mussulmans, Shiahs or Soonis, who rejoice in the green turban, the Aga's claims to a direct descent from Mahomet through Ali rested on undeniable proofs. He again represented the historical “Assassins” of the Old Man of the Mountain. He had married a daughter of the late Shah of Persia; but political broils forced him to leave his native land and seek refuge with the British Government in India. In Bombay he had a numerous religious following. He was a high-spirited, generous man and a hero. The most noticeable feature of his life was that he was born in 1800—and died in 1881, at the age of 81. In his case too the occult influence of the year 1881 has asserted itself.

In the domain of wars, the hitherto invincible Great Britain was worsted at the Cape by a handful of Boers; Ireland is convulsed and threatens; a plague now rages in Mesopotamia; another war is preparing between Turkey and Greece; armies of Socialists and red-handed Nihilists obscure the sun of the political horizon in Europe; and the latter thrown into a violent perturbation is breathlessly awaiting the most unexpected events [in the] future—defying the perspicacity of the most acute of her political men. In the religious spheres the heavenly triangle pointed its double horn at the monastic congregations and—a general exodus of monks and nuns—headed by the children of Loyola, followed in France. There is a revival of infidelity and mental rebellion, and with it a proportionate increase of missionary labourers (not labour), who like the hordes of Attila destroy much and build but little. Shall we add to the list of signs of these nefasti dies, the birth of the New Dispensation at Calcutta? The latter, though having but a small and quite a local importance, shows yet a direct bearing upon our subject, i.e., the astrological meaning of the planetary conjunction. Like Christianity with Jesus and his Apostles the New Dispensation can henceforth boast of having had a forerunner in starry heaven—the present triune conjunction of planets. It proves, moreover, our kabalistic theory of periodical cyclic recurrences of events. As the Roman sceptical world of 1881 years ago, we are startled by a fresh revival of mendicant Ebionites, fasting Essenes and Apostles upon whom descend “cloven tongues like as of fire,” and of whom we cannot even say as of the Jerusalem twelve, “that these men are full of new wine,” since their inspiration is entirely due to water, we are told.

The year 1881, then, of which we have lived but one-third, promises, as predicted by astrologers and astronomers, a long and gloomy list of disasters on land, as on the seas. We have shown elsewhere (Bombay Gazette, March 30, 1881) how strange in every respect was the grouping of the figures of our present year, adding that another such combination will not happen in the Christian chronology before the year 11811, just 9930 years hence, when—there will be no more a “Christian” chronology we are afraid, but something else. We said: “Our year 1881 offers that strange fact, that from whichever of four sides you look at its figures—from right or left, from top or bottom, from the back, by holding the paper up to the light—or even upside down, you will always have before you the same mysterious and kabalistic numbers of 1881. It is the correct number of the three figures which have most perplexed mystics for over eighteen centuries. The year 1881, in short, is the number of the Great Beast of the Revelation, the number 666 of St. John’s Apocalypse [xiii, 17-18]—that Kabalistic Book par excellence. See for yourselves: 1 + 8 + 8 + 1 make eighteen; eighteen divided thrice gives three times six, or placed in a row, 666, ‘the number of man.’”*

This number has been for centuries the puzzle of Christendom and was interpreted in a thousand different ways. Newton himself worked for years over the problem, but ignorant of the secret Kabala, failed. Before the Reformation it was generally supposed in the Church to have reference to the coming Antichrist. Since then the Protestants began to apply it, in that spirit of Christian charity which so characterizes Calvinism, to the Latin Popish Church, which they call the “Harlot,” the “great Beast” and the “scarlet woman,” and forthwith the latter returned the compliment in the same brotherly and friendly spirit. The supposition that it refers to the Roman nation—the Greek letters of the word Latinus as numerals, amounting to exactly 666—is absurd.

* [See “The Year 1881” in the present Volume.—Compiler.]

There are beliefs and traditions among the people which spring no one knows from whence and pass from one generation to the other, as an oral prophecy, and an unavoidable fact to come. One of such traditions, a correspondent of the Moscow Gazette happened to hear in 1874 from the mountaineers of the Tyrolian Alps, and subsequently from old people in Bohemia. "From the first day of 1876," says that tradition, "a sad, heavy period will begin for the whole world and will last for seven consecutive years. The most unfortunate and fatal year for all will be 1881. He who will survive it has an iron head."

An interesting new combination, meanwhile, of the year 1881, in reference to the life of the murdered Czar, may be found in the following dates, every one of which marks a more or less important period in his life. It proves at all events what important and mysterious a part, the figures 1 and 8 played in his life. 1 and 8 make 18; and the Emperor was born April 17th ($1 + 7 = 8$) in 1818. He died in 1881—the figures of the years of his birth and death being identical, and coinciding, moreover, with the date of his birth 17 ($1 + 7 = 8$). The figures of the years of the birth and death being thus the same, as four times 18 can be formed out of them, and the sum total of each year's numerals is 18. The arrival at Petersburg of the late Empress—the Czar's bride—took place on September 8th; their marriage April 16th—($8 + 8 = 16$); their eldest daughter, the Grand Duchess Alexandra, was born August 18th; the late Czarevitch Nicolas Alexandrovitch, on September the 8th, 1843 ($1 + 8 + 4 + 3 = 16$, i.e., twice 8) . The present Czar, Alexander III, was born February 26th ($2 + 6 = 8$); the proclamation of the ascension to the throne of the late Emperor was signed February 18; the public proclamation about the coronation day took place April 17th ($1 + 7 = 8$). His entrance into Moscow for the coronation was on August 17th ($1 + 7 = 8$); the coronation itself being performed August 26th ($2 + 6 = 8$);

the year of the liberation of the Serfs, 1861, whose numerals sum up to 16—i.e., twice 8!*

To conclude, we may mention here a far more curious discovery made in relation, and as a supplement, to the above calculation, by a Jewish Rabbi in Russia—a Kabbalist, evidently, from the use he makes of the Gematria reckoning. It was just published in a St. Petersburg paper. The Hebrew letters as stated have all their numerical value or correspondence in arithmetical figures. The number 18 in the Hebrew Alphabet is represented by the letters—“HETH” = 8, and “YOD” = 10, i.e., 18. United together Heth and Yod form the word “khaî,” or “haî,” which literally translated means the imperative—live and alive. Every orthodox Jew during his fast and holy days is bound to donate for some pious purpose a sum of money consisting of, and containing the number 18 in it. So, for instance, he will give 18 copecks, or 18 ten-copeck bits, 18 rubles or 18 times 18 copecks or rubles—according to his means and degree of religious fervour. Hence, the year 1818—that of the Emperor’s birth—meant, if read in Hebrew—“khaï, khaï” or live, live—pronounced emphatically twice; while the year 1881—that of his death read in the same way, yields the fatal words “Khai-tze” rendered in English, “thou living one depart”; or in other words, “life is ended.” . . .

Of course, those sceptically inclined will remark that it is all due to blind chance and “coincidence.” Nor would we much insist upon the contrary, were such an observation to proceed but from uncompromising atheists, and materialists, who, denying the above, remain only logical in their disbelief, and have as much right to their opinion as we have to our own. But we cannot promise the same degree of indulgence whenever attacked by orthodox religionists. For, that class of persons while pooh-poohing speculative metaphysics, and even astrology—a system based upon strictly mathematical calculations, pertaining as much to exact science as biology or physiology, and open to experiment and verification—will,

* [All the dates given in this paragraph are according to the Julian Calendar or “Old Style” to which 12 days should be added (in the nineteenth century to obtain the correct dates, according to the Gregorian Calendar.—Compiler.]

at the same time, firmly believe that potato disease, cholera, railway accidents, earthquakes and the like are all of Divine origin and, proceeding directly of God, have a meaning and a bearing on human life in its highest aspects. It is to the latter class of theists that we say: prove to us the existence of a personal God either outside or inside physical nature, demonstrate him to us as the external agent, the Ruler of the Universe; show him concerned in human affairs and destiny and exercising on them an influence, at least as great and reasonably probable as that exercised by the sunspots upon the destiny of vegetables and then—laugh at us. Until then, and so long as no one is prepared with such a proof and solution, in the words of Tyndall —“Let us lower our heads, and acknowledge our ignorance, priest and philosopher, one and all.”

“PRAISE HIM WITH THE TIMBREL AND DANCE”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 9, June, 1881, pp. 201-202]

. . . “Let the children of Zion . . . praise the Lord’s name in the dance. . . with the timbrel and harp” (Psalms, cxlix, 3).

The Brahma body (the Sadharan) publishes in its organ odds-and-ends called “Musings on the New Dispensation,” which are witty but cruel hits against its venerable Parent, the Brahma Samaj that was, and the New Apostolic Church that is —of Babu K. C. Sen. There is a paragraph on a NEW INVENTION which speaks of the:

“Mode of chastising apostacy with love, persecution with prayer, and scoffing with solemn hymns.” Weapon? “Artillery of forgiving love and prayer” as personified in the following lovely and dignified epithets: “deluded renegade,” “wanton blasphemy,” “irreverent scoffing,” “weak-minded brother,” “misguided brother,” etc.

Our esteemed colleague of the *Brahmo Public Opinion*, is somewhat unjust. He should bear in mind that these “lovely and dignified epithets” are not at all original with the Aryan apostles of the New Dispensation. They are but mild echoes of those so profusely lavished upon each other, in days of old, by their Semitic predecessors, the Apostles Peter and Paul (with whom, we are told, Mr. Sen is on friendly terms and even occasional communication), and which have been of late years so strongly revived by our valued friends, the *Padri-Editors of Dissenterism*.

And there is another bit quite as liable to mislead the uninitiated reader and make him regard the venerable New Dispensation Church as a branch of the whirling and dancing dervishes of the Mussulmans of Turkey.

PHILOSOPHY OF DANCING—“The minister” asked the Lord’s help, “perpetually to dance and smile.” Believing that a response had been given, he shaved his head, took the vow of poverty, put on dore kopin, tied a bass ghoongoor round his ankles, and began to dance. This is the religion of the New Dispensation!

We are sorry to see our witty colleague cast a slur upon one of the oldest and most venerable rites of antiquity. Mystical dancing is a practice hoary with age and pregnant with occult philosophy, and the “Minister” of the New Dispensation has done wisely to adopt it. It can bring him but into closer affinity with, and make him resemble the more, the “man after God’s own heart.” The sweet psalm-singing King David, “danced before the Lord with all his might,” uncovered himself “in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants,” promised “to be more vile than this,” to be base even in his “own sight,” and apparently succeeded. It is at this moment, we love to think, that the clairvoyant eye of the Prophet of the New Dispensation, after the fashion of Professor Denton’s psychometers, caught sight of the King Psalmist in a retrospective image, performing the circle dance of the Amazons around a priapic image, and thus moved, gave birth to the sweet hymn of the “Mystic Dance.”

. . . Jesus dances, Moses dances. . . . Old King David dances, . . . And with him Janak and Yudhistir. . . .

And why not? The mystics and devotees of nearly every religion and sect have at some time adopted the salutary exercise. There was the “Dance of the Daughters of Shiloh” in the Jewish Mysteries (Judges, xxi, 21, 23 et passim) and the “Leaping of the prophets of Baal” (I Kings, xviii, 26). From the Sabaeen dance—denoting the motion of the planets round the sun—down to the American Shakers of Mother Lee, the truly religious bodies found themselves occasionally possessed with Bacchic frenzy. During their religious meetings the Shakers first sing a hymn, then form wide circle around a band of male and female singers, to the music of whom they dance in a solemn rhythm, until “moved by the spirit” they begin prophesying and speak with tongues. Dancing was established as a rite, together with the kiss of charity, by the Agapaeists, the venerable members of that primitive Christian institution called the “Agapae” which counted St. Augustine among its influential members. Of these, the too plain-spoken Tertullian, who had belonged to the sect and spoke from experience, said after he had joined the Montanists: . . . “In the Agapae, the young men lay with their sisters, and wallowed in wantonness and luxury”* Prominent among the modern and highly philosophical dancing sects we may also place that of the Methodist Negro “jumpers” of the United States. The piety and zeal of these humble “descendants of Ham,” during religious service, baffles description and puts the infidel to shame. They have been even known to make frantic efforts to catch at the legs of Jesus, whom they affirm having seen above their heads in all His glory, and so to forcibly bring their Redeemer down to land in their midst; their fury of zeal endowing them with the agility of a Hanuman and making them jump in dancing higher than the benches. Then, again, we have the Russian dissenters called Molokans and the Dukhobors, two jumping sects, whose elders bring promiscuously together persons of both sexes to dance and pray—disrobed and in utter darkness; who choose their own “Mother Virgin”—the community representing collectively the “Spirit of God”; and who recognize her subsequent first male progeny as Christ, and set aside the female issue as material for future “virgins.”

* [De jejuniis (On Fasting), cap. Xvii.]

Verily dancing with, before, and for “the Lord” is an old institution, and must have been adopted by the Christian sect-founders to avoid the accusation contained in Matthew and Luke: “We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced.”* Babu Keshub’s New Dispensation containing, as we hear, “pipings” from every religion, especially from those of Mohammedanism, and Christianity, whose vow of poverty and sacrament it has adopted, did not, of course, wish to be outdone by Dervishes, Shakers and Negro-Methodists. Let the Grihastha-Bairagis of the Calcutta Church, by all means “go forth in the dances of them that make merry.” They have our Theosophical blessing.

Following is the text unabridged of the New Dispensation’s Hymn of the “Mystic Dance,” as we find it in the organ of that sect, and which we will venture to call—A COTILLION OF SAINTS.

[These verses have been omitted.]

In short, the whole company of the apostles and martyrs in the various “heavenly mansions” seem to have been bitten by the tarantula. Our European and American members will perhaps sigh to think that in so promiscuous a quadrille of saints and sinners—there should have been no room for the “atheistic Theosophical Society.” Is it, we wonder, because the Bengal Psalmist thought it would be straining metaphor too far to picture such thoughtful and sedate persons as moving in “the mazy” and “tripping it on the light fantastic toe”?

* [Matt., xi, 17; Luke, vii, 32.—Compiler.]

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 9, June, 1881, p. 205]

[Concerning the assassination of Alexander II] No Czar of Russia—aye, no other sovereign in the whole world, perhaps—was so much beloved by his people as that Imperial victim of the savagest production of this, our most savage and cruel century—the Nihilist-Socialists.

The “All-Annihilating” Nihilists have laboured but to build a number of new churches, and to add one more martyr to the host of other publicly and synodically recognized great martyrs of Russia

A POSTHUMOUS PUBLICATION

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, July, 1881, pp. 211-212]

We are glad to lay before our readers the first of a series of unpublished writings of the late Éliphas Lévi (Abbé Louis Constant), one of the great masters of occult sciences of the present century in the West. An ex-Catholic priest, he was unfrocked by the ecclesiastical authorities at Rome, who tolerate no belief in God, Devil, or Science outside the narrow circle of their circumscribed dogma, and who anathematize every creed-crushed soul that succeeds in breaking its mental bondage. “Just in the ratio that knowledge increases, faith diminishes; consequently, those that know the most, always believe the least . . .” said Carlyle.

Éliphas Lévi knew much; far more than the privileged few even among the greatest mystics of modern Europe; hence, he was traduced by the ignorant many. He had written these ominous words: . . . “The discovery of the great secrets of true religion and of the primitive science of the Magi, revealing to the world the unity of the universal dogma, annihilates fanaticism by scientifically explaining and giving the reason for every miracle,” and these words sealed his doom. Religious bigotry persecuted him for disbelieving in “divine” miracle; bigoted materialism for using the word “miracle” and “prodigy”; dogmatic science, for attempting to explain that which she could not yet explain herself, and in which, therefore, she disbelieved. The author of *The Dogma and Ritual of High Magic*, of *The Science of Spirits* and of *The Key to the Great Mysteries*,* died, as his famous predecessors in the occult arts, Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus and many others did—a pauper. Of all the parts of the world, Europe is the one which stones her true prophets the most cruelly, while being led by the nose by the false ones the most successfully. Europe will prostrate herself before any idol, provided it flatters her preconceived hobbies and loudly appeals to, and proclaims her superior intelligence. Christian Europe will believe in divine and demoniacal miracles and in the infallibility of a book condemned out of its own mouth, and consisting of old exploded legends. Spiritualistic Europe will fall into ecstasies before the eidolon of a medium—when it is not a sheet and a clumsy mask—and remain firmly convinced of the reality of the apparitions of ghosts and the spirits of the dead. Scientific Europe will laugh Christians and Spiritualists to scorn, destroy all and build nothing, limiting herself to preparing arsenals of materials which she knows not in most cases what to do with, and whose inner nature is still a mystery for her. And then all the three agreeing in everything else to disagree, will combine their efforts to put down a science hoary with age and ancient wisdom, the only science which is capable of making religion—scientific, science—religious, and of ridding human Intelligence of the thick cobwebs of CONCEIT and SUPERSTITION.

* [The original French titles of these works being: *Dogme et Rituel de la haute magie*; *La Science des Esprits*; and *La Clef des Grands Mystères*.—Compiler.]

The article that follows is furnished to us by an esteemed Fellow of the Theosophical Society, and a pupil of Éliphas Lévi. Having lost a dear friend who committed suicide, the great master of the occult science was desired by our correspondent and his pupil to give his views upon the state of the soul of the *felo-de-se*. He did so; and it is with the kind permission of his pupil, that we now translate and publish his manuscript. Though personally we are far from agreeing with all his opinions—for having been a priest, Éliphas Lévi could never rid himself to his last day of a certain theological bias—we are yet prepared to always lend a respectful ear to the teachings of so learned a Kabbalist. Like Agrippa and, to a certain extent, Paracelsus himself, Abbé Constant may be termed a Biblical or Christian Kabbalist, though Christ was in his sight more of an ideal than a living Man-God or an historical personage. Moses and Christ, if real entities, were human initiates into the arcane mysteries in his opinion; Jesus was the type of regenerated humanity, the deific principle being shown under a human form but to prove humanity alone divine. The mysticism of the official church which seeks to absorb the human in the divine nature of Christ, is strongly criticized by her ex-representative. More than anything else Éliphas Lévi is then a Jewish Kabbalist. But were we even so much disposed to alter or amend the teachings of so great a master in Occultism, it would be more than improper to do so now, since he is no longer alive to defend and expound his positions. We leave the unenviable task of kicking dead and dying lions to the jackasses—voluntary undertakers of all attacked reputations. Thence, though we do not personally agree with all his views, we do concur in the verdict of the world of letters that Éliphas Lévi was one of the cleverest, most learned, and interesting of writers upon all such abstruse subjects.

FOOTNOTES TO “A SUICIDE’S AFTER-STATE”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, July, 1881, p. 212]

[Describing the state of suicides after death, the writer, Éliphas Lévi, says among other things: “You may help the poor deserter of life, with ‘prayer’—but that prayer must be one of action, not words. See whether he has not left something undone, . . . and then try to accomplish the deed for him, and in his name.” To this H. P. B. remarks:]

The Kabalistic theory is, that a man having so many years, days and hours to live upon earth and not one minute less than the period allotted to him by fate, whenever the Ego gets consciously and deliberately rid of its body before the hour marked, it must still live even as a disembodied suffering soul. The Ego, or the sentient individual soul is unable to free itself from the attraction of the earth and has to vegetate and suffer all the torments of the mythical hell in it. It becomes an Elementary Spirit; and when the hour of deliverance strikes, the soul having learned nothing, and in its mental torture lost the remembrance of the little it knew on earth, it is violently ejected out of the earth’s atmosphere and carried adrift, a prey to the blind current which forces it into some new reincarnation which the soul itself is unable to select as it otherwise might with the help of its good actions. . . .

[“The souls disenthralled from their earthly fetters elevate our own to themselves; and in our turn our souls can attract them down, through a power similar to that of the magnet.”]

It would be an error to infer from the above that Éliphas Lévi believed in the so-called Spiritualism.

He derided both the Spiritualistic and the Spiritist theory of the return of the disembodied souls or spirits in an objective or materialized form on earth. Teaching the Kabalistic doctrine of the subjective intercommunication between the embodied and the disembodied spirits, and the mutual influence exercised by those souls, that influence is limited by him to purely psychological and moral effects, and lasts but so long as the pure soul slumbers in its transitory state in the ether, or the sinful one (the Elementary Spirit) is kept in bondage in the earthly regions.

[“But the sinful souls suffer two kinds of torture. One is the result of their imperfect disenthralment from the terrestrial bonds which keep them down chained to our planet; the other is owing to a lack of ‘celestial magnet’.”]

Celestial magnet means here that spiritual buoyancy (the absence of sinful deeds and thoughts supposed to be possessed of a material heaviness) which alone is enabled to carry the disembodied soul to higher or rather purer regions.

A LETTER FROM SURB OHANNES

[This excerpt from a long letter signed “X . . . F.T.S.” was originally published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, July, 1881, pp. 213-15, and its authorship has remained unknown through the intervening years. However, when a Manuscript on the subject of Zoroastrianism, in H.P.B.’s own handwriting and held in the Archives at Adyar, was transcribed and published in *The Theosophist* (Vol. 80, October and November, 1958), the name of the author of this letter suddenly came to light. It appears that it was written by the Adept known under the name of Hillarion (or Ilarion), also Hillarion Smerdis, who at one time resided on the Island of Cyprus. H.P.B. mentions this letter and definitely identifies its author. From other sources, it is known that Hillarion Smerdis collaborated with H.P.B. in the writing of her occult stories, such, for instance, as “The Ensouled Violin” which is actually signed with his name in *The Theosophist* (Vol. I, Jan., 1880). It has been stated both by H.P.B. (*Light*, Aug. 9, 1884) and by Col. H. S. Olcott (*Diaries*, entry of Feb. 19, 1881) that this Adept has “gone for his final initiation, passing through and visiting us [the Founders] in his physical body on his way, at Bombay.

” To the same Brother is attributed the authorship of the first part of *Light on the Path*, recorded by Mabel Collins. *Surb Ohannes* is the name of the oldest Christian monastery in Armenia. It has been thought advisable to publish the entire text together with the footnotes appended to it by H.P.B.—[Compiler.]

. . . . Our Zoroastrian Fellows would fain hear a page of their history torn out of the book of popular memory and woven into legends. That book, so full of the glories of their forefathers, in that hoary past when they formed not only a proud and independent nation, but many linked together by one religion, one polity and civilization—is rapidly fading out. Its fate was like that of some precious manuscripts of the pre-Christian ages, which are sometimes found mouldering in the libraries of old monasteries. First its broad margins were used for monkish dissertations, and later on, its contents themselves began being rubbed out by vandal hands to make way for polemical discussions on some Arian heresy. . . . Strange to say, even the few traditions that have remained intact, did not find refuge among the Behedin—that small remnant of “the followers of the true faith,” who, clinging to their old religion are now scattered all over the province of Kerman—but, are all centered, on the contrary, around the mountain chain of Great or Major Armenia, and of the Lake Van, among the semi-Christian Armenian population. To extricate them whole and undisfigured from the entangled skein of Mohammedan, Christian and pagan traditions, demands a more dexterous hand than that of the enchanted Princess in the fairy tale of “Bluebeard.” Very luckily, some of the principal records are saved and preserved in the shape of a whole library of cylinders. They may serve one day to strongly damage the wild theories and interpretations of the Anquetil-Duperrons, the Spiegels and Haugs. *Vox populi, vox dei*. Popular rumour, always alive to the marvellous, has spun out an intricate cobweb of fancies around the central speck of fact: it will have a stately figure—which it persists in identifying with Mathan, the last of the great Magian High Priests, gathered unto his fathers for the last Sixteen centuries—appear daily at sunset at the entrance of an inaccessible cave at the top of one of the peaks of Ala-Dag, with a book of records under his arm. . . .

With the exception of the “Guebers”—the Behedin of Kerman—now, all the millions of the ancient Fire-worshippers have turned Mussulmans and Christians.

Of the human blood spilt during the forcible conversions to Christ and Mohammed, the national traditions are full. The tears of the Recording Angel, wept throughout the whole duration of the two ages allotted to humanity from the period of Gayo-Maratan, would hardly suffice to wash away the entries made in his book of the ferocious and cruel deeds committed by Christians and Moslems against the followers of Zarathushtra. Of the works of ages in the shape of Fire-temples and monuments destroyed by the zeal of the proselytizing "Saints"—the "men of honest repute" recorded in the Ecclesiastical fables called the History of the Church—the ruins are plentiful and each of them has its tale of woe to relate. I have just visited one of such historical spots built in the undated period of an antiquity, more remote from us than would be willingly conceded to us by the Europeans. I write to you on a fire-altar, 4,000 years old, which has escaped destruction by some miracle, having turned it into a very comfortable pupitre.

Leaving Dyadin the day before yesterday early in the morning, I made my way to the foot of Ala-Dag through snow and ice and arrived at the cave 36 hours later. . . . Ala-Dag, geographically speaking, is the modern name for the whole range of the mountainous chain south of Bayazid and Dyadin; Napat, Shushik-Dag, Tchir-Geruk and Kumbeg-Dag being all independent peaks, though included in the same denomination of Ala-Dag or "God's Mountain." They are not to be compared with the Himalayas, their loftiest peak measuring but 11,600 feet above the sea level, but they are interesting for the traditions clinging to them. It would be premature and even useless to give out what may be known of the truth. Your archaeologists and ethnologists are yet bound hand and foot by the Biblical weeds which, for a century or so, will still prevent the Plant of True Knowledge from taking firm root on the Western soil. . . . But, I may tell you of a popular tradition the nucleus of which is built upon fact. Upon hearing of my intention to start on exploration of the mountain fastnesses, a venerable Armenian patriarch of Dyadin, on the decline of life, and who tries to put to the best use the only and solitary organ left in him intact by the Kurds, namely, his tongue, let it loose upon that occasion. He tried his best to frighten me out of my intention. No mortal man, he said, could ever visit that particular place and live.

Besides every cave being the private property of “Mathan,” he would cause the sacred fire to appear under the traveller’s foot and burn him to death for his sacrilegious attempt; and then Noah’s Ark is preserved in the highest cave . . . “And what do you make of the Arc on Mount Ararat then?” I inquired of him. Forthwith I was appraised of the novel geological discovery that Ararat had formed once upon a time part and parcel of Ala-Dag, but falling into the hands of the Persians it broke away from the latter and placed itself on Christian territory, leaving in its precipitate flight the “sacred” ark in the safe keeping of Ala-Dag. Since then “Mathan” refuses to give it up.* Another tradition—among the Behedin, and in the oasis of Yezd—tells us of the initiated Magi who in times prehistoric had become through their knowledge and wisdom—“gods.” These lived in the Armenian mountains, and were astrologers. Having learned from the star-gods that the world was going to be flooded, they caused the mountain on which they lived to breathe fire and lava, which covered with bitumen all the outward surface of the mountain; and this made the great cave in it secure against the water. After that they placed all the good people with their cattle and goods inside the mountain, leaving the wicked ones to perish. A still simpler version might be found, and one which would come nearer to the historical facts. But of that, no more at present.

You know, of course, that the Armenians, who, until the fourth and even seventh centuries of the Christian era were Parsees in religion, call themselves Haigs, the descendants of Haig, a contemporary of Bilu (Belus), a king of the Babylonians† who deified and worshipped him after death as a Sun and Moon God. Haig is made to have flourished 2200 B.C. according to accepted date, and more than 7,000 agreeably to truth.

* In George Smith’s *The History of Babylonia*, the author expresses an opinion to the effect that the Biblical Ararat “does not mean the mountain now called Ararat, but a mountainous country south of this and near the lake Van” (pp. 49-50). The great Assyriologist can hardly have heard of that popular tradition and must have been prompted to say this on some knowledge grounded upon weightier reasons than popular tradition. But one corroborates the other.—Ed. Theos. [H.P.B.]

† Not to be confounded with the Sun-God Belus and Baal—two far more ancient deities.—Ed. Theos. [H.P.B.]

Their legend states that Haig and his clan were compelled to emigrate from Babylonia to Armenia on account of the religious persecutions to which they were subjected from Bilu who sought to pervert them from pure Parseeism to Sabaeism by including the moon in sun worship. Twenty-six centuries later, (accepted date) their King Tiridates the last of the Arsacidae began to force them into Christianity (fourth century) and the new faith had spread its own versions of cosmogony from Genesis, that Haig had the honour of finding himself transformed into a descendant of Japhet, the son of Noah—that virtuous old man who had performed every achievement but that of being born. But even in their forgotten traditions we find that they claimed to have remained true to the teachings of Zoroaster. These they had accepted ever since Musarus Oannes or Annêdotus—the Heaven or Sun-sent (the first Odakôn Ano-Daphos, the man-fish) arising daily from the sea at sunrise to plunge back into it at every sunset, taught them the good doctrine, their arts and civilization. That was during the reign of Amenon the Chaldean, 68 sari, or 244,800 years before the Deluge. Since then (as demonstrated by the Assyriologists, according to the cylinder records), several other Odakôns had ascended from the sea, the last coming during the days* of the Chaldean King Ubara-Tutu—“the glow of sunset,”—the last but one of the antediluvian kings of Berossus. Each and all of these aquarian teachers came from his habitat, in lands unknown ascending from the Persian Gulf.† If we study the account given of the Annêdotus by Apollodorus and then amplify it with the old pre-Christian traditions of Armenia, which say that he made them know the seeds of the earth, taught them to worship their mother Earth and their father the Sun and showed them how to help the two to bring forth fruit, i.e., taught them the arts of agriculture, we will not wonder at discovering that the Chaldean Oannes and Zoroaster are one in their reminiscences.

* During the millenniums rather, since, according to the chronology left to us by Berossus, the reign of that king lasted 8 sari or 28,800 years.

† One of the cylinders states that this sea was part of the great chaotic deep out of which our world was formed; the celestial region where the “gods and spirits” (the initiated Magi, or Sons of God) dwelt was in their neighbourhood, but not in their country.—Ed. Theos. [H.P.B.]

The Chaldean Annêdotus was called the “Son of the Fish,” and the latter was the name of Zoroaster’s mother. Wonder, what your Zend scholars, Parsees and Europeans, will say to this? They will not feel a little surprised, perhaps, when told, that it was the Hellenized name of their Zoroaster—Annêdotus, whom the Greeks called Oannes that led the old Armenians more easily into accepting Christianity than they otherwise might—as I am now prepared to show.

From Ala-Dag I proceeded west of Dyadin and halted at the Monastery of Surb-Ohannes—“John the Precursor” (the name Ohannes being identical with the Greek Iôannês or John). Now Surb-Ohannes is the oldest Christian monastery in Armenia. It is built on the site of an antediluvian Fire-temple, and situated on the left bank of the, Euphrates, at the foot of the majestic Nepat. Centuries before the Christian era there was a town here, called by some Bhagvan and by others Ditzavan consecrated to Ahura-mazda or Ormuzd. The country is alive with traditions, and even the convent libraries have preserved many fully authenticated records of these pre-Christian centuries. There is one thick manuscript, among others, which contains the Chronicles of all the festivals of the fire-worshipping Armenians, written upon parchment. Their New Year, which began with them in August, was celebrated with extraordinary pomp. Armenian civilization wrought out by the Zoroastrian philosophy, seems to have been ignorant of but few of our modern comforts. These chronicles (fourth century of the Christian era) contain an account of the death and burial of the High Priest Mathan (with whose ghost I am daily threatened by the inhabitants), a brother of the King Tigranes III. When he died his royal relative had a gorgeous fire-temple built to his memory. There were several inns attached to it, offering free lodging and board to every traveller and relief to pilgrims of whatever nationality. Alas! these were the last sunny days of the faith. . . . In 302 King Tiridates with his nobles and army was receiving baptism on this same spot in the waters of the Euphrates from Gregory the Illuminated. There is no doubt but that the venerable saint could claim to have found himself illuminated with a most brilliant idea; since, had it not occurred to him at the time, the many millions of the baptized Armenians might have remained fire-worshippers to this day. Though the king and a portion of his nobles had accepted baptism, the people resisted, and had to be forced with great trouble to accept the new faith.

To overcome their reluctance, the king was advised in the same year by Gregory to pull down and rase the Bhagvan fire-temple to the ground and replace it with a Christian church, wherein relics (a thigh bone and two finger bones) alleged as those of St. John the Baptist, or the “Precursor,” were placed. The Armenians, during a century and a half of subjection to Macedonia (from 325 B.C.) had accepted the name of Ohannes for their Chaldean man-fish Annêdotus. They were easily made to believe that “Ohannes the Baptist” who led them into the water, was identical with Ohannes or Oannes, who had instructed their forefathers arising out, setting in, and replunging back into the water before, during, and after the preaching. The identity of the name and the element, in short, proved useful allies in the plan devised by the diplomatic Saint. Before the end of the eleventh century all Armenia was baptised.* The moral to be inferred from the tale is, that old men die and new arise in their place, but that the same partisan and sectarian spirit which animates the missionary and the priest of today animated the missionary and the priest of old—the priestly caste being the toughest of all. This tradition about, and belief in the Chaldean Oannes was the only additional feature to that of modern Parseeism in the Armenians of old. And yet I am not prepared to say that the Parseeism of the pre-Sassanian period did not include the same belief, at least in a legendary form. At the time when the last sparks of Persian nationality were quenched by the downfall of the Sassanidae, nearly all their books and records spared by Alexander were lost.

* “Iôannês, the Baptist who is usually associated with Waters, is but a Petro-Paulite name and symbol of the Hebrew Jonah [the Jonah swallowed by the whale] and the First Messenger, Assyrian Oannes . . . The fishermen and fishers of men in the Gospels are based on this mythos.” (Enoch, the Book of God, Vol. II, p. 80.) This appears the more probable as the Mohammedan inhabitants of Mosul, near the ruins of Nineveh have assumed for centuries that the mound called by them —“Nebbi Yunus”—contained the tomb or sepulchre of the prophet Jonah, on its summit; while the excavations of Layard brought to light on the neighbouring mount Kuyunjik a colossal image of the Fish-God Oannes—the cause most probably of the later legend.—Ed. Theos. [H.P.B.]

The Sassanian dynasty, I know, had restored the Magian religion in all its primitive splendor; and the ancient Chaldean Magi were believers in Oannes the man-fish, the messenger sent to them by Belus, the Sun-God, to instruct humanity, as Berosus a priest of the Temple of Belus tells us. To accept Zoroaster as the reformer of the Magian religion is to move the period in which he flourished to the very threshold of the Christian era, in which case there could never exist such a discrepancy about the age he lived in, as there is now, and as we find among the Greek historians.

Now to bring my letter to a close. In the years 634-639 the Byzantine Emperor Irakli (Herakleios) returning from his campaign to Persia, and finding the church too mean to contain such a treasure, as the relics of the "Precursor," had the edifice pulled down and a monastery of gigantic size built in its place. Its outward majestic and most grandiose proportions strike the traveller with astonishment up to this day. It is the largest building in Armenia. But—inside it is all darkness and emptiness. The wall bearing the deeply cut inscription which tells of the meritorious deed of the Byzantine Emperor is perforated with Mussulman bullets. . . . The cupola rests on four massive granite pillars, inside which are excavated a number of rooms, several stories high, one above the other, with spiral staircases winding round them and leading to each of the cells, and secret passages managed in the wall leading the inmates in hours of danger to the top of the cupola, and from thence into the heart of the mountain and its many natural caves. Owing to the recent invasions of the Kurds the last ornaments of the church and altar have disappeared—the holy thigh and two fingers having failed to protect the place. Alone the library, composed of books and old manuscripts heaped up as waste paper in every corner of the pillar-cells tempting no Kurd are scattered over the rooms. Out of the three monks who were here in 1877 there remains but one. For the consideration of a dagger and a few silver abazes I got several precious manuscripts from him. . . .

X. . . .F.T.S.

April.

FOOTNOTES TO “THE FIVE-POINTED STAR”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, July, 1881, pp. 216-217]

[In a letter to H. P. Blavatsky, C. H. Van der Linden seeks an explanation of certain unusual experiences that had befallen him and encloses a letter written by him to Col. Bundy of the Religio-Philosophical Journal, on the same subject. He says in part: Some will call me insane, others a dreamer, the majority of humanity an impostor.” To this H. P. B. replies:]

Most undoubtedly they will; and every member of the Theosophical Society—unless he keeps all such occult and psychological personal experience to himself and strictly secret—must be prepared for it. A public (including the best society)—ready at any day to turn round upon its idols and authorities and, dashing them to pieces, to pelt them with stones and trample into the mud such eminent men of science as Professors Hare and Zöllner, Messrs. Wallace and Crookes, for no better reason than that they found themselves compelled to recognize certain phenomena as facts and to honestly proclaim them as such—is not likely to show itself more lenient towards such humble individuals as we are.

[In telling of his experiences he says: “A few days ago my wife had agonizing cramps in the abdomen. I magnetized her, making unintentionally in my motions, the figure of the five-pointed star over the suffering parts and lo! the cramp disappeared as by enchantment. . . . Has this sign anything to do with it?”

His letter to Col. Bundy tells of his lying at midnight “dozing but conscious. . . .” He noticed near his bed a “person in ancient garb” who spoke to him saying: “Unknowingly you used a secret to relieve your wife’s pains a few days ago, which secret, when generally known, would change the practice of medicine to a very great extent. . . .

I will teach you how to apply it personally . . . only one promise I demand in return . . . never reveal the secret of it to anyone outside your own family. . . ." In conclusion the writer says: "Science itself becomes corrupt for it refuses to either accept or investigate facts." To this H. P. B. remarks:]

Many men of science do, on the contrary. But it requires a man of no ordinary moral courage to face the storm of criticism which the avowal of such investigations—especially when successful—brings upon the experimenter. See Professor Zöllner's *Transcendental Physics*, and *Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism*, by Wm. Crookes, F.R.S., and Judge for yourself.

[Editor's Closing Note.]

Such visitations by "Orientals" as the one with which our Brother, Mr. Van der Linden was favoured, become rather frequent in our days. We have several letters to the same effect. No explanation, however, we venture to say, would do any good, unless preceded by a long study and a thorough understanding of the occult laws of "magnetic correspondences" so-called. First let us see whether by the accumulation of testimony for identical results, we have a right to include this mysterious influence among facts. It is premature for us to speak of such things when even the scientific hypothesis of Professor Zöllner's fourth dimension of space finds so little favour in the eyes of the materialist. Meanwhile, we append to this contribution another letter upon the same subject from a Parsee gentleman, an F.T.S., a full-blown sceptic but yesterday, but whose scepticism was a little staggered by the same results.

[The letter appended to the above is from Darasha Doshabhoy. Besides relating an experience similar to the one of C. H. Van der Linden, with regard to the effects of the pentagram, he writes of having been much impressed by a story of Reincarnation written by a Kshatriya lady, and published in *The Theosophist*, (Vol. II, May, 1881).

He says: "I now find that the lady's story confirms my suspicions as it stands to reason that as nothing increases or decreases in this perishable world of matter, the atma of one as soon as it leaves the frame or body enters into another. . . I am still half sceptical about what it is or what it should be. . . ."]

What it is or "should be" is incapable of scientific demonstration. What it is not and cannot be is pretty well verified though. It is neither "harp" nor "wings" on a bodiless head with nothing but its ears to sit upon—and that alone is a comfort.

A REPLY TO OUR CRITICS

(Our final answer to several objections.)

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, July, 1881, pp. 217-218]

In the ordinary run of daily life speech may be silver, while "silence is golden." With the editors of periodicals devoted to some special object "silence" in certain cases amounts to cowardice and false pretences. Such shall not be our case.

We are perfectly aware of the fact that the simple presence of the word "Spiritualism" on the title page of our journal, "causes it to lose in the eyes of materialist and sceptic fifty per cent of its value"—for we are repeatedly told so by many of our best friends, some of whom promise us more popularity, hence—an increase of subscribers, would we but take out the "contemptible" term and replace it by some other, synonymous in meaning, but less obnoxious phonetically to the general public. That would be acting under false pretences. The undisturbed presence of the unpopular word will indicate our reply.

That we did not include "Spiritualism" among the other subjects to which our journal is devoted "in the hopes that it should do us good service among the Spiritualists" is proved by the following fact: From the first issue of our Prospectus to the present day, subscribers from "Spiritual" quarters have not amounted to four per cent on our subscription list.

Yet, to our merriment, we are repeatedly spoken of as “Spiritualists” by the Press and—our opponents. Whether really ignorant of, or purposely ignoring our views, they tax us with belief in Spirits. Not that we would at all object to the appellation—too many far worthier and wiser persons than we, firmly believing in “Spirits”—but that would be acting under “false pretences” again. And so, we are called a “Spiritualist” by persons who foolishly regard the term as a “brand,” while the orthodox Spiritualists, who are well aware that we attribute their phenomena to quite another agency than Spirits, resent our peculiar opinions as an insult to their belief, and in their turn ridicule and oppose us.

This fact alone ought to prove, if anything ever will, that our journal pursues an honest policy. That, established for the one and sole object, namely, for the elucidation of truth, however unpopular, it has remained throughout true to its first principle—that of absolute impartiality. And that as fully answers another charge, viz., that of publishing views of our correspondents with which we often do not concur ourselves. “Your journal teems with articles upholding ridiculous superstitions and absurd ghost stories,” is the complaint in one letter. “You neglect laying a sufficient stress in your editorials upon the necessity of discrimination between facts and error, and in the selection of the matter furnished by your contributors,” says another. A third one accuses us of not sufficiently rising “from supposed facts, to principles, which would prove to our readers in every case the former no better than fictions.” In other words—as we understand it—we are accused of neglecting scientific induction. Our critics may be right, but neither are we altogether wrong. In the face of the many crucial and strictly scientific experiments made by our most eminent savants,* it would take a wiser sage than King Solomon himself, to decide now between fact and fiction. The query, “What is truth?” is more difficult to answer in the nineteenth than in the first century of our era.

* See the article following this: “Science, Phenomena and the Press.”—Editor, The Theosophist.

The appearance of his “evil genius” to Brutus in the shape of a monstrous human form, which, entering his tent in the darkness and silence of night, promised to meet him in the plains of Philippi—was a fact to the Roman tyrannicide; it was but a dream to his slaves who neither saw nor heard anything on that night. The existence of an antipodal continent and the heliocentric system were facts to Columbus and Galileo years before they could actually demonstrate them; yet the existence of America, as that of our present solar system, was as fiercely denied several centuries back as the phenomena of Spiritualism are now. Facts existed in the “pre-scientific past,” and errors are as thick as berries in our scientific present. With whom then, is the criterion of truth to be left? Are we to abandon it to the mercy and judgment of a prejudiced society constantly caught trying to subvert that which it does not understand; ever seeking to transform sham and hypocrisy into synonyms of “propriety” and “respectability”? Or shall we blindly leave it to modern exact Science, so-called? But Science has neither said her last word, nor can her various branches of knowledge rejoice in their qualification of exact, but so long as the hypotheses of yesterday are not upset by the discoveries of today. “Science is atheistic, phantasmagorical, and always in labour with conjecture. It can never become knowledge per se. Not to know is its climax,” says Prof. A. Wilder, our New York Vice-President, certainly more of a man of Science himself than many a scientist better known than he is to the world. Moreover, the learned representatives of the Royal Society have as many cherished hobbies, and are as little free of prejudice and preconception as any other mortals. It is perhaps, to religion and her handmaid theology, with her “seventy-times seven” sects, each claiming and none proving its right to the claim of truth, that, in our search for it, we ought to humbly turn? One of our severe Christian Areopagites actually expresses the fear that “even some of the absurd stories of the Puranas have found favour with The Theosophist.” But let him tell us, has the Bible any less of “absurd ghost stories” and “ridiculous miracles” in it than the Hindu Puranas, the Buddhist Maha-Jataka, or even one of the most “shamefully superstitious publications” of the Spiritualists?

(We quote from his letter.) We are afraid in all and one it is but:

Faith, fanatic faith, once wedded fast

To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last. . . and—we decline accepting anything on faith. In common with most of the periodicals we remind our readers in every number of *The Theosophist* that its “Editors disclaim responsibility for opinions expressed by contributors,” with some of which they (we) do not agree. And that is all we can do. We never started out in our paper as Teachers, but rather as humble and faithful recorders of the innumerable beliefs, creeds, scientific hypotheses, and—even “superstitions” current in the past ages and now more than lingering yet in our own. Never having been a sectarian—i.e., an interested party—we maintain that in the face of the present situation, during that incessant warfare, in which old creeds and new doctrines, conflicting schools and authorities, revivals of blind faith and incessant scientific discoveries running a race as though for the survival of the fittest, swallow up and mutually destroy and annihilate each other—daring, indeed, were that man who would assume the task of deciding between them! Who, we ask, in the presence of those most wonderful and most unexpected achievements of our great physicists and chemists would risk to draw the line of demarcation between the possible and the impossible? Where is the honest man who conversant at all with the latest conclusions of archaeology, philology, palaeography, and especially Assyriology, would undertake to prove the superiority of the religious “superstitions” of the civilized Europeans over those of the “heathen,” and even of the fetish-worshipping savages?

Having said so much, we have made clear, we hope, the reason why, believing no mortal man infallible, nor claiming that privilege for ourselves, we open our columns to the discussion of every view and opinion, provided it is not proved absolutely supernatural. Besides, whenever we make room for “unscientific” contributions it is when these treat upon subjects which lie entirely out of the province of physical science—generally upon questions that the average and dogmatic scientist rejects a priori and without examination; but which the real man of science finds not only possible, but after investigation very often fearlessly proclaims the disputed question as an undeniable fact. In respect to most transcendental subjects the sceptic can no more disprove than the believer prove his point.

FACT is the only tribunal we submit to and recognize it without appeal. And before that tribunal a Tyndall and an ignoramus stand on a perfect par. Alive to the truism that every path may eventually lead to the highway as every river to the ocean, we never reject a contribution simply because we do not believe in the subject it treats upon, or disagree with its conclusions. Contrast alone can enable us to appreciate things at their right value; and unless a judge compares notes and hears both sides he can hardly come to a correct decision. *Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt**—is our motto; and we seek to prudently walk between the many ditches without rushing into either. For one man to demand from another that he shall believe like himself, whether in a question of religion or science is supremely unjust and despotic. Besides, it is absurd. For it amounts to exacting that the brains of the convert, his organs of perception, his whole organization, in short, be reconstructed precisely on the model of that of his teacher, and that he shall have the same temperament and mental faculties as the other has. And why not his nose and eyes, in such a case? Mental slavery is the worst of all slaveries. It is a state which, as brutal force has no real power, always denotes either an abject cowardice or a great intellectual weakness.

Among many other charges, we are accused of not sufficiently exercising our editorial right of selection. We beg to differ and contradict the imputation. As every other person blessed with brains instead of calves'-foot jelly in his head, we certainly have our opinions upon things in general, and things occult especially, to some of which we hold very firmly. But these being our personal views, and though we have as good a right to them as any, we have none whatever to force them for recognition upon others.

[From Horace, Satires, I, 2, 24: "while striving to shun one vice, fools run into its opposite."—
Compiler.]

We do not believe in the activity of “departed spirits”—others and among these, many of the Fellows of the Theosophical Society do—and we are bound to respect their opinions, so long as they respect ours. To follow every article from a contributor with an Editor’s Note correcting “his erroneous ideas” would amount to turning our strictly impartial journal into a sectarian organ. We decline such an office of “Sir Oracle.”

The Theosophist is a journal of our Society. Each of its Fellows being left absolutely untrammelled in his opinions, and the body representing collectively nearly every creed, nationality and school of philosophy, every member has a right to claim room in the organ of his Society for the defence of his own particular creed and views. Our Society being an absolute and uncompromising Republic of Conscience, preconception and narrow-mindedness in science and philosophy have no room in it. They are as hateful and as much denounced by us as dogmatism and bigotry in theology; and this we have repeated usque ad nauseam.

Having explained our position, we will close with the following parting words to our sectarian friends and critics. The materialists and sceptics who upbraid us in the name of modern Science—the Dame who always shakes her head and finger in scorn at everything she has not yet fathomed—we would remind of the suggestive but too mild words of the great Arago: “He is a rash man, who outside of pure mathematics pronounces the word ‘impossible.’ ” And to theology, which under her many orthodox masks throws mud at us from behind every secure corner, we retort by Victor Hugo’s celebrated paradox: “In the name of RELIGION we protest against all and every religion!”

SCIENCE, PHENOMENA AND THE PRESS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, July, 1881, pp. 218-220]

Fiat Justitia, ruat coelum is not the motto of our century. Nothing is so amusing as to watch at every fresh exposure of some tricky medium—of whom there are a good many—the attitude of the Press in general, and those time-serving editors of pseudo first-class papers—of whom there are still more—especially. In order to flatter the sympathies, and bow to the prejudices of their subscribers, they, who speak in terms of the utmost veneration of a church they often do not believe in, will, at the same time, denounce, in the most objugatory and vituperative language, spiritualism in which they occasionally themselves believe, and Theosophy of whose tenets they know next to nothing.

Such is the present attitude of some Anglo-Indian papers in relation to the Fletcher case. The trial and sentence to hard labour of Mrs. Fletcher—who was punished for fraudulently obtaining valuables and not at all for being, or rather not being a medium—seems to have thrown some of them into ecstasies of joy. Two of them especially—one a Lahore and the other an Allahabad paper—have got quite off their balance and gone beating about the bush after those “impostors calling themselves Theosophists and Spiritualists.” (!?) We seriously doubt whether the respective editors of the two above-mentioned papers could ever hope for the high honour of being received into the company of even the flunkeys of some of our titled “Spiritualists and Theosophists” of England, whom they include in the category of “impostors.” But, as there is every probability, in the case in hand, of a certain professional envy on their part against spiritual mediums, their irritation may have its *raison d’être*.

The mediums “produce” while these editors “absorb” spirits. Hence—with an eye to their incurable and well-known bibacity we have to be charitable. One, who is generally as drunk as David’s sow, can hardly be made responsible for what he says. The phenomena of obsession and possession assuming most varied forms, one medium will be obsessed by “an imaginary goblin,” while another one will be possessed—by the seven fiends of drink. Hence we accuse the two “medium-editors” of gross inconsistency. For, if the public is made to credit the witty definition of that American reporter who notified the world of his discovery that “materialized spirits are but frozen whiskey,” they ought certainly to show themselves a little more grateful toward their brother mediums than they do. Leaving, however, English and Yankee-Irish editors to the tender mercies of delirium tremens and the spiritual snakes in their boots, we will broach our subject at once.

That spiritualism has made itself unpopular, is an undeniable fact. That its phenomena have become so, chiefly owing to claims of supernatural intervention for them, to the agency of spirits in the production of the manifestations, is as incontrovertible. But when the sceptic has once pronounced in tones of contempt the tabooed word “Spiritualism,” is there one man in ten thousand who fully realizes the meaning of that which he so abuses? Is it Spiritualism proper that is denounced? Or, that faith which professes blind belief in the communication of the living men with the spirits of their departed friends, through mediums? Or, is it only belief in the occurrence of occult phenomena that the average public so strongly objects to? Which?

And now, we are inclined to demonstrate, that were Society—Christians and materialists included—ever capable of acting with anything like impartiality, and of reasoning its antipathies before it became entirely blinded by its prejudices, spiritualism could never have become its *bête noire* as it now has.

At all events, whether judged from its social, or examined from its philosophical standard, it stands certainly higher than any of the sects of the “revivalists”—against which Society has nevertheless not a word to say. Since its ranks are composed chiefly of the well-educated classes, and that spiritualism was never half as aggressive offensive as we find most of the sects of dissenters, the public has no right to taboo it, as it does.

However it may be, as the policy of our paper is to present all things in their true light, we mean now to seriously analyse spiritualism. Owing to long years of study, we believe we are more competent to judge of it than those who really know nothing of it—as the native and the Anglo-Indian press for instance. On the other hand, our own theories as to the agency producing most of the phenomena being diametrically antagonistic to those of the Spiritualists—the accusation of partiality in our case can but fall to the ground. We will now show the inconsistency of the anti-Spiritualists of all classes.

If it is against “Spiritualism” proper that the public wrath waxes so hot, then every Christian who abuses it is untrue to his creed. He plays into the hands of Infidelity. Besides having been used for ages in contradistinction to that of materialism, the word spiritualism served no farther back than the first half of our century to designate the doctrines and religious life of that class of Christian mystics who believed themselves to be under the guidance of the Divine Spirit; the adjective “Spiritualist” having been always applied to those persons who spiritualized the Jewish Scriptures. In the past centuries such was the appellation given to Jacob Böhme, Madame Guyon, Miguel de Molinos and other Quietists and Mystics. In our present age it belongs by right to the Shakers of America, and even more so to the “Apostles” of the Calcutta New Dispensation, than to the lay believers in mediumistic phenomena, who—we are sorry to say, instead of spiritualizing matter, materialize Spirit. . . . As the notion stands though, the most that could be brought by orthodox Christians against modern Spiritualism is the accusation of being one of the many heretical Christian sects of the day.

Not only have the majority of Spiritualists retained their belief in the Bible and Christianity, but even the most infidel among them do no worse than the Unitarians—who assert the simple humanity of Christ, contending that he was no more than a divinely illuminated prophet—a medium, say the Spiritualists. Hence Spiritualism as a sect has as much a right for recognition and at least outward respect, as any other Christian sect. But it is perhaps their peculiar belief that is so hateful to the unbelievers? Another and still grosser inconsistency! For how can belief in spirits, the surviving souls of departed men—quite an orthodox Christian dogma—be held disreputable by a Christian public? We do not mean to be disrespectful but only fair, in asking the following question: Were a sane person placed under the necessity of choosing, but had yet the privilege of a free choice, which of the two stories, think ye, he would accept as the most likely to have occurred: that of a materialized angel and the she-ass whose mouth was opened by the Lord to speak to Balaam in a human voice,* or that of Mr. Crookes' materialized Katie King? It really would not be generous in us to insist upon a direct answer. But we will do this: placing the Spiritualists on one side, and the Christian Adventists or Millenarians on the other, we will offer our reader a bird's-eye view of both. The former, in company with more than one eminent man of science, will be represented by us at his greatest disadvantage; namely, in a spiritual circle, in a half-darkened room singing in chorus a spiritual melody, and anxiously waiting for the apparition of a materialized relative. . . . The Millenarian—surrounded by his family and household gods roosting on the top of a tree, or the roof of his house, singing Christian psalms and waiting as anxiously for his Christ to appear and carry them all away into heaven over a crumbling universe! . . . We insist that our readers should not misunderstand us.

* [Numbers, xxii, 28; 2 Peter, ii, 16.—Compiler.]

We laugh no more at the faith of the Millenarian who, notwithstanding many such days of failure when instead of catching hold of his Saviour, he found himself drenched to the bones, caught a bad cold and was occasionally killed by lightning,* than we deride that of the believer in the materializations. We simply ask why should the press and the public permit themselves to despise and laugh to scorn the Spiritualist, while hardly daring to mention, let alone laugh, at the beliefs of the former? Learned divines meet and seriously discuss and devise means “to be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” Dr. Tyng, one of the best educated clergymen of New York, actually pronounces these words: “Yes; we firmly believe in the coming advent. A conference was held in London in February last, and the result was gratifying. . . . At this coming the dead that have died in Christ will rise first, and then those of his children who are alive will be caught up into the clouds with them, and their bodies will undergo a change, and they will dwell in heavenly places for a season”!!

* Hardly a few years since such a case happened in America to some unlucky Millenarians, the elders of whose churches had prophesied the day and the hour of the second advent of Christ. They had sold their properties and given it away; settled their worldly affairs after which most of them climbed on that solemn day to the highest trees and hills. A shower, accompanied by a terrible thunderstorm and lightning brought two of the Adventist families together with their trees down to the ground instead of taking them Elijah-like to heaven. And that the belief of a physical advent of Christ is not confined to the ignorant classes alone is proved by the following clip from an American newspaper of 1878.

“A circular has been issued signed by the Rev. Dr. James H. Brookes of the Presbyterian Church, St. Louis; the Rev. Dr. Stephen H. Tyng, Jr., of this city; Bishop W. R. Nicholson of the Reformed Episcopal Church, Philadelphia; W. Y. Morehead; the Revd. A. J. Gordon of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church, Boston; Maurice Baldwin; the Rev. H. M. Parsons of the Presbyterian Church, Buffalo; and the Rev. Dr. Rufus W. Clarke of the Dutch Reformed Church, Albany, inviting those who believe in the personal pre-millennial advent of Jesus Christ to meet at the Church of the Holy Trinity in this city, on the 30th and 31st of October and the 1st of November, to listen to a series of papers on the pre-millennial advent of Jesus Christ, and to join in such discussion as the topics may suggest. A large number of professors, ministers, and laymen have endorsed the call. Among them are the older Tyng, Bishop Vail of Kansas, Professor Kellogg of Alleghany Presbyterian Seminary, the Rev. Dr. Imbrie of Jersey City, George T. Pentecost, the Boston Evangelist, and other well-known men.”—New York Sun.

Hence—the logical induction: So long as the Christian public professes belief in, and veneration for its ancestral faith, it behoves them little to throw the accusation of “degrading superstitions and credulity” into the teeth of spiritualism. They are no better than the hypocrites denounced in Luke; those who are commanded by Jesus to cast out first the beam of their own eye, and then offer to pull out the mote that is in their brother’s organ of sight. As for those gentlemen of the press, who, lacking the courage to denounce the superstitions of the strong and the mighty, fall back upon those, whose unpopularity has made them weak and helpless, they act more than in a cowardly way. They are the “Bashi-Boozooks*” of Mrs. Grundy’s army—those, who under the cover of darkness and in perfect safety to themselves spoil and finish the wounded. The Theosophists and Spiritualists have at least the courage of their opinions. They openly and fearlessly proclaim their heterodox and unpopular beliefs and face the enemy’s fire without flinching. How many of our colleagues of the press will dare to follow our example? Verily, the ugly cancer of sham and hypocrisy has gnawed down to the very bone of educated Society! We find truthfulness and moral courage now, but in a few atheists, who, like Bradlaugh and Colonel Ingersoll bravely defy the whole world. Even great and independent men like Tyndall, cower down before public wrath. He who did not blush to speak of Spiritualism as of “an intellectual whoredom” was made before the storm of indignation raised by him in the English clergy to half recant his publicly expressed scientific opinion of the absolute “potency of matter.” But he never thought of offering an apology for his insult to those of his scientific colleagues who believed in Spiritual phenomena. . . .

And now dropping off the adjective of “Spiritual” from the word phenomena—let us see how far sceptics are justified in throwing a slur upon the latter and to reject the testimony of the greatest men of modern Science in favour of their genuineness. And that, whenever a scientist went to the trouble of seriously investigating the phenomena, he was forced to admit the objective reality of these weird manifestations, is henceforth an historical fact. And it is precisely that which we purpose to prove in the next article.

THE EVIDENCE OF SCIENCE

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, July, 1881, pp. 220-221]

From Professor Hare, the great American chemist, a world-wide celebrity, a quarter of a century ago, down to Professor Zöllner, the Leipzig astronomer in 1878, each and all of the men of Science who, undertaking to expose the so-called Spiritual phenomena in the name of science, went yet to work honestly at their investigation—found themselves baffled and finally completely beaten by facts.

So, in 1853, Professor Hare publicly expressed the following determination: “I feel called upon as an act of duty to my fellow creatures, to bring whatever influence I possess to the attempt to stem the tide of popular madness, which, in defiance of reason and science is fast setting in favour of the gross delusion called “Spiritualism.” (History of Spiritualism, p. 115.) Two years later, and after that man of science had brought his keenest acumen to bear upon the phenomena, and had invented all kinds of machinery through which he hoped to detect tricky mediums, but to no avail, Professor Hare became a Spiritualist. The Harvard professors by whom the learned doctor had been regarded for forty years as an authority upon all scientific subjects, now denounced his “insane adherence to the gigantic humbug.” But the phenomena were found facts and had the best of him as they had of many more of learned professors at various times.

In 1869 the Committee of the Dialectical Society of London,* composed of twenty-eight persons of education and good public repute (among whom we find the names of Mr. Grattan Geary, the present editor of the Bombay Gazette, of Mr. H. G. Atkinson, and of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh—see Report on Spiritualism, of the Committee of the London Dialectical Society, London, 1871), after sittings with mediums for months, and having applied to them the most crucial tests, was compelled to acknowledge: 1st—That the phenomena that they had witnessed were genuine, and impossible to simulate; 2nd—That the most extraordinary manifestations thoroughly upsetting many preconceived theories as to natural laws, did happen, and were undeniable. Some had occurred in their own families.

In 1870 Mr. Crookes, F.R.S., had expressed his opinion in print that he believed “the whole affair was a superstition, or at least an unexplained trick . . . a delusion of the senses.” In 1875, in his letter upon Katie King, the young lady “Spirit” who visited him for three years during séances held in the presence of a number of men of science, we find Mr. Crookes confessing as follows:—“To imagine . . . the Katie King of the last three years to be the result of imposture does more violence to one’s reason and commonsense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms. . . .” (a “spirit”). With that man of science, the discoverer of Radiant Matter, that Force he had so derided after a long course of honest and scientific investigations had . . . “become not a matter of opinion but of absolute knowledge.”†

Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the great English naturalist, writes in his preface to *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*:

Up to the time when I first became acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism, I was a confirmed philosophical sceptic. . . . I was so thorough and confirmed a materialist that I could not at that time find a place in my mind for the conception of spiritual existence. . . .

* “At a Meeting of the Council of the London Dialectical Society, held on the 26th January, 1869, on the motion of Dr. Edmunds, a committee was appointed to investigate the phenomena alleged to be spiritual manifestations and to report thereon.” (Copy of the Minutes of the Council.)

† *Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism*, pp. 7, 112.

Facts, however, are stubborn things. . . . The facts beat me. They compelled me to accept them as facts . . . [and] led me to accept Spiritualism. (p. 7.)

Mr. Nicholas Wagner, Professor of Zoology at the St. Petersburg University, writes at the beginning of his investigations:—"I accepted Professor Butleroff's invitation to witness the phenomena produced by the medium Home who lived in his house, with the greatest mistrust and even aversion." At the end of about twenty séances he closes a narrative full of the most inexplicable phenomena upsetting every scientific hypothesis with the following admission:—

I have presented a truthful account of facts witnessed by myself. I desire that all those who will not believe me, may prove to me that I am wrong; but in such a case they will have to support their case with facts as positive and as undeniable as those that forced me to my present conviction, that the mediumistic phenomena ARE REAL EXISTING FACTS. *

Nor has Professor Wagner given up to this day his firm belief in the objective reality of such manifestations; for only a few months ago he closes another article upon phenomena obtained, which are the repetition of Professor Zöllner's experiments with Dr. Slade only with non-professional mediums (ladies of high society) with these words: "Again, these facts convince us of the necessity of widening the domain of recognized science and its methods and means for the exploration of the invisible and unknown world. . . ."†

Professor Butleroff of St. Petersburg, a chemist of the greatest eminence and a member of the Academy of Sciences—one of the few men of learning who, seeking in Science truth alone, feared not to pass into the minority—has been investigating the phenomena for many years. In the April number of the *Russkiy Vvestnik*, an orthodox journal of the greatest respectability, we find him beginning a long and scientific article upon "Empiricism and Dogmatism in the Domain of Mediumship" with an unequivocal confession of faith:

* *Yevropeyskiy Vestnik* (Messenger of Europe), 1876.

† See *Transcendental Physics*, p. 148, translation by Charles Carleton Massey, Barrister-at-Law (Vice-President of the British Theosophical Society).

—“Firmly and fully convinced of the objective reality of mediumistic phenomena, I find necessary to point out in print the first attempts made to connect some of these phenomena with scientific hypotheses,” he writes. And then he proceeds to enumerate several great names of men of science who struck “rock bottom” in Germany, in the shifting sands of phenomena, which had hitherto eluded all scientific grasp. These are Dr. Zöllner, Professor of Physics and Astronomy in the University of Leipzig, who stands in the front ranks of the scientific men of Europe; Dr. Fichte, the son of the celebrated German philosopher, for years Professor of Philosophy at the University of Tübingen,* and who was at first the greatest sceptic and opponent of the theory which upheld the reality of the phenomena; Dr. Wilhelm Weber, Professor of Physics—the founder of the doctrine of the Vibration of Forces. “No scientific reputation stands higher in Germany than that of Weber.”† Professor Perty of Geneva; Professor Scheibner, of Leipzig University, “a well-known and highly distinguished mathematician”; Dr. Gustav T. Fechner, an eminent natural philosopher, another Professor of Physics at Leipzig, and von Hoffmann; Baron von Hellenbach of Vienna, etc., etc. Many of these, namely, Professors Weber, Scheibner, Fechner and others, have been witnesses to Mr. Zöllner’s scientific experiments with Dr. Slade, the medium, and have taken a part in them. Speaking of the physical phenomena which had taken place in that medium’s presence, Professor Zöllner says as follows:

I reserve to later publication in my own treatises the description of further experiments, obtained by me in twelve séances with Mr. Slade, and as I am expressly authorized to mention, in the presence of my friends and colleagues, Professor Fechner, Professor Wilhelm Weber, the celebrated electrician from Göttingen, and Herr Scheibner, Professor of Mathematics . . . who are perfectly convinced of the reality of the observed facts, altogether excluding imposture or prestidigitation.”‡

* In contradistinction to the Hegelian pantheism Fichte established a system of his own which he called—“Concrete Theism.”

† Transcendental Physics, p. 18.

‡ Ibid., p. 18.

These descriptions of the experiments in the most extraordinary phenomena may be found in that most interesting volume translated and published by Mr. C. C. Massey from the third volume of Zöllner's scientific treatises, called *Transcendental Physics*. Space in our journal absolutely precludes the possibility of our mentioning them. But in order to answer beforehand the well-known and trite objection that "any clever prestidigitator can do the same," we will append extracts from two letters here, from the same volume. These are the published confessions of two jugglers of wide-known fame—Messrs. Maskelyne of London, and Samuel Bellachini, Court conjurer at Berlin—who repeat that which the celebrated Robert-Houdin, the French conjurer, had already stated before; namely, that "levitations without contact as produced in the presence of mediums were feats utterly beyond the power of the professional juggler"; that it was "the work of no human agency, whatever else that agency might be."

On the 1st July, 1873, Mr. Maskelyne writes in answer to a challenge from a spiritualist who offered him £1000 if he could reproduce certain mediumistic phenomena, as follows:

In accepting this challenge, I wish you distinctly to understand that I do not presume to prove that such manifestations as those stated in the Report of the Dialectical Society are produced by trickery—I have never denied that such manifestations are genuine, but I contend that in them there is not one iota of evidence which proves that departed spirits have no better occupation than lifting furniture about. . . . I have never stated that you cannot produce some phenomena in a genuine manner. . . . [And in a third letter Mr. Maskelyne adds:] How genuine phenomena can be produced by trickery I am at a loss to know.*

There we have juggler No. 1, confessing that there is such a thing as genuine phenomena.

In an official document, Samuel Bellachini, the prestidigitator and Court conjurer to His Majesty the Emperor William I of Germany, certifies over his signature and those of two witnesses to the following:

* Given in the Appendices of *Transcendental Physics*, pp. 263, 264, 265.

. . . . I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation, to be absolutely impossible.

It must rest with . . . men of Science . . . to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the “How” of this subject to be premature, and according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a notary and witnesses.

(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI.*

Berlin, 6th December, 1877.

And that makes juggler No. 2.

These two documents, added to the testimony of the several eminent men of science, ought to settle the “to be, or not to be” of the reality of the phenomena whatever the agency which produces them. If we cannot yet sufficiently prove what it is, there is some consolation to know what it is not: it is neither supernatural, divine nor diabolic. And if it is neither and the evidence in favour of its objective reality rests on such a scientific testimony, then the sooner the public and its *âme damnée*—the press—cease to sneer at and hiss it, the better for both—in future. Until then, to those who oppose and point the finger of scorn at the Spiritualists and Theosophists we will remark that they are quite welcome to call us names in words and even in print. In the words of a spiritualist—a very dear lady friend of ours—addressed to a sneering sceptic last year, at Simla: There is real comfort in the thought that while you only believe us—we know you to be FOOLS.

* Op. cit., pp. 260-61.

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF SPIRITUALISM

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, July, 1881, p. 225]

Having already (p. 139, Vol. II) borne testimony to the admirable moral qualities and intellectual endowments of our lamented friend, the late Epes Sargent, it would almost suffice for us to announce the appearance of his crowning psychological work, *The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism*, to give our readers an idea of its merits. From the beginning to the close of Mr. Sargent's busy literary life, whatever he did was well done. Though a man of strong convictions, he yet showed throughout an earnest determination to state his case fairly and without offensive combativeness—a talent we honestly envy. He became a Spiritualist only under the pressure of hard facts that he could not explain away, and since then has been jotting down for reference instead of merely seeing and forgetting like many others, the proofs that Spiritualism offers to the man of science, that it is worth investigating. The fruits of this methodical industry have, as we stated in our recent notice of his death, been given to the world in the form of three of the most useful books upon the subject. Mr. Sargent had no feeling of antagonism to Theosophy. With many enlightened Spiritualists he expressed his entire readiness to join us when he should be convinced of the Theosophical theory of the mediumistic phenomena by as unanswerable proofs as those which had made him what he was. And, as from the nature of things, these proofs were not available outside the closed circle of Asiatic mystics whom he could not visit, he took up an attitude of friendly yet neutral good will, maintaining correspondence to the last with his Theosophic friends.

In his Scientific Basis, Mr. Sargent makes such an array of both logic and phenomena as to silence, if not convince, the sceptical man of science who would sneer mediumism down as a sort of child's play for servant girls and schoolboys. It is a book to be thought over as well as read by every real student of Psychology. We commend it most heartily to such, notwithstanding that, from having been more favoured than the lamented author with opportunities to learn the real cause of the mediumistic phenomena, we differ with him as to the necessary agency therein of the spirits of the dead. Messrs. Colby and Rich, the publishers, will accept our thanks for the copy of the work we have received.*

* [See the Bio-Bibliogr. Index for additional information regarding Epes Sargent.—Compiler.]

FOOTNOTES TO “THE WORK OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETIES”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, Supplement, July, 1881]

[While on a visit to Ceylon, Col. Olcott visited Colombo. He wrote in part: “I lectured at the College last evening to an audience of about five hundred. . . . I had in my hand a paper on which the High Priest, the Rev. Sumangala, had entered all the lies about the Theosophical Society I was to refute. . . . I defied everybody, Christian or otherwise, that had anything to say either about the Theosophical Society or ourselves, to come on the platform like men and say it to my face But not a soul dared open his mouth.”]

And the Missionary organs, like the Lucknow Witness and others, denounce us yet for our lack of sympathy for the padris and Christian converts! For six years we have to fight step by step, falsehoods, slanders and vilification invented with the sole object of making the public lose every confidence in the Theosophical Society. And all that in the name of the Bible, which commands—“Thou shalt not bear false witness,” and in that of Christ, of Him, who, represented as the meekest and the most forgiving of all men, is said to have died for humanity to save the world from sin!

Verily more crimes are perpetrated, and false evidence daily given in the name of the “meek Nazarene” by His followers, than there ever was among those Jews and heathens He called—a “generation of vipers”! Can TRUTH ever need such weapons?

[The Ceylon Times reports in detail the incidents mentioned by Col. Olcott, including his answers to questions during his lecture at Galle. To the question whether the Society is Buddhistic or not, Col. Olcott is alleged to have answered that the “parent society may be said to be Buddhist.”]

The Reporter must have misunderstood our President. The Parent Society cannot be said to be “Buddhist” since (a) it is more unsectarian than any of its branches, and (b) its numerous body being composed of members professing the most widely separated creeds—many of them are liberal Christians, Mohammedans, Hindus, Parsees, etc., while others, and the greater number, are materialists and spiritualists. The “Parent Society” is not composed only of the two Founders (now in India) and the Recording Secretary, these three alone being openly Buddhists, but of other original Founders who are scattered about America and Europe, and of members, half a dozen or so of whom also profess that faith and “take refuge in Buddha.” But even the fact of the two Founders being Buddhists does not make them respect any the less for it the Vedas and especially the Vedanta. After as much study as we could give to it, we came to the firm conviction that Vedantism and Buddhism were two synonymous, nearly identical philosophies, in spirit, if not in practice and interpretation. The Vedanta system is but transcendental or so to say spiritualized Buddhism, while the latter is rational or even radical Vedantism. Between the two stands Sankhya philosophy.

[The Harbinger of Light, Melbourne, (Australia), reports “the receipt of a photograph of the Theosophical Society’s Buddhist School at Point de Galle, where a reform in the right direction was initiated and is now in active operation, viz., the redemption from blind Christianity to rational Buddhism of the Singhalese ‘rising generation.’” . . .

“Buddhism is, pure Theism.” To this H. P. B. remarks:]

Our esteemed friend is mistaken. Buddhism is no “Theism,” since Buddhists do not believe in a “personal god,” and reject altogether Revelation. They “take refuge in Buddha” and call him “Saviour” not because they regard him as a god but, on account of the “Enlightened Teacher” having saved humanity from the great darkness of superstition, from blind faith in the teachings of fallible men and belief in their authority. Siddhârtha Buddha is a saviour indeed, for, taking us by the hand he was the first to show us the way to true salvation—deliverance from the miseries of human life; future everlasting misery and eternal bliss depending but upon our own personal merits. We are our own Saviours.

EDITOR’S NOTE TO “THE HINDU SABHA”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 10, Supplement, July, 1881]

[The President of the Hindu Sabha, A. Sankariah, published in his Journal an appeal to its members to give special attention to the objects of the Association. He says in part: “Our definition of Hindu is one who respects the Rishis of India and loves the nation devoted to them . . . every educated Hindu should acquire as much proficiency as is possible for him in the Vyasiyam. . . . Yet still after publication of eight numbers of the Journal, we have to confront the anomaly of Hindus wishing to know what is the Vyasiyam and who is a Hindu.”]

Our esteemed Brother seems to wonder that “after the publication of eight numbers of the journal he, the Editor, has “to confront the anomaly of Hindus wishing to know what is the Vyasiyam and who is a Hindu.” His surprise may cool, perhaps, when we have told him, that after six years of the Theosophical Society’s existence, and after the publication of twenty-one numbers of The Theosophist journal, full of the objects and aims of its Society, we encounter nearly daily the “anomaly” of its Members and Fellows wishing to know “what is Theosophy” and “who or what is a Theosophist”!

Some of them, we find, laboured under the extraordinary impression that no sooner were they initiated than they would find themselves able to cross the astride on a cloud, converse with the “UNKNOWABLE” face to face, or—secure at once an appointment for High Court Judgeship! . . .

CANONIZATION OF A NEW SAINT

[The Pioneer, Allâhâbâd, July 20, 1881]

The last mail from Europe informs us of the canonization of a new Saint who, if he takes his mundane habits to heaven, will be no savoury companion to the good souls under St. Peter’s guardianship. Just one hundred years ago, a Frenchman, named Benoit Labre, left La Trappe for Rome, making his way on foot, and certainly having no peas in his shoes for the good reason that he made the weary way all barefooted. In the capital of Christianity he adopted the modest calling of a mendicant. But, then, he was no mean and selfish beggarman. Benoit Labre took his daily post at the gates of the great churches. The alms or gifts he got, whether in cash or clothes or bread, he gave at once to the poor; though not to those poorer than himself, for none could be so. How then did he live? His food was the garbage of the Roman dust heaps. His clothing was the unpatched shreds of the miserable raiment he had brought from France. As to his intimate companionship it was awful: it was confined to the crawling vermin on his person, some of these are still preserved (not in life let us hope) at Rome, and are carried to sickbeds in emergencies, when recovery may be esteemed a miracle. The good Saint Anthony enjoyed the companionship of a pig. Pelisson relieved his solitude with a spider.

Why should not the pious mendicant, now Saint Benoit Labre in heaven, comfort himself with the society of more minute fellow creatures in the ruins of Colosseum, where he slept every night? One day he was found dead at the gate of the church of Our Lady of the Mount, half devoured by the companions he encouraged about his person. He is credited with having performed miracles in his lifetime, and a solemn conclave of the church adjudged him divine honours. Last month the enlightened Leo XIII confirmed the canonization. Without grudging Saintship to any good man who may have made sacrifices for humanity, one may still feel a little surprised that a Pope from whom much was expected should have made out his first free pass for Paradise in favour of a personage representing a kind of virtue which the Nineteenth Century certainly cannot be expected to regard as best worth encouragement.

STONE-SHOWERS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 11, August, 1881, pp. 231-233]

The writer of the letter to which H. P. B. appends an explanatory note, A. J. Riko, of The Hague, Holland, presents interesting details, including an official report from the Dutch East Indies, signed by Major W. Michiels, concerning the phenomenon of falling stones, singly or in showers. Riko cites several instances in all of which the stones appear to have been guided by unseen hands, as no one was ever hurt, though the stones were sometimes the size of an egg, and continued falling near certain individuals for periods of two weeks. Riko concludes his letter by inquiring of H. P. B. as to the nature of the invisible beings who cause such showers of stones to come down.

Some of the geographical names in Riko's letter are obviously misspelt, and H.P.B., having corrected them, adds in a footnote:]

Unless the blame for the incorrect rendering of the names of these localities is to be laid at the door of the printers we have to beg Mr. Riko's pardon for the liberty we take in correcting them.

The cases related by him are most incredible for the general reader, though, having witnessed far more extraordinary phenomena personally, we believe in them thoroughly. But *The Theosophist* is sent throughout the world. Some persons might read this account in Java, or, finding themselves there, desire to ascertain how far the statements are true. It is absolutely necessary that in every case the names of the localities, where the phenomena took place, and their geographical position, should be rendered as carefully as possible. The Theosophists and Spiritualists have too many enemies to allow the latter triumphs which might be easily avoided by exercising some little care. And neither of us—Spiritists or Theosophists—can be too careful.

[The letter is followed by H. P. B.'s comment:]

Meanwhile, Mr. Riko will perhaps permit us a word. The last sentence of his letter proves clearly that even he, a spiritist, is unable to trace such a uniformly senseless, idiotic phenomenon—one that periodically occurs in every part of the world and without the slightest cause for it, as without the least moral effect upon those present—to the agency of disembodied human spirits. We will know that, while most of the spiritists will attribute it to the *esprits malins* (malicious disembodied spirits), the Roman Catholic world and most of the pious Protestants at least those who may have convinced themselves of the facts—will lay it at the door of the devil. Now for argument's sake, and allowing the idea of such creatures as the “malicious human souls” of the spiritist and the “demons” of the Christian theology to exist elsewhere than in imagination, how can both these classes of believers account for the contradictions involved? Here are beings which or who—whether devils, or malicious ex-human imps—are evidently wicked. Their object—if they have any at all—must be to derive cruel pleasure from tormenting mortals? They cannot be less bent upon mischief or more careful of possible results than ordinary mischievous schoolboys. Yet we see the stones, or whatever the missiles may be, carefully avoiding contact with those present.

They fall all around without “even grazing” the little Javanese girl—evidently the medium in the case observed by General Michiels. They fall thick among the ranks of the soldiers at “Fort Victoria”; and pass incessantly for several days before the very noses of the police agents at Paris and The Hague, without ever touching, let alone hurting, anyone! What does this mean? Malicious human spirits, to say nothing of devils, would certainly have no such delicate care for those they were bent upon tormenting. What are they then, these invisible persecutors? Ordinary human “spirits”? In such a case human intelligence would be but a name; a word devoid of meaning as soon as it gets separated from its physical organs. It would become a blind force, a remnant of intellectual energy that was, and we would have to credit every liberated soul with insanity!

Having disposed of the theory of “spirits,” “imps” and “devils,” on the score of the idiocy and total absence of malevolence in the proceedings, once that the genuineness of the phenomenon is proved, to what else can it be attributed in its causation or origin, but to a blind though living force; one subjected to an intransgressible law of attraction and repulsion—in its course and effects—a law which exact science has yet to discover; for it is one of innumerable correlations due to magnetic conditions which are supplied only when both animal and terrestrial magnetism are present; meanwhile the former has to fight its way step by step for recognition, for science will not recognize it in its psychological effects—do what its advocates may. The Spiritualists regard the phenomena of the stone-showers as irregular. We, Theosophists, answer that although their occurrence at a given place may appear to be very irregular, yet from a comparison of those in all parts of the world it might be found, if carefully recorded, that hitherto they have been uniform or nearly so. Perhaps they may be aptly compared with the terrestrial magnetic perturbations called by Science “fitful,” and distinctly separated by her, at one time, from that other class she named “periodical”; the “fitful” now being found to recur at as regular periods as the former.

The cause of these variations of the magnetic needle is as entirely unknown to physical science as are the phenomena of stone-showers to those who study psychological Science; yet both are closely connected. If we are asked what we mean by the comparison—and indignant may be the question on the part of both Science and Spiritualism—we will humbly answer that such is the teaching of Occult Science. Both classes of our opponents have yet much to learn, and the Spiritualists—to first unlearn much in addition. Did our friends the believers in “spirits” ever go to the trouble of first studying “mediumship” and only then turning their attention to the phenomena occurring through the sensitives? We, at least, never heard that such is the case, not even during the most scientific investigations of mediumistic powers that ever took place—Professor Hare’s and Mr. Crookes’ experiments. And yet, had they done so, they might have found how closely related to and dependent on the variations of terrestrial magnetism are those of the mediumistic or animal magnetic state. Whenever a true medium fails to get phenomena it is immediately attributed by the Spiritualists, and oftener by the “Spirits” themselves, to “unfavourable conditions.” The latter are lumped together in a single phrase; but never did we hear the real scientific and chief cause for it given: the unfavourable variations of the terrestrial magnetism. The lack of harmony in the “circle” of investigators; various and conflicting magnetisms of the “sitters” are all of secondary importance. The power of a real, strongly charged medium* will always prevail against the animal magnetism which may be adverse to it: but it cannot produce effects unless it receives a fresh supply of molecular force, an impress from the invisible body of those we call blind “Elementals” or Forces of Nature, and which the Spiritualists in every case regard as the “spirits of the dead.

* We hold that a “physical medium,” so-called, is but an organism more sensitive than most others to the terrestrial electro-magnetic induction. That the powers of a medium for the production of phenomena fluctuate from one hour to another is a fact proven by Mr. Crookes’ experiments and, believing though we do in the existence of innumerable other so-called Spiritual Forces besides and quite independent of human spirits, we yet firmly maintain that physical mediums have very little, if anything, to do with the latter. Their powers are purely physical and conditional; i.e., these powers depend almost entirely on the degree of receptivity, and chance polarization of the body of the medium by the electro-magnetic and atmospheric currents. Purely psychological manifestations are quite a different thing.

” Showers of stones have been known to take place where there was not a living soul—consequently no medium. The medium charged by the atmospheric legion of “correlations” (we prefer calling them by the new scientific term) will attract stones within the periphery of his force, but will at the same time repel them, the polaric condition of his body preventing the missiles from touching it. And his own molecular condition will temporarily induct with its properties all the other human and even non-sensitive bodies around it. Sometimes there may be an exception to the rule produced by some chance condition.

This explanatory postscript may be closed with the remark to Mr. Riko that we do not regard the Elementals of the Kabalists as properly “beings.” They are the active Forces and correlations of Fire, Water, Earth and Air, and their shape is like the hues of the chameleon which has no permanent colour of its own. Through the interplanetary and interstellar spaces, the vision of almost every clairvoyant can reach. But it is only the trained eye of the proficient in Eastern Occultism, that can fix the flitting shadows and give them a shape and a name.

SPOTLESS MURDERERS

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 11, August, 1881, p. 238]

Some time ago we noted the cheering fact (for murderers) that George Nairns, a drunken beast who killed a poor Hindu at Calcutta, and subsequently was “converted” in prison was “safe in the arms of Jesus”—if the padri who attended at his burial is to be believed. Other blessed rescues of these erring sheep claim a moment’s attention from all who are restrained from murder only by the fear of punishment after death.

The latest instance comes from America. A married woman plots with a brutal paramour to kill her husband so that they may freely indulge in their filthy desires. Under circumstances of ferocity the deed is done, and the wife helps the lover to hang the corpse by the neck to a beam to give the impression that the poor man had committed suicide. They are, however, detected, tried, convicted and executed. Both leave written confessions. The man says:—

Friends, I feel that I am going home. Lord, for Jesus' sake, take my soul to Thee in heaven, where my dear wife is. Lord, have mercy on me. If I had read the Bible as much, before I came here, as I have since, I would not be here. I advise all persons, especially young persons, to read the Bible.

The advice is good. There is no such comforting book as the Bible for murderers. Moses killed an Egyptian, David killed the husband of Bathsheba whom he wanted for a mistress, and Jehovah expressly ordered murder by wholesale of peoples guilty only of defending their country, and had their virgin daughters turned over to the Jewish army to do what they pleased with. The woman assassin was also blessed. She said:

I die in the assurance of peace with God and the knowledge of sins forgiven.

So everything turned out just as it should, except—except that the law was not quite as forgiving as the Lord, and the repentant converts were hung. The saints in heaven are welcome to their new friends.

THE FIVE-POINTED STAR

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 11, August, 1881, pp. 240-241]

[The following comment was written by H. P. Blavatsky on letter by Mr. S. T. Venkatapaty, who claimed to have successfully used the five-pointed star, drawn on paper with the name of a Hindu god written in the spaces, for healing or mitigating the effect of scorpion bites.]

Of late numerous letters have been received in The Theosophist office concerning the efficacy of the mysterious Pentagram. Our Eastern readers are perhaps unaware of the great importance given by the Western Kabalists to that sign, and, therefore, it may be found expedient to say a few words about it just now, when it is coming so prominently before the notice of our readers. Like the six-pointed star which is the figure of the macrocosm, the five-pointed star has its own deep symbolic significance, for it represents the microcosm. The former—the “double triangle” composed of two triangles respectively white and black—crossed and interlaced (our Society’s symbol)—known as “Solomon’s Seal” in Europe—and as the “Sign of Vishnu” in India—is made to represent the universal spirit and matter, one white point which symbolizes the former ascending heavenward, and the two points* of its black triangle inclining earthward.†

* [Should read: “the lower point,” as corrected by H. P. B. herself. Vide footnote on page 315 of the present Volume.—Compiler.]

† The double triangle on the right corner of The Theosophist was by a mistake of the engraver reversed, i.e., placed upside down. So is the Egyptian Tau with the snake coiled round it, in the opposite corner of the title-page cover. The latter double sign when drawn correctly represents the anagram of the Society—a T. S.—and the head of the snake ought to turn the opposite way.

The Pentagram also represents spirit and matter but only as manifested upon earth. Emblem of the microcosm (or the “little universe”) faithfully mirroring in itself the macrocosm (or the great cosmos), it is the sign of the supremacy of human intellect or spirit over brutal matter.

Most of the mysteries of Kabalistic or ceremonial magic, the gnostical symbols and all the Kabalistic keys of prophecy are summed up in that flamboyant Pentagram, considered by the practitioners of the Chaldeo-Jewish Kabala as the most potent magical instrument. In magical evocation during which the slightest hesitation, mistake or omission, becomes fatal to the operator, the star is always on the altar bearing the incense and other offerings, and under the tripod of invocation. According to the position of its points, it “calls forth good or bad spirits, and expels, retains or captures them”—the Kabalists inform us. “Occult qualities are due to the agency of elemental spirits,” says the *New American Cyclopaedia* in article “Magic,” thus making use of the adjective “Elemental” for certain spirits—a word which, by the by, the spiritualists accused the Theosophists of having coined, whereas the *N. A. Cyclopaedia* was published twenty years before the birth of the Theosophical Society. “This mysterious figure [the five-pointed star] must be consecrated by the four elements, breathed upon, sprinkled with water, and dried in the smoke of precious perfumes; and then the names of great spirits, as Gabriel, Raphael, Oriphiel, and the letters of the sacred tetragram and other Kabalistic words, are whispered to it, and are fantastically inscribed upon it”—adds the *Cyclopaedia*, copying its information from the books of old Mediaeval Kabalists, and the more modern work of Éliphas Lévi—*Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*.

A modern London Kabbalist, styling himself an “Adept,”—a correspondent in a London Spiritual paper, derides Eastern Theosophy and would—if he could—make it subservient to the Jewish Kabala with its Chaldeo-Phoenician Angelology and Demonology. That new Cagliostro would probably explain the power and efficacy of the “five-pointed star” by the interference of the good “genii,” evoked by him; those jinns which Solomon-like he has apparently bottled up by sealing the mouth of the vessel with King “Solomon’s Seal” servilely copied by that mythical potentate from the Indian Vaishnava sign, together with other things brought out by him from the no-less mythical Ophir if his vessels ever went there. But the explanation given by the Theosophists for the occasional success obtained in relieving pain (such as scorpion bites) by the application of the Pentagram—a success, by the by, which with the knowledge of the cause producing it might with some persons become permanent and sure—is a little less supernatural, and rejects every theory of “Spirit” agency accomplishing it whether these spirits be claimed human or elemental. True, the five-pointed shape of the star has something to do with it, as will now be explained, but it depends on, and is fully subservient to, the chief agent in the operation, the alpha and the omega of the “magical” force—HUMAN WILL. All the paraphernalia of ceremonial magic—perfumes, vestments, inscribed hieroglyphics and mummeries, are good but for the beginner; the neophyte whose powers have to be developed, his mental attitude during the operations defined, and his WILL educated by concentrating it on such symbols. The Kabbalistic axiom that the magician can become the master of the Elemental Spirits only by surpassing them in courage and audacity in their own elements, has an allegorical meaning. It was but to test the moral strength and daring of the candidate that the terrible trials of initiation into ancient mysteries were invented by the hierophants; and hence the neophyte who had proved fearless in water, fire, air and in the terrors of a Cimmerian darkness, was recognized as having become the master of the Undines, the Salamanders, Sylphs and Gnomes.

He had “forced them into obedience,” and “could evoke the spirits” for, having studied and acquainted himself with the ultimate essence of the occult or hidden nature and the respective properties of the Elements, he could produce at will the most wonderful manifestations or “occult” phenomena by the combination of such properties, combinations hitherto unknown to the profane, as progressive and exoteric science, which proceeds slowly and cautiously, can marshal its discoveries but one by one and in their successive order, for hitherto it has scorned to learn from those who had grasped all the mysteries of nature for long ages before. Many are the occult secrets ferreted out by her and wrung from the old magic, and yet it will not give it credit even for that which has been proved to have been known by the ancient esoteric scientists or “Adepts.” But our subject must not be digressed from, and we now turn to the mysterious influence of the Pentagram.

“What is in a sign?” will our readers ask. “No more than in a name” we shall reply—nothing except that, as said above, it helps to concentrate the attention, hence to nail the WILL of the operator to a certain spot. It is the magnetic or mesmeric fluid flowing out of the fingers’ ends of the hand tracing the figure which cures or at least stops the acute pain in benumbing the nerves and not the figure per se. And yet there are some proficients who are able to demonstrate that the five-pointed star, whose points represent the five cordial [sic] limbs or those channels of man—the head, the two arms and the two legs—from whence the mesmeric currents issue the strongest, the simplest tracing of that figure (a tracing produced with far more efficacy with the finger ends than with ink, chalk or pencil), helped by a strong desire to alleviate pain, will very often force out unconsciously the healing fluid from all these extremities, with far more force than it otherwise would. Faith in the figure is transformed into intense will, and the latter into energy; and energy from whatsoever feeling or cause it may proceed, is sure to rebound somewhere and strike the place with more or less force; and naturally enough that place will be the locality upon which the attention of the operator is at that moment concentrated; and hence—the cure attributed by the self-ignorant mesmeriser to the PENTAGRAM.

Truly remarks Schelling that “though magic has generally ceased to be an object of serious attention . . . it has had a history which links it on the one hand with the highest themes of symbolism, theosophy, and early science, as well as on the other with the ridiculous or tragical delusions of the many forms of demonomania. . . . In the Greek mythology the ruins of a superior intelligence and even of a perfect system were to be found, which would reach far beyond the horizon which the most ancient written records present to us . . . and portions of the same system may be discovered in the Jewish cabala. . . .”^{*} That “perfect system” is now in the hands of a few proficients in the East. The legitimacy of “Magic” may be disputed by the bigots, its reality as an art, and especially as a science, can scarcely be doubted. Nor is it at all doubted by the whole Roman Catholic Clergy, though their fear of its becoming a terrific witness against the legitimacy of their own ascendancy forces them to support the argument that its marvels are due to malignant spirits or “fallen angels.” In Europe it has still “a few learned and respectable professors and adepts,” admits the same Cyclopaedia. And, throughout the “Pagan” world, we may add, its reality is almost universally admitted and its proficients are numerous, though they try to avoid the attention of the sceptical world.

^{*} [Quoted in the New Amer. Cycl., art. on “Magic.”—Comp.]

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 11, August, 1881, pp. 246-248]

The nefarious influence of the year 1881 is still asserting itself. The assassination of the President of the United States, General Garfield, follows the murder of the Emperor of Russia. The death of Rubinstein, the great pianist, but preceded that of Henry Vieuxtemps, the Belgian, the greatest violoncellist and composer of our century. And now comes that of Littré, one of the most brilliant scientific lights of France, and it is to him that we will now devote a few lines. But who next?

Maximilien Paul Émile Littré, the Academician, and Senator, the great French Lexicographer, born in the first year of our century, has just died in his eighty-first year. The eminent philologist (he knew Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek and Latin to perfection) was a professed atheist all his life, and a warm friend of August Comte, as well as a prominent promoter of his doctrines of which he gives an excellent synopsis in his great work, *La Philosophie Positive*, and upon which he expounded, while defending them in a series of pamphlets. For years, owing to the intrigues of the Archbishop Dupanloup, the “fiery Bishop of Orleans,” and notwithstanding the eminent scientific achievements of the infidel savant, the doors of the Academy of Sciences were shut to him. The forty “Immortals” fearing to admit such a rank atheist lest the aristocratic Faubourg St.-Germain, and the Fish Market, in the face of their respective representatives of the fair sex—those ladies from the two opposite ends of the social ladder, having now remained the chief if not the only pillars of the Roman Catholic clergy in Republican France—should stone them.

In 1871, however, M. Dupanloup notwithstanding, the “Immortals” feeling themselves suffused with blushes for their cowardice, unanimously elected M. Littré to the Academical chair. We may add en passant, that they were rewarded for it by a fearful scandal created by the Archbishop, who cursed and anathematized his colleagues there and then and—withdrew, breaking forever with the Academy. To the last moment of his conscious life, the late Positivist remained true to his principles of negation. And now—he died . . . as the clerical papers triumphantly assert—a Christian!

According to the unanimous testimony of the Paris press, as soon as the octogenarian atheist had fallen in articulo mortis, and the agony had begun, the ever vigilant Jesuit Fathers, who had secured to their cause his wife and daughter, proclaimed the news that the atheist had just before that repented; and, without losing time, administered to him the rites of baptism and the viaticum. According to the Gaulois the friends and supporters of the dead philosopher were enraged beyond description at such proceedings, and the burial ceremony culminated in a public scandal. The clericals had endeavoured to make the entourage of the funeral as solemn and as theatrical as it was possible for them. Since early morning a priest was seen prostrated before the coffin which was surrounded by a whole army of the clergy who tried to crowd off from the church every infidel they could. They had no trouble to succeed, as none of Littré’s associates in atheism would enter it during the service, and M. Renan, the free-thinking author of the *Vie de Jésus*, Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire and a host of others stood outside. In the cemetery, when Mr. Viruboff, the intimate friend and literary partner of the defunct, desired to make a speech by his tomb, the clericals interrupted him with cries—“Respect to the bereaved family.” In answer, the Positivists, who numbered about two-thirds of the crowd—3,000 men strong—shouted “Vive la libre pensée! Vive la liberté!” (Long live Free Thought! Hurrah, for Liberty!), and regardless of the protest, Mr. Viruboff pronounced his speech excusing the defunct before the Positivists on the grounds given above.

The République Française vociferates against the clergy and tells its readers that it is they “of the long coats” who shouted “Down with the Republicans!” receiving in reply: “Down with the Jesuits! The church has committed a ravishment upon a dying man. . . . It is guilty of kidnapping!” etc. The presence of the President of the Republic of France served but to throw oil upon the fire. As a matter of course, the clergy who have before now tried their hand at claiming as their prize Thomas Paine and even Voltaire, will now sing victory more than ever. Thus the memory of an honest and a great man, who remained true to his convictions for over three score and ten [years]—will descend to posterity as that of a MORAL COWARD!

* * * * *

Under the heading of “Forgiveness and Chastisement” the New Dispensation, comparing its members to Jesus when whipping out the money-changers from the temple, takes into its confidence, and proceeds to enumerate its painful but unavoidable duties to the world in general, and the infidels and sceptics especially. “To remove,” it says, “the plague” of infidelity and scepticism with which it feels “bound to remonstrate, JESUS-LIKE”(!)—

however painful the task, is a bounden duty, which no believer can shirk. The sharp knife of the surgeon must cut open the festering sore. The New Dispensation must chastise and heal all its enemies, of whatever class, and by administering strong medicines make them clean. This is not personal resentment, but healing and correction (!). He who does not ply his healing art, under God, is one of the worst foes of society and an opponent of the New Dispensation. Burn up every paper that breathes resentment as so much anti-Dispensation trash. Destroy also the entire literature of spurious toleration which flirts with infidelity and corruption, for it too is an enemy of God and . . . of the present Dispensation!!

The italics are ours—of course. But, oh, Cerulean Powers! . . . Has Calcutta established then—not even an internuncial see, for that would be only modest—but another R.C. Pontificality, with its Pontifex Maximus, the infallible Pope, with its Index Expurgatorius, its In Coena Domini, its Ipse dixit and the whole lugubrious cortège of Papal appurtenances, for their women Hapless Babus, and still more unfortunate Brahmos, who gave up Sutti, but to accept auto-da-fé for themselves at some future day?

It really would be worth learning though, how the Dispensationists come to such an infallibility and power. “Burn up every paper that breathes . . . anti-Dispensation trash”; “Destroy the entire literature . . . that flirts with infidelity” . . . “which is an enemy of the present Dispensation”! Forsooth, we have to be prudent, it seems, with these modern “Princes of Peace and Apostles of Forgiveness,” of “GOD’S DISPENSATION”! We know, for we are told so by themselves, that they have “no vindictiveness”; and being full of “forgiveness and love,” and rice and water, if they chastise at all, it is not out of “malice” but with the sole object of destroying “God’s enemies.” This is the language of the late Holy Inquisition—happily defunct. Our Dispensationists being prevented by law to burn their heretics, they proceed—always in a spirit of charity, of course—to chastise the “enemies of God” through little, vile and slanderous attacks upon the enemies’ private characters and even those of their daughters, attacks epitomized in “filthy and obscene correspondences,” in organs “under the distinguished patronage of the Prophet of the New Dispensation”—if we have to believe the *Brahmo Public Opinion* (July 7th). The magistrates who may or may not be anti-Dispensationists recognize the libel and chastise in their turn the weapon, the hand remaining prudently invisible. Thus acted the *Consiglio dei Dieci*—the terrible “Council of Ten” of the Venetian Doges of old, whose members remained ever invisible behind their masks in the presence of the accused to be “chastised,” brought before them in the secret hall of the Dogal palace, and who unveiled their faces, but when praying and glorifying God—publicly. . . .

The cycle is running down and brings back to us in its vortex the things that were—by faithfully reproducing them. So we had the Mosaic Dispensation, the tables of stone “written with the finger of God,” a charter signed and sealed by Jehovah himself. Then came the Christian Dispensation, written by authors unknown, and chartered by Constantine.

But our century presents us with two New Dispensations at once: the “Spiritual”—chartered by the “Angels,” and the “Babu-Keshubians,” also claiming a charter as the rest. Only our Dispensation, No. 4, is an evident improvement upon its predecessors, as its “Apostles” inform us; and a kind of Re-Revised Bible, with Renan’s Jesus in it, lined with Chaitanya and propped by Mohammed and Socrates. It is written on something as durable as the “tables of stones”—and as transcendental, namely, on the overheated tables of the grey matter of the “Minister’s” cerebellum. The sensory ganglia being abnormally excited at the expense of the hemispheres of the brain, hence—the delusion of a *Missio in partes infidelium*; that Mission to the unbelievers, the clear perception of which makes our Calcutta Prophet assume an authority and issue Bulls as if he had a whole host of celestial Sipahis with flaming swords behind his back to enforce them. Indeed, his newly established rite, that of baptism in a Calcutta “Jordantank” was a brilliant idea. Nothing can prove more beneficent to the members of the “New Church” than daily and full immersions in ice-cold water. The Arlington Co. ought to enter into immediate negotiations with the “Apostles” for furnishing them with pneumatic ice machines.

THE BRITISH THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 11, Supplement, August, 1881, p. 2]

We have received no official report as yet from those quarters though we hope to publish the Secretary's Report next month. But we gather from a semi-official correspondence that the number of the Fellows is increasing, though our London Brothers are very careful in admitting new members into their Society, and it is on the whole difficult to be admitted into that body. Its esteemed President, Dr. G. Wyld, informs us of an extraordinary opinion held by one of its Members—one who lived in India, and is personally acquainted, as it seems, with a Society of Initiates in Tibet—that “those who live there in the snow[?] are not adepts but under training, and that a true adept can defy all magnetisms and live in society if he chooses.” Most undoubtedly he can. So can a man, gradually having accustomed himself to an ever-increasing heat, pass days—if not altogether live—in a furnace without dying, as recent scientific experiments have proved. So can also a person pass years in the utter darkness of a subterranean cavern and thereby so weaken his sight as to lose it entirely when suddenly emerging into light again. The question is not “could the Eastern initiates” so live or not, but will they, and why should they consent to do so, having no better reason for it than the satisfaction of the curiosity of—to them—an alien race, five-sixths of which would regard them as clever impostors and charlatans, and the other sixth—the best disposed to believe in their psychological powers, regard them as wonderful physical mediums controlled by “spirits.” Mr. Sinnett's *The Occult World* is a good feeler in that direction.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 11, Supplement, August, 1881, p.3]

[In connection with the words of a padri in Ceylon who was trying to misrepresent some of Col. Olcott's expressions. It appears that he said that each of the Christians had a work to do, namely, to make known the name of Jesus Christ to others, and that it was a work that is especially given to men to do, though God could have given it to angels, who would be very glad to do it.]

And a great pity it is that "God" did not do so. It is an administrative mistake of his, as such an act would have proved conducive to more than one beneficent result for us poor mortals, namely: (a) to proving that there were such things as Biblical angels, and (b)—demonstrating to us the existence of their Creator himself—that "personal God" whose being has hitherto remained not only an open question, but an absolutely unprovable tenet. As the matter stands though, such a "hide and seek" policy leads every reasonable and thinking man unprepared to accept assertions upon blind faith to respectfully question the correctness of affirmations as blind when emanating from the well-meaning, but not always impartial, padris. What is true religion for them may be a false one for others. We claim freedom of conscience as the unassailable right of every freeborn man. In the words of d'Holbach:—"If the Christian must have his chimeras, let him at least learn to permit others to form theirs after their fashion."

MADAME BLAVATSKY ON “THE HIMALAYAN BROTHERS”

[The Spiritualist, London, August, 12, 1881]

SIR,

“On the authority of an adept” (?) “they [the Theosophists and Madame Blavatsky] are all mediums under the influence of the lower spirits.” Such is the sentence used by you in an editorial review of Mr. Sinnett’s Occult World (Spiritualist, June 17th). Doubtful as its pertinency might appear, I personally found nothing very objectionable in it, the more so, as elsewhere you do me the honour to express your conviction that (whether controlled by good or bad spirits) I am yet a “strong physical medium”—that term precluding at least the suspicion of my being a regular impostor. This letter then is not directed against you, but rather against the pretensions of a would-be “adept.” Another point should be also attended to before I proceed, in order that the situation may be as clearly defined as possible.

Finding myself for the period of nearly seven years one of the best abused individuals under the sun, I rather got accustomed to that sort of thing. Hence, I would hardly take up the pen now to defend my own character. If people, besides forgetting that I am a woman, and an old woman, are dull enough to fail to perceive that had I declared myself anything in creation, save a Theosophist and one of the founders of our Society, I would have been in every respect—materially as well as socially—better off in the world’s consideration, and that therefore, since, notwithstanding all the persecution and opposition encountered, I persist in remaining and declaring myself one, I cannot well be that charlatan and pretender some people would see in me—I really cannot help it.

Fools are unable, and the wise unwilling to see the absurdity of such an accusation, for, as Shakespeare puts it:

“Folly in fools bears not so strong a note

As foolery in the wise, when wit doth dote. . . .”*

It is not then to defend myself that I claim space in your columns, but to answer one whose ex-cathedra utterances have revolted the sense of justice of more than one of our Theosophists in India, and to defend them—who have a claim on all the reverential feeling that my nature is capable of.

A new correspondent, one of those dangerous, quasi-anonymous individuals who abuse their literary privilege of hiding their true personality, and thus shirk responsibility behind an initial or two, has lately won a prominent place in the columns of your journal. He calls himself an “adept”; that is easy enough, but does or rather can he prove it? To begin with, in the sight of the Spiritualists, as much as in that of sceptics in general, an “adept,” whether he hails from Tibet, India, or London, is all one. The latter will persist in calling him an impostor; and the former, were he even to prove his powers, in seeing in him either a medium or a juggler. Now your “J.K.,” when he states in the *Spiritualist* of June 24th, that “the phenomena attendant upon real adeptship are on an entirely different plane from Spiritualism” risks, nay is sure, to have every one of the above expletives flung in his face by both the above-mentioned classes.

Could he but prove what he claims, namely, the powers conferring upon a person the title of an initiate, such epithets might well be scorned by him. Aye, but I ask again, is he ready to make good his claim? The language used by him, to begin with, is not that which a true adept would ever use. It is dogmatic and authoritative throughout, and too full of insulting aspersions against those who are not yet proved to be worse or lower than himself; and fails entirely to carry conviction to the minds of the profane as of those who do know something of adepts and initiates—that it is one of such proficientes who now addresses them.

* [Love’s Labour’s Lost, Act V, Sc. 2.]

Styling himself an adept, whose “Hierophant is a western gentleman,” but a few lines further on he confesses his utter ignorance of the existence of a body which cannot possibly be ignored by any true adept! I say “cannot” for there is no accepted neophyte on the whole globe but at least knows of the Himalayan Fraternity. The sanction to receive the last and supreme initiation, the real “word at low breath,” can come but through those Fraternities in Egypt, India and Tibet, to one of which belongs “Koot Hoomi Lal Singh.” True, there is “adept” and adept, and they differ, as there are adepts in more than one art and science. I, for one, know in America of a shoemaker, who advertised himself as “an adept in the high art of manufacturing Parisian cothurns.” J. K. speaks of Brothers “on the soul plane,” of “divine Kabbalah culminating in God,” of “slave magic,” and so on, a phraseology which proves to me most conclusively that he is but one of those dabblers in Western occultism which were so well represented some years ago, by Frenchborn “Egyptians” and “Algerians,” who told people their fortunes by the Tarot, and placed their visitors within enchanted circles with a Tetragrammaton inscribed in the centre. I do not say J. K. is one of the latter, I beg him to understand. Though quite unknown to me and hiding behind his two initials, I will not follow his rude example and insult him for all that. But I say and repeat that his language sadly betrays him. If a Kabbalist at all, then himself and his “Hierophant” are but the humble self-taught pupils of the mediaeval, and so-called “Christian” Kabbalists; of adepts, who, like Agrippa, Khunrath, Paracelsus, Vaughan, Robert Fludd, and several others, revealed their knowledge to the world but to better conceal it, and who never gave the key to it in their writings. He bombastically asserts his own knowledge and power, and proceeds to pass judgment on people of whom he knows and can know nothing.

Of the “Brothers” he says: “if they are true adepts, they have not shown much worldly wisdom, and the organization which is to inculcate their doctrine is a complete failure, for even the very first psychical and physical principles of true Theosophy and occult science are quite unknown to and unpractised by the members of that organization—the Theosophical Society.”

How does he know? Did the Theosophists take him into their confidence? And if he knows something of the British Theosophical Society, what can he know of those in India? If he belongs to any of them, then does he play false to the whole body and is a traitor? And if he does not, what has he to say of its practitioners, since the Society in general, and especially its esoteric sections that count but a very few “chosen ones”—are secret bodies?

The more attentively I read his article the more am I inclined to laugh at the dogmatic tone prevailing in it. Were I a Spiritualist, I would be inclined to suspect in it a good “goak” of John King, whose initials are represented in the signature of J. K. Let him first learn, that mirific Brother of the “Western Hermetic Circle in the soul-plane,” a few facts about the adepts in general, before he renders himself any more ridiculous.

(1) No true adept will on any consideration whatever reveal himself as one to the profane. Nor would he ever speak in such terms of contempt of people, who are certainly no more silly, and, in many an instance, far wiser than himself. But were even the Theosophists the poor misled creatures he would represent them to be, a true adept would rather help than deride them.

(2) There never was a true Initiate but knew of the secret Fraternities in the East. It is not Éliphas Lévi who would ever deny their existence, since we have his authentic signature to the contrary. Even P. B. Randolph, that wondrous, though erratic, genius of America, that half-initiated seer, who got his knowledge in the East, had good reasons to know of their actual existence, as his writings can prove.

(3) One who ever perorates upon his occult knowledge and speaks of practising his powers in the name of some particular prophet, deity, or Avatara, is but a sectarian mystic at best. He cannot be an adept in the Eastern sense—a Mahatma, for his judgment will always be biassed and prejudiced by the colouring of his own special and dogmatic religion.

(4) The great science, called by the vulgar “magic,” and by its Eastern proficientes Gupta-Vidya, embracing as it does each and every science, since it is the acme of knowledge, and constitutes the perfection of philosophy, is universal; hence—as very truly remarked cannot be confined to one particular nation or geographical locality. But, as Truth is one, the method for the attainment of its highest proficiency must necessarily be also one. It cannot be subdivided, for, once reduced to parts, each of them, left to itself, will, like rays of light, diverge from, instead of converging to, its centre, the ultimate goal of knowledge; and these parts can re-become the Whole only by collecting them together again, or each fraction will remain but a fraction. This truism, which may be termed elementary mathematics for little boys, has to be recalled in order to refresh the memory of such “adepts” as are too apt to forget that “Christian Kabbalism” is but a fraction of Universal Occult Science. And, if they believe that they have nothing more to learn, then the less they turn to “Eastern Adepts” for information, the better and the less trouble for both. There is but one royal road to “Divine Magic”; neglect and abandon it to devote yourself specially to one of the paths diverging from it, and like a lonely wanderer you will find yourself lost in an inextricable labyrinth. Magic, I suppose, existed millenniums before the Christian era; and, if so, are we to think then, with our too-learned friends, the modern “Western Kabbalists,” that it was all Black Magic, practiced by the “old firm of Devil & Co.”? But, together with every other person who knows something of what he or she talks about, I say that it is nothing of the kind; that J. K. seems to be superbly ignorant even of the enormous difference which exists between a Kabbalist and an Occultist. Is he aware, or not, that the Kabbalist stands, in relation to the Occultist, as a little detached hill at the foot of the Himalayas to Mount Everest?

That what is known as the Jewish Kabbala of Shimon Ben Yochai, is already the disfigured version of its primitive source, the great Chaldaean Book of Numbers. That as the former, with its adaptation to the Jewish Dispensation, its mixed international Angelology and Demonology, its Oriphiels and Raphaels, and Greek Tetragrams, is a pale copy of the Chaldaean, so the Kabbala of the Christian Alchemists and Rosicrucians is nought in its turn but a tortured edition of the Jewish. By centralizing the Occult Power and his course of actions in some one national God or Avatara, whether in Jehovah or Christ, Brahmâ or Mohammed, the Kabbalist diverges the more from the one central Truth. It is but the Occultist, the Eastern Adept, who stands a Free Man, omnipotent through his own Divine Spirit as much as man can be on earth. He has rid himself of all human conceptions and religious side issues. He is at one and the same time a Chaldaean Sage, a Persian Magi, a Greek Theurgist, an Egyptian Hermetist, a Buddhist Rahat, and an Indian Yogi. He has collected into one bundle all the separate fractions of Truth widely scattered over the nations, and holds in his hands the One Truth, a torch of light which no adverse wind can bend, blow out or even cause to waver. Not he the Prometheus who robs but a portion of the Sacred Fire, and therefore finds himself chained to Mount Caucasus for his intestines to be devoured by vultures, for he has secured God within himself, and depends no more on the whim and caprice of either or evil deities. True, "Koot Hoomi" mentions Buddha. But it is not because the Brothers hold him in the light of God or even of "a God," but simply because he is the Patron of the Tibetan Occultists, the greatest of the Illuminati and Adepts, self-initiated by his own Divine Spirit, or "God-Self," into all the mysteries of the invisible universe. Therefore to speak of imitating "the life of Christ," or that of Buddha, or Zoroaster, or any other man on earth, chosen accepted by any one special nation for its God and leader, is to show oneself a Sectarian even in Kabbalism, that fraction of the one "Universal Science"—Occultism.

The latter is prehistoric and is coeval with intelligence. The Sun shines for the heathen Asiatic as well as for the Christian European, and for the former still more gloriously, I am glad to say.

To conclude, it is enough to glance at that sentence of more than questionable propriety, and more fit to emanate from the pen of a Jesuit than that of a Kabbalist, which allows of the supposition that the “Brothers” are only a branch of the old established firm of “Devil & Co.,” to feel convinced that, beyond some “Abracadabra” dug out from an old mouldy MS. of Christian Kabbalism, J. K. knows nothing. It is but on the unsophisticated profane, or a very innocent Spiritualist, that his bombastic sentences, all savouring of the anch’ io son’ pittore,* that he may produce some sensation. True, there is no need of going absolutely to Tibet or India to find some knowledge and power “which are latent in every human soul”; but the acquisition of the highest knowledge and power requires not only many years of the severest study enlightened by a superior intelligence and an audacity bent by no peril; but also as many years of retreat in comparative solitude, and association with but students pursuing the same object, in a locality where nature itself preserves like the neophyte an absolute and unbroken stillness if not silence! Where the air is free for hundreds of miles around of all mephitic influence; the atmosphere and human magnetism absolutely pure and—no animal blood is spilt. Is it in London, or even the most hidden country village of England, that such conditions can be found?

Bombay, July 20th, 1881.

* [“I too am a painter”—an expression attributed to Corregio on seeing a painting of Raphael.—
Compiler.]

**FOOTNOTES TO “IAMBlichOS: A TREATISE
ON THE MYSTERIES”***

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 12, September, 1881, pp. 252-253]

[Iamblichos says: “I have the same thing to say to you in regard to the superior orders which came next after the deities. I am speaking of the tutelary spirits or demons (1), of heroes or half-gods, and of souls that have not been tainted by the conditions of life on the earth (2).”]

(1) Called by the mediaeval Kabalists—Planetary Spirits, and in the Hindu philosophy—Devas.

(2) “By the conditions of life” on our Earth, and only so far as they have not reached it. No Planetary Spirit (and each human “Soul”—rather Spirit at the beginning of new Pralaya† or the periodical resurrection to objective and subjective life of our universe—limited, of course, to our planetary System—is a planetary pure and formless Spirit) can avoid the “Cycle of Necessity.” Descending from, and re-ascending to the first starting point, that junction in the Infinity where Spirit or Purusha first falls into Prakriti (plastic matter) or that primordial and yet formless cosmic matter which is the first out-breathing of the Infinite and Changeless Universal Soul (the Parabrahm of the Vedantins), the Planetary Spirit has to take shape and form and live successively in each of the spheres—our own earth included—which compose the great Maha-Yuga, or the Circle of Existences, before he can lead a conscious EGO-life.

* [This translation of Iamblichus’ work was made by Dr. Alexander Wilder, F.T.S.; a portion of it was originally published in The Platonist and The Theosophist, later, however, the complete text was published by The Metaphysical Publ. Co., New York, 1911. 283 pp. This translation is rather scarce, and appeared under the title of Theurgia or the Ancient Mysteries.—Compiler.]

† [This is unquestionably a slip of the pen; the term should have been Manvantara instead of Pralaya, the word “resurrection” gives the clue; Pralaya means “dissolution.”—Compiler.]

Alone the “Elementals”—those half-blind Forces of Nature—say the Kabalists—which are the coruscations of matter and of the rudimentary minds of the descending “spirits” who have failed on their downward way—have not yet lived but will live some day on earth. The esoteric philosophies of both the eastern and western initiates, whether Greek or Hindu, Egyptian or Hebrew, agree on the whole. Whenever they seem to clash, it will be always found due rather to the difference of terms and mode of expression than to any essential difference in the systems themselves.

[Iamblichos continues: “What are the peculiarities of the higher Orders, by which they are distinguished from each other? . . . These peculiarities, having been evolved entirely from entities always existing, will be in all particulars distinct and simple.”]

The Maha-Pralaya or the Universal Dissolution occurring at the end of every “Day of Brahmâ” is followed by a Universal Rebirth at the end of the “Night of Brahmâ” which corresponds in length of period to the “Day.” It is the beginning of such a rebirth that is considered by the vulgar minds as the “creation” of the world, whereas it is but one of the number of successive existences in an infinite series of revolutions in the Eternity. Therefore, as Spirit and Matter are one and eternal, the one being thrown into objectivity by the other, and neither capable of asserting itself per se to our sensual perceptions unless linked together, these “Entities” have “always” existed.

“THE CLAIMS OF OCCULTISM”

By H.P.B.

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 12, September, 1881, pp. 258-260]

This is the heading of an article I find in a London publication, a new weekly called Light and described as a “JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE HIGHEST INTERESTS OF HUMANITY, BOTH HERE AND HEREAFTER. It is a good and useful journal; and, if I may judge by the only two numbers I have ever seen, one, whose dignified tone will prove far more persuasive with the public than the passionate and often rude remarks passed on their opponents and sceptics by its “spiritual” contemporaries. The article to which I wish to call attention, is signed by a familiar name, nom de plume—“M. A. (Oxon),” that of a profoundly sympathetic writer, of a personal and esteemed friend; of one, in short, who, I trust, whether he remains friendly or antagonistic to our views, would never confound the doctrine with its adherents, or, putting it more plainly, visit the sins of the occultists upon occultism and—vice versa.

It is with considerable interest and attention then, that the present writer has read “The Claims of Occultism.” As everything else coming from M. A. (Oxon)’s pen, it bears a peculiar stamp, not only of originality, but of that intense individuality, that quiet but determined resolution to bring every new phase, every discovery in psychological sciences back to its (to him) first principles—Spiriutalism.

And when writing the word, I do not mean by it the vulgar “séance-room” spiritualism which M. A. (Oxon) has from the very first outgrown; but that primitive idea, which underlies all the subsequent theories; the old parent root from which have sprung the modern weeds, namely—belief in a guardian angel, or a tutelary spirit, who, whether his charge is conscious of it or not—i.e., mediumistic or non-mediumistic—is placed by a still higher power over every (baptized?) mortal to watch over his actions during life. And this, if not the correct outline of M. A. (Oxon)’s faith, is undoubtedly the main idea of all the Christian born Spiritualists, past, present and future. The doctrine, Christian as it now may be—and pre-eminently Roman Catholic it is—has not originated, as we all know, with the Christian but with the Pagan world. Besides, being represented in the tutelary Daimon of Socrates, that ancient “guide” of whom our Spiritualists make the most they can—it is the doctrine of the Alexandrian Greek theurgists, of the Zoroastrians, and of the later Babylonian Jews, one, moreover, sadly disfigured by the successors of all these—the Christians. It matters little though, for we are now concerned but with the personal views of M. A. (Oxon) which he sets in opposition to those of some Theosophists.

His doctrine then seems to us more than ever to centre in, and gyrate around, that main idea that the spirit of the living man is incapable of acting outside of its body independently and per se; but that it must needs be like a tottering baby guided by his mother or nurse—led on by some kind of spiritual strings by a disembodied spirit, an individuality entirely distinct from, and, at some time even foreign to himself, as such a spirit can only be a human soul, having at some period or other, lived on this planet of ours. I trust that I have now correctly stated my friend’s belief which is that of most of the intellectual, progressive and liberal Spiritualists of our day, one, moreover, shared by all those Theosophists who have joined our movement by deserting the ranks of the hoi polloi of Spiritualism. Nevertheless, and bound though we be to respect the private opinions of those of our Brother-Fellows who have started out at the research of truth by the same path as M. A. (Oxon), however widely they may have diverged from the one we ourselves follow—yet we will always say that such is not the belief of all the Theosophists—the writer included.

For all that, we shall not follow the nefarious example set to us by most of the Spiritualists and their papers, which are as bitter against us as most of the missionary sectarian papers are against each other and the infidel Theosophists. We will not quarrel, but simply argue, for “Light! More Light!” is the rallying cry of both, progressive Spiritualists and Theosophists. Having thus far explained myself, M. A. (Oxon) will take, I am sure, en bon Seigneur every remark that I may make on his article in *Light* which I here quote verbatim. I will not break his flowing narrative, but limit my answers to modest footnotes.

[“M. A. (Oxon)” gives his impressions of *Isis Unveiled* and the statements contained therein about the adepts of Tibet. He refers also to A. P. Sinnett’s *The Occult World*, and the “glimpses revealed of this silent Brotherhood.” He says in part:

“The material sadly needed reducing to order and many of the statements required elucidation.”]

It is not the first time that the just reproach is unjustly laid at my door. It is but too true, that “the material sadly needed reducing to order,” but it never was my province to do so, as I gave out one detached chapter after the other and was quite ignorant, as Mr. Sinnett correctly states in *The Occult World*, whether I had started upon a series of articles, one book or two books. Neither did I much care. It was my duty to give out some hints, to point to the dangerous phases of modern Spiritualism, and to bring to bear upon that question all the assertions and testimony of the ancient world and its sages that I could find—as an evidence to corroborate my conclusions. I did the best I could and knew how. If the critics of *Isis Unveiled* but consider that (1) its author had never studied the English language, and after learning it in her childhood colloquially had not spoken it before coming to America half a dozen of times during a period of many years; (2) that most of the doctrines (or shall we say hypotheses?) given, had to be translated from an Asiatic language; and

(3) that most, if not all of the quotations from, and references to, other works—some of these out of print, and many inaccessible but to the few—and which the author personally had never read or seen, though the passages quoted were proved in each instance minutely correct, then my friends would perhaps feel less critically inclined.* However, *Isis Unveiled* is but a natural entrée en matière in the above article, and I must not lose time over its merits or demerits.

[“. . . the mysterious Brotherhood for whom the author made such tremendous claims.”]

Indeed, the claims made for a “Brotherhood” of living men, were never half as pretentious as those which are daily made by the Spiritualists on behalf of the disembodied souls of dead people!

[“The Brothers . . . sought no one, they promised to receive none.]

No more do they now.

[“The Theosophical Society, which has been the accepted, though not the prescribed organization of the Occult Brotherhood.”]

We beg to draw to this sentence the attention of all those of our fellows and friends in the West as in India, who felt inclined to either disbelieve in, or accuse the “Brothers of the 1st Section” on account of the administrative mistakes and shortcomings of the Theosophical Society. From the first the Fellows were notified that the first Section might issue occasionally orders to those who knew them personally, yet had never promised to guide, or even protect, either the Body or its members.

[“We have Mr. Sinnett coming forward . . . to give us his correspondence with Koot Hoomi, an adept and member of the Brotherhood, who had entered into closer relations . . . with him than had been vouchsafed to other men.”]

With Mr. Sinnett—and only so far. His relations with a few other fellows have been as personal as they might desire.

* [This sentence is correctly copied from the original. It seems to be lacking the verb.—Compiler.]

[“Madame Blavatsky . . . possessed certain occult powers that seemed to the Spiritualist strangely like those of mediumship.”]

Medium—in the sense of the postman who brings a letter from one living person to another; in the sense of an assistant electrician whose master tells him how to turn this screw and arrange that wire in the battery; never in the sense of a Spiritual medium. “Madame Blavatsky” neither needed nor did she ever make use of either dark séance-rooms, cabinets, “trance-state,” “harmony” nor any of the hundreds of conditions required by the passive mediums who know not what is going to occur. She always knew beforehand, and could state what was going to happen save infallibly answering each time for complete success.

MIRACLES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 12, September, 1881, pp. 266-268]

That golden treasury of arcane knowledge—the Catholic Mirror—reports a “magnificent lecture” upon miracles by Archbishop Seguers. It is a “fascinating discourse” on the “manifestations of supernatural powers of evil spirits,” and—“how the demons take possession of human beings.” The most reverend lecturer by selecting the Masonic Hall of Portland (Oregon) showed much judiciousness. A “Jadookhana” is the most appropriate place for discussion on such thrilling subjects. Those of our pious readers who have grumbled at us for giving room to ghastly stories from the pen of infidels, will give more credit, we hope, to the present one as it emanates from the divinely authorized and sanctified lips of an orthodox Bishop.

Remarking by way of introduction that the extraordinary manifestations of a “supernatural and mysterious power at Knocke and Lourdes have attracted the attention of the world” the lecturer said he took this opportunity “to elucidate a subject essentially mysterious and obscure with which comparatively few persons are familiar.”

He, the reverend lecturer, believed in such powers. "I intend," he said, "to treat the subject of miracles, under the four following heads: 1st. The essence and nature of a miracle; 2nd. The possibility of miracles; 3rd. The authority of miracles; 4th. The means to ascertain them, or criterion of miracles."

Space forbidding, we regret our inability to give the whole of the strictly Catholic philosophy upon this interesting topic. We will cull but the most exotic of rhetorical flowers and plants. The learned Bishop after criticising Hume's definition of miracles offered in lieu of his own.

I introduce, [he said] my definition of a miracle, taking it in a broad, or rather in its broadest sense. We will call miracle, a wonderful fact or event produced in the visible world by a cause which is not natural. This definition comprises both miracles, as I said, in their restricted meaning, and miracles in their widest or broadest signification. If the cause, that produces the effect under consideration, is God himself or a spirit acting by God's positive and direct order, that effect is a miracle in the strict sense of the word; if that cause is a created spirit, good or evil, acting spontaneously and without positive instructions received from the Almighty, its effect is a miracle in a broad sense.*

The tendency of our epoch has been called rightfully naturalism. It is against that tendency that we must vindicate the existence of the "supernatural." Many people deny the "supernatural"; they think that every fact can be explained and ought to be explained by natural reasons and causes; the position they take is a very weak one and can easily be taken by storm; they maintain that God, angels and evil spirits never produce an effect, never meet a visible phenomenon in the sphere of nature; now, if we can prove one fact, only one fact, which has a spirit either created or uncreated for cause, this position is taken, naturalism is exploded and the supernatural is vindicated. And what have we to do in order to show and prove a fact to be caused by a spirit? We must show that the agent of the fact under consideration is endowed with intelligence and free will.

With regard to this we will permit ourselves a remark.

* Truly wise are they, who are enabled to distinguish by the effect the true nature of the Cause! As a matter of course this class of divinely appointed technologists of black art and white magic can only be found within the holy orthodox Church, as no layman, least of all a heretic, is competent to judge. [H.P.B.]

If, in this passage, by “naturalism” is meant the denial of a supernatural agency in the miracles and revelations contained in the Bible, a disbelief which leads invariably to a thorough rejection of the very occurrence of the latter, the Bishop is right. But the proof of “such an agent endowed with intelligence and free will” would far sooner lead to belief in Spiritism and Spiritualism than in Christianity. The former, irrational as it may seem, is yet far more logical than the latter, and belief in “Spirits” does not at all necessitate belief in God, i.e., monotheism; our argument being proved by the twenty million spiritualists and the eight hundred million Buddhists, Brahmins and many more belonging to other non-Christian religions who are either atheists, polytheists or pantheists. Naturalism, properly defined, is simply another form of pantheism, that theory which resolves all phenomena into forces in nature—forces either blind or intelligent—but ever in accordance with fixed and immutable laws, and independent of any direction by one intelligent force called God. And such “naturalists” believe in invisible beings endowed with will and various gradations of intelligence. Therefore, we must again protest against the learned lecturer’s assumption when he says: “I believe that very few will be found to disagree with me if I assert that a wonderful event is miraculous, not only it evinces intelligence and free will in the unknown agent that enacts it, but also as soon as it surpasses the known forces of nature.”

No real man of science has ever asserted yet that he knew all the forces of nature; that, therefore, which only “surpasses the known” may be entirely within the existing natural law though that law be yet unknown. Why should we call the effect “miraculous” for all that? Enumerating the causes of miracles, the Bishop speaks of “three agents, mysterious agents, who must be considered as the causes of any phenomenon which is either supernatural or preternatural—evil spirits, angels, God.”

He blames those who disbelieve in a “personal devil.” No man can be a Christian, he says, and refuse to believe in Satan.

The existence of the devil and his evil influence over man is the very foundation of Christianity; if there is no Satan, there is no Redeemer; if there is no Redeemer, Christianity is a lie.* No, no, we ought not to consider this matter as devoid of importance; it is of the greatest importance, as the whole structure of Christianity rests upon the actions of Satan as on its foundations; the extreme of evil necessitates the extreme bounty of a bountiful Saviour.

After this theological manifesto, the sine qua non of both Catholicism and Protestantism, the lecturer spoke on objective and subjective phases of phenomena, which, he said, were of two kinds. There was “obsession and possession.”

If we consult medical men, they will be called by them “hallucinations,” corresponding to obsession, and “mysterious neuropathy, demonopathy, mania,” and several other medical terms corresponding to possession.

Socrates—he thinks—was “obsessed.”

Every one that has, in his classical studies, read a few lines of Xenophon or Plato, remembers undoubtedly the daimon, the god (Theos) of Socrates, wherein there is no mention of his god [sic]. Sometimes, while walking with his disciples, Socrates would suddenly stop and listen to the interior voice of his god. “Everybody knows,” says Xenophon, “that Socrates was frequently warned by a daimon. . . . He said what he thought, and he maintained that a god (daimon) gave him secret warnings; and he warned his disciples to do or not to do certain things, according to the dictates of his genius. Those that followed his directions did well, and those that neglected them had to repent of their folly. Everybody knows that his disciples did not consider him to be an impostor or a fool; now, he would have been both if, pretending to announce hidden things through the inspiration of his god, he had been found a liar.” Thus writes Xenophon, himself one of his disciples; thus speaks Plato, thus testifies Aristophanes. Now, there is a question here, not of any superiority of Socrates’ intellectual powers, but of the real inspirations of a god sent to him by the god at Delphi; it is Socrates himself that says so, his disciples understand him to say so; the general public know that he says so.

* This sentence we are sorry to see is plagiarized word for word by the noble lecturer from Des Mousseaux’s work—*Moeurs et Pratiques des Démons*, p. 10, and *Les Hauts Phénomènes de la Magie*. Preface, p. xii. Yet it is eminently orthodox.

[The idea rather than the actual wording occurs in the works referred to.—Compiler.]

There is question of mysterious manifestations of unknown events at the time that they were taking place at great distances; for instance, when he announced the defeat and death of Sannion, when the latter was marching against Ephesus, there is question of warnings, of presentiments, of predictions, which found accurate and exact fulfilment. To maintain that Socrates was a fraudulent knave, is preposterous; to assert that he was a fool, is absurd; he was the wisest, the most virtuous and most modest of philosophers, the glory of Greece, and the master of the most illustrious disciples. What, then, shall we say of this hallucination? Simply that it is

A HISTORICAL CASE OF OBSESSION

one which cannot be called in question without shaking the foundations of the authority of history. Let us conclude this part of our remarks with one fact borrowed from Plato's *Theages*, and then we may dismiss Socrates. "Clitomachus," said the latter's brother, Timarchus, "I die for neglecting to listen to Socrates!" What did he mean? When he rose from the table with Philemon, to go and kill Nicias, their object not being known to any mortal man, Socrates stood up and said: "Do not go out; I receive the usual warning." Timarchus stopped; but a moment later he rose and said: "Socrates, I go." Socrates heard his god's voice once more, and stopped him a second time. Finally, the third time, Timarchus stood up and left, without saying a word, while Socrates' attention was engaged by something else: and he did that which led him to his death.*

And it leads, moreover, every reasonable man—once that he accepts the reality of the "Daimon"—to firmly maintain that the latter if it was a "Spirit," independent from Socrates, could not be a bad or evil spirit—least of all a devil, for the fallen angels were never known to be "guardian angels" and hence—the Bishop is preaching Spiritualism pure and simple. He is, however, right in remarking that "some people affect to disbelieve them (the devils), because, they say, they are never afraid of them. But not to believe and not to be afraid are two different things. I read about an English unbeliever, who gloried in his unbounded incredulity, and who would never sleep alone in a room without a burning lamp," he added. Nor, as a true son of the Catholic Church, does the lecturer forget the usual hit at his brother Christians—the Protestants. "It is under this class of phenomena (obsession)," he says, "that we must rank spirit-rappers, apparitions of ghosts, temptations of visible spirits under a visible form. Samuel Wesley has left us a conscientious account of the spirit-rappers that obsessed his father, the famous founder of Methodism, and especially his sister." . . .

* [Theages, 129 A-C.]

Having done with obsession, the Bishop gives his verdict upon

. . . possession called by medical men mysterious neuropathy, demonopathy, monomania, etc., and the difference between possession and obsession is that the latter exhibits the action of spirits vexing, tormenting, persecuting a person, whereas possession implies the presence of spirits in a person, the union of a spirit with the body, the limbs, the senses of a person, so that in the case of a possession, the movements, the words of a person are no more under that person's control, but under the control of another spiritual agent, who has taken possession of that person's organism.

After this, the venerable prelate passes on to the symptoms of possession. "What are those symptoms that prove and demonstrate the presence and the action of spirits?" he asks, and he answers

. . . the Ritual enumerates the following: 1st, the speaking and understanding by the patient of a foreign language unknown to him, as was noticeable in the case of that Chinese Christian of Cochin-China; 2nd, the revelation of hidden things or of distant things which cannot naturally be known by the patient, as was the case with a most remarkable diabolical possession at Loudun in France, as we read in Dr. Calmeil's book on Insanity; * 3rd, the exertion of irresistible power, far above the forces of the patient, as we saw in the case of that hallucinated girl, described by Dr. Delpit; 4th, the subversion of all the laws of nature, for instance, suspension in the air, flight through the air, as we saw in the life of St. Crescentia, the hanging from the ceiling of a church with the head down, as we heard from Father Lacour, the vomiting of hair, needles, pins, thimbles, rags, pieces of glass and crockery-ware, as was the case with some girls at Amsterdam, described by Dr. de Weir and accepted by Dr. Calmeil. I am aware that legerdemain and sleight-of-hand can accomplish many wonderful things. I saw myself a man suspended from the ceiling of a room with his head downward, by means of iron shoes and a load-stone during two or three minutes; but such practices are performed with and after due preparation, and no one is deceived by them, because all know that those tricks had been prepared and are performed for the sake of lucre.

* [J.-L Calmeil, *De la Folie considérée sous le point de vue pathologique*, Paris, 1845, 2 vols.]

There is no similarity between the facts of these so-called wizards and the facts of which I have been speaking: the former show ingenuity of mind and nimbleness of hands, the latter demonstrate the presence and action of spiritual and powerful beings, invisible and consequently strangers to this natural and visible world.

And here we will close our quotations, giving but one more opinion thereon. The learned Bishop has brilliantly and once more proved the occurrence of various most weird phenomena, the existence of which no sane man who has seen them would ever think of denying. But no more than the long line of his predecessors of the infallible Church or the unanimous verdict of materialistic science (as infallible in the opinion of its representatives) has he explained, or even helped to elucidate the cause of these supposed miracles. His “three agents—evil spirits, angels and god”—are on a par with the “human spirits” of the spiritualists. He who is neither a believer in the Church’s infallibility nor in the doctrines of the spiritists will never be satisfied with their respective explanations, for the contradiction between cause and effect is too palpable, and the theories both one-sided and unphilosophical. Hence even that “magnificent lecture” leaves the question as it stood before—both sub judice and sub rosa.

COMMENTS ON “STRANGE APPARITIONS”

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 12, September, 1881, pp. 273-274]

[“ N. D. K.” in reviewing the memoirs of Colonel Meadows Taylor gives two authentic instances of apparitions, as related by the Colonel. One of these was the figure of a lady in England whom he dearly loved; it appeared one evening at the door of his tent imploring him: “Do not let me go.” He subsequently received word from his father that the lady had married on the day of the apparition. The second instance relates to a young soldier whose figure, in hospital dress, presented itself to the Captain of his company and requested that his pay be forwarded to his mother, giving her address. The Captain made a note of the request, whereupon the man disappeared. Upon inquiry the Captain found that the soldier had died on the previous day.

Concerning the first apparition, “N. D. K.” asks: “May it not be that her astral body streamed forth and made itself visible?” To this H. P. B. remarks:]

We believe such is the case. Intense thought creates and becomes objective, and there is no appreciable distance in the Infinite Space.

[Regarding the second instance, “N. D. K.” says: “It were profitable . . . to know what hermetic philosophy has to say about the kind of remembrance of, or connection with, our earth that the Astral Soul continues to enjoy.” H. P. B. gives the following explanation:]

“Nature never proceeds in her work of either creation or destruction by jumps and starts,” says the late Éliphas Lévi, the greatest hermetic philosopher in Europe of the present century. The “Astral Soul” may remain with the body for days after the dissolution of the latter, but separates itself entirely from it but on its complete disintegration.

Such was the belief of the ancient Egyptians in reference to their mummies, such is the general belief of the Hindus who say that the souls of their dead sit upon the roof of the house in which the body breathed its last for ten days and, therefore, the survivors offer rice-balls to them by throwing them on the roof. Our belief is that the intense thought and anxiety felt by the soldier in his dying moments for his mother could very easily create what the Hindus call a “Kama-rupa” (a form born of and generated by the powerful desire of the still living man), to achieve a certain object, in this case a form of himself in his hospital dress; as the “astral soul” per se is the exact ethereal likeness of the body, but certainly not of its temporary garments. The soldier realized the necessity of being recognized by his superior who might not have done so had the astral form appeared to him disrobed, and whose attention, moreover, attracted by the unusual sight, would have been distracted from the chief purpose which was that of bringing him naturally to listen and pay due regard to the desire of the dead man. The soldier must have most certainly made several rehearsals, so to say, in his imagination, and while yet alive, of the way he would like to appear before that officer and give him his mother’s address; and very naturally saw himself in his fancy as he then was—namely, in his hospital dress. That desire (Kama) faithfully reproduced the scene planned beforehand, and strongly impressed upon the THOUGHT before the party involved in it and with apparently an objective reality

The opinion of hermetic philosophy is unanimous in rejecting the theory of the modern Spiritualists. Whenever years after the death of a person his spirit is claimed to have “wandered back to earth” to give advice to those it loved, it is always in a subjective vision, in dream or in trance, and in that case it is the soul of the living seer that is drawn to the disembodied spirit, and not the latter which wanders back to our spheres. Nature—say the Kabalists—opens to life all its doors, and closes them as carefully behind, to prevent life from ever receding. Look at the sap in the plants, writes upon that subject Éliphas Lévi, in his Science of Spirits; examine the gastric juice in the crucible of human bowels, or the blood in our veins; a regular motion pushes them ever onward, and once the blood expelled, the veins, auricles and ventricles contract and will not let it flow backward.

“The living souls of a superior sphere,” tells us Louis Lucas, “can no more return to ours, than a babe already born re-enter its mother’s bosom.” We think as he and the other hermetic philosophers do, and, therefore, the story of Samuel coming down once more on earth to curse Saul, though believed in by the Christian Kabalists, is explained in quite a different wise. For them the witch of Endor was an ecstatic seer who through somnambulism and other occult means placed herself in direct communication with the mournful and sur-excited soul of the Israelite king and drew forth out of it the ever-present form of Samuel whose image preyed on his mind. It is from the depths of the tormented conscience of the murderer of priests and prophets, and not from the earth’s bowels, that arose the bleeding spectre of Samuel; and, when apparently his voice was vociferating anathemas and threats, it was her own lips and those of the pythoness—half medium and half magician—who, drawing down from space the ever-living vibrations and notes of the prophet’s voice, assimilated them to hers and reading clairvoyantly in the culprit’s mind, repeated but what she saw engraved by the remorse in the thoughts of Saul. “Chaos magnum firmatum est,” says Robert Fludd, the great mediaeval Rosicrucian and Hermetic philosopher of England. “The great chaos consolidates and closes, and those who are above can no more come down.” In a future number we will give the translation of Éliphas Lévi’s chapter on the “Transition of Spirits or the Mystery of Death.”* His views are those of all the Kabalists and adepts.

* [This is the title of Chapter II in Part I of Lévi’s *La Science des esprits*.—Compiler.]

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. II, No. 12, September, 1881, p. 275]

INSANE BY ELECTRICITY

A young man, twenty-four years of age, named George Odette, has just been adjudged insane and committed to an asylum for lunatics, in Illinois (U.S.A.). His case is very interesting from a scientific point of view. His madness was caused by an overwhelming shock of electricity given to him as a practical joke by some ignorant companions. The American journal from which the above facts are taken very sensibly remarks upon the extreme danger there is in suddenly pouring through the delicate nerve-matter of the brain and spinal cord a strong current of electricity, and suggests that the best if not the only remedy in such a case is the application of the vital magnetic current of some powerful mesmerizer or "healer." It might have added that it is equally dangerous to saturate a nervous patient's brain with mesmeric fluid, as is too often done by thoughtless tyros in magnetism. The human vital force is the most potent of all known agencies, and health of body or mind is only possible when there is a perfect magnetic equilibrium in one's system. The "healer" heals simply by restoring that balance in his patient by the force of his benevolent desire and will.

FOOTNOTES TO “THE NEW DISPENSATION DISSECTED”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. I, October, 1881, pp. 5-6]

[The writer, Babu T. Banerji, discusses the merits of the newly-formed religious sect known as the New Dispensation, whose leader and inspirer, Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, claims inspiration and the power of directly communing with God and the Prophets, and purposes to “purify the religions of India.” The writer finds a resemblance between the policy of the new Prophet and that of Mohammed, and says that many a time his religion has been mistaken for Christianity in disguise. Speaking of Babu Keshub C. Sen, H.P.B. says:]

We believe, that however great the moral mischief produced by Babu K. C. Sen at present, it will be limited to the small nucleus of his followers. On the other hand, the world at large may yet be benefited by the practical instance he affords the modern historian of pointing out to our immediate successors the correct picture of the conception, germination, the growth and development of all the religions founded upon avatarism. We see in it the true retrospective representation of what were the beginnings and results of Vishnu, and Christ-worship. We discern in it the possible repetition of the Mosaic Law, whose cruel dogmatism, crystalized under the influence of dry, heartless bigotry and intolerance, led finally the most civilized nations of the world to accepting, the one—Mariolatry as a faithful copy of Isis and Venus worship, the others—Bible worship with its suicidal thirty-nine articles as a result, its brain-murdering theological casuistry, landing into the worst kind of sophistry, its incomprehensible dogmas, and intellect-killing mysteries.

We may yet see Babu K. C. Sen's mother become a successor to Isis, Devaki and Mary. Read the New Dispensation and even the more cautious Sunday Mirror and behold there all the germs of the Inquisition, Calvinism and the Blue Laws of Massachusetts combined.

The very name of the "New Dispensation" is an old one. It was first coined by the Quakers, the followers of old mother Ann Lee, and is now universally used by the Spiritualists, American Spiritualists especially never using another term to designate their belief. See Banner of Light and other spiritualistic papers.

[Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.] This idea is again bodily taken from the Spiritualists. All the invocations to the Deity by their trance or "inspirational" mediums begin with, "O Thou Great Father and Mother God." See the trance lectures delivered by Mrs. Cora Tappan-Richmond—the best, at least the most verbose of the American Spiritual trance-lecturers. See Banner of Light and other spiritualistic papers. Who knows but after all the Spiritualists of both hemispheres are right in maintaining that Babu Keshubis but a Medium!

STRAY THOUGHTS ON DEATH AND SATAN

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 1, October, 1881, pp. 12-15]

[As appears from a letter of Master K.H. to A.P. Sinnett, received February 2, 1883 (The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett, p. 196), at one time or another after the publication of this article the Master precipitated some remarks and comments on a couple of pages of The Theosophist which contain Éliphas Lévi's articles on "Death" and "Satan." He also underlined certain passages in Lévi's text. In his Letter to Sinnett, the Master suggests that he reflect upon certain words used, such, for instance, as drones, etc. These pages from The Theosophist are among the so-called "Mahatma Papers" in the holdings of the British Museum, and we have incorporated the Master's comments in the present reproduction of this article.

TO THE EDITOR OF The Theosophist.

Madam,—Since you have published a posthumous letter of my Master and beloved friend, the late Éliphas Lévi, I think it would be agreeable to you to publish, if judged suitable, a few extracts of the many manuscripts in my possession, written expressly for, and given to, me by my ever-regretted MASTER.

To begin, I send you—“Stray Thoughts on Death and Satan” from his pen.

I cannot close this letter without expressing the deep indignation aroused in me by the base diatribes published in the London Spiritualist against your Society and its members. Every honest heart is irritated at such unfair treatment, especially when proceeding from a man of honour as Mr. Harrison (Editor of The Spiritualist) who admits in his journal anonymous contributions that are tantamount to libels.

With the utmost respect,

I remain, Madam,

Yours devotedly,

BARON J. SPEDALIERI.

Marseilles, July 29, 1881.

Editor's Note.—It is with feelings of sincere gratitude that we thank Baron Spedalieri for his most valuable contribution. The late Éliphas Lévi was the most learned Kabalist and Occultist of our age in Europe, and everything from his pen is precious to us, in so far as it helps us to compare notes with the Eastern Occult doctrines and, by the light thrown upon both, to prove to the world of Spiritualists and Mystics, that the two systems, the Eastern-Aryan, and the Western or the Chaldeo-Jewish Kabala—are one in their principal metaphysical tenets. Only, while the Eastern Occultists have never lost the key to their esoterism, and are daily verifying and elaborating their doctrines by personal experiments, and by the additional light of modern science, the Western or Jewish Kabalists, besides having been misled for centuries by the introduction of foreign elements in it, such as Christian dogmas, dead letter interpretations of the Bible, etc., have most undeniably lost the true key to the esoteric meaning of Shimon Ben Yochai's Kabala, and are trying to make up for the loss, by interpretations emanating from the depths of their imagination and inner consciousness.

Such is evidently the case with J. K., the self-styled London “Adept,” whose anonymous and powerless vilifications of the Theosophical Society and its members are pertinently regarded by Baron Spedalieri as “tantamount to libels.” But we have to be charitable. That poor descendant of the Biblical Levites—as we know him to be—in his pigmy efforts to upset the Theosophists, has most evidently fractured his brain against one of his own “occult” sentences. There is one especially in *The Spiritualist* (July 22), to which the attention of the mystically inclined is drawn further down, as this paragraph is most probably the cause of the sad accident which befell so handsome a head. Be it as it may, but it now disables the illustrious J.K. from communicating “scientifically his knowledge” and forces him at the same time to remain, as he expresses it “in an incommunicable ecstatic state.” For it is in no other “state” that our great modern adept, the literary man of such a “calibre”* that to suspect him of “ignorance” becomes equal, in audacity, to throwing suspicion upon the virtue of Caesar’s wife—could possibly have written the following lines, intended by him, we believe, as a lucid and clear exposition of his own psycho-Kabalistic lore as juxtaposed to the “hard words,” “outlandish verbiage,” “moral and philosophical platitudes,” and “jawbreakers” of “the learned Theosophists.”

* “To accuse a literary man of my calibre of ignorance, is as amusing a mistake as it would have been to charge Porson of ignorance of Greek,” he writes in *The Spiritualist* of July 8. . . . “The occult is my special subject, and . . . there is but little . . . that I do not know,” he adds. Now, the above sentence sets the question at rest with us. Not only an “adept” but no layman or profane of the most widely recognized intellect and ability, would have ever dared, under the penalty of being henceforth and forever regarded as the most ridiculously conceited of Aesop’s heroes—to use such a sentence when speaking of himself! So stupidly arrogant, and cowardly impertinent has he shown himself behind the shield of his initials to far better and more worthy men than himself, in his transparent attacks upon them in the above-named *Spiritualist*—that it is the first and certainly the last time that we do him the honour of noticing him in these columns. Our journal has a nobler task, we trust, than to be polemizing with those, whom in vulgar parlance the world generally terms—bullies.

These are the “gems of occult wisdom” of the illustrious Jewish Kabbalist who, like a bashful violet, hides his occult learning under two modest initials.

In every human creature there lies latent in the involitional part of the being a sufficient quantity of the omniscient, the absolute. To induce the latent absolute, which is the involitional part of our volitional conscious being, to become manifest, it is essential that the volitional part of our being should become latent. After the preparatory purification from acquired depravities, a kind of introversion has to take place; the involitional has to become volitional, by the volitional becoming involitional. When the conscious becomes semi-unconscious, the, to us, formerly unconscious becomes fully conscious. The particle of the omniscient that is within us, the vital and growing, sleepless, involitional, occult or female principle being allowed to express itself in the volitional, mental, manifest, or masculine part of the human being, while the latter remains in a state of perfect passivity, the two formerly dissevered parts become re-united as one holy (wholly) perfect being, and then the divine manifestation is inevitable.

Very luckily, J. K. gives us himself the key to this grandiloquent gush:

. . . necessarily [he adds] this is only safely practicable while living in uncompromisingly firm purity, for otherwise there is danger of unbalancement—insanity, or a questionable form of mediumship.

The italics are ours. Evidently with our immaculate “adept” the “involitional, occult or female principle” was not allowed to “express itself in the volitional, mental, manifest, or masculine part” of his being, and—behold the results!!

For the edification of our Hindu readers, who are unprogressive enough to refuse reading the lucubrations of “J. K.” or follow the mental “grand trapeze” performed by this remarkable “Adept” in the columns of *The Spiritualist*, we may add that in the same article he informs his English readers that it is “Hindu mystification acting on Western credulity” which “brought out the Theosophical Society.” “Hindu philosophy,” according to that great light of the nineteenth century is no “philosophy” but “rather mysticism.”

. . . Following the track of the mystifying and mystified Hindus they (the Theosophists) consider the four above faculties (Siddhis of Krishna) Anima, Mahima, Laghima and Garima to be the power they (we) have to strive for. . . . Indeed, what a ludicrous confusion of effect with cause!

The fracture of the brain must have been serious indeed. Let us hope that timely and repeated lotions of “witch hazel” or “the Universal Magic Balm” will have its good effects. Meanwhile, we turn the attention of our Hindu readers and students of Occultism to the identity of the doctrines taught by Éliphas Lévi (who, too, is contemptuously sneered at, and sent by the “Adept” to keep company with “Brothers,” Yogis, and “Fakirs”) in every essential and vital point with those of our Eastern initiates.

[In the two Essays of Éliphas Lévi which follow, the Comments of Master K.H. are printed in bold type, parallel with the text itself. They are numbered to correspond with similar numbers inserted in square brackets within the body of the essays. Words and sentences which are underlined have been underscored by K. H. himself. The footnotes signed Ed. Theosophist, as well as the long Editorial Note, are by H.P.B. herself.—Compiler.]

I

DEATH

BY (THE LATE) ÉLIPHAS LÉVI

Death is the necessary dissolution of imperfect combinations. [1] It is the re-absorption of the rough outline of individual [2] life into the great work of universal life; only the perfect [3] is immortal. It is a bath in oblivion. [4] It is the fountain of youth where on one side plunges old age, and whence on the other issues infancy. *Death is the transfiguration of the living; corpses are but the dead leaves of the Tree of Life which will still have all its leaves in the spring. [5] The resurrection [6] of men resembles eternally these leaves. Perishable forms are conditioned by immortal types.

[1] Of the 1, 2, 3d, 4, 5th.

[2] The personality of the personal Ego.

[3] The 6th and 7th Prles.

[4] Until the hour of remembrance.

[5] In the language of the Kabalist "Spring" means the beginning of that state when the Ego reaches its omniscience.

[6] The Chaldean "resurrection in life eternal" borrowed by the Xtians means resurrection in Nirvâna.

* Rebirth of the Ego after death. The Eastern, and especially Buddhistic doctrine of the evolution of the new, out of the old Ego.—Ed. Theosophist.

All who have lived upon earth, live there still in new exemplars of their types, but the souls which have surpassed their type receive elsewhere a new form based upon a more perfect type, as they mount ever on the ladder of worlds;* the bad exemplars are broken, and their matter returned into the general mass. †

Our souls are as it were a music, of which our bodies are the instruments. The music exists without the instruments, but it cannot make itself heard without a material intermediary; [8] the immaterial can neither be conceived nor grasped. Man in his present existence only retains certain predispositions from his past existences. [9]

[8] Hence Spirit cannot communicate.

[9] Karma.

Evocations of the dead are but condensations of memory, the imaginary coloration of the shades. To evoke those who are no longer there, is but to cause their types to re-issue from the imagination of nature.‡

* From one loka to the other; from a positive world of causes and activity, to a negative world of effects and passivity.—Ed. Theosophist.

† Into Cosmic matter, when they necessarily lose their self-consciousness or individuality, [7] or are annihilated, as the Eastern Kabalists say.—Ed. Theosophist. [7] Their Monad 6th and 7th Principles.

‡ To ardently desire to see a dead person is to evoke the image of that person, to call it forth from the astral light or ether wherein rest photographed the images of the Past. That is what is being partially done in the seance rooms. The Spiritualists are unconscious NECROMANCERS. — Ed. Theosophist.

To be in direct communication with the imagination of nature, one must be either asleep, intoxicated, in an ecstasy, cataleptic, or mad. [10]

The eternal memory preserves only the imperishable; all that passes in Time belongs of right to oblivion. The preservation of corpses is a violation of the laws of nature; it is an outrage on the modesty of death, which hides the works of destruction, as we should hide those of reproduction. Preserving corpses is to create phantoms in the imagination of the earth;* [11] the spectres of the nightmare, of hallucination, and fear, are but the wandering photographs of preserved corpses. [12]

It is these preserved or imperfectly destroyed corpses, which spread, amid the living, plague, cholera, contagious diseases, sadness, scepticism and disgust of life.† Death is exhaled by death. The cemeteries poison the atmosphere of towns, and the miasma of corpses blight the children even in the bosoms of their mothers.

Near Jerusalem in the Valley of Gehenna a perpetual fire was maintained for the combustion of filth and the carcasses of animals, and it is to this eternal fire that Jesus alluded when he says that the wicked shall be cast into Gehenna;

[10] And to be in direct communication with the intelligence of Nature one must become an Adept.

[11] We never bury our dead. They are burnt or left above the earth.

[12] Their reflections in the astral light.

* To intensify these images in the astral or sidereal light. —Ed. Theosophist.

† People begin intuitively to realize the great truth, and societies for burning bodies and crematories are now started in many places in Europe.—Ed. Theosophist.

signifying that dead souls will be treated as corpses.

The Talmud says that the souls of those who have not believed in immortality will not become immortal. It is faith only which gives personal immortality; * [13] science and reason can only affirm the general immortality.

The mortal sin is the suicide of the soul. This suicide would occur if the man devoted himself to evil with the full strength of his mind, with a perfect knowledge of good and evil, and an entire liberty of action which seems impossible in practice, but which is possible in theory, because the essence of an independent personality is an unconditioned liberty. The divinity imposes nothing upon man, not even existence. Man has a right to withdraw himself even from the divine goodness, and the dogma of eternal Hell is only the assertion of eternal free will.

God precipitates no one into Hell. It is men who can go there freely, definitely and by their own choice. Those who are in Hell,

[13] In the Deva-Chan the Ego sees and feels but that which he longed for. He who cares not for a continuation of sentient personal life after physical death will not have it. He will be reborn remaining unconscious of the transition.

* Faith and will power. Immortality is conditional, as we have ever stated. It is the reward of the pure and good. The wicked man, the material sensualist, only survives. He who appreciates but physical pleasures will not and cannot live in the hereafter as a self-conscious Entity.—Ed. Theosophist.

that is to say, amid the gloom of evil* and the sufferings of the necessary punishment, without having absolutely so willed it, are called to emerge from it. This Hell is for them only a purgatory. The damned completely, absolutely and without respite, is Satan who is not a rational existence, but a necessary hypothesis.

N.I. †Satan is the last word of the creation. He is the end infinitely emancipated. He willed to be like God of which he is the opposite. God is the hypothesis necessary to II.† reason, Satan the hypothesis necessary to unreason asserting itself as free will.
[14]

To be **immortal** [15] in good, one must identify oneself with God; to be immortal in evil, with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of souls; between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind.

[14] That which I have marked with red pencil are all seeming contradictions but they are not.

[15] As a rule the Hermetists, when using the word “immortality,” limit its duration from the beginning to the end of the minor cycle. The deficiencies of their respective languages cannot be visited upon them. One could not well say a semi-immortality. The ancients called it “panaeonic eternity” from the words, *πάν*—all or nature, and *αἰών*, a period of time which had no definite limit, except for the initiates. See Dictionaries—an aeon is the period of time during which a person lives, the period during which the universe endures, and also—eternity. It was a “mystery word” and was purposely veiled.

* That is to say, they are reborn in a “lower world” which is neither “hell” nor any theological purgatory, but a world of nearly absolute matter and one preceding the last one in the “circle of necessity” from which “there is no redemption for there reigns absolute spiritual darkness” (Book of Khiu-ti).—Ed. Theosophist.

† [See corresponding marks in the second Essay, on “Satan,” which follows.]

Editor's Note.—This may seem into the average reader, for it is one of the most abstruse of the tenets of Occult [16] doctrine. Nature is dual; there is a physical and material side, as there is a spiritual and moral side to it; and, there both good and evil in it, the latter the necessary shadow to its light. To force oneself upon the current of immortality, or rather to secure for oneself an endless series of rebirths conscious individualities—says the Book of K'hiu-ti, Volume XXXI, [17] one must become a co-worker with nature, either for good or for bad, in her work of creation and reproduction, or in that of destruction. [18] It is but the useless drones, which she gets rid of, violently ejecting and making them perish by the millions [19] as self-conscious entities. [20] Thus, while the good and the pure strive to reach Nipang (Nirvana or that state of absolute existence and absolute consciousness—which, in the world of finite perceptions, is non-existence and non-consciousness)—the wicked will seek, on the contrary, a series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings, preferring to be ever suffering under the law of retributive justice [21] rather than give up their lives as portions of the integral, universal whole.

[16] Western.

[17] Chap. III.

[18] This sentence refers to the two kinds of the initiates—the adepts and the sorcerers.

[19] One of her usual exaggerations.

[20] Two useless words.

[21] Karma.

Being well aware that they can never hope to reach the final rest in pure spirit, or nirvana, they cling to life in any form, [22] rather than give up that “desire for life,” or Tanha which causes a new aggregation of Skandhas or individuality to be reborn.* Nature is as good a mother to the cruel bird of prey as she is to the harmless dove. Mother nature will punish her child, but since he has become her co-worker for destruction she cannot eject him. [23] There are thoroughly wicked and depraved men, yet as highly intellectual and acutely spiritual for evil, as those who are spiritual for good. [24] The Egos of these may escape the law of final destruction or annihilation for ages to come. [25] That is what Éliphas Lévi means by becoming “immortal in evil,” through identification with Satan. “I would thou wert cold or hot,” says the vision of the Revelation to St. John (iii, 15-16). “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” The Revelation is an absolutely Kabalistic book. Heat and cold are the two “poles,” i.e., good and evil, spirit and matter. Nature spues the “lukewarm” or “the useless portion of mankind” out of her mouth, i.e., annihilates them. This conception that a considerable portion of mankind may after all not have immortal souls, will not be new even to European readers. Coleridge himself likened the case to that of an oak tree bearing, indeed, millions of acorns,

[22] Thro’ mediums who have existed everywhere in every age. *Read note on pages attached.

[23] Not during the aeon, if they but know how to force her. But it is a life of torture and eternal hatred. If you believe in us how can you disbelieve in them?

[24] The Brothers o the shadow.

[25] The majority have to go out of this planet into the 8th as she calls it. But the highest will live till the very threshold of the final nirvana.

but acorns of which under nominal [26] conditions not one in a thousand ever developed into a tree, and suggested that as the majority of the acorns failed to develop into a new living tree, so possibly the majority of men fail to develop into a new living entity after this earthly death.

[26] Normal

II

SATAN

Satan is merely a type, not a real personage.

II. It is the type opposed to the Divine type, the necessary foil to this in our imagination. It is the factitious shadow which renders visible to us the infinite light of the Divine.

If Satan was a real personage then would there be two Gods, and the creed of the Manicheans would be a truth.

Satan is the imaginary conception of the absolute in evil; a conception necessary to the complete affirmation of the liberty of the human will, which, by the help of this imaginary absolute seems able to equilibrate the entire power even of God. It is the boldest, and perhaps, the sublimest of the dreams of human pride.

“You shall be as Gods knowing good and evil,” saith the allegorical serpent in the Bible. Truly to make evil a science is to create a God of evil, and if any spirit can eternally resist God, there is no longer one God but two Gods.

To resist the Infinite, infinite force is necessary, and two infinite forces opposed to each other must neutralize each other.*

If resistance on the part of Satan is possible the power of God no longer exists, God and the Devil destroy each other, and man remains alone;

* And evil being infinite and eternal, for it is co-eval with matter, the logical deduction would be that there is neither God nor Devil—as personal Entities, only One Uncreated, Immutable and Absolute Principle or Law: Evil or DEVIL—the deeper it falls into matter, GOOD or GOD as soon as it is purified from the latter and re-becomes again pure unalloyed Spirit or the ABSOLUTE in its everlasting, immutable Subjectivity.[27]—Ed. Theosophist.

[27] True.

he remains alone with the phantom of his Gods, the hybrid sphinx, the winged bull, which poises in its human hand a sword of which the wavering lightnings drive the human imagination from one error to the other, and from the despotism of the light, to the despotism of the darkness.

The history of mundane misery is but the romance of the war of the Gods, a war still unfinished, while the Christian world still adores God in the Devil, and a Devil in God.

The antagonism of powers is anarchy in Dogma. N.I. Thus to the Church which affirms that the Devil exists the world replies with terrifying logic: then God does not exist; and it is vain to seek escape from this argument to invent the supremacy of a God who would permit a Devil to bring about the damnation of men; such a permission would be a monstrosity, and would amount to complicity, and the god that could be an accomplice of the devil, cannot be God.

The Devil of Dogmas is a personification of Atheism. The Devil of Philosophy is the exaggerated ideal of human free will. The real or physical Devil is the magnetism of evil.

Raising the Devil is but realizing for an instant this imaginary personality. This involves the exaggeration in one's self beyond bounds of the perversity of madness by the most criminal and senseless acts.

The result of this operation is the death of the soul through madness, and often the death of the body even, lightning-struck, as it were, by a cerebral congestion.

The Devil ever importunes, but gives nothing in return.

St. John calls it "the Beast" (la Bête) because its essence is human folly (la Bêtise humaine).

Éliphas Lévi's (Bonae Memoriae) creed, and that of his disciples. We believe in a God-Principle, the essence of all existence, of all good and of all justice, inseparable from nature which is its law and which reveals itself through intelligence and love.

We believe in Humanity, daughter of God, of which all the members are indissolubly connected one with the other so that all must co-operate in the salvation of each, and each in the salvation of all.

We believe that to serve the Divine essence it is necessary to serve Humanity.

We believe in the reparation of evil, and in the triumph of good in the life eternal.

FIAT.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 1, October, 1881, p. 26]

Nothing promises to prove more dangerous to the Bible and to the Bible Christians—not even the new Revision of the sacred volume by the combined ecclesiastical talent of England, than that eminently Hindu funeral rite—cremation. The more this mode of disposing of the bodies of the dead comes into general practice the more it is calculated to strike terror into the hearts of the pious and God-fearing folk who look forward to death, because of the resurrection at the last joyful summons from the Angel’s trumpet. But with cremation resurrection has become impossible. But since matters cannot be mended, and science has entered into a league with the heathens, even such a bigoted country as Italy, priest-ridden and Jesuit-ridden as it is, has taken the lead in cremation. Germany, according to a correspondent of the Pall Mall Gazette, has also its own Cremation Hall at Gotha, a handsome and spacious building, and artistically inferior to only that of Milan. It has been in existence about two years and a half, and was built by an association or Verein of some of the most thoughtful and learned men in Germany. The correspondent adds: “Fifty-two persons, five of whom were women, have in this space of time chosen such a form of burial [does not this sound like a bull?],* one body being sent from New York. The cost of the mere process of cremation is about five pounds sterling, and the religious ceremony can be first read over the body.

* [Square brackets, are H.P.B.’s— Compiler.]

It is unnecessary to say that the Catholic priest refuses church burial to anyone electing to be cremated. Protestant pastors, on the contrary, willingly accord it. The cinerary urns bear the name of one or two Jews.” It would be worth while determining as to who are the most consistent—the Catholic priests, the Protestant pastors, or the Jews? The correspondent thus concludes: “I think few visitors will visit this cremation hall without being duly impressed in favour of a system so advantageous to the living, and, it must be admitted—at least, of France and Germany —also advantageous to the dead. Here, as in France, the law compels such prompt interment that in many cases it has been known to take place before the breath has left the body. In Algeria I have known personally a victim of this misapprehension; and my German friends all speak to me in warm terms of the new system as, irrespective of other advantages, preventing premature burial.”

[Ibid., Supplement, October, 1881, p. 2]

[The following Note has reference to an article in defence of Col. Olcott which appeared in the Ceylon Times of September 22, 1881, intended to be a reply to attacks against him published in the Ceylon Observer of September 20th.]

The article of the Ceylon Observer to which the Times correspondent alludes was a most cowardly attempt to traduce a spotless, private character by innuendo. The testimonials to Col. Olcott’s highly honourable record in America provoked the bigoted editor’s spleen, and led him to such palpably mean and futile extremes as to win for his coveted victim the sympathy of this writer. The fact is that the Christian party are thoroughly alarmed at the effect already produced by our President upon the hitherto sluggish Buddhists of the Island. He is awakening in them so marked an interest in their religion as to forbode disastrous times for the Protestant missionaries.

Garbled reports of discussions in which he always gets worsted; absurd proposals to petition the Governor to order him away; silly stories of his certainty to be assassinated; foolish questions put to him in the papers by featherbrained fellows; prohibitions by bishops, priests and padris to their laity to hear his lectures; newspaper articles against him put into tract form and widely circulated—all these prove at once the greatness of his success and the anxiety of our enemies.

FOOTNOTES TO “WHO ARE THE ARYAS AND THE BUDDHISTS?”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 1, Supplement, October, 1881, pp. 2-3]

[This is an extract from the Journal of the Hindu Sabha, on the subject of initiations and initiates in ancient India. The writer says that “the gods were fully Emancipated Theosophists,” to which H. P. B. remarks:]

Or the highest adepts. To this day in Tibet, the “perfect Lamas or Bodhisattvas” are called gods and Spirits—LHAS.

The writer continues: “We hold the ancient land of the Aryas with their gods and their Rishis to have been the Himalayan station which is even now Sacred to Hindu Theosophists and where Theosophical merit and learning still flourishes and whence the Brahmaputra still flows.”]

We italicize these lines as they have a direct reference to our first section, doubted and ridiculed by blind scoffers— a reality nevertheless. We can only repeat with Galileo his historical and immortal words: *Eppur si muove!* Other scoffers and bigots as blind as our modern skeptics would not allow the earth to move, and yet it moved, moves and will move unto the last hour of the Pralaya.

And the Brahmaputra flows from Tibet.

“There is no reasonable doubt that the Tsampu of great Tibet and the Brahmaputra of the plains are one and the same river,” says Markham in his recent work Tibet.* “Great Tibet embraces the region between the Northern and Southern chains of the Himalaya, the towns and principal monasteries . . . are chiefly in the valley of the Brahmaputra.”

[The writer concludes saying: “The Founders of the Theosophical Society say that they are in communion with Yogis, the Editor of the Saddarshana Chintanika that his Yogi will reveal himself in time, and the Hindu Sabha exhorts everyone to invoke the Yogi within himself.” To this H. P. B. appends the following note:]

And the Hindu Sabha is quite right, if, by “Yogi,” it means Atma, the highest Spiritual Soul. But the writer uses an incorrect expression when saying that the Founders of the Theosophical Society claim communion with Yogis; Yogis can be but Hindus and in the Fraternity—with which we claim to have some acquaintance—the Hindus are in a minority. Even these cannot be strictly called “Yogis” since their modes of life, habits, religious worship and form of Initiation differ entirely from those of the Hindu Yogis as known to the general public. In one respect only are the adepts we know, like Yogis; namely, in their great purity of life, self-abnegation, and the practice of Dhyana and Samadhi.

* [Reference is here to Sir Clements Roberts Markham who edited the Narratives of the Mission of Geo. Bogle to Tibet and of the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa, London, 1876.—Compiler.]

CURRENT EVENTS

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 1, Supplement, October, 1881, p. 4]

[Commenting on a letter from a correspondent who referred enthusiastically to the revival movement in Hinduism, congratulating the Theosophical Society on its work in this direction, and invoking the help of the “Divine Power” for “the advocates of the religion inculcated in the Aryan Shastras,” H. P. B. wrote as follows:]

To avoid misunderstanding and especially “misrepresentations” on the part of our opponents, we must remark in connection with the above letter that we “advocate” no more the religion taught in the Aryan Shastras than we do any other faith. Our journal is absolutely unsectarian and equally open to every sincere and honest defender and advocate of his own faith—whatever the latter may be. We are devoted admirers of the Vedas, holding it in veneration as the oldest, and, as we believe, the wisest book of the world, although its mystical and allegorical language needs the interpretation of one who thoroughly understands its spirit. As we do not feel competent to decide which of the various and many interpreters is the right one, we try to be impartial to all and let every sect (with the exception of the “Maharaja sect,” of course) advocate its own cause before the public. The Founders of the Theosophical Society and Proprietors of this Journal are the staunch allies and devoted friends of Swamijee Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, and author of the Veda Bhashya; but though the recognized supreme chief of a number of our Theosophists who belong to the Arya Samaj, neither the President of the Parent Society, Colonel H. S. Olcott, nor yet its Corresponding Secretary, Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, can ever be his followers any more than those of any other Preacher, as the Rules of our Society strictly forbid its Founders and the Presidents of its many Branches to advocate either in our journal, or at mixed and general meetings, any one religion in preference to any other.

We are all upon neutral ground, and even our own personal religious leanings or preferences have nothing to do and must not interfere with the general work. We preach and advocate an incessant and untiring search for TRUTH, and are ever ready to receive and accept it from whatever quarter. We are all enquirers and never offered ourselves as teachers, except in so far as to teach mutual tolerance, kindness and reciprocal enlightenment and a firm resistance to bigotry and arrogant conceit whether in RELIGION or SCIENCE.

THE THEOSOPHIST AND PANDIT SHRADDHA RAM

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 1, Supplement, October, 1881, pp. 4-5]

In the August number of The Theosophist there appeared a short paragraph announcing the death of Pandit Shraddha Ram of Jallunder, Puñjab. Several friends and Theosophists of Lahore, among others, writing to the Headquarters to express their deep regret, asked the Editor to devote to the death of the late Pandit a few lines of notice. As the President-Founder and the Editor had known the deceased gentleman personally, during their stay at Lahore, where, it appears, he was much beloved by all the orthodox Hindus, their just desire was complied with, and the short obituary appeared. It was a small courtesy to show to one who had been a warm defender and preacher of his views during life, a sincere and fearless champion of what was to him sacred truth—Hindu or Brahmanical religion. Yet it was found fault with and strongly upbraided and criticized by the last person we would have ever thought of, in such a connection—a Theosophist and an Arya-Samajist!! On n'est jamais trahi que par les siens becomes truer than ever. We leave to the impartial reader to judge and decide which, the Editor or the "Critic," is "bringing discredit" upon himself.

The criticism appeared in the Tribune of Lahore, August 13, and we now give it to our readers as it stands:

THE THEOSOPHIST AND PANDIT SARDHA RAM

To the Editor of The Tribune:

Sir,—It is curious to see in The Theosophist for August 1881 (page 245) that Pandit Sardha Ram, deceased, is trumpeted to have been a leader of Hindu religion and to have disseminated his opinions so boldly and eloquently that neither Brahmo nor Arya-Samajists ever ventured to cross him.

This is anything but true, and the Editor of that journal is greatly misinformed, and no doubt brings discredit upon herself by giving publicity to such trash and utterly incorrect information in the editorial columns of her paper, for everybody who knew Pandit Sardha Ram full well that he was innocent of having ever engaged himself in discussion with an Arya-Samajist, though challenged to do so many a time by them.

Indeed, he organized a society giving it the name of Hari-Gyan-Sabha, which is composed of a dozen of persons otherwise for the present age, who are disinterestedly devoted to the secret cause of idolatry and superstition, which the Arya-Samaj ruthlessly attempts to sweep away by its sacrilegious act of disseminating Vedic knowledge through the length and breadth of the country.

True the Pandit was a leader of the Hindu religion, but only so far as the members of Hari-Gyan-Sabha are concerned; for without the pale of that Sabha no one ever thought him guilty of deep Sanskrit learnings and it is an acknowledged fact that he was not encumbered with Vedic knowledge in the least.

As regards the Brahmos it would be unjust to omit to state here that once the deceased held a discussion with Babu Nobin Chander Roy and suffered the game to be won by the Babu as is apparent from a pamphlet in which that discussion has been published. We would fain have refrained from criticism upon a dead man, but truth compels us to disabuse the public of a wrong notion which a note in The Theosophist from the pen of its Editor is calculated to create, and I, therefore, beg to request you, Mr. Editor, to insert these few lines in the next issue of your paper and oblige,

Yours, etc.,

A THEOSOPHIST AND ARYA-SAMAJIST.

Aug. 11, 1881

THE THEOSOPHIST AND ARYA-SAMAJIST

To the Editor of The Tribune.

DEAR SIR,

A letter published in your issue of August 14th and signed “A Theosophist and Arya-Samajist” has unfortunately—for its writer—appeared in your columns and demands a prompt reply. Had it been signed by any other nom de plume I would never think of answering it, still less giving my reasons for publishing anything I choose in the journal conducted by me. As the matter stands, however, and the writer having publicly accused “the Editor of that journal’ (The Theosophist) of being “greatly misinformed,” and bringing “discredit upon herself by giving publicity to such trash” (sic)—viz., by inserting a few lines to express regret at the sudden death of Pandit Shradha Ram (!)—I, the undersigned, the Editor of The Theosophist, and one of the Founders of the Society to which the writer himself belongs, will now, with your permission, answer his very flippant, untruthful, and, I regret to say—since he is a theosophist—transparently spiteful remarks.

(1) I could not be “greatly misinformed” since my information was derived (a) from a personal, though a very short acquaintance with the defunct, at Lahore; (b) from several trustworthy and impartial informants, such as a high English official, a Christian clergyman, and several respectable natives from that same city; and finally (c) from two members of our Society—one of whom is a greatly esteemed and very learned native of Lahore, a valued friend of ours and—a “theosophist of good standing.”

(2) No Editor can possibly “bring discredit” upon himself —unless our critic and Brother (?) has yet to learn the real value of English words—merely for his speaking in a spirit of kindness of a defunct person, were the latter the greatest reprobate, which, even the detractors of the late Pandit would never dare to say of him. De mortuis nil nisi bonum is the motto of every honest man.

On the other hand, a “Theosophist”—the more so if in addition to being a Fellow of a Society, based upon the wisest principles of mutual tolerance and universal philanthropy, one, in short, striving to deserve the name of a practical Brotherhood of Humanity, he is a member of the Arya Samaj, a body known as opposing and being opposed by every orthodox Hindu—does “bring discredit,” and not only upon himself, but upon the Society he belongs to, by showing such a spirit of personal spite, narrow-mindedness and uncharitableness, as exhibited in his criticism in the Tribune. “It is far less a sin to speak kindly of and forgive ten sinners deserving punishment, than to slander or punish one who is innocent” is an old saying, especially—we may add—when the victim is dead and cannot defend himself.

(3) It is not true that Pandit Shraddha Ram “was innocent of any discussion with an Arya-Samajist” as I happen to know to the contrary; nor, that his “Hari-Gyana Mandir” (or Hari-Gyan Sabha, as the writer calls it) is composed but of “a dozen of persons”; nor yet that in his polemics with Babu Nobin Chunder Roy “he suffered the game to be won” by that Brahma gentleman, as the Pandit was away, we are told, when his Bengali opponent had his last say, and that since then he published the Dharma Rakhsha in which he contradicted every word pronounced by his opponent. All his insinuations are exaggerated and greatly misrepresented. The late Pandit may have been little “guilty of deep Sanskrit learning” for all I can vouch for, but that is no reason why he should not be honoured after his death as a good and generally respected man. The whole letter under notice, breathing with that spiteful and bigoted spirit of partisanship which precludes the possibility on the part of its writer to show himself fair and impartial—his object falls short of its mark and his vilifications harm but their author.

While one “Theosophist” writes a quasi-libellous letter, and throws mud upon the memory of one, whose only crime seems to have been to oppose the teachings of the Arya-Samajists which he honestly, if erroneously, believed heretical—another Theosophist whom we personally know, as a most trustworthy and impartial witness, wrote to Colonel Olcott from Lahore, at the date of July 18, 1881, the following:

It is with deep regret that I inform you of the sudden death of Pandit Shraddha Ram of Phillour, in the District of Jullander in the Puñjab—who visited you at Lahore. He was the only preacher of orthodox Hinduism, who travelled far and wide on behalf of his religion at his own expenses, and spoke so eloquently and with such a force of argument that neither missionaries, Moulvies, nor Brahmos, ever dared to encounter him . . . (this informant, independently of informant number one, whose paragraph we published, gives the very same testimony as to what our critic contradicts). He was a great orator, and his argumentative powers were very remarkable indeed. In addition to his knowledge of Sanskrit he was well versed in Persian, knew medicine and knew the Nasht Patrika, a branch of astrology, to almost a miraculous perfection. He also knew music, was a good poet, and an admirable writer in Hindi. Religious hymns of his composition are much appreciated and sung in the Puñjab. His pleasing manners and marvellous abilities secured for him the friendship of many good-natured Christian missionaries and of several European officials of high position. . . . His loss is not only severely felt by all the orthodox Hindus, but is deeply regretted and sincerely lamented by all his Arya-Samaj and Brahmo-Samaj friends.

The italics are mine. Whom are we to believe? Evidently Theosophist No. 2 had not met “A Theosophist” No. 1, otherwise the—to put it very mildly—indiscreet remarks in his letter would have never appeared, perchance, in the Tribune. To conclude:

As the Editor of The Theosophist, I now publicly declare that being no sectarian, following no one’s lead, and feeling the profoundest contempt for narrow-minded bigotry under whatever form, the columns of our journal—so long as I edit it—will never be closed against any writer, only because he happens to differ with me on religious or philosophical opinions. Holding Gautama Buddha higher in my veneration than any other religious teacher the world over, I yet publicly, and notwithstanding Buddhist opposition to the Hindu Scriptures—profess a profound admiration for the Vedas and the Vedanta teaching, simply because I claim an undeniable right of thinking for myself, untrammelled by any divine or human teacher or teaching.

And were I to receive, at any day, a well-written article directed either against our Society, the Buddhist Saviour, or myself personally, I would surely publish it in the same spirit of tolerance and impartiality, and with the same readiness as I would give room to one against a declared enemy of ours. And, as the Corresponding Secretary of the Parent or Central Theosophical Society, I am compelled to warn “A Theosophist and Arya-Samajist.” Let him avoid in future giving vent to such feelings as expressed by him in *The Tribune* as they are as discreditable to himself, as they are loathsome to the Society which honoured him by admitting him to the number of its Fellows. Unless he heeds this friendly advice our General Council might some day interfere, and he would suddenly find himself compelled to sign his future denunciations but as “An Arya-Samajist.”

Fraternally yours,

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Simla, August 24, 1881.

[In H.P.B.'s Scrapbook, Vol. XI, Part II, pp. 410-12, there are several cuttings from the *Ceylon Catholic Messenger* of October 25 and 26, and November 1, 1881, entitled “Absurdities of ‘A Buddhist Catechism’ by Henry S. Olcott.” It is a long and hostile attack on Buddhism in general and Col. Olcott in particular. The following passage has been marked by H.P.B. in blue pencil:

“If no other proof of our assertion could be had, Buddhists’ scanty knowledge, not to say utter ignorance, of the earth, its physical and astronomical laws, would be quite sufficient; for even at the present day, the sphericity and the revolutions of the earth, are denied by those who profess to be the disciples of the ‘All-Wise,’ the ‘Enlightened’! Buddhism, according to Col. Olcott, sometimes excels modern science.”

To this H.P.B. appended the following remarks in ink:]

Some ignorant Buddhist priests may deny at present as ever the sphericity of the earth and its rotations. But so do the Roman Catholic bigots and monks to the day and more than ever since the days of Galileo.

Professor Schöpffer, an eminent astronomer of Berlin, denies the heliocentric system and Father Grégoire of Cairo did so. The Jesuits avoid speaking of that rotation which befools the infallible Bible and Joshua's "Miracle."

[She also appended the following final remark:]

Having done with Colonel Olcott and with the "Absurdities of Buddhism" it falls foul upon the "Absurdities of Protestantism"!! Oh Catholic Messenger, Consistency is Thy name!

[This is followed by an article from the same paper entitled "A Catechism About Protestantism and the Catholic Church," by John Perrone, S.J.]

THE SIX-POINTED AND FIVE-POINTED STARS OUR ANSWER

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 2, November, 1881, pp. 31-33]

["Our Answer" was written by way of reply to an article by K. Lalshankar entitled "The Six-Pointed and Five-Pointed Stars." It is quite complete and self-explanatory.]

Our authorities for representing the pentagram or the five-pointed star as the microcosm, and the six-pointed double triangle as the macrocosm, are all the best known Western Kabalists—mediaeval and modern. Éliphas Lévi (Abbé Constant) and, we believe, Khunrath, one of the greatest occultists of the past ages, give their reasons for it. In Hargrave Jennings' Rosicrucians the correct cut of the microcosm with man in the centre of the Pentagram is given. There is no objection whatever to publish their speculations save one—the lack of space in our journal, as it would necessitate an enormous amount of explanations to make their esoteric meaning clear.

But room will always be found to correct a few natural misconceptions which may arise in the minds of some of our readers, owing to the necessary brevity of our editorial notes. So long as the question raised provokes no discussion to show the interest taken in the subject, these notes touch but superficially upon every question. The excellence of the above-published paper, and the many valuable remarks contained in it, afford us now an opportunity for correcting such errors in the author's mind.

As understood in the West, Spirit and Matter have for the real Kabalists their chief symbolical meaning, in the respective colours of the two interlaced triangles and relate in no way to any of the lines which bind the figures themselves. To the Kabalist and Hermetic philosopher, everything in nature appears under a triune aspect; everything is a multiplicity and trinity in unity, and is represented by him so symbolically in various geometrical figures. "God geometrizes," says Plato. The "Three Kabalistic Faces" are the "Three Lights" and the "Three Lives" of EN-SOPH (the Parabrahma of the Westerns) also called the "Central Invisible Sun." The "Universe is his Spirit, Soul and Body," his "Three Emanations." This triune nature—the purely Spiritual, the purely Material and the Middle nature (or imponderable matter, of which is composed man's astral soul) are represented by the equilateral triangle whose three sides are equal, because these three principles are diffused throughout the universe in equal proportions; and the ONE LAW in nature being perfect EQUILIBRIUM—they are eternal and co-existent. The Western symbology then, with a trifling variation, is identically the same as that of the Aryans. Names may vary, and trifling details added, but the fundamental ideas are the same. The double triangle representing symbolically the MACROCOSM, or great universe, contains in itself besides the idea of the duality (as shown in the two colours, and two triangles—the universe of SPIRIT and that of MATTER)—those of the Unity, of the Trinity, of the Pythagorean TETRAKTYS — the perfect Square—and up to the Dodecagon and the Dodecahedron.

The ancient Chaldean Kabalists—the masters and inspirers of the Jewish Kabala—were not the Anthropomorphites of the Old Testament or those of the present day. Their EN-SOPH—the Endless and the Boundless—“has a form and then he has no form,” says the Book of the Zohar* and forthwith explains the riddle by adding: “The Invisible assumed a form when he called the universe into existence,” i.e., the Deity can only be seen and conceived of in objective nature—pure pantheism. The three sides of the triangles represent to the Occultists as to the Aryans—spirit, matter, and middle nature (the latter identical in its meaning with space); hence also—the creative, preservative, and destructive energies, typified in the “Three Lights.” The first light infuses intelligent, conscious life throughout the universe, thus answering to the creative energy; the second light produces incessantly forms out of cosmic preexistent matter and within the cosmic circle, hence is the preservative energy; the third light produces the whole universe of gross physical matter; and, as the latter keeps gradually receding from the central spiritual light, its brightness wanes, and it becomes Darkness or EVIL leading to Death. Hence it becomes the destructive energy, which we find ever at work on forms and shapes—the temporary and the changing. The Three Kabalistic Faces of the “ANCIENT of the Ancient”—who “has no face” are the Aryan deities—respectively called Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Rudra or Siva. The double triangle of the Kabalists is enclosed within a circle represented by a serpent swallowing its own tail (Egyptian emblem of the eternity) and sometimes by a simple circle (see the Theosophical Seal). The only difference we can see between the Aryan and the Western symbology of the double triangle—judging by the author’s explanation—lies in his omission to notice the profound and special meaning in that which he terms “the zenith and the zero” if we understand him rightly.

* Zohar—Book of Splendour, written by Shimon ben Yochai, in the first century B.C.; according to others in the year A.D. 80.

[Rf. is to Zohar, III, p. 288, Amst. ed., 1714.—Compiler.]



ALLAN OCTAVIAN HUME
1829-1912

Reproduced from Life of Allan Octavian Hume,
By Sir Wm. Weddenburn, London, F. Fisher Unwin, 1913.



YEVGENIY FYODOROVICH VON HAHN
1807-1874

Presiding Senator. First cousin of H.P.B.'s father.

With the Western Kabalists—the apex of the white triangle loses itself (the meaning being the same in the Egyptian pyramid)* in the zenith, the world of pure immateriality or unalloyed spirit, while the lower angle of the black triangle† pointing downward towards the nadir shows—to use a very prosaic phrase of the mediaeval Hermetists—pure or rather “impure matter” as the “gross purgations of the celestial fire”—Spirit—drawn into the vortex of annihilation, that lower world, where forms and shapes and conscious life disappear to be dispersed and return to the mother fount—cosmic matter. So with the central point, and the central cavity, which according to the Puranic teaching “is considered to be the seat of the Avyaktabrahma—or the unmanifested Deity.”

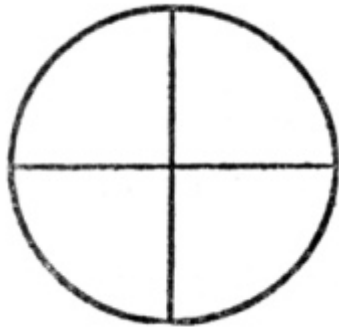


The Occultists who generally draw the figure thus, instead of a simple central, geometrical point (which, having neither length, breadth, nor thickness, represents the invisible “Central Sun,” the light of the “unmanifested deity”), often place the crux ansata (the handled cross or the Egyptian TAU), at the zenith of which instead of a mere upright line they substitute a circle—symbol of limitless, uncreated Space, which cross thus modified has nearly the same significance as the “mundane cross” of the ancient Egyptian Hermetists, a cross within a circle.

* A French archaeologist of some renown, Dr. E. Rebold, shows the great culture of the Egyptians 5000 B.C., by stating upon various authorities that there were at that time no less than “thirty or forty colleges of the initiated priests who studied occult sciences and practical magic.” [Histoire générale de la Franc-Maçonnerie, Paris, 1851.]

† In the August Number (1881) of The Theosophist a mistake has crept in which has now to be corrected. On page 240 (second column, line 16th of the Editor’s Note) it is said—“the two points of its black triangle inclining earthward,” whereas it ought to read—the “lower point of its black triangle,” since the black triangle has its two angles forming its base reversed.

Therefore, it is erroneous to say the Editorial note stated that the double triangle represented “Spirit and matter only” for it represents so many emblems that a volume would not suffice to explain them.



Says our critic: “If, as you say, the ‘double triangle’ is made to represent the universal spirit and matter only, the objection that two sides—or any two things—cannot form a triangle, or that a triangle cannot be made to represent one thing—a spirit alone or matter alone—as you appear to have done by the distinction of white and black, remains unexplained.” Believing that we have now sufficiently explained some of the difficulties, and shown that the Western Kabalists always regarded the “trinity in unity” and vice versa, we may add that the Pythagoreans have explained away the “objection” especially insisted upon by the writer of the above words, about 2500 years ago. The sacred numbers of that school—whose cardinal idea was that there existed a permanent principle of unity beneath all the forces and phenomenal changes of the universe—did not include the number two or the duad among the others. The Pythagoreans refused to recognize that number, even as an abstract idea, precisely on that ground that in geometry it was impossible to construct a figure with only two straight lines. It is obvious that for symbolical purposes the number cannot be identified with any circumscribed figure, whether a plane or a solid geometric figure; and thus as it could not be made to represent a unity in a multiplicity as any other polygonal figure can, it could not be regarded as a sacred number.

The number two represented in geometry by a double horizontal line == and in the Roman numerals by a double perpendicular line || and a line having length, but not breadth or thickness, it had to have another numeral added to it before it could be accepted. It is but in conjunction with number one that, becoming the equilateral triangle, it can be called a figure. It becomes, therefore, evident why, having to symbolize spirit and matter—the Alpha and the Omega in the Cosmos—the Hermetists had to use two triangles interlaced—both a “trinity in unity”—making the former to typify “spirit”—white, with chalk—and the later typifying “matter”—black, with charcoal.

To the question, what do the two other white points signify, if the one “white point ascending heavenward symbolizes spirit”—we answer that, according to the Kabalists, the two lower points signify “spirit falling into generation, ”i.e., the pure divine spark already mixed with the matter of the phenomenal world. The same explanation holds good for the two black angles of the horizontal line; both of the third points, showing one—the progressive purification of spirit, and the other—the progressive grossness of matter. Again, to say that “any thought of upward or downward” in “the sublime idea of the Cosmos” seems “not only revolting but unreal,” is to object to anything abstract being symbolized in a concrete image. Then why not make away with all the signs altogether, including that of Vishnu and with all the learned Puranic explanation thereof given by the writer? And why should the Kabalistic idea be more revolting than that of “Death—Devourer—Time,” the latter word being a synonym of Endless Eternity—represented by a circle surrounding the double triangle? Strange inconsistency and one, moreover, which clashes entirely with the rest of the article! If the writer has not met “anywhere with the idea of one triangle being white and the other black” it is simply because he has never studied, nor probably even seen the writings of the Western Kabalists and their illustrations.

The above explanations given by us contain the key to the Pythagorean general formula of unity in multiplicity, the ONE evolving the many, and pervading the many and the whole. Their mystic DECAD $1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10$ expresses the entire idea; it is not only far from being “revolting” but it is positively sublime. The ONE is the Deity, the Two matter (the figure so despised by them as matter per se can never be a conscious unity),* the THREE (or Triangle) combining Monad and Duad, partaking of the nature of both, becomes the triad or the phenomenal world. The Tetrad or sacred TETRAKTYS, the form of perfection with the Pythagoreans, expresses at the same time the emptiness of all—MAYA; while the DECAD, or sum of all, involves the entire cosmos. “The universe is the combination of a thousand elements, and yet the expression of a single element—absolute harmony or spirit—a chaos to the sense, a perfect cosmos to reason”—we say in *Isis Unveiled*.† Pythagoras learned his philosophy in India. Hence, the similarity in the fundamental ideas of the ancient Brahmanical Initiates and the Pythagorists. And when defining the Shatkon, the writer says it “represents the great universe ब्रह्माण्ड (Brahmânda) — the whole endless महाकाश (Mahâkâśa)—with all the planetary and stellar worlds contained in it,” he only repeats in other words the explanation given by Pythagoras and the Hermetic philosophers of the hexagonal star or the “Double Triangle” as shown above.

Nor do we find it very difficult to fill up the gap left in our brief note in the August number as to the “remaining three points of the two triangles” and the three sides of each of the “double triangles” or of the circle surrounding the figure.

* See in Kapila’s *Sankhya—Purusha and Prakriti*: only the two combined when forming a performing unity can manifest themselves in the world of senses.

[In *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. xvi, this sentence runs: “The universe is the combination of a thousand elements,, and yet the expression of a single spirit—a chaos to the sense, a cosmos to the reason.” —Compiler.]

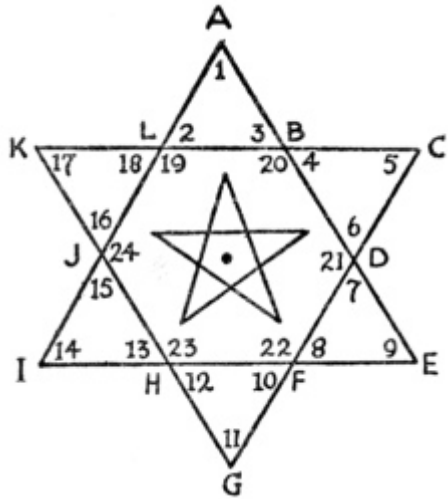
As the Hermetists symbolized everything visible and invisible they could not but do so for the macrocosm in its completeness. The Pythagorists who included in their DECAD the entire cosmos, held the number 12 in still higher reverence as it represented the sacred Tetraktys multiplied by three, which gave a trinity of perfect squares called Tetrads. The Hermetic philosophers or Occultists following in their steps represented this number 12 in the “Double Triangle”—the great universe or the Macrocosm as shown in this figure, and included in it the pentagram, or the microcosm—called by them—the little universe.

Dividing the twelve letters of the outer angles into four groups of triads, or three groups of Tetraktys, they obtained the dodecagon, the regular geometric polygon, bounded by twelve equal sides and containing twelve equal angles which symbolized with the ancient Chaldeans—the twelve “great gods”* and with the Hebrew Kabalists the ten Sephiroths, or creative powers of Nature, emanated from Sephira (Divine Light), herself the chief Sephiroth and emanation from Hokhmah, the Supreme Wisdom (the unmanifested wisdom), and EN-SOPH, the endless; viz., three groups of Triads of the Sephiroth and a fourth Triad, composed of Sephira, En-Soph, and “Hokhmah,” the Supreme Wisdom “that cannot be understood by reflection,” and which “lies concealed within and without the cranium of Long Face”;† the uppermost head of the upper triangle formed the “Three Kabalistic Faces,” making up the twelve.

* According to Haug’s Aitareya Brâhmanam, the Hindu manas (mind) or Bhagavant creates no more than the Pythagorean monas. He enters the egg of the world and emanates from it as Brahm, as itself (Bhagavant) has no first cause (apûrva). Brahm as Prajâpati manifests himself as the androgyne Sephira first of all as the ten Sephiroths do—as twelve bodies or attributes which are represented by the twelve gods symbolizing: 1—Fire, 2—the Sun, 3—Soma, 4—all living Beings, 5—Vayu, 6—Death, Siva, 7—Earth, 8—Heaven, 9—Agni, 10—Aditya, 11—Mind, 12—the great Infinite Cycle which is not to be stopped. This, with a few variations is purely the Kabalistic idea of the Sephiroths.

† Idrah Rabbah (Greater Holy Assembly), vi § 58.

Moreover, the twelve figures give two squares or the double tetraktys representing in the Pythagorean symbology the two worlds—the spiritual and the physical, the 18 inner and 6 central angles yield, besides 24, twice the sacred macrocosmic number, or the 24 “divine unmanifested powers.” These it would be impossible to enumerate in so short a space.



Besides it is far more reasonable in our days of scepticism to follow the hint of Iamblichus, who says, that “the divine powers always felt indignant with those who rendered manifest the composition of the icosagonus” viz., who delivered the method of inscribing in a sphere the dodecahedron—one of the five solid figures in Geometry, contained under twelve equal and regular pentagons, the secret Kabalistic meaning of which our opponents would do well to study.*

* [This difficult subject is greatly clarified and amplified in L. Gordon Plummer’s work entitled *The Mathematics of the Cosmic Mind*, privately published in 1966, wherein all geometrical solids are explained in terms of the Esoteric Philosophy.—Compiler.]

In addition to all that, as shown in the “Double Triangle” above, the pentagram in its centre gives the key to the meaning of the Hermetic philosophers and Kabalists. So well known and spread is that double sign that it may be found over the entrance door of the Lha-Khang (temple containing Buddhist images and statues) in every Gompa (lamasery) and often over the relic-cupboard, called in Tibet Doong-ting. The mediaeval Kabalists give us in their writings the key to its meaning. “Man is a little world inside the great universe,” teaches Paracelsus. “A microcosm, within the macrocosm, like a foetus, he is suspended by his three principal spirits in the matrix of the universe.” These three spirits are described as double: (1) the spirit of the Elements (terrestrial body and vital principle); (2) the spirit of the stars (sidereal or astral body and will governing it); (3) the spirit of the spiritual world (the animal and the spiritual souls)—the seventh principle being an almost immaterial spirit or the divine Augoeides, Atma, represented by the central point, which corresponds to the human navel. This seventh principle is the Personal God of every man, say the old Western and Eastern Occultists.

Therefore, the explanations given by our critic of the Shatkon and Pañchkon, rather corroborate than destroy our theory. Speaking of the five triangles composed of “five times five” or 25 points, he remarks of the pentagram that it is a “number otherwise corresponding with the twenty-five elements making a living human creature.” Now we suppose that by “elements” the writer means just what the Kabalists say when they teach that the emanations of the 24 divine “unmanifested powers,” the “unexisting” or “Central Point” being the 25th—make a perfect human being?

But in what other respect does the above sentence—without disputing upon the relative value of the words “element” and “emanation”—strengthened moreover as we find it by the author’s additional remark that “the entire figure of the microcosm . . . the inner world of individual living being . . . a figure which is the sign of Brahmâ, the deified creative energy”—in what respect, we ask, does it clash so much with our stating that some proficient (in Hermetic philosophy) and Kabalists regard the five points of the pentagram as representing the five cardinal limbs of the human body? We are no ardent disciple or follower of the Western Kabalists; yet, we maintain that in this they are right. If the twenty-five elements represented by the five-pointed star, make up “a living human creature” then these elements are all vital, whether mental or physical, and the figure symbolizing “creative energy” gives the more force to the Kabalistic idea. Every one of the five gross elements—earth, water, fire, air (or “wind”) and ether—enters into the composition of man; and whether we say, “five organs of action” or the “five limbs” or yet “the five senses,” it will always amount to splitting hairs, for it means all one and the same thing. Most undoubtedly the “proficients” could explain at least as satisfactorily their claim, as the writer controverts and denies it, by explaining his. In the Codex Nazaraeus—the most Kabalistic of books, the Supreme King of Light and the chief Aeon—MANO, emanates the five Aeons—he himself with the Lord Ferho (the “unknown formless life” of which he is an emanation) making up the seven which typify again the seven principles in Man—the five being purely material and semi-material, and the higher two almost immaterial and spiritual (see “Fragments of Occult Truth”).* Five refulgent rays of light proceed from each of the seven Aeons, five of these shooting through the head, the two extended hands, and the two feet of Man represented in the five-pointed star, one enveloping him as with a mist and the seventh settling like a bright star over his head.

* [The first three installments of this Series were published in The Theosophist, Vol. III, Oct., 1881, March and Sept., 1882. They were written by A. O. Hume. Later installments of the Series were from the pen of A. P. Sinnett.—Compiler.]

The illustration may be seen in several old books upon the Codex Nazaraeus and the Kabala. What wonder, that electricity or animal magnetism passing most powerfully from the five cardinal limbs of man, and the phenomena of what is now called “mesmeric” force having been studied in the temples of ancient Egypt and Greece and mastered as it may never hope to be mastered in our age of idiotic and a priori denial, the old Kabalists and philosophers who symbolized every power in nature, should for reasons perfectly evident for those who know anything of the arcane sciences and the mysterious relations which exist between numbers, figures, and ideas, have chosen to represent “the five cardinal limbs of man”—the head, the two arms and the two legs—in the five points of the pentagram? Éliphas Lévi, the modern Kabalist, goes as far, if not further than his ancient and mediaeval brethren; for, he says in his *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie* (p. 175): “The Kabalistic use of the pentagram can determine the countenance of unborn infants, and an initiated woman might give to her son the features of Nereus or Achilles, as those of Louis XIV, or Napoleon.”* The astral light of the Western occultists is the *akaśa* of the Hindus. Many of the latter will not study its mysterious correlations, neither under the guidance of initiated Kabalists nor that of their own initiated Brahmans, preferring to *Prajña-Paramita*—their own conceit. And yet both exist and are identical, the idiotic and ignorant denials of J. K., the London “Adept,” notwithstanding.

* [Vol. I, p. 187, in 6th edition.—Compiler.]

THE GRAND INQUISITOR

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 2, November, 1881, p. 38]

[In the November and December, 1881, issues of The Theosophist, H.P.B. published all English translation—apparently made by herself—of certain passages from the famous work of Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, namely from chapter 5 of Book V. She introduced this translation with the following two separate Notes:]

Dedicated by the Translator to sceptics who clamour so loudly both in print and private letters: “Show us the wonder-working ‘Brothers,’ let them come out publicly and—we will believe in them!”

This is an extract from Dostoyevsky’s celebrated novel *The Brothers Karamazov*—the last publication from the pen of the great Russian novelist, who died a few months ago, and just as the concluding chapters appeared in print. Dostoyevsky now begins to be recognized as one of the ablest and profoundest among the Russian writers. His characters are invariably typical portraits, drawn from various classes of Russian society, strikingly lifelike and realistic to the highest degree. The extract translated constitutes a great satire on modern theology generally and the Roman Catholic religion in particular. The idea is that Christ revisits earth, coming to Spain at the period of the Inquisition, and is at once arrested as a heretic by the Grand Inquisitor. One of the three brothers of the story, Ivan, a rank materialist and an atheist of the new school, is supposed to throw this conception into the form of a poem, which he describes to Alyosha (the youngest of the brothers), a young Christian mystic brought up by a “saint” in a monastery . . .

[It appears that the suggestion to translate this passage from Dostoyevsky came from H.P.B.'s superiors. In a letter received by A. P. Sinnett at Simla, in August, 1881, from Master K.H. (The Mahatma Letters, pp. 204-07), occurs the following sentence:

“The suggestion to translate the Grand Inquisitor is mine; for its author, on whom the hand of Death was already pressing when writing it, gave the most forcible and true description of the Society of Jesus that was ever given before. There is a mighty lesson contained in it for many and even you may profit by it.” — Compiler.]

FOOTNOTES TO“THE TWELVE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 2, November, 1881, pp. 41-44]

[This valuable and scholarly article by T. Subba Row is accompanied by a few footnotes appended by H.P.B. to various terms and statements of the author. They are as follows:]

[Concerning the Sign of Virgo;]

Virgo-Scorpio, when none but the initiates knew there were twelve signs. Virgo-Scorpio was then followed for the profane by Sagittarius. At the middle or junction-point where now stands Libra, and at the sign now [so] called which follows Virgo, two mystical signs were inserted which remained unintelligible to the profane.

[Of the zodiacal sign spoken of by Subba Row as the Crocodile:]

This constellation was never called Crocodile by the Western ancient astronomers who described it as a horned goat and called it so—Capricornus.

[Of the principle which Subba Row calls the Jivatma, and which he says is represented by the sign Sinha, or the Lion:]

In its lowest or most material state, as the life-principle which animates the material bodies of the animal and vegetable worlds, etc.

[Of Subba Row's statement that the sign Sinha, or the Lion, also represents "the real Christ, the anointed pure spirit, though the missionaries may frown at this interpretation":]

Nevertheless it is a true one. The Jivatma in the Microcosm (man) is the same spiritual essence which animates the Macrocosm (universe), the differentiation, or specific difference between the two Jivatmas presenting itself but in the two states or conditions of the same and one Force. Hence, "this son of Paramatma" is an eternal correlation of the Father-Cause, Purusha manifesting himself as Brahmâ of the "golden egg" and becoming Viraj—the universe. We are "all born of Aditi, from the water" (Rig-Veda, Hymns to the Maruts, Bk. X, Hymn 63, 2), and "Being was born from non-being" (ibid., Mandala I, Sukta 164, 6).

[Of the Astral light:]

Even the very name of Kanya (Virgin) shows how all the ancient esoteric systems agreed in all their fundamental doctrines. The Kabalists and the Hermetic philosophers call the Astral Light the "heavenly or celestial Virgin." The Astral Light in its unity is the 7th. Hence the seven principles diffused in every unity, or the 6 and ONE—two triangles and a crown.

[Of Subba Row's statement that "Jivatma differs from Paramatma, or to state the same thing in other words, 'Baddha' differs from 'Mukta,' in being encased as it were within these 36 Tattvas, while the other is free":]

As the Infinite differs from the Finite and the Unconditioned from the Conditioned.

[Of the 36 Tattvas:]

36 is three times 12, or 9 Tetraktys, or 12 Triads, the most sacred numbers in the Kabalistic and Pythagorean numerals.

[Of the sign Makara, or the Goat (Capricornus):]

See the article, in the August (1881) number, “The Five-Pointed Star,”* where we stated that the five-pointed star or pentagram represented the five limbs of man.

[Of the “nine Prajapatis—the assistants of the Demiurgus”:]

The nine Kabalistic Sephiroth, emanated from Sephira the 10th, and the head Sephiroth are identical. Three trinities or triads with their emanative principle form the Pythagorean mystic Decad, the sum of all which represents the whole Kosmos.

* [Pages 250-54 in the present Volume.—Compiler.]

THE BRIGHT SPOT OF LIGHT

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 2, November, 1881, pp. 45-46]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE THEOSOPHIST:

MADAME,—In the last issue of your valuable Journal, a member of the New York Theosophical Society seeks to be enlightened as to the cause of a bright spot of light which he has often seen. I am also equally curious to have an explanation. I attribute it to the highest concentration of the soul. As soon as I place myself in that prescribed attitude, suddenly a bright spot appears before me which fills my heart with delight—indeed, that being regarded as a special sign by the Indian devotee that he is in the right path, leading to ultimate success in the Yoga practice—that he is blessed by the special grace of the Almighty.

One evening, sitting on the ground cross-legged, in that state of innate concentration when the soul soars into the high regions, I was blessed with a shower of flowers—a most brilliant sight, and which I long to see again. I moved to catch at flowers so rare, but they eluded my grasp and suddenly disappeared, leaving me much disappointed. Finally two flowers fell on me, one touching my head and the other my right shoulder, but this time also the attempt to seize them was unsuccessful. What can it be, if not a response that God has been pleased with his worshipper, meditation being, I believe, the unique way of spiritual worship.

P.

September 18, 1881.

Editor's Note — It depends. Those of our orthodox native contributors, who worship some particular God—or, if they so prefer, the one ISVARA, under some particular name—are too apt to attribute every psychological effect brought on by mental concentration during the hours of religious meditation to their special deity, whereas, in 99 cases out of 100, such effects are due simply to purely psycho-physiological effects. We know a number of mystically-inclined people who see such “lights,” and that as soon as they concentrate their thoughts. Spiritualists attribute them to the agency of their departed friends; Buddhists—who have no personal God—to a pre-nirvanic state; pantheists and Vedantins to Maya—illusion of senses; and Christians—to a foresight of the glories of Paradise. The modern Occultists say that, when not directly due to cerebral action whose normal functions are certainly impeded by such an artificial mode of deep concentration—these lights are glimpses of the Astral Light, or, to use a more scientific expression—of the “Universal Ether” firmly believed in by more than one man of science, as proved by Mr. Balfour Stewart's Unseen Universe. Like the pure blue sky closely shrouded by thick vapours on a misty day—is the Astral Light concealed from our physical senses, during the hours of our normal, daily life. But when concentrating all our spiritual faculties, we succeed, for the time being, to paralyse their enemy—the physical senses, and the inner man becomes, so to say, distinct from the man of matter, then, the action of the ever-living spirit, like a breeze that clears the sky from its obstructing clouds—sweeps away the mist which lies between our normal vision and the Astral Light, and we obtain glimpses into, and of, that light.

The days of “smoking furnaces” and “burning lamps” which form part of the Biblical visions are well gone by and—to return no more. But, whosoever, refusing natural explanations, prefers supernatural ones, is, of course, at liberty to imagine that an “Almighty God” amuses us with visions of flowers, and sends burning lights before making “covenants” with his worshippers.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 2, November, 1881, pp. 48, 52]

[Commenting upon a statement in the article entitled “Advice from a Swami,” to the effect that certain high stages of meditation bring man face to face with “the Almighty, the Universal, the All-Knowing and the All-Glorious God,” H.P.B. says:]

Who, whenever seen, will always prove to be man’s own deific principle, his own luminous Atman, at best, and not God or Íswara, who—as well proved by Kapila—if Impersonal and Infinite cannot be seen, and if Personal, hence finite, is not the “universal” spirit.

[In connection with various fanatical religious utterances in the Sunday Mirror of the Brahmo-Samâja:]

To wind up, having declared in another editorial called “Dogma and Life” that the “Theists”—only by no means “Monotheists,” if you please—“of the New Dispensation believe in the doctrine of Trinity—they accept the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,”—without informing us this once, what becomes of our friend “Durga,” and whether it is she “the holy spirit”—the Mirror propounds a doctrine, which for its novelty, beats even Auguste Comte’s “feminine mystery” and “artificial fecundation.” Happily for itself the pious organ confesses that particular mystery connected with God and Christ working upon the Babus neither—“so much history, so much biography, so much metaphysics, or so much theology,” with which definition we fully concur.

For once the rhetorical blossoms which overshadow rather too thickly the roots of wisdom concealed in the fathomless depth of the editorial—are culled, the reader discovers it, as pertaining to pure physiology. Christ is viewed—“as a ball of fire carrying heaven and salvation into the sinner’s heart,” and—stomach. “When he (Christ) enters into the life of a Brahmo” explains the Sunday Mirror—“he enters as a living principle, a burning idea, a consuming fire that changes the entire life, and creates everything anew. He is swallowed, he is digested, and he is converted into life blood . . .” (!!), etc., etc., etc. . . . Stop, oh Sunday Mirror, stop! This is pure Anthropophagy and threatens to trespass the bounds of even Oriental metaphor. What difference, then, would the Brahmos of the N.D. make between the “Lamb” of God and a lamb cutlet?

[In connection with various fanatical activities on the part of the Salvation Army:]

And to this we may add our own prayer: “Oh Lord, how easy it would be for you to ‘smash’ the devil at once without any ‘Hall’ or ‘Army’ and so extirpate evil and misery for ever from this world of sorrow! Oh, Lord, it is because, alleged Omniscient, and Omnipotent and JUST (!!) you have nevertheless ever refused to do so, or even to give us a sign of your existence, and that you are now allowing instead, a whole ‘Army’ of fanatical zealots, who ought to be at home mending their shoes and stockings, and wiping their children’s noses, to roam about—an army of lunatics caricaturing their religion—that so many good people reject the devil and even doubt your own Being. Whose fault is it, Oh, Lord? Not ours, that is evident, but rather that of the brains you have furnished our heads and REASON you have endowed man with.”



WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE
April 23, 1951—March 21, 1896



DR. JIRAH DEWEY BUCK
1838-1916
(From The Path, New York, Vol. VII, January, 1893)

DAYANAND SARASWATI AND HIS FOLLOWERS

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 2, Supplement, November, 1881, pp. 3-4]

TO THE EDITOR OF The Theosophist.

MADAM: The following is a very important notice received from Benares. Please publish it in your columns, and give your readers an opportunity of judging thereby for themselves.

Your very truly,

PANDIT GOPI NATH,

Editor, Mittra Vilasa.

“Being led away by the misleading reputation of Swami Daya Nanda Saraswatee, we, the undersigned, repaired to him to hear his Vedic lectures and act according to his dictates. But no sooner had we heard him than we became convinced that he was no true reformer. Our doubts now having been removed by our Vedic Guru Pandit Jugulkishore Pathak, a member of The Brahmamrit Varshini Sabha, we made penance, as commanded in our Shastras, for this mistake and sin of ours, and we hereby promise never to deviate from the true and just way taught by our Guru.

“Sita Rama, Babu Nand Pande, Krishna Rama Shukul and Rama Prasda Dube.

“Published by

“PANDIT JUGULKISHORE PATHAK,

Brahmamrit Varshini Sabha,

“Benares.”

Editor’s Note.—True to our policy of perfect impartiality, to the promise that every religion, sect, and school of philosophy will be given a chance of a fair hearing before the public, and the adherents permitted to defend their respective opinions in our journal, we are forced to make room for the above manifesto.

But we do so with regret, for this is no philosophical proof that the doctrines taught by the learned Pandit in whose favour it is issued, namely—Pandit Jugulkishore Pathak—are more philosophical, or in any way more true than those expounded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. As it stands, the declaration is simply the confession of a short-lived apostasy, and, a public contrition in consequence of it. Tomorrow the disciples of Swami Dayanand may send us in their reply, and we would have to publish it in our next on the same principle. If ever any good is calculated to come out of such mutual denunciations, then, ought the two learned pandits to furnish us, at least with papers pro and contra their respective interpretations of the Vedas; and so leave the verdict to the opinion of the impartial readers. Otherwise such denunciations are calculated to do more harm than good.

WESTERN “ADEPTS” AND EASTERN THEOSOPHISTS

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 2, Supplement, November 1881, pp. 4-6]

Since the first appearance of *The Occult World* the London Spiritualist undertook a series of regular weekly attacks upon it. On the ground that Mr. Sinnett had never himself seen Koot Hoomi, the existence of the latter was doubted. This doubt was followed by the arbitrary hypothesis that no one else ever had seen him. Then, when seven Theosophists (four natives of India and three Europeans) had declared over their own signatures that they had seen our Brother, a pretext for invalidating their testimony was immediately invented. An objection, loosely grounded upon the fallacious and not very delicate insinuation, that as no one in England knew whether the lives and characters of the witnesses entitled their evidence to be accepted without protest, a very small degree of confidence could be placed upon it.

Besides that, it was urged that as neither Mrs. A. Gordon, nor Colonel Olcott had given their testimony—the latter, moreover, having never declared to have seen the “Brothers”—the claim would receive no attention. Both of the above-named persons have now sent in their evidence. It remains to be seen, whether in the first place their letters will be published; and if so, what attempt will be made to discredit them.

Meanwhile, for over a period of three months, and week after week, *The Spiritualist* never appeared without containing an attack or two of more or less doubtful literary refinement upon the Theosophists in general, the Founders of the Society in particular, and Koot Hoomi and Mme. Blavatsky—especially. At times, the epithets to their address, and the peculiar phraseology characterizing them, reached a degree of eminence that placed *The Spiritualist*—with its hitherto immaculate columns which ought to be solely devoted to the necrologies of distinguished disembodied angels—on a level with the cheapest political daily of America, during the Presidential elections. The editorial “passes” having been somewhat obstructed by the seven avalanches of the Theosophical witnesses, *The Spiritualist* bethought itself of another expedient. When Italy had fallen into impious doubt and infidelity, Pius IX resorted to the expedient of being protected by foreign hirelings, and a body of “Papal Zouaves” was duly organized. When the Editor of *The Spiritualist* saw himself in danger of being floored by the accumulated testimony to the existence of the “Brothers”—from India, he found out a “Kabalist,” and formed with him an alliance—offensive only; as, so far no one went to the trouble of attacking him. That *Spiritualist* “Zouave” was J. K., the mirific “adept” and a “widow’s son” to boot; a—“Hiram Abiff,” reared up and raised by an illustrious grand master—a “Hierophant of Western origin” as J. K. himself introduced him.

So far, so good. The Kabalistic arrows directed by J. K. against the Theosophists, shooting over their heads, hurt no one but *The Spiritualist*, whose columns were, for a time, filled with the pompous self-glorifications of the Occult “Sir Oracle.”

These articles provoking homeric fits of laughter among those of the Anglo-Indians who read them, were rather a treat than a nuisance. Had J. K. proceeded in that strain, no one would have ever paid the slightest attention to his harmless diatribes and, as stated in the October Theosophist, that would have been the first and the last time that we would have noticed him in our columns. But the alleged “adept” has now resorted to personalities. Forgetting that the “Theosophists” of Bombay are private and non-professional characters who neither sell quack medicines for a livelihood, nor advertise “Magnetism classes at one guinea for the course, or 5s. a lesson,” he permits himself to speak of better people than himself in a deprecatory tone which, at best, might be assumed only by a regular proficient in the Occult art and knowledge, recognized as such the world over. To make use of such phrases as —“Madame Blavatsky—evidently knows nothing of our art [!?!], I [!?!] do not hesitate to state [of course, how should a Kabalist of his “calibre” hesitate at anything?] that the voluminous work [Isis Unveiled] is a thoroughly misleading one . . . she has not grasped the right meaning” . . . etc., etc.—the critic must have proved himself as great as Paracelsus or, at the least, as wise as the “Hierophant” who initiated him.

Instead of that, what do we find? Who is that J. K. who like his En-Soph is ever “speaking of himself, to himself, and through himself”? Since he did not hesitate to name Mme. Blavatsky and tried to show her so inferior to himself, we do not see why we should feel the slightest scruple to lift up the “brazen mask” which shrouds the face of the Kabalistic beau domino. We declare then in our turn, proofs in hand, that Mr. Julius Kohn is a very conceited, vain, young gentleman, who, hardly weaned from the A.B.C. of Occultism, puts on the airs of a mysterious grand adept—dextro tempore, writes pretentious articles under the safe cover of two initials, and so obtains a public hearing under false pretences. There is no Kabalistic organ, and even the third-class London Weeklies, but would throw his articles in the waste basket, had he offered them.

What better opportunity, then, taking advantage of the ill-feeling of the Spiritualists toward the Theosophists to get room in a journal wherein to ventilate his vagaries? Hence his articles in *The Spiritualist*, and the declarations that there are no spirits in nature other than human spirits; and the magisterial, ridiculous verdict “if the Theosophists study the elementals, they study only undeveloped human spirits.”

“The disciple is not above his master . . . it is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord”; read verses 24-25, chap. x of Matthew. Hence Julius Kohn has either to abide by his “Lord and Master’s” decision, or maintain that he is above his “hierophant,” adding, moreover that his Initiator of “Western origin” (so designated by him, we suppose, in contradistinction to his own which is Eastern) does not know what he is talking about. Whatever our “adept” may say in his excuse in the future, that is the interesting information that the said Master (whose full name, if he would like to see it published, we are as ready to give, as we gave his own)—says of his disciple, of whom otherwise, Mr. W—seems to be very proud:—“Mr. Kohn,” he tells a friend, “has been under my direct guidance for several years and went on reading in all languages every Kabalistical work to be purchased here and in Germany . . . but he does not go in for Astrology to any extent. He has not yet made his entrance into the adytum; but his intuitions are working up and he gets very lucid glimpses of things by times. His dreams are getting very interestingly spiritual. . . . But he eschews mediumship. Although he has not yet confronted the ‘Red Elixir,’ (i.e., made the perfect junction of the soul with the spirit) . . . yet he is on the fair way of it, for ‘of that day and hour knoweth no man’ . . .”

Quite so. No one knoweth of it, no more the master than the disciple, we see. We have good reasons to believe that the former will not take the risk of denying his own words, so religiously quoted by us, as in the contrary case, we might add to it some other trifling particulars, which we will abstain from mentioning at present. We do not know that gentleman personally, and we might have perchance more respect for him, if we did have that honour, than we are likely to ever entertain for his pupil.

We have proved the essential points, and that suffices for our purposes. On the authority of the person, more likely to exaggerate the achievements of his disciple than to lower them in the world's estimation, we are informed, (1) that J. K. "has not yet made his entrance into the adytum,"—which amounts to confessing before anyone who knows anything of Hermetic phraseology, that his pupil knows NOTHING yet of the essential, final, and higher mysteries, evolving, meanwhile, his "involutional soul" out of the allegorical interpretations of his "interesting dreams," during the non-lucid interludes between his "intuitional" lucid glimpses of things; (2) that J. K. "eschews mediumship," having, as we were told in one of his articles, his own notions about "spirits," i.e., in every case as heretical as those of the theosophists, only perchance, less correct (N.B., the Editor of *The Spiritualist* thus seeming to be warming a viper in his bosom); and—(3) not having yet "confronted the Red Elixir," namely, having never succeeded so far, in uniting his spirit with his soul, which alone makes the adept for a time a divine being existing in the region of absolute wisdom, J. Kohn is but an humble chela* in the school of magic, and no "adept" at all, as he would like to have us believe.

It is this dabbler in occultism, who, in his pretentious, bombastic style, so full of audacious conceit, speaks of such adepts as were the old Indian Rishis, of the authors of such philosophies as the Vedas, the Vedanta and the Sankhya, of such men as our Brother Koot Hoomi, as if they knew nothing worth knowing! To show his own ignorance Oh, shadows of Kapila and Patañjali!—J. K. calls "Akaśa"—a FIGMENT!! If readers would only believe him: "Taking erroneously some esoteric sentences from Paracelsus in their literal wording, the late Abbé Alphonse Louis Constant (Éliphas Lévi), or the man who wrote his books on Magic, invented [?!] out of the sidereal influence of Paracelsus an objective astral light, and theorised thereon that the great work of adeptship is to subjugate and direct this force.

* The disciple of a Yogi.

Combine therewith,” he adds, “a practice of bullying the elementals in all the four kingdoms, and you are, according to Éliphas Lévi, an accomplished master magician.”

Combine with ignorance, a practice of bullying all those who differ from you, especially those who refuse to recognize in Mr. Julius Kohn anything higher than a “figment-adept” and you are, according to J. K., “an accomplished master magician.”

And now to the truthfulness and reliability of his criticisms upon Isis. “In Paracelsus,” he says, “as in all other Kabalists, the letter is for the uninitiated, the spirit for the initiated. The mediaeval adepts were, by the age they lived in, compelled to hide their knowledge from the church.” (What wondrous news. The first revelation of a truth which every school boy knows.) “They used, therefore, a veiled language, and physical symbols stood for purely spiritual things. The author of Isis seems to have overlooked this,” adds our learned adversary. Well, the “author of Isis” did nothing of the kind, however. On the other hand, the author of “The Adeptship of Jesus Christ” must have never done more than skip Isis, if he overlooked the fact that both its volumes are full of references and explanations as to the “veiled language” of the Kabalists, Christian as well as Pagan—the former dreading to divulge their meaning on account of the persecution of the Church, the latter owing to the terror of the “initiation oath” pronounced during the “mysteries.” That J. K. only pretends to have overlooked the fact is still more likely. However it may be, the whole work is an exposition of that which the London “adept” tries to teach, but makes a sad mess of. Nor was the author of Isis ever unaware of the well-known fact, that most (not all) of the physical symbols stand “for purely spiritual things.” Whoever has read Isis will see how reliable are J. K.’s criticisms.

“Elemental spirits,” goes on to perorate the critic, “are not creatures evolved in earth, air, fire or water. There are no doubt spirits who prefer to dwell in one of the said elements, but they are human [!].

The method ordinarily resorted to for entering into communication with Elementals by offering them some favourite food, shows that they are simply not very advanced human spirits." The last argument is charmingly logical, and worthy of the "literary calibre" of a great "adept." Just as if only human beings ate food, and men and their spirits alone could be offered "some favourite food"! The Elementals are all "human," he maintains. And what are the "Shedim" of his Jewish Kabalists? What of Robert Fludd—the grand master of the mediaeval "Fire" philosophers, who were the greatest Kabalists living—who says that as there are an infinity of visible human creatures, so there is an endless variety of non-human beings among the spirits of the elements? And what of the endless variety of the "Demons" of Proclus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, and of the "Nature Spirits"? . . . Verily, it requires a very small amount of intelligence in a critic to write—"let 'The Church,' so-called, go to the Devil of her own creation,"* or again—"Theosophy is Diabolosophy . . . which gets but the Sophistries of His Satanic Majesty"; but it requires a good deal of wisdom which cannot be imparted by any "Hierophant" to understand true Theosophy. It is as easy for a cabman as for Mr. Kohn, to utter words of abuse; and the former is as free to point out the Royal Society as a gin shop, adding that all its Fellows assemble there but to get drunk with liquor, as for the adept to call Theosophy "Diabolosophy." Both can do so with perfect impunity. For, no more than the said cabman will ever get admitted within the sacred precincts of learning, can a man using such a language hope of ever entering within the circle of true Theosophy, or—"confront the Red Elixir."

The real gist, the pith of the stuff of which all J. K.'s articles are made up, is explained by the following: Notwithstanding all his self-glorification of "adeptship" neither the "adept" nor even his "hierophant," whom we know better than both may imagine, would be able to produce the slightest phenomenon at will; even of that kind which incipient mediums and sensitive children often produce, say, raps upon the table without contact.

* J. K.'s article, "The Adeptship of Jesus Christ," in *Medium and Daybreak*, September 2, 1881, p. 556.

Hence his diatribes against the phenomena described in *The Occult World*; his bombastic and long-winded prattle about the powers of adeptship being “only purely spiritual.” It is so easy and it offers such secure ground to assume “powers” which have to remain, on the said principle, for ever theoretical. But it becomes rather more dangerous for him to declare that “when Koot Hoomi is alleged to say repeatedly: ‘The adept is the rare efflorescence of a generation of enquirers,’ he ventilates this idea purely to bring recruits to the Theosophical Society.”

It is dangerous, we say, for besides being a glaring falsehood and a calumny, the disciples of Koot Hoomi might easily retort to Mr. Julius Kohn and ask: And what may be the secret meaning of this sentence of yours which directly follows the preceding? “Whoever attempts to arrive at Divine power by diabolic means labours in a most deplorable delusion. Anaesthetic and drugs should never be experimented with. Also with the practice of organic mesmerism must be united great care not to abuse the power, combined with an uncompromisingly pure life.”

If the “adept” refuses to inform the readers of the real occult meaning of the above, we will. Combined with other, very frequent allusions in his verbose articles—we may just call them *sub rosa* advertisements*—it is meant to call the attention of the reader to certain wonderful books on mesmerism, in close relation with professional “classes of magnetism” at 3 and 1 guinea the course.

* Such advertisements, for instance, as this one we find inserted in his article upon “The Adeptship of Jesus Christ.” “The following extracts from the third edition of Miss Chandos Leigh Hunt’s excellent and most valuable *Private Instructions on Organic Magnetism*, will give a scientific description of the Soul-Power, and the means to attain thereto:”—Follows the “scientific description” in which Jesus Christ is honoured with the title of “Red magician.” Further on, J. K. recommends once more “the ACQUISITION OF THE INVALUABLE WORK just quoted, while those who are by locality favoured, should not fail to GET PERSONAL INSTRUCTION. Now this we call searching for “recruits” with an unparalleled zeal.

The said occult meaning is simply “to bring recruits” within the fold of the happy magneto-Kabalistic trimurti; that triad we mean well known to the Theosophists in London, which under three different names represents in reality but two, if not one, and ought to bear in any case the name of the “Hierophant” though it does sail under a triple compound name which is no longer its own. We are sorry to say, even so much, of persons with whom we are not in the least concerned. But we sincerely think it a kindness to Mr. W——, the “Hierophant,” [who] as we are told, is a man of sense and learning, [to let him know] that his pupil is sorely compromising him. Let him then use his occult powers to force upon his too indiscreet disciple— (a) that he who lives in a glass house ought never to throw stones at that of his neighbour; and (b) that he should not exhibit his ignorance in such a flagrant manner, by speaking of the doctrines of Gautama Buddha, as if he knew, or could know anything of HIS esoteric doctrines! Hear him jabbering about Sâkya-Muni, and dogmatizing right and left in the following strain: “Whatever the sapient critics and bookmakers do not understand, they label with a false name and think that thereby they have explained it.” Just Mr. J. Kohn’s position, who pretends to explain all that he knows nothing about. “If the books of Philo and John are productions of Neo-Platonists, then the teachings of Gautama Buddha, which contain the same doctrine, only in other wording, must also be Neo-Platonism.” (“The Adeptship of Jesus Christ.”)

So immeasurably arrogant and vain of his supposed learning is Mr. J. Kohn that he actually insinuates in the above his thorough knowledge of the secret meaning of the doctrines taught by Gautama Buddha! We advise him to limit his revelations to the Jewish Kabala, as his superficial comprehension of it may yet throw, with an appearance of some reason, glamour in the eyes of the too confiding reader innocent of any great proficiency in the Kabalistic lore. But will he have the additional effrontery of maintaining or even of insinuating that he understands better the Buddhistic “Rahat” doctrine than the most learned Buddhist priests, of whom we have such a number among the Fellows of the Theosophical Society at Ceylon, Burma and Tibet?

We would not wonder. The too Kabalistic “J. K.” winds up the article under review with the following words of wisdom:

The errors here set forth appear in the text-books of the Theosophists. If I have said hard things of the Theosophical Society, I mean the Society exclusive of the Western members who I believe are all INTELLIGENT and AMIABLE individuals; as such I esteem them, but not as Theosophists. . . .

How occult and pompous, yet how transparently clear. Let Mr. Julius Kohn give up, however, the sweet illusion that he, or any adept of his sort, is capable of saying “hard things” whether of the Theosophical Society or of its members. He has ventilated quite a number of “impertinent” things, but this affords rather merriment than inflicts pain upon those who know how far he deserves the self-imposed title of “adeptship.” By “the Society, exclusive of the Western members,” he means the Parent Society, now in India, of course; and, he is kind enough to believe our “Western members . . . intelligent and amiable individuals”—(read enthusiastic but amiable fools)—and thus closes his denunciatory article with another untruth. For, we happen also to know, how his “dreams” and occasional “glimpses of things” bring him to see intuitively through the fallacies of such writers as “one of the most prominent of the British Theosophists, who will remain unnamed.” And, we are also aware of the contempt with which he speaks of many of these “intelligent and amiable individuals.” If he flatters them in his article at all, it is because these individuals, living in London and some of them receiving him at their houses, he has sense enough to avoid irritating them too unnecessarily. At the same time the “Eastern” Theosophists are far away in India, and, as he thinks, can know nothing of him, his “spiritual dreams” having failed to reveal to him that they did know something—Mr. J. Kohn’s “adeptship” as will be seen, excluding neither cunning, nor yet an eye to business.

Nevertheless, we owe him a debt of gratitude, for enlightening us as to the various colours of the many various kinds of magicians.

“The White Magician,” he writes, quoting enthusiastically from a “gifted Lady magnetist’s” work (the legitimate wife, we are told, of his “Hierophant-Initiator,” though we never heard yet of a practicing Hierophant Magician who was married) —“the white Magician is a high form of Adeptship, and few there are who reach it; fewer still who become Red Magicians. The difference between the former and the latter is, that the senses and the world possess certain temptations for the White Magician, which he sees and feels though he conquers. But nothing can tempt the Red Magician to evil any more than God can be tempted. The passive White Magician is to be found in the Religieuse” (? ! ! nuns?) . . . and “Black Magic is (in part) the art of applying the science of Magnetism to the obtaining of worldly riches, and to the influencing of persons to obey your Will, with results injurious to themselves. This part of the art I do not teach.”

We should say not. Even in this our century of scepticism it would not be quite safe to advertise “classes” for imparting the Black Art. However, although modestly withholding from his reader’s knowledge his own particular shade, we suggest the hypothesis of a colour that might be correctly termed—“chameleonic.” His published lucubrations warranting, and his alleged abstinence from wine* forbidding us to accept the theory offered by one of our French Occultists who, writing about “J. K.” says of him—“Le magicien est gris,” we can find no better nuance for him than the indefinite iridescence of the chameleon, that pretty animal reflecting every colour it approaches.

* It is not enough for a “hierophant” or an “adept” to abstain from wine and liquor; he must avoid leading others into temptation, if he cares to deserve the glorious name. We would then put the following question to those, who, denying our Eastern Brotherhood, accept as “hierophants” and “adepts” persons having no right to the appellation: what man, acquainted but with the A.B.C. of Occult sciences would dare maintain that even a simple pupil—let alone an adept in Occultism—would, while pursuing the divine science, at the same time obtain and hold a patent for the invention of a distilling apparatus for the manufacture of an improved whisky!! Imagine a modern Paracelsus or Jacob Boehme, proprietor of a dram shop and erecting distilleries in London and Ireland! Truly our age is an AGE OF BRASS.

And now to close. The Theosophists “exclusive of the Western members,” hope that their learned critic will henceforth direct his sole attention to the grand revelation he gives the world upon the “Adeptship of Jesus Christ”—the Red Magician, and leave the Theosophists—Western and Eastern—strictly alone. For, although the amount of incomprehensible metaphysical twaddle and quite unhistorical statements* contained in it, almost preclude the possibility of anything like an elaborate criticism upon it—yet they might find a word or two to say on the advertising portions of the mystical paper. Having, as mentioned elsewhere, in his powerful Kabalistic phraseology, sent the Christian “Church to the Devil” and Theosophists along with it, let Mr. Julius Kohn rest on his laurels, as it behoves a Christian Kabalist—the latter appellation being applied to him on the authority of his own words. “Whenever demanded,” he writes (*Spiritualist*, September 9), “whether I know a special process whereby to acquire magic power, whereto my reply ever is ‘beyond the Christ-life there is nothing . . .’”—this particular “Christ-life” nota bene to be studied according to his, Mr. J. Kohn’s interpretations, never as taught by “the Devil’s Official Church” (sic) as he elegantly puts it. We are, however, glad to learn from the above that this promising mystic is a convert to Christ, as that news is calculated to save his “adeptship of Jesus Christ” from more than one scathing criticism. For, viewing the production with a thoroughly unbiased eye, who should, or could ever know more about the “magical powers” of Christ than the direct lineal descendant of those who insulted Jesus in Jerusalem by saying: “He casteth out devils through the prince of devils?”

* For instance, when he writes:—“And, down to the present time, official priests take fermented wine—which is an impure intoxicant, and from which Jesus abstained all His life,”—what is it but an arbitrary, foolish statement, founded on no authority, that the author could point out, except his own lucubrations?

[SPIRITUALISM AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES]

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, p. 55]

Magna est veritas et prevalebit. The reality of the phenomena has prevailed, and the Church is now forced to seek alliance with the Spiritualists against “materialism and infidelity.” How will the faithful Christian “skeptics” receive the news, and what effect it will produce on the churchgoing “scoffers of spiritual phenomena” is a question which time alone can answer.

For the first time, since the “raps” and “knockings” of an alleged disembodied pedlar, at Rochester, in 1848, inaugurated the era of Spiritualism, which has gradually led the people to accept the hypothesis of discarnated spirits communicating with the world of life, the divines have become alive to the danger of dogmatizing too strongly. For the first time, as the reader may see in the long account of the Congress we reprint further on, the divines seem ready for any concession—even to giving up their hitherto immovable and cherished dogma of eternal torments and damnation. And now they seek to compromise. While Dr. Thomas, the liberal-minded Wesleyan minister in America, is brought on his trial before a Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (as so many other clergymen have been of late before him), for the same heresy of denying endless torments in hell-fire, the English divines are seriously discussing the advisability of giving the doctrine up. They are ready, they say, to “thankfully acknowledge the truths of Spiritualist teaching, as weapons which we (they) are too glad to wield against Positivism, and Secularism, and all the anti-Christian ‘isms’ of this age of godless thought.”

(Revd. R. Thornton's speech.) *Mirabile dictu!*—the reverend gentleman went so far as to say: “Let us lay to heart the hints given (by Spiritualists) as to our own shortcomings” !!

The extracts from the reports of the Congress which we here republish from *Light* will give the reader a better idea of the position of the Protestant clergy in England. It is evidently very precarious. The divines seem to find themselves most uncomfortably situated between the horns of a dilemma. How they will emerge from it is one problem; whether many Spiritualists are likely to succumb to the unexpected coquetry of the Church they have parted company with is another one— and of a still more difficult solution. If, *en désespoir de cause* the reverends finally accept the theory of spirits—and we do not see how the reconciliation could be otherwise effected—then, acting upon the rule: “every spirit that confesseth not Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God”—they will have with the exception of a handful of “spirits” acting through a handful of so-called “Christian Spiritualists,” or rather their mediums who accept Jesus Christ—to pronounce the enormous majority of the “angels” who do not, as—“of the Devil.” Then, they will have to encounter a still greater difficulty. Even the Christian Spiritualists have their own peculiar views upon Christ, which, according to the canons of the established Church are “heretical,” but which, we doubt, the Spiritualists will ever give up. Then again, how about —“Though an angel from Heaven preach unto us any other Gospel than that which has been preached unto us, let him be accursed”? Well, time will show, and time is the only and best inspirer of wise schemes and devices. Meanwhile, the Spiritualists—and so far the Theosophists with them—have won the day, for the reality of the phenomena has been admitted at the Church Congress; and we have as good hopes, that, whatever happens, it is neither the Spiritualists nor the Theosophists who will be the conquered in the long run.

For, divided as we may be in our conflicting beliefs as to the agency of the phenomena, we are at one as regards the reality of the manifestations, mediumship in all its various aspects,* and the highest phases of Spiritualism such as personal inspiration, clairvoyance, etc., and even the subjective intercourse between the living and the disembodied souls and spirits under conditions fully defined in Part I of "Fragments of Occult Truth." At all events, there is a far lesser abyss between the Spiritualists and the Theosophists than there is between the Protestants and the Roman Catholic clergy, their common Christianity notwithstanding. Their house is one and, divided against itself, it must finally fall; while our houses are two. And if we are wise and, instead of quarrelling, support each other, both will be found built on a rock, the foundation being the same though the architecture be different.

* We never denied mediumship, we have only pointed out its great dangers and questioned the advisability of giving way to it and to the control of yet (to Spiritualists) unknown forces.

THE BANNER OF LIGHT

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, pp. 55-56]

We see that our old friend the Boston Banner of Light, the leading Spiritualist paper of America, begins its fiftieth Volume by enlarging its size with four additional pages. We heartily desire the veteran organ the success it so well deserves. For over a quarter of a century it has remained a staunch defender of its colours. It possesses qualities that many of us might well envy. The spirit it uniformly exhibits is that of tolerance, charity, and true brotherly feeling to all men. It always had on its staff the most excellent and learned writers. It strenuously avoids acrimonious polemics and wrangling, and seems to have tacitly adopted the noble motto: "Better give the accused the benefit of the doubt and even forgive ten culprits, than unjustly accuse one innocent."

We may and do differ with it in our views and opinions; nevertheless we most sincerely respect and admire it. All honour to our esteemed old friend, Mr. L. Colby, and may his Banner prosper and wave for long years to come—is the hearty wish of The Theosophist and its Editor.

FOOTNOTE TO “THE CHURCH CONGRESS AND SPIRITUALISM”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, p. 59]

[In an account of certain Spiritualistic phenomena, there occurs the following passage: “The Spirit came up to him and declared most emphatically that it was his brother. Very happily he had not lost a brother. In pursuance of a little plot he had arranged, he squirted over the Spirit some liquid cochineal. . . . At the close of the séance they found that the medium was covered with liquid cochineal. This proved that the Spirit and the medium were one and the same person.” H. P. B. says:]

It proves nothing of the kind; but simply, that the “animal soul” or the Kama-rupa, the living inner man of the medium, has more to do with the “materializations” than the spirits of “dead” men.

SUPERSTITION

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3 December 1881, pp. 60-62]

Owing to the fanciful reports of superficial and prejudiced travellers, to their entire ignorance of Asiatic religions and, very often, their own—Western nations generally are labouring under the strange impression that no people in the world are as stupidly superstitious as the non-Christian populations of India, China and other “heathen” countries. Unblessed with the light of the Gospel, they say, these poor pagans groping in the dark, attribute mysterious powers to the most unseemly objects: they will stake the future happiness or woe of their father’s soul, upon the hopping crow’s accepting or rejecting the rice-ball of the “Sradha” ceremony; and will believe, as the now famous Kolhapur conspirators did, that “owl’s eyes” worn as an amulet will make the bearer invulnerable. Agreed:—all such superstitions are as degrading as they are ridiculous and absurd . . .

But greatly mistaken, or as grossly unjust is he who affirms that such strange beliefs are limited to paganism, or that they are the direct result of the heathen religions alone. They are international; the cumulative production and necessary effect of countless generations of the arts of an unconscientious clergy of every religion and in every age. Adopted by the archaic priestly hierarchies, the policy of subjecting the ignorant masses, by working on their untutored imaginations and credulous fears, with the object of getting at their purse via the soul, was found effectual and was universally practiced by the priest upon the layman from the first dawn of history down to our own modern times.

Everything in nature, whether abstract or concrete, has two sides to it as every poison must have its antidote somewhere. Religion or belief in an invisible world being based upon a dual principle—God and Satan, or GOOD and EVIL, if PHILOSOPHY—the outflow of true religious feeling—may be likened to a filtered stream, on the other hand, SUPERSTITION is the cloaca of all dogmatic creeds that are based upon blind faith. Literally speaking, it is the sewer carrying off the putrid waters of the Chaldeo-Noachian deluge. Unstemmed, it ran in a straight course, through Paganism, Judaism and Christianity alike, catching up in its current all the garbage of human dead letter interpretations; while on its muddy banks have crowded the priesthood of all times and creeds and offered its unwholesome waters to the adoration of the credulous as the “holy stream,”—calling it now Ganges, anon the Nile or Jordan.

Why then should the Western people accuse the non-Christian nations alone of such beliefs? Little does the “truth of God” abound through such lies, and it is showing poor respect to one’s religion to introduce it to the stranger’s notice under false pretences. History shows us that, while seemingly occupied in destroying every trace of heathenism, and condemning belief in ancient folklore and the effects of “charms” as the work of the devil, the Christian proselytizers became the keepers of all such superstitions, and, adopting them gradually, let them loose again upon the people, but under other names. It is useless for us to repeat that which was said, and better said, and proved by the statistical records of crimes perpetrated through superstition, in every Christian country. Beliefs of the grossest, as most dangerous, character are rife in Catholic France, Spain, Italy and Ireland, in Protestant England, Germany and Scandinavia, as in Greek Russia, Bulgaria and other Slavonian lands, and they are as alive among the people now, as they were in the days of King Arthur, of the first Popes, or the Varyago-Russian Grand Dukes. If the higher and middle classes have civilized themselves out of such absurd fancies, the masses of rural populations have not.

The lower classes being left to the tender mercies of the rural priest—who, when he was not himself ignorant, was ever cunningly alive to the importance of his holding the parishioner in mental slavery—they believe in charms and incantations and the powers of the devil now, as much as they did then. And, so long as belief in Satan and his legion of fallen angels (now devils) remains a dogma of the Christian Church—and we do not see how it could be eliminated, since it is the cornerstone of the doctrine of (now devil) salvation—so long will there exist such degrading superstitions, for the whole superstructure of the latter is based upon this belief in the mighty rival of the Deity.

There hardly comes out one number of our Journal without containing some proof of what we say. Only last year from sixty to a hundred persons of both sexes were tried in Russia for arbitrarily burning alleged sorcerers and witches, who were supposed to have spoiled some hysterical women. The trial lasted for months and disclosed a ghastly list of crimes of the most revolting nature. Yet the peasants were acquitted for they were found irresponsible. For once justice had triumphed in Russia over the dead letter law. And now, there comes news of the effect of the same superstition of a still deadlier character. The following will read like a mediaeval tale during the days of the “Holy” Inquisition. The Russian Courier* contains an official report from Tchembar (Government of Penza) to the governor of the province, which we will summarize thus:

At the end of December last, during Christmas time, the village of Balkasheme became the theatre of a horrid and an unheard-of crime, caused by a superstitious belief. A landowner, N. M., inherited a very large property and went just before Christmas day to receive it at Penza. The inhabitants of the village—one of the many struck this year with famine—are generally poor; and two of the poorest and the hungriest of them resolved upon robbing the landowner during his absence.

* [Russkiy Vestnik.]

Unwilling though to pay the penalty for their crime, they went first to a village Znaharka (literally “a knowing one,” a witch). In a Russian village where the witch is as indispensable as the smith and public house, or an astrologer in a village of India, these professions multiply in proportion to the wealth and demands of each locality. So our two future burglars consulted the “sorceress” as to the best way of effecting the robbery and avoiding detection at the same time. The witch advised them to kill a man, and cutting out the epiploon from under the stomach, to melt it, and preparing of it a candle, light the latter and, entering the house of the landlord, plunder it at their ease: by the enchanted light of the human candle they would remain invisible to all. Following out the advice literally, the two peasants sallied forth from their huts at 2 after midnight, and meeting on their way a half-drunken wretch, a neighbour of theirs, just leaving the public house, they killed him and cutting out his epiploon buried him in the snow near a cowshed. On the third day of the murder, the corpse was dug out by the dogs, and an inquest appointed. A large number of peasants was arrested, and, during the search of the village houses for proofs, a pot full of melted fat was discovered, an analysis of whose contents was made, and the substance proved to be human fat. The culprit confessed and giving out his accomplice, both confessed their object. They pleaded guilty, but said they had acted upon the advice of the witch, whose name, though, they would divulge upon no consideration, dreading the revenge of the sorceress far more than human justice. The fact is the more remarkable as both murderers had been hitherto regarded as two poor but steady, sober, and very honest young men. It seems next to impossible to find out which one of the neighbouring “witches”—for there are many and some are never known but to their “clients”—is guilty of the murderous advice. Nor is there any chance of getting at any clue from the villagers, as the most respectable among them would never consent to incur the displeasure of one of these devil’s familiars.

We believe, indeed, having a right to say, that the above superstition leaves far behind it, in criminality, the comparatively innocent belief of the Kolhâpur conspirators in the efficacy of the “owl’s eyes.”

Another recent case is that of an “enchanter.” During the month of the same December last, the village council of Alexandrovsk voted the expulsion from their midst and forcible exile to Siberia of a wealthy peasant named Rodinin. The accusation showing the defender guilty “of the great crime of being thoroughly versed in the science of enchantments and the art of causing people to be possessed by Satan,” having been read, the verdict of the jury was found unanimous. “As soon,” states the Accusation Act, “as the defendant Rodinin approaches one, especially if any person accepts a glass of brandy from him, he becomes possessed on the spot . . . Instantly the victim begins to howl, complaining that he feels like a river of liquid fire inside him, and piteously assures those present that Satan tears his bowels into shreds . . . From that moment he knows no rest, either by day or by night, and soon dies a death of terrific agony. Numerous are the victims of such wicked enchantments perpetrated by the defendant . . . In consequence of which, the local jury having found him ‘guilty,’ the authorities are respectfully requested to do their bounden duty.” The “bounden duty” was to parcel Rodinin off to Siberia, and so they did.

Everyone in the West knows of the popular and universal belief—prevailing both in Germany and Russia—about the miraculous power of a certain three-leaved fern when culled at midnight on St. John’s day in a solitary wood. Called out by an incantation to the evil one, the blade of grass begins growing at the end of the first verse and is grown by the time the last one is pronounced. If unappalled by the terrific sights taking place around him—and they are unsurpassed in horror—the experimenter heeds them not, but remains undismayed by the shoutings of the “forest imps” and their efforts to make him fail in his design, he is rewarded by getting possession of the plant which gives him power during his lifetime over the devil and forces the latter to serve him.

This is faith in Satan and his power.

Can we blame the ignorant or even the educated yet pious persons for such a belief? Does not the Church—whether Catholic, Protestant, or Greek—not only inculcate in us, from our earliest age, but actually demand such a belief? Is it not the sine qua non of Christianity? Aye, will people answer; but the Church condemns us for any such intercourse with the Father of Evil. The Church wants us to believe in the devil, but to despise and “renounce” him at the same time; and alone, through her legal representatives, she has a right to deal with his hoary majesty and enter into direct relations with him, thereby glorifying God and showing the laymen the great power she has received from the Deity of controlling the Devil in the name of Christ, which she never succeeds in doing, however. She fails to prove it; but it is not generally that which is the best proved that is the most believed in. The strongest proof the Church ever gave of the objectivity of Hell and Satan, was during the Middle Ages when the Holy Inquisition was appointed by Divine right, the agency for kindling hell-fire on earth and burning heretics in it. With laudable impartiality she burned alike those who disbelieved in hell and the devil, as those who believed too much in the power of the latter. Then the logic of these poor credulous people who believe in the possibility of “miracles” at all, is not quite faulty either. Made to believe in God and the Devil, and seeing that evil prevails on earth, they can hardly avoid thinking that it is good proof that Satan has the upper hand in his eternal struggle with the Deity. And if so—his power then and alliance are not to be scorned. Torments in hell are far off, and misery, suffering, and starvation are the doom of millions. Since God seems to neglect them, they will turn to the other power. If a “leaf” is endowed with miraculous powers by God in one instance, why should not a leaf be as useful when it is grown under the direct supervision of the Devil? And then do we not read of innumerable legends, where sinners, having made a pact with the Devil, have dishonestly cheated him out of their souls toward the end, by placing themselves under the protection of some Saint, repenting and calling upon “atonement” at the last moment?

The two murderers of Tchembar, while confessing their crime, distinctly stated that as soon as their families would have been provided for through their burglary, they meant to go into a monastery and taking the “holy orders, repent”!! And if, finally, we view as gross, degrading superstition, belief in the one leaf, why should the State, Society, and hardly a century ago—law, have punished for disbelieving in the Church miracles? Here is a fresh instance of a “miracle”-working leaf just clipped out of the Catholic Mirror. We commend it for comparison, and then perhaps our readers will be more merciful to the superstitions of the “poor heathen” unblessed with the knowledge of, and belief in, Christ.

A MIRACLE-WORKING LEAF

Father Ignatius, who is at present preaching a mission at Sheffield, furnishes the following account of a very remarkable “miracle” of healing, alleged to have been wrought on a Brighton lady by a leaf from the bush on which the Virgin Mary is said to have descended during the recent celestial manifestations she is alleged to have vouchsafed at Llanthony Abbey. After describing the apparitions, Father Ignatius goes on to say that God was confirming the truth of these apparitions by the most blessed signs possible. The leaves from the bush had been sent to many persons, and were being used by God to heal. He would mention one great miracle that had been wrought. An elderly lady who kept a ladies’ school in Brighton, and was, therefore, well known, had suffered the most excruciating suffering for thirty-eight years from a diseased hip-joint that would not allow her to lie or sit down with comfort. She was a complete cripple. In fact, he himself had seen her turn quite livid with the pain from the joint. He sent her a leaf, not that he thought it would cure her, but with the idea of giving her some memorial of the apparitions. When she went to bed that night she took his letter and the leaf with her, and the words, “According to thy faith be it unto thee,” which she had read in Hawker’s Morning and Evening Portion, were ringing in her ears. She prayed, and applied the leaf to the abscess, on her leg, and instantly the abscess, disappeared, instantly the discharge ceased, instantly the pain ceased, and instantly she was able to place her foot properly on the ground. Since then she could walk about like other people, and she had been delivered entirely from a life of terrible excruciating suffering. He would give the name and address of the lady to any one who wished to investigate the case, and the lady was quite willing to afford every information.

An “apparition” at Llanthony Abbey, or an “apparition” in the cabinet of a medium—we really do not see much difference in the two beliefs; and if God condescends to work through a leaf, why should not the devil, the “monkey of God,” do likewise?

THE THEOSOPHIST AND HINDU PANTHEISM

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, pp. 64-65]

It is upon the above subject that we find Mr. Henry Atkinson, of Boulogne, France, treating in the *Philosophic Inquirer* of Madras. This gentleman is an able and widely-known writer, generally perfectly clear and definite in his ideas. It, therefore, surprises us the more, to be unable to find out his motive for dragging the Theosophists into the above-named article. Having condensed from Professor Flint’s *Anti-Theistic Theories*, the author’s analysis of the Vedanta system, which led him to conclude that the negation of the reality of the worlds, along with the affirmation that Parabrahma is an impersonal deity—is a kind of Pantheism which is Acosmism, Mr. Atkinson confirms the remark by adding that “Pantheism is just as likely to issue in Atheism.” Not that we know of—is our answer. As taught by the ablest and most learned Vedantins of Benares, Pandits and Sanskrit scholars, their Pantheism has quite a contrary result. But we must not digress from the direct subject. Says the writer:

From this virtual atheism there is but a step to avowed atheism. The Sankhya philosophy and Buddhism are the Hindu exemplifications of this tendency of pantheistic speculation. “It takes for granted that material atoms existed from eternity. The reasoning by which the belief in creation is set aside by Hindu philosophers is ever substantially that which we find thus expressed in a Sutra of the Sankhya system: There cannot be the production of something out of nothing; that, which is not, cannot be developed into that which is: the production of what does not already exist potentially is impossible; because there must, of necessity, be a material out of which a product is developed, and because everything cannot occur everywhere at all times; and because anything possible must be produced from something competent to produce it.”

This quotation is immediately followed by the wholly unexpected—hence rather startling—question. “Now do the Theosophists ask us to return to such self-refuting, dreamy abstractions—such wilful wandering of an early unscientific age and country,”(?) and—that is the only reference we find to the THEOSOPHISTS in the whole letter.

We fail, therefore, to perceive the relevancy of the query in relation to anything in Mr. Atkinson’s article; nor do we see that the quotation from the Sutra has anything so “unscientific” in it; nor yet, the possible bearing upon theosophy the writer finds in the case in hand, in general. What have the “Theosophists” to do with Professor Flint’s speculations, with Vedantism, the Sankhya, or even with Buddhism in this application? The Theosophists study all the systems and—teach none, leaving everyone to think and seek out truth for himself. Our members but help each other in the common work, and everyone of us is open to conviction, wherever the probable truth of any given hypothesis is demonstrated to him by the light of modern science, logic, or reason. Less than all, does anyone of the Theosophists “ask anyone else to return to, remain in” or proceed in “self-refuting, dreamy abstractions” and “wilful wandering of an early unscientific age”—unless such “wandering” is necessitated by the far greater wandering, and many an unproved speculation of our own “scientific” age—modern science ever balancing on one leg at the brink of “impassable chasms.” If Science, to enable herself to put two and two together so as not to make of it five, had to return to the atomic theory of old Democritus and the heliocentric system of the far older Pythagoras—both of whom have lived in ages which are generally regarded as “unscientific”—we do not see why the Theosophists should not wander in such ages in quest of the solution of the most vital problems which, do what he may, no modern philosopher has yet succeeded in even approaching.

But what we do ask and most decidedly, is that people should study, compare and think for themselves before they definitely accept anything upon secondhand testimony. Hence we protest against more than one authoritative and as arbitrary assumption of this our so-called “enlightened and scientific age.” Till now, our daily accumulative and joint experience shows to us the adjective no better than a vain boast and a misnomer; and we feel quite ready to maintain our position, inviting and promising to feel grateful to Mr. Atkinson or anyone else who will disprove it.

Why should we, to begin with, call our age a “scientific” age, in preference to, or with any better claim to it than, the age of Alexander the Great, or even that of Sargon the Chaldean? Our century is a period which gave birth to many scientific men; to a still greater number of those who fancy themselves very scientific, but could hardly prove it in a crucial test; and—to teeming millions of “innocents” who are quite as ignorant, as superstitious, and as mentally weak and uneducated now as any of the citizens in the days of the Hyksos, of Pericles, or of Rama ever were—then. No one will deny that to every genuine man of science, there are, at least, one hundred sciolists—pretenders to learning—and ten millions of thorough ignoramuses throughout the world. Nor could anyone contradict the assertion that to every enlightened and thoroughly well-educated person in society, we have to throw in several hundreds of half-educated boobies, with no more than a superficial society-varnish to conceal their gross ignorance. Moreover Science, or rather Knowledge, and Ignorance are relative terms as all other contraries are in nature—antagonistic, yet rather proving than disproving each other. Thus, if the Scientist of today knows infinitely more in one direction than the Scientist who flourished in the days of the Pharaoh Tuthmosis, the latter knew probably immeasurably more in another direction than all our Tyndalls and Herbert Spencers know, proof of the above being shown in the “lost” arts and sciences.

If this age of ours is one of wonderful achievement in physical sciences, of steam and electricity, of railroads and telegraphs, of telephones and what not, it is also one in which the best minds find no better, no more secure or more reasonable refuge, than in Agnosticism, the modern variation on the very ancient theme of the Greek philosopher—"All I know is that I know nothing." With the exception of a handful of men of science and cultured people in general, it is also an age of compulsory obscurantism and wilful ignorance—as a direct result, and the bulk of the present population of the globe is no less "unscientific" and quite as grossly superstitious as it was 3,000 years back.

Is Mr. Atkinson or anyone else (but a Christian) prepared to deny the following very easily verified assertion—that one million of uneducated Buddhists chosen at random—those, who hold to the "good law" as taught in Ceylon, ever since it was brought there by King Aśoka's son Mahinda, in the "unscientific" age of 200 B.C. — are a hundred times less credulous, superstitious, and nearer to scientific truths in their belief, than a million of Christians, equally chosen at random and instructed in this "scientific" age? We would advise any person, before he undertakes to contradict what we say, to first get Colonel Olcott's Buddhist Catechism—intended for the poor, ignorant children of as ignorant and unscientific Sinhalese parents, and placing along with it the Roman Catholic Catechism, or the highly elaborate Westminster Confession of Faith, or yet the Church of England Thirty-nine Articles—compare notes. Let him read and take these notes by the light of science and then tell us which—the Buddhist or Christian dogmas—are nearer to the teachings of Modern Science? And let us bear in mind in this connection that Buddhism, as now taught, is identically the same as it was preached during the first centuries which followed Buddha's death, namely, from 550 B.C to A.D. 100 in the "early and unscientific age and country" of early Buddhism, while the above-named expositions of the Christian faith—especially the two Protestant works—are the elaborately revised and corrected editions, the joint productions of the most learned theologians and the greatest scholars of our "scientific" age.

That they are, moreover, the expression and the profession of a faith, deliberately accepted by the post cultured classes of Europe and America. Thus, while this kind of teaching remains in authority for the bulk of Western population—both for the learned as well as for the unlearned—we feel entirely justified in saying, that our age is not only “unscientific” on the whole, but that the Western religious world is very little ahead, indeed, of the fetish-worshipping savage.

TRANCE MEDIUMS AND “HISTORICAL” VISIONS

SOPHIE PEROVSKY AS A “SPIRIT”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, pp. 65-67]

The reliability of the identification of returning spirits, may be inferred from this bit of fresh intelligence recently received through the Religio-Philosophical Journal, of July 23. A lady from Rochester, U.S.—a Mrs. Cornelia Gardner—writes to narrate a personal experience of her own clairvoyant powers. Treating of the “identity of spirits, and their messages,” she says: “I usually take them for what they are worth, and if I get evidence of truth, I am more than glad; if not, I put it into the scales with much else that comes, and wait for evidence before deciding, for I believe the spirits need trying as well as their mediums.”

Precisely; and a great pity it is, that the writer should have departed, in the present instance, from her wise policy. Having neglected to “wait for evidence,” she now throws a considerable doubt upon the reliability and lucidity of her clairvoyance. This is the substance of what she tells us: Madame (?) Perovsky—the Nihilist executed for the foul murder of Czar Alexander II—hastened, as it seems, on the Saturday afternoon following the execution of the five Nihilists at St. Petersburg, to put in an ethereal appearance at Rochester before Mrs. Gardner who heard her exclaim “I am glad I did it!

It was the cause of freedom and of my countrymen. I had suffered with others of my family from the power of tyranny, and I felt a power impelling me onward that I could not resist. Now I know what that unseen influence was, and why I could not resist it. I acted in concert with the invisible forces of higher intelligences who are bringing about the great changes upon the earth that will prove that the people's hour has come."

To the clairvoyant's question "Who are you?" the voice replied: "I am Madame Sophie Perovsky. I was executed in St. Petersburg with the Nihilists for the assassination of the Czar."

The upper features of a face becoming visible, they showed "a clear cut, broad, high forehead," which forehead helped the clairvoyant to identify the face as that of Sophie Perovsky. On the following day, she found in a newspaper the account of the execution. "The most noticeable object," she writes, "in the conveyance that carried the prisoners to the scaffold, was the 'broad, high forehead' of Madame Perovsky, who rode to her execution bareheaded. This answered to the head I had seen clairvoyantly."

Very well. And now we will analyse this remarkable vision. To begin then. In hardly a dozen lines said to have been pronounced by the "spirit," we find about half a dozen posthumous fibs. Sophie Perovsky, who, by the way, never had "a broad, high forehead," but a very narrow and high forehead—we have her photograph—a brow enhancing but little her natural beauty—could not have—"rode to her execution, bareheaded." Besides the regulations demanding that all the prisoners should have their black caps on, her hands were tied. And with that cap she appears, at least in the photographed illustration of the ghastly procession and the official reports of the execution where, poetical fancy finding no room, the caps are mentioned. Nor would Sophie Perovsky have introduced herself after death as "Madame," no more than she would have done so during life, since she was unmarried and was always called "Mlle" Perovsky in the Russian, as in all the European papers.

Again—all “others of my (her) family” suffered but through the eternal disgrace brought by that wretched, heartless creature upon her family. That family, established for years in Crimea, is known to all the Odessa society, and to the writer personally as well; and we say, with little fear of being contradicted, that no Russian was ever more loyal or more devoted to the late Emperor than the unfortunate father of Sophie Perovsky—the father who, unable to survive the dishonour, has since died of a broken heart, or, as many suspect a suicide. The “cause of freedom” and of her countrymen! By the insane act of the regicides, unfortunate Russia was thrown forty years back, her political fetters being now made heavier and stronger than ever. But the most damaging part (damaging to the “angels”) in the Perovsky-Spook’s tirade is the concluding sentence of her short communication. If that cold-blooded murderess acted “in concert with the invisible forces of higher intelligences,” and those “higher intelligences” influenced her to perpetrate the most foul of crimes—that of killing an old man (the fact of his being the Emperor adding nothing to our indignation)—and the kindest, most patriotic, as the best-disposed man and ruler towards his people that Russia ever had, and who, if left alone instead of being daily threatened, and given time, would have brought about to a certainty every needed reform and so added to the great reforms already accomplished—then of what character, may we ask, must be the “lower” intelligences? And to think that such a “spiritual communication” was published just at the time when the U.S. President, General Garfield, was himself dying from the hand of a vile assassin and has actually died since . . . Is it also the “higher intelligences” that prompted Guiteau’s hand? If so, the sooner we mortals shut our doors against the intrusion of such dangerous visitors, the better it will be for the world’s morality.

This remarkable letter is wound up by other information of no less damaging a character. “Once since,” writes Mrs. Gardner, “at the house of a friend, she (Perovsky) came again, and with her the woman whom Russian justice took from childbed and cruelly tortured to death.”

How very remarkable! Now, had the clairvoyant but waited “for evidence,” she might have learned from the August papers, the official news that the “woman whom Russian justice . . . had cruelly tortured to death” (an ignoble invention of the Russian Nihilists at Paris), namely, the Jewess, Jessie Gelffman—has just been pardoned by the Emperor, and her death sentence commuted into deportation for life. It is in consequence of a petition sent by her to the Empress, begging for mercy in the name of the Imperial children and her own—the regicide’s—innocent babe, that her worthless life was spared. Would Mrs. Gardner expect the murderess to be made, in addition to the pardon, “lady-in-waiting” upon the Russian Empress? —We would advise her, in such a case, to use her psychological powers to move the U.S. Republicans to vote for the murderer Guiteau’s nomination as State-Secretary, if not President of the U.S. in lieu of his victim.

These two little psychological blunders remind us of another blunder of the same kind, which found room likewise in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, a few years back. In a series of letters, the reminiscences of a stay at St. Petersburg, a Mr. Jesse Sheppard—a really genuine, though rather erratic, medium, a “trance pianist” and singer of America, through whose marvellous windpipe, the late Mesdames Catalini, Malibran, Grisi, and the Signori Lablache, Ronconi and Co., with a host of other deceased operatic celebrities, give daily their posthumous performances—narrates some remarkable “visions” of his. These visions which we may term historical—were obtained by him in a state of clairvoyant trance, in Russia. The thrilling subject of one of them is the assassination of the Emperor Paul I. Mr. Jesse Sheppard was at that time visiting the palace in which the awful regicide had been perpetrated, and the trance and subsequent vision were induced, as he tells us, by the gloomy associations hanging like an invisible shroud over the palace.

How, in the world, that remarkable medium could have ever got into a palace which was razed to the ground more than eighty years back—in fact almost as soon as the crime had been committed, a military school now being erected on its emplacement—is something that has always puzzled us to explain. However, and nevertheless, Mr. J. Sheppard was there—since he himself so tells us—and there it was that he beheld, in an apocalyptic and well retrospective vision, the scene of the ghastly murder, with all its sickening yet historical details. He saw the Emperor Paul having his throat cut by two serfs rejoicing in Russo-Yankee names, the favourites of Catherine II—the “wife of Paul”—whom the medium saw quietly waiting for the finale of this little conjugal drama in her own chamber, etc., etc. . . . Now, taking into consideration the trifling and undeniably historical fact, which informs us that Catherine the Great was Paul’s mother, and had died before Paul ever ascended the throne of Russia, and that, as a logical deduction, she could not be at the same time his wife, ergo had nothing to do with his unpleasant death; and thirdly—that the Emperor Paul having been strangled with his own regimental sash, to cut, therefore, his throat in addition to that, would only be most rashly adding insult to injury—for the life of us we could never, since we read and pondered over this remarkable vision, make out the rationale of such a “phenomenon”! Nor can we make head or tail of most of the modern mediumistic visions. Can anyone else?

As a matter of course, these remarks will bring upon our head a new tornado of abuse, which, during its whirling and progressive motion, will develop at each rotation a fresh column of most wonderful and unexpected vilification and abuse. So, we expect to be called again an “impostor”; a subsidized agent of living Jesuits, hired to ruin Spiritualism; and the “medium” of dead Jesuits, namely, “Jesuit Spirits” who use us with that object. We will be accused of bigamy, trigamy and polygamy; of having robbed the Bank of England and, perhaps, killed with our “psychological powers in combination with jugglery” a Pope and several British Premiers; of being one of the heroines of Émile Zola, and of speaking French argot (slang) like one of Eugène Sue’s pickpockets in *Les Mystères de Paris* (rather a compliment to our linguistic capabilities, than otherwise, the more so as most of our own detractors can hardly speak even their own language grammatically).

To wind up the list of our ghastly iniquities, we will be placed under the direct accusation of pipe and “cigar-smoking” (!), “violent profanity (!!)

and— “habitual INTEMPERANCE” (!!!). All that, because we question the veracity of “Spirits” who neglect to study history, and refuse to recognize the “ghosts” of persons, whom we know to be alive. Furor arma ministrat . . . Indeed, truth alone, and very unwelcome truth it must be—is capable of throwing people into such fits of absurd fury!

In relation to the above we regret to find a hitherto respectable and “philosophical” paper descending to the level of the most scurrilous little journal—a certain crazy spiritual Weekly of Philadelphia. It is grievous that the conductors of a journal claiming to be devoted to religion and philosophy should permit unscrupulous correspondents to convert their columns into a vehicle for the dissemination of most ignoble slanders concocted together for the gratification of private malice. A disgraceful letter (disgraceful for the journal that printed it) for the appearance of which, we hope that Colonel Bundy, the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal, then absent from the country, was not immediately responsible, directs a flood of foul calumny against the editors of The Theosophist. This tirade—which no gentleman, not even one with the weak instincts of a gentleman, could have ever written—is beneath notice as regards the details, as it is calculated to provoke, in a few, a sickening feeling of contempt for the writer and in all the rest—a homeric laugh. As it stands, however, it appears to be due to the revengeful hostility of a half-witted French woman, from the “far West,” a would-be medium for “spirit photographs,” who will never forgive the Theosophists for denying her the honour of being constantly surrounded by the late illustrious.

Bonaparte family in astral shape. The “facts in my possession” of which the writer so naïvely boasts, are mostly due to the secondhand information derived by him from that poor, deluded creature. The fact that he accuses us of intemperance and connivance with Jesuits will be enough in itself, in the eyes of everyone who knows us, to determine the character of an attack concerning which we need say no more.

“WE WILL NOT QUARREL BUT SIMPLY ARGUE”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, p. 70]

Our much respected contemporary Light has taken us quite unexpectedly to task. Turning a sentence of ours—the one which heads the present protest—into a weapon, it gives us a friendly rap of warning with it on the head, admonishing us in the following wise:

“WE WILL NOT QUARREL — BUT SIMPLY ARGUE,” says Madame Blavatsky in the September number of The Theosophist. Yet on another page of the same number we find the following strange announcement: —“The proprietors of The Theosophist are preparing to publish a large work, unique in its kind, save perhaps Wagner’s ‘Dictionary of faulty arguments and abuse, by his musical critics.’ They have been collecting for over six years materials for the publication of a Synopsis, arranged alphabetically, and which will contain all the rude and abusive expressions, all the slanderous and even libellous sentences, Billingsgate phraseology, pious fibs, malicious insinuations, and glaring untruths coupled with the term “Theosophy” in general, and directed against the two Founders of the Society especially, as found printed in missionary and other Christian organs, since January 1, 1876, till January, 1882. In each deprecatory sentence the name of the paper and the date will be scrupulously and correctly stated.” With all due deference to the proprietors of The Theosophist, we venture the suggestion that they are making a sad mistake—that the course they threaten to adopt is very much like “quarrelling” and very little like “simply arguing.”

It is, moreover, a great waste of energy which might be directed to a better purpose. And it is vulgar! In the pursuit of truth it is conscious rectitude, self-possession and dignity, that command attention and respect.

In our turn, “with all due deference and sincere esteem” for the opinions of the able conductors of *Light*, while admitting the justice of a portion of the remarks above quoted, we most emphatically protest against some of the remainder. It would, perhaps, be “a sad mistake” to carry out the publication of the “Synopsis” as proposed, *le jeu ne valant pas la chandelle*, so far as time and energy are concerned, and which, indeed, might be applied to better purpose. But we most strongly object to the course we proposed being called “vulgar,” or, if we did carry it out—that it would be “very much like quarrelling” and very little like “simply arguing.” It would be neither, as it takes two to quarrel. The publication of a Synopsis containing the abusive terms and slanderous statements that have been used about the Theosophists without any comment from them, would be no more “like quarrelling” than the compilation of a dictionary or glossary. Nor can the simple act of publishing an historic record of the opinions that have been circulated against us, in any sense be regarded as “vulgar,” howsoever “vulgar” may be found the contents of the record itself—“the rude and abusive expressions,” the “slanderous and libellous sentences,” the “malicious insinuations, pious fibs,” etc., etc. It might be characterized as “wicked,” “uncharitable,” “vengeful”—and we would have accepted any of these terms without protest—but as well might the publication of the Books of the Prophets—Hosea especially—or the Reverend Revisers of the Holy Bible be termed “vulgar” for publishing textually the old Pentateuch full, as it is, of sentences couched in the most indecent language. It is surprising that such an able and well-conducted paper as *Light* should be found tripping in its logic, even through its exaggerated ideas of charity and forgiveness.

WHAT IS “A FACT”?

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, pp. 70-71]

Once fairly started on a friendly discussion—not “quarrelling,” we hope—with Light, we may just as well set matters right regarding another topic, about which, it seems to us to use a rather faulty argument. Remarking in another paragraph that it desires to treat its “friends, the Theosophists, perfectly fairly, and to give them the fullest credit for honesty and sincerity of purpose,” it adds—“Spiritualism, we say, is a fact. Theosophy, we also say, may be a fact for aught we know, but at present we are without sufficient proof.

Now to this we must take exception. We find ourselves forced to reply as follows: Either both Spiritualism and Theosophy are “facts” or—neither. For how is either of them “a fact” except through its respective votaries? As an existing and, we may say, an effective organization, a society—Theosophy is as much of a “fact” as Spiritualism is, and certainly no less so than any of the established recognized bodies, and sects, whether they be in the domain of philosophy or religion. As regards phenomena produced—limited to a very small fraction of our Society—the manifestations stand, or fall along with those of the Spiritualists. We may suppose then, that, when asserting Spiritualism to be a “fact,” the writer had in his mind the “Spiritual” manifestations or rather the agency, the disembodied intelligences claimed to be at work in their production? If so, then once again Light used an incorrect, or we should say, an incomplete expression.

For, if the theory of communicating “spirits” is an undeniable axiom for Spiritualists, it is yet an open question—or oftener—positive delusion in the eyes of the majority of non-Spiritualists, and skeptics. Moreover, the manifestations which even to the Theosophists are a truth, are considered illusory and impossible to a much larger portion of the people in the world. Again we, the Theosophists, though accepting the phenomena as a fact, refuse to accept it as a “fact” that such manifestations are produced only by the spirits of persons deceased. As with Spiritualism, so with the Occultism of Theosophists; to some persons it is a fact, and to others it is not. Spiritualism and Theosophy are both forms of belief, and nothing more; inasmuch as there are persons who believe in them, they are both facts. In the same way Christians, Brahmans and Mohammedans are an existing fact, while neither Christianity, nor Brahmanism, nor Mohammedanism are “facts” per se, or for those who are opposed to these creeds. The divine inspiration of Mohammed and his direct communion with Allah is an undeniable “fact,” for about 300 millions of the followers of the Prophet, but is rejected as the grossest error and imposture by as many Christians. The phenomena of the Spiritualists being a genuine, proven, incontrovertible reality—whether many or few believe in it—so far the “facts” of Spiritualism have a far better claim to acceptance than those of dogmatic Christianity or of any other creed, based exclusively on blind faith. Their personal views, however, the orthodox theories regarding “spirits,” being not a matter of fact but of opinion and simply a belief, they can no more claim to be regarded as a “fact” than any other emotional belief. If the physical senses, intellect and reason of the Spiritualists testify to them that “Spirits” are at work in their phenomena, the physical senses, intellect and reason of the Occultists testify to them, in their turn, that the subjective world outside and around us containing a great variety of non-human intelligences, and beings, more associated with humanity than Materialism, Positivism and even Spiritualism will ever consent to admit—most of these manifestations are produced by Forces and Powers quite outside and beyond the calculations of the orthodox Spiritualist. In so far as the existence of higher, pure Spirits outside of our sphere of physical senses is concerned, the Theosophists and Spiritualists agree.

But they entirely disagree in their respective theories regarding the nature and cause of the so-called “communicating intelligences.” Our friends, the Spiritualists, who are visited by them, are pleased to call the latter the spirits of deceased persons; and, notwithstanding their contradictory statements, they believe what these “spirits” tell them and regard it as a revelation and a “fact.” Our mystics are visited by what every one of them knows to be living men of flesh and blood, whose wisdom can scarcely be denied (even by those who disbelieve in their powers), and who tell us quite a different tale of the weird visitors of the Spiritualists from that given by the “spirits” themselves at their séances. The assertions of the “spirits” and “Brothers,” however, are, and can be accepted as “facts” by only their respective believers. No one would ever think of offering these assertions to the world as something mathematically demonstrated. Spiritualists and Theosophists may dispute interminably without convincing each other, and the facts of one will probably for ever continue a delusion in the eyes of the other. Alleged gods—Avataras and Incarnations—have descended from time to time on earth, and every word they uttered remained a fact and a gospel truth for those who believed in them. Yet these dogmatic utterances have made their respective votaries neither happier, better, nor wiser. Quite the contrary; for they have often proved conducive of strife and misery, of fratricidal wars, and of interminable crimes due to fanaticism and bigotry. Men naturally disagree on most subjects, and we cannot hope to force others to accept as facts the things that appear so to us. But what we can do is, to show more mutual tolerance and abstain from dogmatism and bigotry as there is too much of it already outside of our two unpopular and equally tabooed systems. One undeniable fact exists on earth; a sad, a tacitly and universally recognized yet as universally ignored “Fact,” namely—that MAN is man’s worst enemy.

Born helpless, ignorant, and doomed to a lifelong struggle through that ignorance, surrounded by intellectual darkness which no amount of scientific or spiritual research can entirely dispel, instead of helping each other in that life struggle, one half of humanity is ever striving to create obstacles, over which the other half may trip, stumble and even break its neck, if possible. Were we wise, instead of boasting of our partial knowledge, we ought to unite and act on the principle common to the Books of Wisdom of all nations; on the sublime precept taught by all sages; by Manu, Confucius and Buddha alike, and finally copied into the Christian Gospels: “as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”* Time alone will show who of us is right, and who wrong, in the matter of Spiritualism; or, perchance, the great problem might be doomed forever to remain unsolved for the majority, while the minority will go on explaining it, each according to its light, and understanding. Still, instead of abusing and endeavoring to annihilate each other, as Protestants and Roman Catholics do on account of their faiths, we ought to confine ourselves to a correct presentation of our facts and of the theories we found on them, allowing everyone to accept or reject what he pleases and quarrel with no one on that account. This is the position we, of the Theosophical Society, composed of so many different creeds and beliefs, have always desired to take. In our turn—firmly convinced of “the honesty and sincerity of purpose” of the Spiritualists, if The Theosophist has occasionally derided some of their too tricky mediums, it has ever, on the other hand, defended those it knew to be genuine; and the journal has never insulted or tabooed their whole body, as the Spiritualists have our Society. Some of our best and most devoted members are Spiritualists, and very prominent ones, who have ever been the best friends and supporters of the movement. This has not prevented the London Spiritualist (see every weekly number since the beginning of last July) from denouncing, mocking, laughing and allowing its contributors to revile us individually and collectively.

* [Luke, vi, 31.]

We need not mention the American so-called “Spiritual” organs in this connection. They, with the single exception of the Banner of Light, have been throwing every impermissible missile at us for the last seven years. From its beginning The Theosophist, if it has not always advocated, has, at least, warmly defended Spiritualism, as a careful perusal of its back numbers will show. It has defended it from the attacks of Science, of Journalism, and against the denunciations of private individuals, while the Spiritualist has never lost an opportunity of caricaturing us. With Spiritualists as a body, we have never quarrelled, nor do we ever mean to quarrel. Let our esteemed contemporary Light give credit for so much at least to those who profess themselves the enemies but of BIGOTS, HYPOCRITES AND PHARISEES.

HAZY NOTIONS

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, pp. 71-72]

Enter Ghost.

Hamlet:

Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,

Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,

Thou com'st in such a questionable shape

That I will speak to thee: . . .*

The Sunday Mirror honours us with a direct notice. The Calcutta organ of piety, generally so contemptuous and reserved, actually begins to show signs of interest for its humble contemporary and—speaks to it. Our star is evidently in its ascendancy. Let not pride overwhelm our better feelings, but may our prayers reach Saraswati, the sweet goddess of wisdom, to inspire us in the answers we shall have to give to our stern cross-examining critic.

* [Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act I, Sc. 4.]

Our notions about the Theosophists are so hazy that we feel diffidence in pronouncing upon the merits of the system which they have come to preach

we read in the Mirror of November 20. To feel “a diffidence in pronouncing upon the merits” of a system, with notions about it confessedly “hazy” shows wisdom and betokens prudence. Nevertheless, the Mirror “notes” two facts about us. They believe—it says—(meaning the Theosophical culprits)

They believe in the Hindu yoga, and they proclaim themselves to be Buddhists. It is related that they gave themselves out as such before the Madras people who had mistaken them for Hindus.

Oh, foolish Madrassesees! However, the Theosophists, who do “believe” in Yoga “must surely be ubiquitous.” To give one’s self out as one thing or the other, in a place where one has never been, is a feat of which even the Theosophists might well be proud. Let it be understood that when we say—“Theosophists,” we but answer the secret thought of the estimable Mirror pointing to itself under that generic name the two humble founders of the Society, but for reasons best known to itself, avoiding to specify them by name. Well, if so, neither Colonel Olcott nor Madame Blavatsky ever graced yet by their presence Madras, the former having gone no further than Tinnevely, and the latter having trod the shores of the Southern Coast for the last time some twenty-three years back.* There might have been in Madras hundreds of Theosophists for all we know, who “proclaimed” themselves—but what they were: natural-born Buddhists from Ceylon to Burma. So much the worse for Dravidian perspicacity if they were “mistaken for Hindus.” We are inclined though to regard the accusation as a wicked slur upon the Madrassesees’ mental capacities, because, perhaps, of our Southern Brothers showing themselves rather slow in the appreciation of the New Dispensation missionaries.

* [This must be a reference to H.P.B.’s travels in India somewhat prior to 1858, and most likely prior to the outbreak of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857.—Compiler.]

However it may be, further on the Sunday Mirror is more explicit and even becomes authoritative.

Now what we wish to know about them is this [it declares]:

What is the creed which they profess? Buddhism is accepted in various ways by scholars. Its morality is admired by many, while its directly godless character is commended by agnostics. We contemplate the founder of Buddhism as the revealer of a particular idea to his countrymen, and in that way include him in the rolls of the world's great prophets. Now if the Theosophists are Buddhists in what sense are they such? They cannot be simply contented with the morality of Sakya-Muni, since the very same morality they have in the religion of their own countries." Nor are they probably inclined to view him in the way the New Dispensation does!† Are they then agnostics in an old Buddhist dress?‡ The Theological position of Buddhism is not yet clearly ascertained.†† Mr. Rhys Davids assigns, we think, in one of his latest works, a purely atheistic conception to the system. Do the theosophists belong to that class of thinkers?

A direct plainly-put question demands as direct and plain an answer. Unfortunately, with all our good will and sincere desire to satisfy our esteemed contemporary's curiosity (and very laudable it is) we are placed in a very awkward position. It is that of an inhabitant of the earth who would find himself suddenly apostrophized by—say a citizen of the moon meteorically fallen from that luminary. "Oh, child of a strange planet," might say the latter to the former, "a learned astronomer from our satellite tells us that there are living animals on your earth, which, notwithstanding their great variety, are called men and who deny an atmosphere to our planet. Do the like of you belong to that class of beings?" What could man answer to such a question? There would be no more use denying his being a "living animal" called man, than there is of our being "Theosophists"; while his ideas might be as diametrically opposed to those of his fellow beings who deny an atmosphere to fair Luna, as the views and creeds of some Theosophists are opposed to the views and creeds of other Theosophists.

* Not quite "the very same" (morality).

† Oh, heavens—no!

‡ No; but some of us may be "agnostics in a new Theosophical dress."

†† Alas! as little ascertained and as "hazy" as the Sunday Mirror's notions about Theosophy.

The members of our Society may be reckoned by thousands and their respective religions, sects and various philosophies, by hundreds. When, therefore, any one desires to learn to what religion or system belongs this or that one of our Brotherhood, the least he could do would be to specify that particular individual by his or her name.

To afford, however, some slight consolation to our Calcutta contemporary we will take it into our confidence, and unbosom ourselves, of a great secret. Colonel Olcott is a thorough-going, genuine Buddhist—though not of the “prayer-wheel turning” kind; while his humble Corresponding Secretary, Madame Blavatsky, is—what she is: her religious—or if the Mirror so prefers it—irreligious views forming part of her private property, with which the public has not the slightest concern. As to the Society in general, or rather its members, they are bound to respect the religion of everybody; never to attack any system per se, nor yet any religionist who keeps his faith sacredly locked up within his own heart, abstaining from waving it into the public’s face like a red flag before a bull, or flinging it into the teeth of all those he meets with; at the same time, it is our bounden duty and pleasure to oppose harsh-voiced bigotry, religious intolerance, sectarian prejudice and arrogance whenever and in whatever religion we find it; from the oldest “Dispensation”—downward.

WEIRD PHENOMENA

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, p. 75]

[The following stories related by Dr. Ram Das Sen are commented upon by H.P.B.]

I

The following story was related in the presence of a large assemblage of friends and acquaintances by the late Babu Abhoy Charan Newgy, an assistant surgeon in the employ of the Government of Bengal.

He had not long been in charge of a hospital at a certain station in the North-Western Provinces. Accustomed to sleep out of doors during the warm weather, he often slept on an open terrace adjoining the dispensary building. Once, on rather a sultry night, he had retired to bed and was composing himself to sleep. There were a few chairs left standing close to his couch. Suddenly a sound as that of the rustling of a person's dress or something like it, startled him. Opening his eyes he saw before him, sitting calmly in one of his chairs, his predecessor, the late assistant surgeon, who had died a month previous in the premises of that dispensary. Babu Abhoy was a stoutly-built man, and of a frame of mind quite proof to superstitious fears or anything like nervousness. As might be imagined, he was not in the least frightened. He simply ejaculated a low sound of surprise, when the apparition floating over a high wall gradually disappeared. The whole scene took place in a clear moonlight night.

II

Gobind Prasad Sukul was an inhabitant of Nattore, in the district of Rajshahy, Bengal. When we first saw him at Berhampore, in Murshedabad, he appeared to us a thin, wiry skeleton of a man, on the wrong side of 50, with sharp, angular features, a mysterious look about him, and who was constantly muttering something to himself. Admission into the house he resided in, was strictly denied by him to all visitors. He used to always dress in scarlet cotton stuffs and was a frequent visitor of ours.

When sitting in our presence, he would, if requested, take up a pinch of earth, and putting it into his left palm cover it with the other, and breathe into his joined hands; a minute or two after that, opening his palms just enough to let us have a glimpse, he would show us a gold coin, or a flower, the latter each time a different colour and variety. It is said he held converse with "Spirits." Many a person is known to have won lawsuits, and many a one to recover his health—though apparently hopelessly gone, through the mystic instrumentality of that strange personage.

Editor's Note.—We need not notice the subject of article II, as it is very clear that Gobind Prasad Sukul was a man who had possessed himself by some means of considerable occult powers. But we will say a few brief words about the "ghost" of the assistant surgeon. The apparition was that of a man, who had died a month previous—within the premises of the dispensary he appeared in, and where he had lived and breathed his last. The "Astral Light," or, if our readers prefer a more scientific term—the ether of Space—preserves the images of all beings and things on its sensitised waves; and under certain atmospheric and electric conditions, more often furnished and determined by the vital magnetism of "mediums," pictures and scenes subjective, hence invisible under ordinary normal conditions, will be thrown out into objectivity. The figure of the apparition may have been but an accidental and meaningless reflection on that "sultry," electric "moonlight night," of the image of one whose figure was, owing to a long residence and death of that person on the premises, strongly impressed upon the etheric waves; and it may also have been due to the roaming of the "animal soul," what the Hindus call Kama- and Mayavi-rupa, the "Illusionary Body" of the deceased person. At all events, it is but the Spiritualists who will insist that it was the spirit or the conscious "Ego of the dead Assistant Surgeon," the Occultists maintaining that it was at best the "shell" or the astral form of the disembodied man; and giving it as usual the name of an "Earth-bound Elementary."

IS CREATION POSSIBLE FOR MAN?

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, pp. 79-80]

The Editor of The Theosophist.

Madame,—Talking the other day to a friend, who, like me, without being a Theosophist, takes a very great interest in the movements of your Society, I incidentally happened to remark that the “Brothers of the first section” were credited with such large powers, that even creation was not at times impossible to them. In support of my assertion, I instanced their own cup and saucer phenomenon, as narrated by Mr. Sinnett in his *Occult World*, which phenomenon appeared to me to be something more than the mere reproduction, transference or unearthing from its hiding-place of an article lost or stolen, like the brooch. My friend, however, warmly objected to my statement—remarking that creation was not possible to man, whatever else he may be able to accomplish.

Believing, as I then did, in Christianity as the most perfect heaven-descended code of ethics on earth, there was a time in the history of my chequered life (chequered, I mean, as regards the vast sea of doubt and unbelief on which I have been tossing for over twenty years), when I would have myself as warmly, even indignantly, repelled the idea of creation as a possibility to man; but the regular reading of your journal, and a careful perusal of Mr. Sinnett’s book and of that marvel of learning and industry, your own *Isis Unveiled*, have effected quite a revolution (whether for good or bad has yet to be seen) in my thoughts, and it is now sometime since I have begun to believe in the possibility of phenomena beyond the range of my own narrow vision.

Will you kindly tell me which of us is right, my friend or I? Not having the honour of being personally known to you, I close this letter only with my initial.

H.

OUR ANSWER

The question to be dealt with is hardly whether our correspondent or his friend is right, for we understand him to take up the prudent attitude of a seeker after truth who shrinks from affirming dogmatically that creation is possible for man, even while unwilling to accept the dogmatic negative assertion of his friend that “it is impossible.”

Before coming to the gist of the question raised, we have, therefore, to notice the illustrations which this letter affords of the ways in which such a question may be considered.

When our correspondent's friend denies that creation is possible for man, we can hardly assume that he does so from any conviction that he has sounded all the mysteries of Nature, and knowing all about the universe—being able to account for all its phenomena—has ascertained that the process, whatever that may be, which he conceives of as creation does not go on anywhere in obedience to the will or influence of man, and has further ascertained that there is something in man which makes it impossible that such a process should be accomplished. And yet without having done all that, it is bold of him to say that creation is impossible. Assuming that he is not a student of occult science—and the tone of the letter before us conveys the impression that he is not—our friend's friend when he makes his dogmatic statement, seems to be proceeding on the method but too commonly adopted by people of merely ordinary culture and even by a few men of science—the method which takes a large group of preconceived ideas as a standard to which any new idea must be applied. If the new idea fits in with, and seems to support the old ones, well and good; they smile upon it. If it clashes with some of these they frown at it, and excommunicate it without further ceremony.

Now the attitude of mind exhibited by our correspondent, who finds many old beliefs shattered by new ideas, the force of which he is constrained by moral honesty to recognize, and who, therefore, feels that in the presence of the vast possibilities of Nature he must advance very cautiously and be ever on his guard against false lights held out by time-honoured prejudices and hasty conclusions—seems to us an attitude of mind which is very much better entitled to respect than that of his overconfident friend.

And we are the more anxious to recognize its superiority in the most emphatic language, because when we approach the actual question to be discussed, the bearing of what we have to say will be rather in favour of the view which the “friend” takes of “creations,” if indeed we are all attaching the same significance to that somewhat over-driven word.

It is needless after what we have just said to point out that if we are now going to make some statements as to what is, and what is not the fact, as regards some of the conditions of the universe, we are not on that account infringing the rules of thought just laid down. We are simply giving an exposition of our little fragment of occult philosophy as taught by Masters who are in a position to make positive statements on the subject, and the credibility of which will never be in danger from any of these apparently inexplicable occurrences related in the books to which our correspondent refers, and likely enough, as he justly conceives, to disturb many of the orthodox beliefs which he has seen crumbling around him.

It would be a volume we should have to write and not a brief explanatory note, if we attempted to begin, by elucidating the conviction we entertain that the Masters of Occult Philosophy above referred to are entitled to say what is and what is not. Enough for the present to say what we believe would be said, in answer to the question before us, by those who know.

But we must have a clear understanding as to what is meant by creation. Probably the common idea on the subject is that when the world was “created,” the creator accorded himself or was somehow accorded a dispensation from the rule *ex nihilo nihil fit* and actually made the world out of nothing—if that is the idea of creation to be dealt with now, the reply of the philosophers would be not merely that such creation is impossible to man but that it is impossible to gods, or God; in short absolutely impossible. But a step in the direction of a philosophical conception is accomplished when people say the world was “created” (we say fashioned) out of Chaos. Perhaps, they have no very clear idea of what they mean by CHAOS, but it is a better word to use in this case than “nothing.”

For, suppose we endeavor to conceive chaos as the matter of the universe in an unmanifested state, it will be seen at once that though such matter is perfectly inappreciable to ordinary human senses, and to that extent equivalent to “nothing,” creation from such materials is not the production of something which did not exist before, but a change of state imposed upon a portion of universal matter which in its previous state was invisible, intangible and imponderable, but not on that account non-existent.* Theosophist-Occultists do not, however, use the word “creation,” at all, but replace it by that of EVOLUTION.

Here we approach a comprehension of what may have been the course of events as regards the production of the mysterious cup and saucer described in Mr. Sinnett’s book. It is in no way inconceivable that if the production of manifestation in matter is the act accomplished by what is ordinarily called creation, the power of the human will in some of its transcendent developments may be enabled to impose on unmanifested matter or chaos, the change which brings it within the cognisance of the ordinary human senses.

* It is one of the many reasons why Buddhist philosophy refuses to admit the existence and interference in the production of the universe of a direct creator or god. For once admit, for argument’s sake, that the world was created by such a being, who, to have done so, must have been omnipotent, there remains the old difficulty to be dealt with—who then created that pre-existing matter, that eternal, invisible, intangible and imponderable something or chaos? If we are told that, being “eternal” and imperishable, it had no need of being “created,” then our answer will be that in such a case there are TWO “Eternals” and two “Omnipotents”; or if our opponents argue that it is the omnipotent No. 1 or God who created it, then we return from where we first started—to the creation of something out of nothing, which is such an absolute absurdity before science and logic that it does not even require the final unanswerable query resorted to by some precocious children “and who created God?”

EDITOR'S NOTE TO "THE THEOSOPHISTS"

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, pp. 81-82]

[The following Note is H. P. Blavatsky's Editorial comment on an article contributed to Light by Gerald Massey and reprinted in The Theosophist, in which he raised various points about the elementals, and invited explanations from the Theosophist.]

Summed up in a few words, this article asks for further information about "elementals"; suggests that they may be what Spiritualists would call "the spirits" of deceased animals; offers this as a new idea for the consideration of Eastern philosophers; and points out that if the adepts of occult science had been privileged to read Darwin they might, with their peculiar powers of clairvoyance, have been able to detect in the elementals, shapes which would identify these as reliquiae of Man's imperfectly developed ancestors.

The comprehension of what occult science really is, has spread in Europe so very imperfectly as yet, that we must not be impatient even with this curiously entangled view of the subject. European mystics, when further advanced in the tedious study of unintelligible books, will often be hardest to persuade that they must go back some distance on the paths they have travelled, before they can strike into those which lead to the fully illuminated regions of Eastern knowledge. They are naturally loth to confess that much time has been wasted; they try to make the fragments of esoteric Eastern philosophy they may pick up here and there, fit into the vacant places in the scheme of things they have painfully constructed for themselves, and when the fragments will not fit, they are apt to think the corners want paring down here and there, and the hollows filling up.

The situation which the European mystic does not realize is this: The Eastern occult philosophy is the great block of solid truth from which the quaint, exoteric mysticism of the outer world has been casually thrown off from time to time, in veiled and symbolical shapes. These hints and suggestions of mystic philosophy may be likened to the grains of gold in rivers, which early explorers used to think betokened somewhere in the mountains from which the rivers sprang, vast beds of the precious metal. The occult philosophy with which some people in India are privileged to be in contact, may be likened to the parent deposits. Students will be altogether on a wrong track as long as they check the statements of Eastern philosophy by reference to the teachings and conceptions of any other systems. In saying this we are not imitating the various religionists who claim that salvation can only be had within the pale of their own small church. We are not saying that Eastern philosophy is right and everybody else is wrong, but that Eastern philosophy is the main stream of knowledge concerning things spiritual and eternal, which has come down in an unbroken flood through all the life of the world. That is the demonstrable position which we, occultists of the Theosophical Society, have firmly taken up, and all archaeological and literary research in matters connected with the earliest religions and philosophies of historical ages helps to fortify it. The casual growths of mystic knowledge in this or that country and period, may or may not be faithful reflections of the actual, central doctrines; but, whenever they seem to bear some resemblance to these, it may be safely conjectured that at least they are reflections, which owe what merit they possess to the original light from which they derive their own.

Now the tone of such articles as that we have reprinted above is quite out of harmony with this general estimate of the position. Mr. Massey's mental attitude is that of a power in treaty with a collateral power: "Give us this and this bit of information which you perhaps possess; we offer you in return some valuable hints derived from Western science.

Weld them into your own inquiries, and you will, perhaps, bring out some fresh conclusions.” Such an attitude as this is absolutely ludicrous to any one who has had the means of realizing, even in a small degree, what the range and depth of Eastern occult philosophy really are. To say that offering knowledge or discoveries of any sort to the Masters of Occult Philosophy is carrying coals to Newcastle, is to say nothing. There may be some small details of modern science which occult philosophy has not anticipated (centuries ago), but if so, that can only be because the genius of occult philosophy leads it to deal with the main lines of principle and to care as a rule very little for details—as little as for the material advantage or comfort they may be designed to subserve. Such broad conceptions as the theory of evolution, for example, have not only been long ago known to Eastern occultists, but as developed in Europe, are now recognized by them as the first faltering step of modern science in the direction of certain grand principles with which they have been familiar—we will not venture to say since when . . .

“If the Theosophist were also an evolutionist,” says Mr. Massey, “perhaps he would be able to fix the ‘fleeting forms’ of his vision, and perceive some of the Spirits of man’s predecessors on the earth . . .”^{*} If the European scientists whose fancy has for the first time been caught, within these last few years, by the crude outlines of an evolutionary theory, were less blankly ignorant of all that appertains to the mysteries of life, they would not be misled by some bits of knowledge concerning the evolution of the body, into entirely absurd conclusions concerning the other principles which enter into the constitution of Man.

But we are on the threshold of a far mightier subject than any reader in Europe who has not made considerable progress in real occult study, is likely to estimate in all its appalling magnitude.

^{*} [Vide in this connection Letter CXCVIII, p. 364, in The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett. —Compiler.]

Will any one who has perused with only some of the attention it really deserves the article we published but two months ago under the title “Fragments of Occult Truth,”* make an effort to account, in his own mind, even in the most shadowy and indistinct way, for the history of the six higher principles in any human creature, during the time when his body was being gradually perfected, so to speak, in the matrix of evolution. Where, and what were his higher spiritual principles when the body had worked into no more dignified shape than that of a baboon? Of course, the question is put with a full recognition of the collateral errors implied in the treatment of a single human being as the apex of a series of forms, but, even supposing that physical evolution were as simple a matter as that, how to account for the final presence in the perfected human body of a spiritual soul? Or, to go a step back in the process, how to account for the presence of the animal soul in the first creature with independent volition that emerges from the half vegetable condition of the earlier forms? Is it not obvious, if the blind materialist is not to be accepted as a sufficient guide to the mysteries of the universe—if there really are these higher principles in Man of which we speak, that there must be some vast process of spiritual evolution going on in the universe *par passu* with the physical evolution?

For the present we merely throw out hints and endeavour to provoke thought and enquiry; to attempt in this casual manner a complete exposition of the conclusions of Eastern philosophy in this direction would be like starting on a journey to the South Pole à propos to a passing enquiry whether one thought there was land there or not.

But we have, perhaps, said enough to meet the somewhat imperfect suggestion in Mr. Gerald Massey’s article to the effect that elementals may perhaps be the spirits of animals or of “missing links” belonging to a former epoch of the world’s history.

* [This series of articles was started in the October, 1881, issue of *The Theosophist*, the second installment appearing in March, 1882, and the third in September of the same year. From various statements in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* and several of H.P.B.’s own letters, it can be conclusively demonstrated that these three installments were written by A. O. Hume, even though they exhibit here and there a few characteristics of H.P.B.’s style. Later installments under the same title are by A. P. Sinnett.—Compiler.]

The notion that in some immaterial shape—one may use an absurd expression to set forth an absurd conjecture—the spirits of any living creature can lead a perpetual existence as the stereotyped duplicates of the transitory material forms they inhabited while passing through the earthly stage of their pilgrimage, is to reckon entirely without the very doctrine which Mr. Massey so kindly offers for the consideration of Eastern philosophers. No more than any given material form is destined to infinite perpetuation, can the finer organisms which constitute the higher principles of living creatures be doomed to unchangeability. What has become of the particles of matter which composed the physical bodies of “man’s predecessors on the earth”? They have long ago been ground over in the laboratory of Nature, and have entered into the composition of other forms. And the idea or design of the earlier forms has risen into superior idea or design which has impressed itself on later forms. So also, though the analogy may give us no more than a cloudy conception of the course of events, it is manifest that the higher principles, once united with the earlier forms must have developed in their turn also. Along what infinite spirals of gradual ascent the spiritual evolution has been accomplished, we will not stop now to consider. Enough to point out the direction in which thought should proceed, and some few considerations which may operate to check European thinkers from too readily regarding the realms of spirit as a mere phantasmagorial cemetery, where the shades of the Earth’s buried inhabitants doze for ever in an aimless trance.*

* [Consult in connection with this article, The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to A.P. Sinnett, Letter CXCVIII, p. 364, where a precipitated message from Master M. may be found. —Compiler.]

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 3, December, 1881, p. 84]

[The following footnote is appended by H. P. B. to an account of crimes performed by Christian divines:]

We have been repeatedly and unjustly accused of bearing ill will to the Western Clergy, and while copying all the evil reports about them we can find, not to have taken notice of the good they do. We can copy but what we find in the news and—no more. We bear no ill will to any creed especially, and are ready to publish reports of the remarkable doings of any class of men whatever. Hence, we do not see why we should be more particularly careful not to hurt the feelings of the class of men under notice, than those of any other class of men. The subject has a distinct bearing upon the cause we advocate and represent, and it is our special object to find out which of the four great world religions is the more likely to promote morality among men.

“THE KNIGHT WITHOUT REPROACH OR FEAR”

[Bombay Gazette, Bombay, December—, 1881.]

To the Editor of the Bombay Gazette.

Sir,—Since you were kind enough to republish in your paper of the 6th instant an article from the Statesman headed “An Australian Blavatsky,” you will permit I hope to the Bombay individual of that name to make a few remarks thereon. I will only draw your attention to what I may term the most remarkable feature of that gentlemanly editorial, namely, the double-edged aspect of the weapon used against the object of that attack. It is not to be searched for in the outward aspect of the attack itself—one of the many brutal, uncalled for, and libellous articles directed against my name and reputation lately; not even in the abuse and impertinence of its too witty editor. Still less is the point at issue, for the present, in the question whether I am deservedly or undeservedly placed on a parallel with Mrs. Jackson, whom the Statesman pleases to represent as an adventuress, an impostor, and a thief, since she is accused of having obtained a large legacy by fraud and under false pretences. The latter point I may safely leave to the Calcutta courts to decide and pronounce upon. No: that wondrous feature is rather in the cool and serene cheek of the editor, whose mental attitude may be characterized by what the Frenchman unpoetically, but graphically represents as *cracher en l’air pour le faire retomber sur le nez*—to spit in the air, only to feel it fall back on the spitter’s nose—an attitude truly worthy of a “Bayard,” the “Knight without reproach or fear”! However the Statesman’s Editor claims, I believe, to be regarded as a staunch defender of the Indian people’s rights: as a redresser of their wrongs: one who breaks his chivalrous lance in honour of fair Aryavarta?

So does the Editor of The Theosophist—a journal founded for the benefit of and solely for the natives. While he defends their political rights, we Theosophists try our best to defend their religious rights, and to prove their claims to the most ancient civilization, literature, and wisdom, thus showing their superiority in many respects, to our Western civilization—a babe of yesterday. To this effect the political Statesman was started at Calcutta, and the “religio-philosophical” Theosophist at Bombay. How far and whether we have succeeded at all in our respective objects is a question which we must leave to time alone to decide. All I can say is, that we, at least, tried our best and according to our humble lights and means to achieve our task. But here all comparison between the Statesman and The Theosophist abruptly ceases. For that which for the latter was and is a labour of love and devotion to an idea—however Utopian it may seem to many—a labour rewarded by the majority of the natives (on whose behalf it was started) by the most foul abuse, suspicion, and ceaseless attacks upon the Theosophists, the Statesman expected and demanded that his work should be remunerated. We all remember its loud and pressing appeals for money in the Co-Regent of Hyderabad case to the peoples of India. Rajas and Ryots, Brahmin and Sudra, Prince and Mang, were all expected to lay their mite on the altar of national defense: thousands and lakhs of rupees were demanded in order that the Statesman might defend the combined interests of the people of India, and one Sabha alone is said to have sent to London between twenty and thirty thousand rupees. How much good the native contributors got for the worth of their money I do not know, for I have no interest or concern with political brawls. But I have a right to observe that this defense and alleged devotion of the Statesman to the natives of India is not, what one might view as wholly disinterested. On the other hand The Theosophist never made the slightest appeal, or ever laid any claim to the national pocket.

The Theosophist never asked for one pie, nor does it hope to be pecuniarily remunerated for its trouble and losses. I advise the Statesman to deny this, if it can.

Whence and what for then, this most sudden and unexpected series of attacks upon us, in which the Statesman has lately so largely indulged? May it not be that it fears possible competition as to remunerations received from the defended natives? Let its Editor, or Editors in such case, rest undisturbed on their laurels. Neither The Theosophist nor its Editor are likely to ever sell or prostitute their favours. The little they have to give, they give freely, expecting nothing but ingratitude in return, for they serve an idea, not individuals. True devotion to a cause is not to be bought or sold; and, for her money India might choose. Thus the Statesman's insolent parallel between "Blavatsky" and "Jackson" is utterly irrelevant, being a brutal libel. It is as if seeking to establish in The Theosophist a like comparison, we called the Editor of the Statesman "a British Robert Macaire."

To prove to you that I am no adventuress, and to show finally who I am, I send you two documents for your private perusal. One is from my uncle, General R. de Fadeyeff, Assistant Minister of the Interior at St. Petersburg, the other a private letter from Prince Dondukoff-Korsakoff, Governor-General of Southern Russia, with whom I am acquainted for the last thirty-five years. The official document testifying to my identity will be shortly published.*

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, Breach Candy, December 9th, 1881.

* [The private letter referred to was not published in the Bombay Gazette, on account of being too long. The statement by General Rostislav de Fadeyeff will be found in another article on pages 446-48 of the present Volume.—Compiler.]

A LETTER FROM MADAME BLAVATSKY

[The Statesman and Friend of India, Calcutta, December 27th, 1881]

To the Editor.

Sir,—In the course of your remarks you have made in your issue of the 17th, on the letter of my solicitors, Messrs. Sanderson and Company, you represent yourself as aggrieved by me in the course of an angry letter I wrote to the Bombay Gazette, when repeatedly and grossly insulted in your columns on various dates. Deeply as you have wronged me, and ungenerously imperfect as your retraction or apology seems to me to be, I have no hesitation whatever in expressing regret at having inaccurately connected the Statesman as it is now conducted with the acts of a former proprietor or editor. I am too deeply engaged in other pursuits to watch closely the ordinary current of affairs which do not concern me or my work, and was simply unaware of the change of proprietorship of which you speak. I wish you could see the propriety of dissociating yourself, as completely as the London Statesman, from all sympathy with the writer or inspirer of your recent articles—the person, who, while animated in attacking me by private malice (itself the result of a misapprehension of facts) has succeeded in leading you to regard him as writing down Theosophy on public grounds.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, December 21.

1882

“IS IT IDLE TO ARGUE FURTHER?”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 4, January, 1882, pp. 90-92]

Says Light, in its “Notes by the Way,” edited by M. A.

(Oxon):—

The current number of The Theosophist contains an important manifesto, which establishes and defines the ground finally taken up by that body. Shortly put, it is one of complete antagonism to Spiritualism. The Spiritualist believes that it is possible for Spirits of the departed to communicate with this earth. Whatever divergence of opinion there may be among us in respect of other matters, we are agreed on this, the cardinal article of our faith. Our daily experience affirms its truth. The consentient testimony of the most experienced among us agrees that, whether there be, or whether there be not, other agencies at work, the Spirits we know of are human Spirits who have once lived on this earth. To this The Theosophist returns the simple answer that we are mistaken. No Spirits communicate with earth for the sufficient reason that they cannot. It is idle to argue further. We can but go on our way with the assured conviction that, whatever may be the case in the East, we find that the departed Spirits of mankind are both able and willing to communicate with us in the West. And no metaphysical theorising as to what cannot be disposes in any degree of what is.

The Theosophist is forced to take exception to the form of statement of “facts” above used. As it now stands, it is but a short series of speculative deductions from the very superficially defined doctrines in our “Fragments of Occult Truth” which give a by-no-means complete idea of what is really taught in the doctrine, bits of which were explained in the article now most incorrectly styled a “manifesto.” We regret the necessity to contradict once more our esteemed opponent, who seems to be giving up the Theosophists in despair.

But were we also to conclude it “idle to argue further,” then the position taken up by us would indeed, give rise again to endless misinterpretations. The question of man’s state after death, the future progress of his soul, spirit and other principles—whatever any one may call them—was hardly touched upon in the short article under our critic’s notice. In itself the subject embraces a field of boundless extent and of the most metaphysical intricacy, one which would demand volumes of commentaries and explanations to be thoroughly sifted and understood. Yet superficially sketched as our ideas may have been in the “Fragments”—which was but an answer to the direct questions, not to say, reproaches of our esteemed Brother, Mr. Terry (of Australia) — we nevertheless fail to detect in it such passages or ideas as justify M. A. (Oxon) in saying that our doctrine is “one of complete antagonism to Spiritualism.” It is not half so antagonistic as he believes it to be, as we will try to prove.

“The Spiritualist believes that it is possible for Spirits of the departed to communicate with this earth,” says the writer . . . “and to this The Theosophist returns the simple answer that we are mistaken.” In this sentence alone, as a kernel in a nutshell, lies hidden the reason of that partial antagonism. Had M. A. (Oxon), slightly modifying the construction of the above-quoted sentence—written instead that “it is possible for Spirits yet embodied on this earth to communicate with the Spirits of the departed”—then would there have been hardly any antagonism at all to deplore. What we have and do maintain is that all of the so-called “physical phenomena,” and the “materializations” especially, are produced by something, to which we refuse the name of “Spirit.” In the words of the President of our Berhampore Branch,* “we, Hindus”—(and along with them go the European disciples of Eastern philosophy,—“are trying to spiritualize our grosser material selves—while the American and European Spiritualists are endeavouring in their séance-rooms to materialize Spirits.”

* Babu Nobin Krishna Banerjee, President of the Adhi Bhoutic Bhratru Theosophical Society.

These words of wisdom well show the opposite tendencies of the Eastern and the Western minds: namely, that while the former are trying to purify matter, the latter do their best to degrade Spirit. Therefore what we say, is, that 99 times out of 100, “materializations” so-called, when genuine (and whether they be partial or complete), are produced by what we call “shells,” and [occasionally] perhaps by the living medium’s astral body—but certainly never in our humble opinion, by the “disembodied” Spirits themselves.

While we sincerely regret this divergence of opinion with Light, we feel inclined to smile at the naïveté of some other Spiritualist opponents; as, for instance, at that of the editor of the London Spiritualist, who, in his leading editorial of November 18th, entitled “Speculation-Spinning,”* calls the bits of occult doctrine given in our “Fragments”—“unscientific”; reproaching the writer (than whom there is no abler metaphysician, nor closer or more acute and clever logician among Anglo-Indian writers) with a want of “scientific method” in the presentation of his facts! At the same time, the editorial informs us that by “facts” it does not “necessarily mean physical facts, for there are demonstrable truths outside the realms of physics.” Precisely. And it is upon just such “facts,” the existence of which is based for us upon evidence which we “have weighed and examined” for ourselves, that we maintain the demonstrability of the deductions and final conclusions at which we have arrived. These we preach but to those who really want to know them. As none, they say, are so blind as they who will not see, we abstain from offering our doctrines to such as find them offensive—among whom are some Spiritualists. But to the masses of impartial readers whose minds are not yet wedded to this or the other theory, we present our facts and tell them to see, hear, and judge for themselves; and, there have been some who did not find our theories merely a “speculation-spinning” based upon hypotheses and the crass sentimentalism of a faith—welcome, because of its implied promises of a life hereafter—but theories resting upon the logical and stern deduction from facts, which constitute in themselves a knowledge.

* To be answered in our February Number.

Now, what are these facts, and what do they show and teach us? First of all, and as a rule—to which the rare exceptions but confirm it the more—we find, that the so-called “disembodied spirits,” instead of having become the wiser for being rid of the physiological impediments and the restraints of their gross material senses, would seem to have become far more stupid, far less perspicacious and, in every respect, worse than they were during their earthly life. Secondly, we have to take note of the frequent contradictions, and absurd blunders; of the false information offered, and the remarkable vulgarity and commonplace exhibited during their interviews with mortals—in materializing séances their oral utterances being invariably vulgar commonplace, and their inspirational speeches or second-hand communication through trance and other mediums—frequently so. Adding to this the undeniable fact which shows their teachings reflecting most faithfully the special creed, views, and thoughts of the sensitive or medium used by them, or of a sitter or sitters, we have already sufficient proof to show that our theory that they are “shells” and no disembodied spirits at all, is far more logical and “scientific” than that of the Spiritualists.* Speaking here in general, we need not take into consideration exceptional cases, instances of undeniable spiritual identity with which we are sure to find our arguments met by our spiritual opponents.

* We will not go to the trouble of showing how much or rather how little of “scientific method” is to be generally found in *The Spiritualist*. But while speaking of science and its methods, we may simply remark that though both our theories (theosophical and spiritualistic) are sure to be viewed by the men of science as “speculation-spinning” and metaphysical windmills, yet the hypotheses of Spiritualists—as broadly accepted and whether “scientifically” or unscientifically stated—are certain to be pronounced by the majority of men of real science, not merely unscientific, but very unphilosophical, and illogical as well.

No one ever thought of calling “Imperator+” a “shell”; but then the latter, whether a living or a disembodied spirit, neither materializes himself objectively, nor is it yet proved to the satisfaction of any one except M. A. (Oxon) himself that “he” descends to the medium, instead of the spirit of the latter ascending to meet his instructor.*

Thus, we maintain that “spirits” are no more what they claim to be, than the chrysalis shell is the butterfly which left it. That their personations of various individuals, whom they sometimes represent, are mostly due to the accidental contact of an “Elementary” or eidôlon (attracted by the medium and the intense magnetic desire of the circle present) with the personal aura of that or another individual. The thoughts of the latter, the various acts and scenes in his past life, the familiar and beloved faces of his departed ones, are then all drawn out of the all-containing depths of the Astral Light and utilized. At times this is done successfully, but frequently the thing proves a total failure. Only while the former are, as a rule, recorded, the mention of the latter is tacitly avoided—no spiritualistic journal having ever been edited with that special view. So much for materialization and physical phenomena. As for the rest, we are at one with the Spiritualists with but slight variances, more of form than of substance. What we believe in is pretty well defined in the editorial which precedes the article “Church Congress and Spiritualism,” and need not be again enumerated†

* [Consult the Index to The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, s.v. Imperator,+ for a great many references and hints concerning this personage. —Compiler.]

† [See pages 344-46 in the present Volume.—Compiler.]

ESOTERIC AXIOMS AND SPIRITUAL SPECULATIONS

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 4, January, 1882, pp. 92-93]

In a lengthy review of A. Lillie's book, *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, by M. A. (Oxon), our esteemed friend, the critic, takes the opportunity for another quiet little fling at his well-wishers, the Theosophists. On the authority (?) of Mr. Lillie, who seems to know all about it, the reviewer contradicts and exposes the assertions made and theories enunciated by the Theosophists. We will now quote from his review "Buddhism and Western Thought," published in the October number of the *Psychological Review*:

It will be evident to any reader, who has followed me so far, that the Buddhist belief is permeated by what I have described as a distinctive, "a peculiar note of Modern Spiritualism—the presence and guardianship of departed spirits" [!]* I confess that this struck me with some surprise, and, I may say, pleased surprise, for I had come to think that there was a marked antagonism between Eastern and Western modes of thought and belief on this point. We have heard much in disparagement of this special article of faith from some friends who have told us a great deal about the theosophical beliefs of the Hindus, and who have chanted the praises of the Buddhistic as against the Christian faith with vehement laudation of the one, and with abundant scorn of the other. . . . But be this as it may, we have been told so often, that we have come to accept it as a lesson from those who know better than ourselves that our Western belief in the action of departed human spirits in this world of ours is a crazy fallacy. We have believed, at least, that such was the Eastern creed. For ourselves, we (some of us at least) prefer our own experience to the instructions of any whose dogmatic statements are so sweeping as those with which we are met from Eastern experts.

* The italics and points of exclamation are ours. We would like to know what the learned priests of Ceylon, the lights of Buddhism, such as Sumangala Unnanse, would have to say to this? [H.P.B.]

The statements and claims made have seemed to us altogether too vast. It may be, we are driven to think, that departed spirits do not operate in the East, but at any rate we find that they do act in the West. And while we are far from declining to recognize the truth that pervades much of the Spiritualism of the East, and have tried our best to induce our friends to widen their view by adopting it in some degree, we have been sad to think that it should so absolutely contradict the experience of the West.

Mr. Lillie affords me some consolation. I find throughout his book not only most instructive variety of opinion, which I can correlate with my own beliefs and theories to benefit and advantage, but I find that the belief in the intervention of departed human spirits, which we had all of us imagined to be anathema maranatha in the East, is, in effect, a permeating principle of Buddhism in his estimation! —(Part II, p. 174.)

The writer, after that, proceeds to speak of “Buddhistic Spiritualism” . . . a “root-principle” of which is “a belief that the living may be brought en rapport with their departed friends”; of adepts being “highly developed mediums”; and quotes an interesting clause from a chapter of Mr. Lillie’s book. Says the last-named authority:

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this supernaturalism, because it is of the highest importance to our theme. Buddhism was plainly an elaborate apparatus to nullify the action of evil spirits by the aid of good spirits operating at their highest potentiality through the instrumentality of the corpse, or a portion of the corpse of the chief aiding spirit. The Buddhist temple, the Buddhist rites, the Buddhist liturgy, all seem based on this one idea that a whole or portions of a dead body was necessary. What were these assisting spirits? Every Buddhist, ancient or modern, would admit at once that a spirit that has not yet attained the Bodhi or spiritual awakenment cannot be a good spirit. It is still in the domains of Kâma (Death, Cupid, appetite).* It can do no good thing; more than that, it must do evil things. . . . The answer of Northern Buddhism, if we consult such books as the White Lotus of Dharma and the Lalita Vistara, is that the good spirits are the Buddhas, the dead prophets. They come from certain “fields of the Buddhas” . . . †

* We have not read Mr. Lillie’s book; but if he teaches in it many other things no truer than his idea that Kama means “Death,” his authority is likely to prove of a most fragile kind. Kama never meant death, but lust, desire; in this sense—a passionate desire to live again.

† [Buddha and Early Buddhism, pp. 47-48. The italics are H.P.B.’s.—Compiler.]

For all this M. A. (Oxon) rejoices, as he thinks it corroborates the Spiritual theories and is calculated to confound the Theosophists. We, however, are afraid that it will confound, in the end, but Mr. Lillie. “The life of Buddha is permeated,” says the reviewer, “with what seems to me uncompromising Spiritualism . . .”; and in triumph adds: “It is a significant fact that throughout this elucidation of Buddhistic Spiritualism we have not once come upon an Elemental or Elementary Spirit.”

No wonder since they have in Buddhistic and Brahmanical Esotericism their own special and technical names whose significance Mr. Lillie—if he understood their meaning as correctly as he did the word Kama—was just the person to overlook, or include in the generic name of “Spirits.” We will not try to personally argue out the vexed question with our friend, M. A. (Oxon), as our voice might have no more authority with him than Mr. Lillie’s has with us. But we will tell him what we have done. As soon as his able review reached us, we marked it throughout, and sent both the numbers of the magazine containing it, to be, in their turn, reviewed and corrected by two authorities. We have the weakness to believe that these Specialists in the matter of esoteric Buddhism may be regarded as far greater than Mr. Lillie or any other European authority is likely to ever be; for these two are: —(1) H. Sumangala Unnanse, Buddhist High Priest of Adam’s Peak, Ceylon, the teacher of Mr. Rhys Davids, a member of our General Council and the most learned expounder of Southern Buddhism; and (2) the Chohan-Lama of Rinch-cha-tze (Tibet), the Chief of the Archive-registrars of the secret Libraries of the Talay and Tashi-Lhünpo Lamas-Rimpoche—also a member of our Society. The latter, moreover, is a “Panchhen,” or great teacher, one of the most learned theologians of Northern Buddhism and esoteric Lamaism. From the latter we have already received the promise of showing how very erroneous are, in every case, the views of both, the author and his reviewer, the message being accompanied by a few remarks to the address of the former which would have hardly flattered his vanity as an author.

The High Priest Sumangala, we hope, will give his ideas upon “Buddhistic Spiritualism” as well, as soon as he finds leisure—no easy matter, by the way, considering his engagements. If the authority and learning of Mr. Lillie, after that, will still be placed higher than that of the two most learned Buddhist expounders of Southern and Northern Buddhism of our day, then we will have nothing more to say.

Meanwhile, none will deny that esoteric Buddhism and Brahmanism are one, for the former is derived from the latter. It is well known that the most important feature of [his] reform, perhaps, was that Buddha made adeptship or enlightenment (through the dhyana practices of Iddhi) open to all, whereas the Brahmans had been jealously excluding all men without the pale of their own haughty caste from this privilege of learning the perfect truth. Therefore, in the present connection we will give the ideas of a learned Brahman upon Spiritualism as viewed from the esoteric standpoint. The author of the article which follows, than who, no layman, perhaps, in India is better versed in the Brahmanical Occult Sciences* outside the inner conclave of the adepts—reviews in it the seven-fold principle in man, as given in “Fragments of Occult Truth,” and establishes for that purpose an exhaustive comparison between the two esoteric doctrines—the Brahmanical and Buddhistic—which he considers “substantially identical.” His letter was written at our personal request, with no view to polemics, the writer himself being probably very far from the thought while answering it that it would ever be published. Having obtained his permission, however, to that effect, we now gladly avail ourselves of the opportunity. Besides being the best review we are likely to ever obtain upon so abstruse a subject, it will show M.A. (Oxon), and our other friends, the Spiritualists, how far such authors as Mr. Lillie have seized the “root-principle” of the Asiatic religions and philosophy. At all events the readers will be enabled to judge, how much modern Spiritualism, as now expounded, is “a permeating principle” of Brahmanism, the elder sister of Buddhism.

* [Reference is to the great scholar T. Subba Row Garu. —Compiler.]

**THE ARYAN-ARHAT ESOTERIC TENETS ON
THE SEVENFOLD PRINCIPLE IN MAN**

T. Subba Row, B.A., B.L.*

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 4, January, 1882, pp. 93-99]

[It has been thought advisable to publish here the entire text of this material by T. Subba Row, because H.P.B.'s numerous footnotes and Appendices might not be easily understood without the main text to which they are appended.]

. . . Probably the Aryan (we shall for the present call it by that name) and the Chaldeo-Tibetan esoteric doctrines are fundamentally identical and the secret doctrine of the Jewish Kabalists merely an offshoot of these. Nothing, perhaps, can be more interesting now to a student of occult philosophy than a comparison between the two principal doctrines above mentioned. Your letter seems to indicate two divisions in the Chaldeo-Tibetan doctrine: (1) that of the so-called Lamaists; and (2) that of the so-called Arhats (in Buddhism, Arahats, or Rahats) which has been adopted by the Himalayan or Tibetan Brotherhood. What is the distinction between these two systems? Some of our ancient Brahmanical writers have left us accounts of the main doctrines of Buddhism and the religion and philosophy of the Arhats--the two branches of the Tibetan esoteric doctrine being so called by them. As these accounts generally appear in treatises of a polemical character, I cannot place much reliance upon them.

It is now very difficult to say what was the real ancient Aryan doctrine. If an enquirer were to attempt to answer it by an analysis and comparison of all the various systems of esotericism prevailing in India, he will soon be lost in a maze of obscurity and uncertainty.

* We give but extracts from the long letter of the above-named gentleman. ["We" stands for H.P.B. as Editor of The Theosophist.—Compiler.]

No comparison between our real Brahmanical and the Tibetan esoteric doctrines will be possible unless one ascertains the teachings of that so-called “Aryan doctrine,” . . . and fully comprehends the whole range of the ancient Aryan philosophy. Kapila’s “Sankhya,” Patañjali’s “Yoga philosophy,” the different systems of “Sâktya” philosophy, the various Agamas and Tantras are but branches of it. There is a doctrine though, which is their real foundation and which is sufficient to explain the secrets of these various systems of philosophy and harmonize their teachings. It probably existed long before the Vedas were compiled, and it was studied by our ancient Rishis in connotation with the Hindu scriptures. It is attributed to one mysterious personage called Maha.* . . .

The Upanishads and such portions of the Vedas as are not chiefly devoted to the public ceremonials of the ancient Aryans are hardly intelligible without some knowledge of that doctrine. Even the real significance of the grand ceremonials referred to in the Vedas will not be perfectly apprehended without its light being thrown upon them. . . . The Vedas were perhaps compiled mainly for the use of the priests assisting at public ceremonies, but the grandest conclusions of our real secret doctrine are therein mentioned. I am informed by persons competent to judge of the matter, that the Vedas have a distinct dual meaning—one expressed by the literal sense of the words, the other indicated by the metre and the Svava which are, as it were, the life of the Vedas. . . . Learned Pundits and philologists, of course, deny that Svava has anything to do with philosophy or ancient esoteric doctrines. But the mysterious connection between Svava and light is one of its most profound secrets.

Now it is extremely difficult to show whether the Tibetans derived their doctrine from the ancient Rishis of India, or the ancient Bramans learned their occult science from the adepts of Tibet; or again whether the adepts of both countries professed originally the same doctrine and derived it from a common source.†

* The very title of the present chief of the Esoteric Himalayan Brotherhood.

† See Appendix, Note I.

If you were to go the Śramana Balagula and question some of the Jaina Pundits there about the authorship of the Vedas and the origin of the Brahmanical esoteric doctrine, they would probably tell you that the Vedas were composed by Rakshasas* or Thytyas, and that the Brahmans had derived their secret knowledge from them.† Do these assertions mean that the Vedas and the Brahmanical esoteric teachings had their origin in the lost Atlantis—the continent that once occupied a considerable portion of the expanse of the Southern and the Pacific oceans? Your assertion in *Isis Unveiled* that Sanskrit was the language of the inhabitants of the said continent, may induce one to suppose that the Vedas had probably their origin there—wherever else might be the birthplace of the Aryan esotericism.‡ But the real esoteric doctrine as well as the mystic allegorical philosophy of the Vedas were derived from another source, again, whatever that source may be—perchance, from the divine inhabitants-gods of the sacred Island which, as you say, once existed in the sea that covered in days of old the sandy tract now called Gobi Desert. However that may be, the knowledge of the occult powers of nature possessed by the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis was learnt by the ancient adepts of India and was appended by them to the esoteric doctrine taught by the residents of the sacred Island.†† The Tibetan adepts, however, have not accepted this addition to their esoteric doctrine.

* A kind of demon—Devil.

† And so would the Christian padres. But they would never admit that their “fallen angels” were borrowed from the Rakshasas; that their “Devil” is the illegitimate son of Dewel—the Singhalese female demon, or that the “War in Heaven” of the Apocalypse—the foundation of the Christian dogma of the “Fallen Angels”—was copied from the Hindu story about Siva hurling the Târakasurs who rebelled against Brahma into Andhakâra—the abode of Darkness, according to Brahmanical Shastras.

‡ Not necessarily. —See Appendix, Note II. From rare MSS. just received, we will shortly prove Sanskrit to have been spoken in Java and adjacent islands from remote antiquity.

†† A locality which is spoken of to this day by the Tibetans and called by them “Śambhala,” the Happy Land.—See Appendix, Note III.

[The statement referred to in *Isis Unveiled* is in Vol. I, p. 594 footnote, and is according to L. Jacolliot and not H.P.B.’s own.—Compiler.]

And, it is in this respect that one should expect to find a difference between the two doctrines.*

The Brahmanical occult doctrine probably contains everything that was taught about the powers of nature and their laws, either in the mysterious Island of the North, or in the equally mysterious continent of the South. And, if you mean to compare the Aryan and the Tibetan doctrines as regards their teachings about the occult powers of nature, you must beforehand examine all the classifications of these powers, their laws and manifestations and the real connotations of the various names assigned to them in the Aryan doctrine. Here are some of the classifications contained in the Brahmanical system:

I	Classification of the occult powers		as appertaining to Parabrahman and existing in the MACROCOSM.
II	do.	do.	as appertaining to man and existing in the MICROCOSM,
III	do.	do.	for the purposes of Târaka Yoga or Pranava Yoga
IV	do.	do.	for the purposes of Sankhya Yoga (where they are, as it were, the inherent attributes of Prakriti).
V	do.	do.	for the purposes of Hatha Yoga.
VI	do.	do.	for the purposes of Kula Agama.
VII	do.	do.	for the purposes of Sakta Agama.
VIII	do.	do.	for the purposes of Siva Agama.
IX	do.	do.	for the purposes of Srîchakra. (The Srîchakra you referred to in Isis Unveiled is not the real esoteric Srîchakra of the ancient adepts of Aryavarta)†
X	do.	do.	in Atharvana Veda, etc.

In all these classifications, subdivisions have been multiplied indefinitely by conceiving new combinations of the Primary Powers in different proportions.

* To comprehend this passage fully, the reader must turn to Vol. I, pp. 589-594, of Isis Unveiled.

† Very true. But who would be allowed to give out the "real esoteric one"? [See Isis Unveiled, II, 265.]

But I must now drop this subject and proceed to consider the article headed “Fragments of Occult Truth,” in the October number of *The Theosophist*.

I have carefully examined it, and find that the results arrived at (in the Buddhist doctrine) do not seem to differ much from the conclusions of our Aryan philosophy, though our mode of stating the arguments may differ in form. I shall now discuss the question from my own standpoint, though following for facility of comparison and convenience of discussion the sequence of classification of the sevenfold entities or Principles constituting man which is adopted in your article. The questions raised for discussion are (1) whether the disembodied spirits of human beings (as they are called by Spiritualists) appear in the seance rooms and elsewhere; and (2) whether the manifestations taking place are produced wholly or partly through their agency.

It is hardly possible to answer these two questions satisfactorily unless the meaning intended to be conveyed by the expression “disembodied spirits of human beings” be accurately defined. The words Spiritualism and Spirit are very misleading. Unless English writers in general, and Spiritualists in particular, first ascertain clearly the connotation they mean to assign to the word spirit, there will be no end of confusion, and the real nature of these so-called spiritualistic phenomena and their *modus occurrendi* can never be clearly defined. Christian writers generally speak of only two entities in man—the body, and the soul or spirit (both seeming to mean the same thing to them). European philosophers generally speak of Body and Mind, and argue that soul or spirit cannot be anything else than mind. They are of opinion that any belief in *Linga-sarira** is entirely unphilosophical. These views are certainly incorrect, and are based on unwarranted assumptions as to the possibilities of nature, and on an imperfect understanding of its laws. I shall now examine (from the standpoint of the Brahmanical esoteric doctrine) the Spiritual constitution of man, the various entities or principles existing in him, and ascertain whether either of those entities entering into his composition can appear on earth after his death; and, if so, what is it that so appears.

You have read some of Professor Tyndall’s excellent papers on what he calls “Germ Theory,” giving the facts ascertained by his experiments.

* The Astral Body—so called.

His conclusions may be briefly stated thus:—Even in a very small volume of space there are myriads of protoplasmic germs floating in ether. If, for instance, say—water (clear water) is exposed to them and if they fall into it, some form of life or other will be evolved out of them. Now, what are the agencies for bringing of this life into existence? Evidently:-

I. The water, which is the field, 90 to say, for the growth of life.

II. The protoplasmic germ, out of which life or a living organism is to be evolved or developed. And, lastly—

III. The power, energy, force or tendency which springs into activity at the touch or combination of the protoplasmic germ and the water, and which evolves or develops life and its natural attributes.

Similarly, there are three primary causes which bring the human being into existence. I shall call them for the purpose of discussion by the following names:—

(1) Parabrahman—The Universal Spirit.

(2) Sakti (the crown of the astral light combining in itself all the powers of nature).

(3) Prakriti, which in its original or primary shape is represented by Akâśa (really, every form of matter is finally reducible to Akâśa.)*

It is ordinarily stated that Prakriti or Akâśa is the Kshatra or the basis which corresponds to water in the example we have taken; Brahman the germ, and Sakti the power or energy that comes into existence at their union or contact.†

* The Tibetan esoteric Buddhist doctrine teaches that Prakriti is cosmic matter, out of which all visible forms are produced; and Akâśa that same cosmic matter—but still more imponderable, its spirit, as it were, “Prakriti” being the body or substance, and Akâśa-Sakti its soul or energy.

† Or, in other words, “Prakriti, Svabhavat or Akâśa is—SPACE as the Tibetans have it; Space filled with whatsoever substance or no substance at all; i.e., with substance so imponderable as to be only metaphysically conceivable. Brahmâ, then, would be the germ thrown into the soil of that field, and Sakti, that mysterious energy or force which develops it, and which is called by the Buddhist Arahats of Tibet—FO-HAT.

But this is not the view which the Upanishads take of the question. According to them, Brahman* is the Kshatra or basis, Akâśa or Prakriti, the germ or seed, and Sakti the power evolved by their union or contact. And this is the real scientific, philosophical mode of stating the case.

Now, according to the adepts of ancient Aryavarta, seven principles are evolved out of these three primary entities. Algebra teaches us that the number of combinations of n things taken one at a time, two at a time, three at a time and so forth = $2^n - 1$.

Applying this formula to the present case, the number of entities evolved from different combinations of these three primary cause amounts to $2^3 - 1 = 8 - 1 = 7$.

As a general rule, whenever seven entities are mentioned in the ancient occult science of India, in any connection whatsoever, you must suppose that those seven entities came into existence from three primary entities; and that these three entities again, are evolved out of a single entity or MONAD. To take a familiar example, the seven coloured rays in the solar ray are evolved out of three primary coloured rays; and the three primary colours co-exist with the four secondary colours in the solar rays.

“That which we call form (rupa) is not different from that which we call space (Śūnyatâ) Space is not different from Form. Form is the same as Space; Space is the same as Form. And so with the other skandhas, whether vedana, or sañjñâ, or samskara or vijñana, they are each the same as their opposite.” . . . (Book of Sin-king or the Heart Sutra. Chinese translation of the Maha-Prajña-Paramita-Hridaya-Sutra. Chapter on the Avalokiteshwara, or the manifested Buddha.) So that, the Aryan and Tibetan or Arhat doctrines agree perfectly in substance, differing but in names given and the way of putting it, a distinction resulting from the fact that the Vedantin Brahmans believe in Parabrahman, a deific power, impersonal though it may be, while the Buddhists entirely reject it.

* See Appendix, Note IV.

Similarly, the three primary entities which brought man into existence co-exist in him with the four secondary entities which arose from different combinations of the three primary entities

Now these seven entities which in their totality constitute man, are as follows:— I shall enumerate them in the order adopted in your article, as far as the two orders (the Brahmanical and the Tibetan): —

		Corresponding names in your classification
I	Prakriti. The entity evolved out of	Sthûlaśarîra (Physical Body).
II	the combination of Prakriti and Sakti	Sûkshmamśarîra or Linga-śarîra (Astral Body)
III	Sakti. The entity evolved out of	Kâmarupa (the Pêrisprit)
IV	the combination of Brahman, Sakti and Prakriti.	Jivâtma (Life-Soul)
V	Do. Brahman and Prakriti.	Physical Intelligence (or animal soul)
VI	Do. Brahman and Sakti	Spiritual Intelligence (or Soul).
VII	Brahman.	The emanation from the ABSOLUTE, etc. (or pure spirit.)

Before proceeding to examine the nature of these seven entities, a few general explanations are indispensably necessary.

I. The secondary principles arising out of the combination of primary principles are quite different in their nature from the entities out of whose combination they came into existence. The combinations in question are not of the nature of mere mechanical juxtapositions, as it were. They do not even correspond to chemical combinations. Consequently no valid inferences as regards the nature of the combinations in question, can be drawn by analogy from the nature [variety?] of these combinations.

II. The general proposition that when once a cause is removed its effect vanishes, is not universally applicable. Take, for instance, the following example:—if you once communicate a certain amount of momentum to a ball, velocity of a particular degree in a particular direction is the result. Now, the cause of this motion ceases to exist when the instantaneous sudden impact or blow which conveyed the momentum is completed; but, according to the first Law of Motion, the ball will continue to move on for ever and ever with undiminished velocity in the same direction unless the said motion is altered, diminished, neutralized or counteracted by extraneous causes. Thus, if the ball stop, it will not be on account of the absence of the cause of its motion, but in consequence of the existence of extraneous causes which produce the said result.

Again, take the instance of subjective phenomena.

Now the presence of this inkbottle before me is producing in me or in my mind a mental representation of its form, colour and so forth. The bottle in question may be removed, but still its mental picture may continue to exist. Here, again, you see, the effect survives the cause. Moreover, the effect may at any subsequent time be called into conscious existence, whether the original cause be present or not.

Now, in case of the fifth principle above mentioned--the entity L that came into existence by the combination of Brahman and Prakriti,—if the general proposition (in the “Fragments of Occult Truth”) is correct, this principle which corresponds to the physical intelligence must cease to exist whenever the Brahman or the seventh principle should cease to exist for the particular individual; but the fact is certainly otherwise. You stated the general proposition under consideration in support of your assertion that whenever the seventh principle ceases to exist for any particular individual, the sixth principle also ceases to exist for him. The assertion is undoubtedly true though the mode of stating it and the reasons assigned for it are to my mind objectionable.

You said that in cases where tendencies of a man’s mind are entirely material, and all spiritual aspirations and thoughts were altogether absent from his mind, the seventh principle leaves him either before or at the time of death, and the sixth principle disappears with it. Here, the very proposition that the tendencies of the particular individual’s mind are entirely material, involves the assertion that there is no spiritual intelligence or spiritual Ego in him.

You should then have said that, whenever spiritual intelligence should cease to exist in any particular individual, the seventh principle ceases to exist for that particular individual for all purposes. Of course, it does not fly off anywhere. There can never be anything like a change of position in the case of Brahman.* The assertion merely means that there is no recognition whatever of Brahman, or spirit, or life, or spiritual consciousness, the seventh principle has ceased to exercise any influence or control over the individual's destinies.

I shall now state what is meant (in the Aryan doctrine) by the even principles above enumerated.

I. Prakriti.—This is the basis of Sthûlaarîra and represents it in the above-mentioned classification.

II. Prakriti and Sakti. —This is the Lingaśarira, or astral body.

III. Sakti. —This principle corresponds to your Kâmarupa. This power or force is placed by ancient occultists in the Nâbhichakra. This power can gather akâśa or prakriti and mould it into any desired shape. It has very great sympathy with the fifth principle, and can be made to act by its influence or control.

IV. Brahman, Sakti and Prakriti.—This again corresponds to your second principle, Jîvâtma. This power represents the universal life-principle which exists in nature. Its seat is the Anahatachakra (heart). It is a force or power which constitutes what is called Jîva, or life. It is, as you say, indestructible, and its activity is merely transferred at the time of death to another set of atoms, to form another organism. But it is not called Jîvâtma in our philosophy.

* True—from the standpoint of Aryan Esotericism, and the Upanishads; not quite so in the case of the Arahats or Tibetan esoteric doctrine; and it is only on this one solitary point that the two teachings disagree, as far as we know. The difference is very trifling though, resting, as it does, solely upon the two various methods of viewing the one and the same thing from two different aspects.—See Appendix Note IV.

The term Jîvâtma is generally applied by our philosophers to the seventh principle when it is distinguished from Paramâtma or Parabrahman.*

V. Brahman and Prakriti.—This, in our Aryan philosophy, corresponds to your fifth principle, called the physical intelligence. According to our philosophers, this is the entity in which what is called Mind has its seat or basis. This is the most difficult principle of all to explain, and the present discussion entirely turns upon the view we take of it.

Now, what is mind? It is a mysterious something which is considered to be the seat of consciousness—of sensations, emotions, volitions and thoughts. Psychological analysis shows it to be apparently a congeries of mental states, and possibilities of mental states, connected by what is called memory, and considered to have a distinct existence apart from any of its particular mental states or ideas. Now in what entity has this mysterious something its potential or actual existence? Memory and expectation which form, as it were, the real foundation of what is called individuality, or Ahankâra, must have their seat of existence somewhere. Modern psychologists of Europe generally say that the material substance of Brain is the seat of mind; and that past subjective experiences, which can be recalled by memory, and which in their totality constitute what is called individuality, exist therein in the shape of certain unintelligible mysterious impressions and changes in the nerves and nerve centers of the cerebral hemispheres. Consequently, they say, the mind—the individual mind—is destroyed when the body is destroyed; so there is no possible existence after death.

But there are a few facts among those admitted by these philosophers which are sufficient for us to demolish their theory. In every portion of the human body, a constant change goes on without intermission. Every tissue, every muscular fibre and nerve tube, and every ganglionic centre in the brain is undergoing an incessant change.

* The Impersonal Parabrahman thus being made to merge or separate itself into a personal “jîvâtma,” or the personal god of every human creature. This is, again, a difference necessitated by the Brahmanical belief in a God whether personal or impersonal, while the Buddhist Arahats, rejecting this idea entirely, recognize no deity apart from man. See Appendix, Note V.

In the course of a man's lifetime there may be a series of complete transformations of the substance of his Brain. Nevertheless the memory of his past mental states remains unaltered. There may be additions of new subjective experiences and some mental states may be altogether forgotten, but no individual mental state is altered. The person's sense of individuality remains the same throughout these constant alterations in the brain substance. [This is also sound Buddhist philosophy, the transformation in question being known as the change of the skandhas.—Ed. Theos.] It is able to survive all these changes, and it can survive also the complete destruction of the material substance of the brain.

This individuality arising from mental consciousness has its seat of existence, according to our philosophers, in an occult power or force which keeps a registry, as it were, of all our mental impressions. The power itself is indestructible, though by the operation of certain antagonistic causes its impressions may in course of time be effaced, in part or wholly.

I may mention in this connection that our philosophers, have associated seven occult powers with the seven principles or entities above mentioned. These seven occult powers in the microcosm correspond with, or are the counterparts of, the occult powers in the macrocosm. The mental and spiritual consciousness of the individual becomes the general consciousness of Brahman when the barrier of individuality is wholly removed, and when the seven powers in the microcosm are placed en rapport with the seven powers in the macrocosm.

There is nothing very strange in a power or force, or Sakti carrying with it impressions of sensations, ideas, thoughts, or other subjective experiences. It is now a well-known fact, that an electric or magnetic current can convey in some mysterious manner impressions of sound or speech with all their individual peculiarities; similarly, you know very well that I can convey my thoughts to you by a transmission of energy or power.

Now this fifth principle represents in our philosophy the mind, or, to speak more correctly, the power or force above described, the impressions of the mental states therein, and the notion of individuality or Ahankâra generated by their collective operation. This principle is called merely physical intelligence in your article. I do not know what is really meant by this expression.

It may be taken to mean that intelligence which exists in a very low state of development in the lower animals. Mind may exist in different stages of development, from the very lowest forms of organic life, where the signs of its existence or operation can hardly be distinctly realized, up to man, in whom it reaches its highest state of development.

In fact, from the first appearance of life* up to Turiya Avastha, or the state of Nirvana, the progress is, as it were, continuous. We ascend from that principle up to the seventh by almost imperceptible gradations. But four stages are recognized in the progress where the change is of a peculiar kind, and is such as to arrest an observer's attention. These four stages are as follows:—

(1) Where life (fourth principle) makes its appearance.

(2) Where the existence of mind becomes perceptible in conjunction with life.

(3) Where the highest state of mental abstraction ends, and spiritual consciousness commences.

(4) Where spiritual consciousness disappears, leaving the seventh principle in a complete state of Nirvana, or nakedness.

According to our philosophers, the fifth principle under consideration is intended to represent the mind in every possible state of development, from the second stage up to the third stage.

VI. Brahman and Sakti.—This principle corresponds to your “spiritual intelligence.” It is, in fact, Buddhi (I use the word Buddhi not in the ordinary sense, but in the sense in which it is used by our ancient philosophers); in other words, it is the seat of Bodha or Atmabodha. One who has Atmabodha in its completeness is a Buddha. Buddhists know very well what this term signifies. This principle is described in your article as an entity coming into existence by the combination of Brahman and Prakriti. I do not again know in what particular sense the word Prakriti is used in this connection. According to our philosophers it is an entity arising from the union of Brahman and Sakti. I have already explained the connotation attached by our philosophers to the words Prakriti and Sakti.

* In the Aryan doctrine which blends Brahman, Sakti, and Prakriti in one, it is the fourth principle, then; in the Buddhist esotericism the second in combination with the first.

I stated that Prakriti in its primary state is Akâśa.*

If Akâśa be considered to be Sakti or Power by Theosophists,† then my statement as regards the ultimate state of Prakriti is likely to give rise to confusion and misapprehension unless I explain the distinction between Akâśa and Sakti. Akâśa is not, properly speaking, the Crown of the Astral light, nor does it by itself constitute any of the six primary forces. But, generally speaking, whenever any phenomenal result is produced, Sakti acts in conjunction with Akâśa. And, moreover, Akâśa serves as a basis or Adhithana for the transmission of force currents and for the formation of force or power correlations.‡

In Mantraśastra the letter “Ha” represents Akâśa, and you will find that this syllable enters into most of the sacred formulae intended to be used in producing phenomenal results. But by itself it does not represent any Sakti. You may, if you please, call Sakti an attribute of Akâśa.

I do not think that as regards the nature of this principle there can, in reality, exist any difference of opinion between the Buddhist and Brahmanical philosophers.

* According to the Buddhists in Akâśa lies that eternal, potential energy whose function it is to evolve all visible things out of itself.

† It was never so considered, as we have shown it. But as the “Fragments” are written in English, a language lacking such an abundance of metaphysical terms to express every minute change of form, substance and state as found in the Sanskrit, it was deemed useless to confuse the Western reader untrained in the methods of Eastern expression—more than necessary, with a too nice distinction of proper technical terms. As “Prakriti in its primary state is Akâśa,” and Sakti “is an attribute of AKÂSA,” it becomes evident that for the uninitiated it is all one. Indeed, to speak of the “union of Brahman and Prakriti” instead of “Brahman and Sakti,” is no worse than for a theist to write that “man has come into existence by the combination of spirit and matter,” whereas, his words framed in an orthodox shape, ought to read “man as a living soul was created by the power (or breath) of God over matter.”

‡ That is to say, the Aryan Akâśa is another word for Buddhist SPACE (in its metaphysical meaning).

Buddhist and Brahmanical initiates know very well that mysterious circular mirror composed of two hemispheres which reflects as it were the rays emanating from the “burning bush” and the blazing star—the, Spiritual sun shining in CHIDAKASA.

The spiritual impressions constituting this principle have their existence in an occult power associated with the entity in question. The successive incarnations of Buddha, in fact, mean the successive transfers of this mysterious power or the impressions thereon. The transfer is only possible when the Mahatma* who transfers it, has completely identified himself with his seventh principle, has annihilated his Ahankâra and reduced it to ashes in CHIDAGNIKUNDA and has succeeded in making his thoughts correspond with the eternal laws of nature and in becoming a co-worker with nature. Or to put the same thing in other words, when he has attained the state of Nirvana, the condition of final negation, negation of individual or separate existence.†

VII. Atma.—The emanation from the absolute, corresponding to the seventh principle. As regards this entity there exists positively no real difference of opinion between the Tibetan Buddhist adepts and our ancient Rishis.

We must now consider which of these entities can appear after the individual’s death in séance rooms and produce the so-called spiritualistic phenomena.

Now, the assertion of the Spiritualists that the “disembodied spirits” of particular human beings appear in séance rooms necessarily implies that the entity that so appears bears the stamp of some particular individual’s individuality?

So, we have to ascertain beforehand in what entity or entities individuality has its seat of existence. Apparently it exists in the person’s particular formation of body, and in his subjective experiences (called his mind in their totality). On the death of the individual his body is destroyed; his lingaśarîra being decomposed, the power associated with it becomes mingled in the current of the corresponding powers in the macrocosm.

* The highest adept.

† In the words of a gatha in the Mahâ-pari-nirvâna-Sûtra,

“We reach a condition of Rest

“Beyond the limit of any human knowledge.”

Similarly, the third and fourth principles are mingled with their corresponding powers. These entities may again enter into the composition of other organisms. As these entities bear no impression of individuality, the Spiritualists have no right to say that the “disembodied spirit” of the human being has appeared in the séance room whenever any of these entities may appear there. In fact, they have no means of ascertaining that they belonged to any particular individual.

Therefore, we must only consider whether any of the last three entities appear in séance rooms to amuse or to instruct Spiritualists. Let us take three particular examples of individuals and see what becomes of these three principles after death.

1. One in whom spiritual attachments have greater force than terrestrial attachments.

II. One in whom spiritual aspirations do exist, but are merely of secondary importance to him, his terrestrial interests occupying the greater share of his attention.

III. One in whom there exist no spiritual aspirations whatsoever, one whose spiritual Ego is dead or non-existent to his apprehension.

We need not consider the case of a complete Adept in this connection. In the first two cases, according to our supposition, spiritual and mental experiences exist together; when spiritual consciousness exists, the existence of the seventh principle being recognized, it maintains its connection with the fifth and sixth principles. But the existence of terrestrial attachments creates the necessity of Punarjanman, the latter signifying the evolution of a new set of objective and subjective experiences, constituting a new combination of surrounding circumstances or, in other words, a new world. The period between death and the next subsequent birth is occupied with the preparation required for the evolution of these new experiences. During the period of incubation, as you call it, the spirit will never of its own accord appear in this world, nor can it so appear.

There is a great law in this universe which consists in the reduction of subjective experiences to objective phenomena and the evolution of the former from the latter. This is otherwise called “cyclic necessity.” Man is subjected to this law if he does not check and counterbalance the usual destiny or fate, and he can only escape its control by subduing all his terrestrial attachments completely.

The new combination of circumstances under which he will then be placed may be better or worse than the terrestrial conditions under which he lived. But in his progress to a new world, you may be sure he will never turn around to have a look at his spiritualistic friends.*

In the third of the above three cases there is by our supposition, no recognition of spiritual consciousness or of spirit. So they are non-existing so far as he is concerned. The case is similar to that of an organ of faculty which remains unused for a long time. It then practically ceases to exist.

These entities, as it were, remain his or in his possession, when they are stamped with the stamp of recognition. When such is not the case, the whole of his individuality is centered in his fifth principle. And after death this fifth principle is the only representative of the individual in question.

By itself it cannot evolve for itself a new set of objective experiences, or to say the same thing in other words, it has no Punarjanman. It is such an entity that can appear in séance rooms; but it is absurd to call it a disembodied spirit† It is merely a power or force retaining the impressions of the thoughts or ideas of the individual into whose composition it originally entered. It sometimes summons to its aid the Kâmarûpa power, and creates for itself some particular ethereal form (not necessarily human).

Its tendencies of action will be similar to those of the individual's mind when he was living. This entity maintains its existence so long as the impressions on the power associated with the fifth principle remain intact. In course of time they are effaced, and the power in question is then mixed up in the current of its corresponding power in the MACROCOSM, as the river loses itself in the sea.

* As M.A. (Oxon.) will see, the Spiritualists have still less chance of having their claims recognized by Brahmanical than by Buddhist occultists.

† It is especially on this point that the Aryan and Arhat doctrines quite agree. The teaching and argument that follow are, in every respect, those of the Buddhist Himalayan Brotherhood.

Entities like these may afford signs of there having been considerable intellectual power in the individuals to which they belonged; because very high intellectual power may co-exist with utter absence of spiritual consciousness. But from this circumstance it cannot be argued that either the spirits or the spiritual Egos of deceased individuals appear in séance rooms.

There are some people in India who have thoroughly studied the nature of such entities (called *Písacha*). I do not know much about them experimentally, as I have never meddled with this disgusting, profitless, and dangerous branch of investigation.

Your Spiritualists do not know what they are really doing. Their investigations are likely to result in course of time either in wicked sorcery or in the utter spiritual ruin of thousands of men and women.*

The views I have herein expressed have been often illustrated by our ancient writers by comparing the course of a man's life or existence to the orbital motion of a planet round the sun. Centripetal force is spiritual attraction and centrifugal terrestrial attraction. As the centripetal force increases in power in comparison with the centrifugal force, the planet approaches the sun—the individual reaches a higher plane of existence. If, on the other hand, the centrifugal force becomes greater than the centripetal force, the planet is removed to a greater distance from the sun, and moves in a new orbit at that distance—the individual comes to a lower level of existence. These are illustrated in the first two instances I have noticed above.

We have only to consider the two extreme cases.

When the planet in its approach to the sun passes over the line where the centripetal and centrifugal forces completely neutralize each other and is only acted on by the centripetal force, it rushes towards the sun with a gradually increasing velocity and is finally mixed up with the mass of the sun's body. This is the case of a complete adept.

Again, when the planet in its retreat from the sun reaches a point where the centrifugal force becomes all-powerful it flies off in a tangential direction from its orbit, and goes into the depths of void space. When it ceases to be under the control of the sun, it gradually gives up its generative heat and the creative energy that it originally derived from the sun and remains a cold mass of material wandering through space until the mass is completely decomposed into atoms.

* We share entirely in this idea.

This cold mass is compared to the fifth principle under the conditions above noticed, and the heat, light, and energy that left it are compared to the sixth and seventh principles.

Either after assuming a new orbit or in its course of deviation from the old orbit to the new, the planet can never go back to any point in its old orbit, as the various orbits lying in different planes never intersect each other.

This figurative representation correctly explains the ancient Brahmanical theory on the subject. It is merely a branch of what is called the Great Law of the Universe by the ancient mystics . . .

EDITORIAL APPENDIX TO THE ABOVE

NOTE I.

In this connection it will be well to draw the reader's attention, to the fact that the country called "Si-dzang" by the Chinese, and Tibet by Western geographers, is mentioned in the oldest books preserved in the province of Fokien (the chief headquarters of the aborigines of China)—as the great seat of occult learning in the archaic ages. According to these records, it was inhabited by the "Teachers of Light," the "Sons of Wisdom" and the "Brothers of the Sun." The Emperor Yu the "Great" (2207 B.C.), a pious mystic, is credited with having obtained his occult wisdom and the system of theocracy established by him—for he was the first one in China to unite ecclesiastical power with temporal authority—from Si-dzang. That system was the same as with the old Egyptians and the Chaldees; that which we know to have existed in the Brahmanical period in India, and to exist now in Tibet: namely, all the learning, power, the temporal as well as the secret wisdom were concentrated within the hierarchy of the priests and limited to their caste.

Who were the aborigines of Tibet is a question which no ethnographer is able to answer correctly at present. They practice the Bön religion, their sect is a pre- and anti-Buddhistic one, and they are to be found mostly in the province of Kham—that is all that is known of them. But even that would justify the supposition that they are the greatly degenerated descendents of mighty and wise forefathers. Their ethnical type shows that they are not pure Turanians, and their rites—now those of sorcery, incantations, and nature worship, remind one far more of the popular rites of the Babylonians, as found in the records preserved on the excavated cylinders, than of the religious practices of the Chinese sect of Tao-sse—(a religion based upon pure reason and spirituality)—as alleged by some. Generally, little or no difference is made even by the Khelang missionaries who mix greatly with these people on the borders of British Lahul—and ought to know better—between the Böns and the two rival Buddhist sects, the Yellow Caps and the Red Caps. The latter of these have opposed the reform of Tsong-Kha-pa from the first and have always adhered to old Buddhism so greatly mixed up now with the practices of the Böns. Were our Orientalists to know more of them, and compare the ancient Babylonian Bel or Baal worship with the rites of the Böns, they would find an undeniable connection between the two. To begin an argument here, proving the origin of the aborigines of Tibet as connected with one of the three great races which superseded each other in Babylonia, whether we call them the Akkadians (invented by F. Lenormant), or the primitive Turanians, Chaldees and Assyrians—is out of the question. Be it as it may, there is reason to call the trans-Himalayan esoteric doctrine, Chaldeo-Tibetan. And, when we remember that the Vedas came—agreeably to all traditions—from the Manasarowara Lake in Tibet, and the Brahmins themselves from the far North, we are justified in looking on the esoteric doctrines of every people who once had or still have it—as having proceeded from one and the same source; and, to thus call it the “Aryan-Chaldeo-Tibetan” doctrine, or Universal WISDOM—Religion.

“Seek for the LOST WORD among the hierophants of Tartary, China and Tibet,” was the advice of Swedenborg, the seer.

NOTE II.

Not necessarily—we say. The Vedas, Brahmanism, and along with these, Sanskrit, were importations into what we now regard as India. They were never indigenous to its soil. There was a time when the ancient nations of the West included under the generic name of India many of the countries of Asia now classified under other names. There was an Upper, a Lower, and a Western India, even during the comparatively late period of Alexander; and Persia-Iran is called Western India in some ancient classics. The countries now named Tibet, Mongolia, and Great Tartary were considered by them as forming part of India. When we say, therefore, that India has civilized the world and was the Alma Mater of the civilizations, arts and sciences of all other nations (Babylonia, and perhaps even Egypt, included) we mean archaic, pre-historic India, India of the time when the great Gobi was a sea, and the lost “Atlantis” formed part of an unbroken continent which began at the Himalayas and ran down over Southern India, Ceylon, Java, to faraway Tasmania.

NOTE III.

To ascertain such disputed questions, one has to look into and study well the Chinese sacred and historical records—a people whose era begins nearly 4,600 years back (2697 B.C.). A people so accurate and by whom some of the most important inventions of modern Europe and its so much boasted modern science were anticipated—such as the compass, gunpowder, porcelain, paper, printing, etc., known, and practiced thousands of years before these were re-discovered by the Europeans—ought to receive some trust for their records. And from Lao-tze down to Hiuen-Tsang their literature is filled with allusions and references to that island and the wisdom of the Himalayan adepts.

In A Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese, by the Rev. Samuel Beal, there is a chapter "On the Tian-Ta'i School of Buddhism" (pp. 244-258) which our opponents ought to read. Translating the rules of that most celebrated and holy school and sect in China founded by Chinche-K'hae, called Che-chay (the wise one) in the year 575 of our era, when coming to the sentence which reads: "That which relates to the one garment [seamless] worn by the GREAT TEACHERS OF THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS (the school of the Haimavatas)" (p. 256) the European translator places after the last sentence a sign of interrogation, as well he may. The statistics of the school of the "Haimavatas" or of our Himalayan Brotherhood, are not to be found in the General Census Records of India. Further, Mr. Beal translates a Rule relating to "the great professors of the higher order, who live in mountain depths remote from men," the Aranyakas, or hermits.

So, with respect to the traditions concerning this island, and apart from the (to them) historical records of this preserved in the Chinese and Tibetan Sacred Books: the legend is alive to this day among the people of Tibet. The fair Island is no more, but the country where it once bloomed remains there still, and the spot is well known to some of the "great teachers of the snowy mountains," however much convulsed and changed its topography by the awful cataclysm. Every seventh year, these teachers are believed to assemble in Sambhala, the "happy land." According to the general belief it is situated in the North-West of Tibet. Some place it within the unexplored central regions, inaccessible even to the fearless nomadic tribes; others hem it in between the range of the Gangdisri Mountains and the northern edge of the Gobi Desert, South and North, and the more populated regions of Kunduz and Kashmir, of the Gya-Pheling (British India), and China, West and East, which affords to the curious mind a pretty large latitude to locate it in.

Others still place it between Namur-Nor and the Kuen-Lun Mountains—but one and all firmly believe in Sambhala, and speak of it as a fertile, fairylike land, once an island, now an oasis of incomparable beauty, the place of meeting of the inheritors of the esoteric wisdom of the godlike inhabitants of the legendary Island.*

In connection with the archaic legend of the Asian Sea and the Atlantic Continent, is it not profitable to note a fact known to all modern geologists—that the Himalayan slopes afford geological proof, that the substance of those lofty peaks was once a part of an ocean floor?

NOTE IV.

We have already pointed out that, in our opinion, the whole difference between Buddhistic and Vedantic philosophies was that the former was a kind of rationalistic Vedantism, while the latter might be regarded as transcendental Buddhism. If the Aryan esotericism applies the term *jivatma* to the seventh principle, the pure and per se unconscious spirit—it is because the Vedanta postulating three kinds of existence—(1) the *pâramârthika* (the true, the only real one), (2) the *vyâvahârîka* (the practical), and (3) the *pratibhâsika* (the apparent or illusory life)—makes the first life or *jiva*, the only truly existent one. Brahma or the ONE SELF is its only representative in the universe, as it is the universal life in toto while the other two are but its “phenomenal appearances,” imagined and created by ignorance, and complete illusions suggested to us by our blind senses.

* [The Gangdisri Range is also known as Tisse-Gangrî and Kailas Range. It runs parallel to, and to the North of, the Himâlayas, and in its Eastern part blends into the Nyenchentanglha Range. Towards its Western portion, not far from the sources of the Indus River, rises the majestic pyramidal massif of Kailas (22,000 feet), called by the Tibetans Tisse. Some geographers consider this range to be merely the prolongation of the Karakorum Mountains. Kailas is not far from the sacred Lake of Manasa-sarovara.

Namur-Nor is a lake in the Northern part of the province of Gnari-Khorsum, at approximately the 34th degree of Northern Latitude.

It is obvious that H. P. B., in speaking of the geographical location of the land of Sambhala, hides more than she reveals, as the area which she mentions extends over enormous distances in all directions.—Compiler.]

The Buddhists, on the other hand, deny either subjective or objective reality even to that one Self-Existence. Buddha declares that there is neither Creator nor an ABSOLUTE Being. Buddhist rationalism was ever too alive to the insuperable difficulty of admitting one absolute consciousness, as in the words of Flint —“wherever there is consciousness there is relation, and wherever there is relation there is dualism.” The ONE LIFE is either “MUKTA” (absolute and unconditioned) and can have no relation to anything nor to any one; or it is “BADDHA” (bound and conditioned), and then it cannot be called the ABSOLUTE; the limitation, moreover, necessitating another deity as powerful as the first to account for all the evil in this world. Hence, the Arahat secret doctrine on cosmogony admits but of one absolute, indestructible, eternal, and uncreated UNCONSCIOUSNESS (so to translate), of an element (the word being used for want of a better term) absolutely independent of everything else in the universe; a something ever present or ubiquitous, a Presence which ever was, is, and will be, whether there is a God, gods or none; whether there is a universe or no universe; existing during the eternal cycles of Maha Yugas, during the Pralayas as during the periods of Manvantara: and this is SPACE, the field for the operation of the eternal Forces and natural Law, the basis (as our correspondent rightly calls it) upon which take place the eternal intercorrelations of Akâśa-Prakriti, guided by the unconscious regular pulsations of Sakti—the breath or power of a conscious deity, the theists would say—the eternal energy of an eternal, unconscious Law, say the Buddhists. Space then, or Fan, Bar-nang (Mahâ-Sûnyatâ) or, as it is called by Lao-tze, the “Emptiness” is the nature of the Buddhist Absolute. (See Confucius’ “Praise of the Abyss.”) The word jiva then, could never be applied by the Arahats to the Seventh Principle, since it is only through its correlation or contact with matter that Fo-hat (the Buddhist active energy) can develop active conscious life; and that to the question “how can Unconsciousness generate consciousness?” the answer would be: “Was the seed which generated a Bacon or a Newton self-conscious?”

NOTE V.

To our European readers: Deceived by the phonetic similarity, it must not be thought that the name “Brahman” is identical in this connection with Brahmâ or Íswara—the personal God. The Upanishads the Vedanta Scriptures—mention no such God and, one would vainly seek in them any allusions to a conscious deity. The Brahman, or Parabrahm, the ABSOLUTE of the Vedantins, is neuter and unconscious, and has no connection with the masculine Brahma of the Hindu Triad, or Trimûrti. Some Orientalists rightly believe the name derived from the verb “brih,” to grow or increase, and to be, in this sense, the universal expansive force of nature, the vivifying and spiritual principle, or power, spread throughout the universe and which in its collectivity is the one Absoluteness, the one Life and the only Reality.

FOOTNOTES TO “LAKSHMIBAI”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 4, January, 1882, p. 100]

[This purports to be an authentic story of a bhûta. The narrator’s aunt became ill and rapidly grew worse until little hope of her recovery remained. On the day prior to her death she told her sister that she felt she would live only a day or two, and expressed her desire to be removed before her death to some other place, because, she said, “everyone who had died in the room became a bhût,” and she wanted to avoid such a terrible fate. On the next day she died in that room, no one having remembered the wish she had expressed. Six months later a sister-in-law of the narrator was seized with violent trembling and her body became burning hot. Conjecturing that an evil spirit had taken possession of her, her mother-in-law questioned her to ascertain who that spirit was; the ghost introduced itself as Lakshmibai, the aunt who had died.]

The narrative concludes with the query whether the soul of Lakshmibai remained earthbound by her anxiety to be removed from the sick room which she believed to be a place where an escaping soul was apt to become a bhûta. H. P. B. makes the following comments:]

[Bhûta] A ghost, an earthbound spirit or “Elementary.” We give room to this interesting story, in order to show the Western Spiritualists, once more and again, that, while believing in the possibility of returning “spirits,” the Hindus fear and detest them, giving them the epithet of “devils” instead of “departed angels,” and considering such a return in each case as a curse to be avoided and removed as soon as possible.

The ghost’s assertions through her medium, prove nothing in this case. The lady so possessed knew as much of the deceased as the rest of the family. It might have been any spook for all the narrator knows, who personated Lakshmibai, and the correct answers were no test at all.

[“The ghost replied that she had to suffer in consequence of the idea of her not being removed from the sick room, forcibly striking her and preying on her mind at the time of death.”]

This again may lead one to suspect (and we now speak from the standpoint of Eastern Occultism) that it was the dying woman’s last thought, the *idée fixe* (the intensity of which makes of living people monomaniacs, and spreads for an indefinite time its magnetic unhealthy influence after the brain which generated it had long time ceased to exist)—that idea that had so long worried her dying mind, namely that she was going to become a bhûta unless removed—that infected also the mind of her relative. A man dies of a contagious disease; months after his death, aye, years a bit of clothing, an object touched by him during his sickness, may communicate the disease to a person more physiologically sensitive than the persons around him, and while having no effect upon the latter. And why should not an idea, a thought, exercise the same influence? Thought is no less material nor objective than the imponderable and mysterious germs of various infectious diseases the causes of which are such a puzzle for science. Since the mind of a living person can so influence another mind, that the former can force the latter to think and believe whatever it will—in short, to psychologize another mind, so can the thought of a person already dead.

Once generated and sent out, that thought will live upon its own energy. It has become independent of the brain and mind which gave it birth. So long as its concentrated energy remains undissipated, it can act as a potential influence when brought into contact with the living brain and nervous system of a person susceptibly predisposed. The unhealthy action thus provoked may lead the sensitive into a temporary insanity of self-delusion that quite clouds the sense of his own individuality. The morbid action thus once set up, the whole floating group of the dead man's thoughts rushes into the sensitive's brain, and he can give what seems test after test of the presence of the deceased and convince the predisposed investigator that the individuality of the control, "guide," or communicating intelligence is thoroughly established.

THE UNIVERSE IN A NUTSHELL

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 4, January, 1882, pp. 102-104]

The article on dreams alluded to in the following letter is reprinted with the desired explanatory notes for the information of our readers:

TO THE EDITOR.

The accompanying extract is from an article in a recent issue of Chambers' Journal. I hope you will reprint the same and kindly give full explanations upon the following subjects:—

(1) Are dreams always real? If so, what produces them; if not real, yet may they not have in themselves some deep significance?

(2) Tell us something about our ante-natal state of existence and the transmigration of soul?

(3) Give us anything that is worth knowing about Psychology as suggested by this article?

Your most fraternally and obediently,

JEHANGIR CURSETJI TARACHAND, F.T.S.

Bombay, November 10, 1881.

Editor's Answer.

To put our correspondent's request more exactly, he desires The Theosophist to cull into the limits of a column or two the facts embraced within the whole range of all the sublunar mysteries with "full explanations." These would embrace—

(1) The complete philosophy of dreams, as deduced from their physiological, biological, psychological and occult aspects.

(2) The Buddhist Jatakas (re-births and migrations of our Lord Sakya-Muni) with a philosophical essay upon the transmigrations of the 387,000 Buddhas who "turned the wheel of faith," during the successive revelations to the world of the 125,000 other Buddhas, the Saints who can "overlook and unravel the thousandfold knotted threads of the moral chain of causation," throwing in a treatise upon the Nidanas, the chain of twelve causes with a complete list of their two millions of results, and copious appendices by some Arahats, "who have attained the stream which floats into Nirvana."

(3) The compounded reveries of the world-famous psychologists; from the Egyptian Hermes, and his Book of the Dead; Plato's definition of the Soul, in Timaeus; and so on, down to the Drawing-Room Nocturnal Chats with a Disembodied Soul, by Rev. Adramelech Romeo Tiberius Toughskin from Cincinnatti.

Such is the modest task proposed. Suppose we first give the article which has provoked so great a thirst for philosophical information, and then try to do what we can. It is a curious case—if not altogether a literary fiction:

DREAM-LAND AND SOMNAMBULISM

The writer of this article has a brother-in-law who has felt some of his dreams to be of a remarkable and significant character; and his experience shows that there is a strange and inexplicable connection between such dreams and the state of somnambulism. Before giving in detail some instances of somnambulism as exhibited by him and also by his daughter, I will give an account of one of his dreams, which has been four times repeated in its striking and salient points at uncertain periods, during the past thirty years. He was in his active youth a practical agriculturist, but now lives retired. All his life he has been spare of flesh, active, cheerful, very companionable, and not in any sense what is called a bookworm. His dream was as follows:—He found himself alone, standing in front of a monument of very solid masonry, looking vacantly at the north side of it, when to his astonishment, the middle stones on the level of his sight gradually opened and slid down one on another, until an opening was made large enough to uphold a man. All of a sudden, a little man, dressed in black, with a large bald head, appeared inside the opening, seemingly fixed there by reason of his feet and legs being buried in the masonry. The expression of his face was mild and intelligent.

They looked at each other for what seemed a long time without either of them attempting to speak, and all the while my brother's astonishment increased. At length, as the dreamer expressed himself, "The little man in black with the bald head and serene countenance" said: "Don't you know me? I am the man whom you murdered in an ante-natal state of existence; and I am waiting until you come, and shall wait without sleeping. There is no evidence of the foul deed in your state of human existence, so you need not trouble yourself in your moral life—shut me again in darkness.

The dreamer began, as he thought, to put the stones in their original position, remarking as he expressed himself—to the little man:—"This is all a dream of yours, for there is no ante-natal state of existence." The little man who seemed to grow less and less, said: "Cover me over and begone." At this the dreamer awoke.

Years passed away, and the dream was forgotten in the common acceptance of the term, when behold! without any previous thought of the matter, he dreamed that he was standing in the sunshine, facing an ancient garden wall that belonged to a large unoccupied mansion, when the stones in front of it began to fall out with a gently sliding motion, and soon revealed the selfsame mysterious person, and everything pertaining to him, including his verbal utterances as on the first occasion, though an uncertain number of years had passed. The same identical dream has since occurred twice at irregular periods; but there was no change in the facial appearance of the little man in black.

Editor's Note.—We do not feel competent to pronounce upon the merits or demerits of this particular dream. The interpretation of it may be safely left with the Daniels of physiology who, like W. A. Hammond, M.D., of New York, explain dreams and somnambulism as due to an exalted condition of the spinal cord.* It may have been a meaningless, chance-dream, brought about by a concatenation of thoughts which occupy mechanically the mind during sleep—

"That dim twilight of the mind,
When Reason's beam, half hid behind
The clouds of sense, obscurely gilds
Each shadowy shape that fancy builds."—

—when our mental operations go on independently of our conscious volition.

* [Most likely in his work: *Sleep, and its derangements*, Philadelphia, 1869.—Compiler.]

Our physical senses are the agents by means of which the astral spirit or “conscious something” within, is brought by contact with the external world to a knowledge of actual existence; while the spiritual senses of the astral man are the media, the telegraphic wires, by means of which he communicates with his higher principles, and obtains therefrom the faculties of clear perception of, and vision into, the realms of the invisible world.* The Buddhist philosopher holds that by the practice of the dhyanas one may reach “the enlightened condition of mind which exhibits itself by immediate recognition of sacred truth, so that on opening the Scriptures [or any books whatsoever?] their true meaning at once flashes into the heart . . .” [Beal’s *Catena*, etc., p. 255.]† If the first time, however, the above dream was meaningless, the three following times it may have recurred by the suddenly awakening of that portion of the brain to which it was due—as in dreaming, or in somnambulism, the brain is asleep only in parts, and called into action through the agency of the external senses, owing to some peculiar cause: a word pronounced, a thought, or picture lingering dormant in one of the cells of memory, and awakened by a sudden noise, the fall of a stone, suggesting instantaneously to this half-dreamy fancy of the sleeper walls of masonry, and so on. When one is suddenly startled in his sleep without becoming fully awake, he does not begin and terminate his dream with the simple noise which partially awoke him, but often experiences in his dream, a long train of events concentrated within the brief space of time the sound occupies, and to be attributed solely to that sound. Generally dreams are induced by the waking associations which precede them. Some of them produce such an impression that the slightest idea in the direction of any subject associated with a particular dream may bring its recurrence years after. Tartini, the famous Italian violinist, composed his “Devil’s Sonata” under the inspiration of a dream.

* See Editor’s Note on the letter that follows this one, “Are Dreams but Idle Visions?”

† [Italics are H. P. B.’s.Compiler.]

During his sleep he thought the Devil appeared to him and challenged him to a trial of skill upon his own private violin, brought by him from the infernal regions, which challenge Tartini accepted. When he awoke, the melody of the “Devil’s Sonata” was so vividly impressed upon his mind that he there and then noted it down; but when arriving towards the finale all further recollection of it was suddenly obliterated, and he laid aside the incomplete piece of music. Two years later, he dreamt the very same thing and tried in his dream to make himself recollect the finale upon awaking. The dream was repeated owing to a blind street musician fiddling on his instrument under the artist’s window. Coleridge composed in a like manner his poem *Kubla Khan*, in a dream, which, on awaking, he found so vividly impressed upon his mind that he wrote down the famous lines which are still preserved. The dream was due to the poet falling asleep in his chair while reading in Purchas’ *Pilgrimage* the following words: “Here, the Khan Kublai commanded a palace to be built . . . enclosed within a wall.”

The popular belief that among the vast number of meaningless dreams there are some in which presages are frequently given of coming events is shared by many well-informed persons, but not at all by science. Yet there are numberless instances of well-attested dreams which were verified by subsequent events, and which, therefore, may be termed prophetic. The Greek and Latin classics teem with records of remarkable dreams, some of which have become historical. Faith in the spritual nature of dreaming was as widely disseminated among the pagan philosophers as among the Christian fathers of the church, nor is belief in soothsaying and interpretations of dreams (oneiromancy) limited to the heathen nations of Asia, since the Bible is full of them. This is what Éliphas Lévi, the great modern Kabalist, says of such divinations, visions and prophetic dreams.

Somnambulism, premonitions and second sight are but a disposition, whether accidental or habitual, to dream awake, or during a voluntary, self-induced, or yet natural sleep, i.e., to perceive [and guess by intuition] the analogical reflections of the Astral Light . . .

The paraphernalia and instruments of divinations are simply means for [magnetic] communications between the divinator and him who consults him: they serve to fix and concentrate two wills [bent in the same direction] upon the same sign or object; the vague, complicated, moving figures helping to collect the reflections of the Astral fluid. Thus one is enabled, at times, to see in the grounds of a coffee cup, or in the clouds, in the white of an egg, etc., etc., fatidic forms having their existence but in the translucent, or the seer's imagination. Vision-seeing in the water is produced by the fatigue of the dazzled optic nerve, which ends by ceding its functions to the translucent, and calling forth a cerebral illusion, which makes to seem as real images the simple reflections of the astral light. Thus the fittest persons for this kind of divination are those of a nervous temperament whose sight is weak and imagination vivid, children being the best of all adapted for it. But let no one misinterpret the nature of the function attributed by us to imagination in the art of divination. We see through our imagination doubtless, and that is the natural aspect of the miracle; but we see actual and true things, and it is in this that lies the marvel of the natural phenomenon. We appeal for corroboration of what we say to the testimony of all the true adepts . . .”*

And now we give room to a second letter which relates to us a dream verified by undeniable events.

*Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie, Vol. I, pp. 356-77 in 6th ed. [Italics are H. P. B.'s.]

ARE DREAMS BUT IDLE VISIONS?

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 4, January, 1882, pp. 104-105]

[The letter referred to asked for an explanation of two dreams in which a Hindu gentleman, while away from home, saw his wife suffering from cholera, his visions being a few hours later confirmed by a letter. H. P. B. replied:]

“Dreams are but interludes which fancy makes,”* Dryden tells us; perhaps to show that even a poet will make occasionally his muse subservient to sciolistic prejudice.

The instance as above given is one of a series of what may be regarded as exceptional cases in dream-life, the generality of dreams, being indeed, but “interludes which fancy makes.” And, it is the policy of materialistic, matter-of-fact science to superbly ignore such exceptions, on the ground, perchance, that the exception confirms the rule—we rather think, to avoid the embarrassing task of explaining such exceptions. Indeed, if one single instance stubbornly refuses classification with “strange coincidences”—so much in favour with sceptics—then, prophetic, or verified dreams would demand an entire remodeling of physiology. As in regard to phrenology, the recognition and acceptance by science of prophetic dreams—(hence the recognition of the claims of Theosophy and Spiritualism)—would, it is contended, “carry with it a new educational, social, political, and theological science.” Result: Science will never recognize either dreams, spiritualism, or occultism.

Human nature is an abyss which physiology and human science, in general, has sounded less than some who have never heard the word physiology pronounced.

* [Fables: The Cock and the Fox, p. 325.]

Never are the high censors of the Royal Society more perplexed than when brought face to face with that insolvable mystery—man’s inner nature. The key to it is—man’s dual being. It is that key that they refuse to use, well aware that if once the door of the adytum be flung open they will be forced to drop one by one their cherished theories and final conclusions—more than once proved to have been no better than hobbies, false as everything built upon, and starting from false or incomplete premises. If we must remain satisfied with the half explanations of physiology as regards meaningless dreams, how account, in such case, for the numerous facts of verified dreams? To say that man is a dual being; that in man—to use the words of Paul—”There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body”—and that, therefore, he must, of necessity, have a double set of senses —is tantamount, in the opinion of the educated sceptic, to uttering an unpardonable, most unscientific fallacy. Yet it has to be uttered—science notwithstanding.

Man is undeniably endowed with a double set: with natural or physical senses—these to be safely left to physiology to deal with; and, with sub-natural or spiritual senses belonging entirely to the province of psychological science. The Latin word “sub,” let it be well understood, is used here in a sense diametrically opposite to that given to it—in chemistry, for instance. In our case it is not a preposition, but a prefix as in “sub-tonic” or “sub-bass” in music. Indeed, as the aggregate sound of nature is shown to be a single definite tone, a keynote vibrating from and through eternity; having an undeniable existence per se yet possessing an appreciable pitch but for “the acutely fine ear”^{*}—so the definite harmony or disharmony of man’s external nature is seen by the observant to depend wholly on the character of the keynote struck for the outer by the inner man. It is the spiritual EGO or SELF that serves as the fundamental base, determining the tone of the whole life of man—that most capricious, uncertain and variable of all instruments, and which more than any other needs constant tuning; it is its voice alone, which like the sub-bass of an organ underlies the melody of his whole life—whether its tones are sweet or harsh, harmonious or wild, legato or pizzicato.

^{*} This tone is held by the specialists to be the middle F of the piano.

Therefore, we say, man, in addition to the physical, has also a spiritual brain. If the former is wholly dependent for the degree of its receptivity on its own physical structure and development, it is, on the other hand, entirely subordinate to the latter, inasmuch as it is the spiritual Ego alone, and accordingly as it leans more towards its two highest principles,* or towards its physical shell, that can impress more or less vividly the outer brain with the perception of things purely spiritual or immaterial. Hence it depends on the acuteness of the mental feelings of the inner Ego, on the degree of spirituality of its faculties, to transfer the impression of the scenes its semi-spiritual brain perceives, the words it hears and what it feels, to the sleeping physical brain of the outer man. The stronger the spirituality of the faculties of the latter, the easier it will be for the Ego to awake the sleeping hemispheres, arouse into activity the sensory ganglia and the cerebellum, and to impress the former—always in full inactivity and rest during the deep sleep of man, with the vivid picture of the subject so transferred. In a sensual, unspiritual man, in one whose mode of life and animal proclivities and passions have entirely disconnected his fifth principle or animal, astral Ego, from its higher “Spiritual Soul”; as also in him whose hard, physical labour has so worn out the material body as to render him temporarily insensible to the voice and touch of his Astral Soul—during sleep the brains of both these men remain in a complete state of anemia [sic] or full inactivity. Such persons rarely, if ever, will have any dreams at all, least of all “visions that come to pass.”

* The sixth principle, or spiritual soul, and the seventh—its purely spiritual principle, the “Spirit” or Parabrahm, the emanation from the unconscious ABSOLUTE. (See “Fragments of Occult Truth,” No. 1.)

In the former, as the waking time approaches, and his sleep becomes lighter, the mental changes beginning to take place, they will constitute dreams in which intelligence will play no part; his half-awakened brain suggesting but pictures which are only the hazy grotesque reproductions of his wild habits in life; while in the latter—unless strongly preoccupied with some exceptional thought—his ever-present instinct of active habits will not permit him to remain in that state of semi-sleep during which, consciousness beginning to return, we see dreams of various kinds, but will arouse him at once, and without any interlude to full wakefulness. On the other hand, the more spiritual a man, the more active his fancy, and the greater probability of his receiving in vision the correct impressions conveyed to him by his all-seeing, his ever-wakeful Ego. The spiritual senses of the latter, unimpeded as they are by the interference of the physical senses, are in direct intimacy with his highest spiritual principle; and the latter, though per se quasi-unconscious—part of the utterly unconscious, because utterly immaterial Absolute*—yet has in itself inherent capabilities of Omniscience, Omnipresence and Omnipotence which, as soon as the pure essence comes in contact with pure sublimated and (to us) imponderable matters, imparts these attributes in a degree to the as pure Astral Ego.

* To this teaching every kind of exception will be taken by the Theists and various objections raised by the Spiritualists. It is evident, that we cannot be expected to give within the narrow limits of a short article a full explanation of this highly abstruse and esoteric doctrine. To say that the ABSOLUTE CONSCIOUSNESS is Unconscious of its consciousness, hence to the limited intellect of man must be “ABSOLUTE UNCONSCIOUSNESS,” seems like speaking of a square triangle. We hope to develop the proposition more fully in one of the forthcoming numbers of “Fragments of Occult Truth” of which we may publish a series. We will then prove, perhaps, to the satisfaction of the non-prejudiced that the Absolute, or the Unconditioned, and (especially) the unrelated, is a mere fanciful abstraction, a fiction, unless we view it from the standpoint and in the light of the more educated pantheist. To do so, we will have to regard the “Absolute” merely as the aggregate of all intelligences, the totality of all existences, incapable of manifesting itself but through the interrelationship of its parts, as It is absolutely incognizable and non-existent outside its phenomena, and depends entirely on its ever-correlating Forces, dependent in their turn on the ONE GREAT LAW.

Hence highly spiritual persons, will see visions and dreams during sleep and even in their hours of wakefulness: these are the sensitives, the natural-born seers, now loosely termed “spiritual mediums,” there being no distinction made between a subjective seer, a neuropsychological subject, and even an adept—one who has made himself independent of his physiological idiosyncrasies and has entirely subjected the outer to the inner man. Those less spiritually endowed will see such dreams but at rare intervals, the accuracy of the latter depending on the intensity of their feeling in regard to the perceived object.

Had Babu Jugut Chunder’s case been more seriously gone into, we would have learned that for one or several reasons, either he or his wife was intensely attached to the other; or that the question of her life or death was of the greatest importance to either one or both of them. “One soul sends a message to another soul”—is an old saying. Hence, premonitions, dreams, and visions. At all events, and in this dream at least, there were no “disembodied” spirits at work, the warning being solely due to either one or the other, or both of the two living and incarnated Egos.

Thus, in this question of verified dreams, as in so many others, Science stands before an unsolved problem, the insolvable nature of which has been created by her own materialistic stubbornness, and her time-cherished routine policy. For, either man is a dual being, with an inner Ego* in him, this Ego “the real” man, distinct from, and independent of the outer man proportionately to the prevalency or weakness of the material body; an Ego the scope of whose senses stretches far beyond the limit granted to the physical senses of man; an Ego which survives the decay of its external covering—at least for a time, even when an evil course of life has made him fail to achieve a perfect union with its spiritual higher Self, i.e., to blend its individuality with it (the personality gradually fading out in each case); or—the testimony of millions of men embracing several thousands of years; the evidence furnished in our own century by hundreds of the most educated men—often by the greatest lights of science—all this evidence, we say, goes to naught.

* Whether with one solitary Ego, or Soul, as the Spiritualists affirm, or with several—i.e., composed of seven principles, as Eastern esotericism teaches, is not the question at issue for the present. Let us first prove by bringing our joint experience to bear, that there is in man something beyond Büchner’s Force and Matter.

With the exception of a handful of scientific authorities, surrounded by an eager crowd of sceptics and sciolists, who having never seen anything, claim, therefore, the right of denying everything —the world stands condemned as a gigantic Lunatic Asylum! It has, however, a special department in it. It is reserved for those who, having proved the soundness of their minds, must, of necessity, be regarded as IMPOSTORS and LIARS . . .

Has then the phenomenon of dreams been so thoroughly studied by materialistic science, that she has nothing more to learn, since she speaks in such authoritative tones upon the subject? Not in the least. The phenomena of sensation and volition, of intellect and instinct, are, of course, all manifested through the channels of the nervous centres, the most important of which is the brain. Of the peculiar substance through which these actions take place—a substance the two forms of which are the vesicular and the fibrous, the latter is held to be simply the propagator of the impressions sent to or from the vesicular matter. Yet while this physiological office is distinguished, or divided by Science into three kinds — the motor, sensitive and connecting—the mysterious agency of intellect remains as mysterious and as perplexing to the great physiologists as it was in the days of Hippocrates. The scientific suggestion that there may be a fourth series associated with the operations of thought, has not helped towards solving the problem; it has failed to shed even the slightest ray of light on the unfathomable mystery. Nor will they ever fathom it unless our men of Science accept the hypothesis of DUAL MAN.

ON "THEOSOPHISM" IN INDIA

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 4, January, 1882, p. 106]

[H. P. B. comments on various slanderous remarks by a missionary organ with regard to India and the alleged mischief caused by "Theosophism." The writer says that "there is straitness in Christian morality; there is little scope for audacious speculation in a system whose prime requisite is that the recipient should become as a little child . . ." To this H. P. B. remarks:]

A very little one we should say; one not old enough to question the moral regenerating influences of opium-eating and toddy-drinking, and all that follows suit hand in hand with civilization.

[Her closing Editorial Note is as follows:]

That will suffice for one pious and charitable article, the merely slanderous portions of which we have omitted, and some of whose sentences we have italicised. Let us hope that the "conceited," "learnedly ignorant," marvel-swallowing Hindus may now see, if they never did before, with what benevolent respect they are regarded in England by the Church Missionary Society. How could their "sceptical and unregenerate minds," "demoralized by the secular training of Indian Universities," do otherwise than turn from the proffered blessings of a religion which has sent to India such a host of exemplars of the "straitness in Christian morality"? Even the "charlatancy" of "Theosophism" is better than that; for the Theosophists neither drink, nor smoke opium, nor insult their feelings, nor make money out of them, nor baptize the starving babies of dead or dying parents and call them fancy names, such as "brands plucked from the burning," etc. If the London Padris want to stop India from turning Theosophist they must adopt fairer measures than abuse and slander.

A PERSONAL EXPLANATION

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 4, Supplement to January, 1882, pp. 1-2]

It is impossible for the Founders of the Theosophical Society to answer more than a few of the attacks made upon them in the Anglo-Indian Press. They are naturally exposed to many such libellous accusations as the Theosophical movement excites the hostility of two great armies of bigots—the bigots of science, and the bigots of religion. But enemies who are honest enemies, who assail the teaching, or what they conceive to be the teaching of the Theosophical Society in a legitimate way by argument—even when the argument is intemperate and uncivil in tone— may be left to the influence of time and those tendencies in human thought which have generally defeated Bigotry in the long run. For the rudeness of antagonists who know nothing about the real nature of their pursuits, and will not take the trouble to enquire into these, the Founders of the Theosophical Society are fully compensated by the sympathy and regard of those who are better informed and more intelligent.

It happens sometimes, however, that occasional enemies who are not honest—people who have conceived a grudge against the Founders, or either of them on private grounds will take advantage of opportunities afforded by the hostility of the orthodox press to Theosophy, and will write articles ostensibly about Theosophy, but really for the purpose of insinuating some ignoble calumny about the foremost, though humble, representatives thereof. In this way an article, the authorship of which is as obvious to the undersigned, as that of a familiar handwriting would be, was lately contributed to the Statesman of Calcutta.

The writer had previously procured the insertion of similar slanderous attacks in the Civil and Military Gazette, but at length, refused further favours by that paper, he has apparently sought another opening for his contributions, finding this with the Statesman. On the 6th instant that journal published a long, leading article in vilification of the Theosophical Society, its Founders and its friends. The greater part of this is unworthy, either of quotation or reply, but one passage was not alone insulting and calumnious; it was libellous, even as libels are estimated by Courts of Law. Messrs. Sanderson and Co., solicitors of Calcutta, were, therefore, duly instructed on behalf of the undersigned to apply for legal redress, and they addressed to the editor of the Statesman the following letter:

THE THEOSOPHISTS.

To the Editor.

No. 10613, Calcutta, December 16, 1881.

Sir,—In the Statesman of Tuesday, the 6th instant, there appears an article having reference, among other matters, to Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, the Founders of the Theosophical Society. In the course of that article, it is stated:—

“It is now asserted not only that the resources of both (Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott) are exhausted, but that they are largely in debt, on account, it is alleged, of the expenses of the Society. It is not difficult for anyone to arrive at the conclusion that it would be highly desirable and expedient for the Founders of the Theosophical Society to have these debts paid off. This is a simple and not unpraiseworthy instinct. The question that remains is, as regards the means by which this consummation is to be effected.”

The remainder of the article, which we need not quote at length, is an elaborate insinuation that Madame Blavatsky is endeavouring to procure from a gentleman named, by spurious representations, the pavement of her debts.

Now, the allegation about Madame Blavatsky being in debt is, we are instructed, absolutely false to begin with; nor is the Society which she helped to found in debt, unless, indeed, it be to herself.

The accounts of the Society, published in *The Theosophist* for last May, show that the outlay incurred on behalf of the Society up to that date had exceeded the receipts (consisting of “initiation fees” Rs. 3,900, and a few donations) by a sum of Rs. 19,846, but this deficit was supplied from the private resources of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott.

We may further explain that Madame Blavatsky is a Russian lady of high rank by birth (though since naturalized in the United States), and has never been in the penniless condition your article insultingly ascribes to her—whatever mistakes may have arisen from the improper publication of a private letter by Colonel Olcott to a friend in America, the careless exaggerations of which, designed merely for a correspondent familiar with the real state of the affairs to which these referred, have given you occasion for some offensive remarks.

We, therefore, duly instructed on behalf of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, now require of you that you should publish this letter, together with an apology for the scandalous libel to which you have been misled into giving currency.

We also require that in further refutation of these and in general reply to the insulting language of your article, you should publish the enclosed explanations extracted from the *Pioneer* of the 10th instant

In the event of your failure forthwith to comply with our request, or to give up the name of the writer of the article in question, we are instructed to proceed against you in the High Court for recovery of damages for the libellous attack of which our clients complain.—

Yours faithfully,

SANDERSON & CO.

This letter was published by the editor of the *Statesman* in his issue of December 17, together with an article which, in a private letter to Messrs. Sanderson and Co., he refers to as his “apology.” This so-called apology, in the midst of a good deal of comment designed apparently to sound as offensive as it can be made compatible with safety for the writer as regards legal penalties, says:

. . . The statement that the Founders of the Theosophical Society were in debt, has already been contradicted by us, on the authority of the *Pioneer*, in our issue of Monday last, the 12th instant. As soon as we learned from the *Pioneer* that the deficit in the accounts of the Society had been paid off by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott out of their private resources, we took the earliest opportunity of giving publicity to the fact . . .



GENERAL ROSTISLAV ANDREYEVICH DE FADEYEV
1824-1884
H.P.B.'s maternal uncle.



H.P. BLAVATSKY AROUND 1876-77
Photo by Sarony, New York

Later on, the apology adds:

. . . We are, of course, delighted to hear that Madame Blavatsky has never been in the penniless condition in which she was represented to be, and that being so, we regret that the public should have been so misled, and that we should have been led to base a mistaken inference upon the statements that were before the public. We may add that we have much pleasure in publishing Messrs. Sanderson's repudiation (for unless it is so, their letter has no meaning) of any wish or intention on the part of the Founders of the Theosophical Society to obtain money from wealthy members of the Society. This, we should have thought, would be one of their great objects, as we do not see how otherwise the Society can go on and flourish; but we never said that they were likely to seek that object by dishonest means, and therefore, we do not see clearly wherein the scandalous libel consists . . .*

The Statesman then goes on to offer a gratuitous opinion on certain "apparently miraculous achievements attributed to Madame Blavatsky by the Pioneer." As the Statesman thus shows that it has not yet reached the stage of being able to define with accuracy the object of its disbelief, it is unnecessary to pay much attention to its conclusions as to who are "dupes" in this case—the open-minded students of Nature's mysteries who find help in Theosophy, or the orthodox professors of faith in the science of the Pentateuch, and the religion of Mr. Huxley.

To render the personal explanation complete, it seems desirable—distasteful as it is to Madame Blavatsky to advance any claims to public respect, except those which she confidently rests on her devotion to the noble intellectual revival on which the Theosophical Society is engaged—to republish in connection with it a certain article which was published on the appearance of the libellous article in the Statesman, in the Pioneer of December 10.

* The innocent "simplicity" of the argument is truly remarkable! If accusing a person of seeking to obtain money under false pretenses (the latter being the "apparent miraculous achievements," and other alleged claims) be not a scandalous libel, then we do not know what the word "honesty" conveys to the mind of the editor of the Statesman? The excuse is certainly calculated to leave every reader under the impression that the editor of the journal in question has very strange notions of accuracy of language. What, we wonder, would he have done under like circumstances?
[H. P. B.]

This was as follows:

MADAME BLAVATSKY AND “THE STATESMAN.”

Pending any further proceeding that may be taken by the lady concerned, in reference to a libellous attack on Madame Blavatsky in the Calcutta Statesman of Tuesday, we feel bound to publish a translation of a letter we have just received (by the mail which arrived yesterday morning) from Odessa. The establishment of Madame Blavatsky’s real identity by formal proofs of this nature has never been necessary for any person of culture or intelligence who knows her, but foolish or malevolent people, proceeding on vague and erroneous conjectures as to the nature of the work to which she has devoted herself in this country, have ventured to imply that she must be an impostor, aiming at commonplace ends — money, or social position. The absurdity of this contention is made evident by the following letter,* which shows to what rank in society she properly belongs:—

“Sir,—Having heard with astonishment that there exist somewhere about the world persons who have an interest in denying the personality of my niece, Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, pretending that she has appropriated to herself a name that does not belong to her, I hasten to send you these lines, begging you to make use of them to dissipate the very strange calumny. I say strange, but I might say senseless (*insensée*). For why should she choose (supposing she had really any necessity to change her name) a family which is not at all illustrious except by literary and scientific merits, which, indeed, would do honour to its name whatever that might be. What astonishes me especially is that anyone can make a mistake about the origin of a person so erudite and of so cultivated an education as that of my niece.

“However, as it is the burlesque fancy of her personal enemies to treat her as an impostor, will you receive my personal guarantee (given on my honour) that she is what she affirms herself to be, Madame Helen P. Blavatsky, widow of a Civil Councillor, late Vice-Governor of the Province of Erivan in the Caucasus, daughter of a Russian Colonel, Peter von Hahn (whose ancestors were allied with the Counts von Hahn of Germany, and whose mother was née Countess Pröbsting) and my niece by her own mother, my sister née de Fadeyeff, granddaughter of the Princess Dolgoroukov of the elder princely line.

* [The Pioneer published an English translation of the original French text of this letter.—
Compiler.]

“To establish her identity I enclose in this letter two of her portraits, one taken twenty years ago in my presence, the other sent from America four or five year ago. Furthermore, in order that sceptics may not conceive suspicions as to my personal identity, I take the liberty of returning your letter received through Prince Dondukoff-Korsakoff, Governor-General of Odessa. I hope that this` proof of authenticity is perfectly satisfactory. I believe, moreover, that you will have already received the certificate of the individuality of Madame Blavatsky that the Governor-General desired himself to send to Bombay.

“I ought also to mention a rather important fact, which is, that since the departure of my niece Helen Blavatsky from Odessa for America, in 1872, she has always been in continuous correspondence, not only with me, but all her relatives in Russia—a correspondence which has never been interrupted even for a month, and that all this time there has been no change whatever in her style, which is peculiar to herself, nor in her handwriting. This can be proved by all her letters to anyone who wishes to convince himself. This fact alone can leave no doubt except to idiots or evil-intentioned persons who have their own ends to serve. But with these there is no need to waste time.

“I cause my signature to be certified by the confirmation of a notary.

“On which I beg you to receive the expressions, etc. (Signed) Nadejda A. de Fadeyeff, member of the Council of the Theosophical Society, daughter of the late Russian Privy Councillor, formerly director of the Department of State Lands in the Caucasus, and member of the Council of the Viceroy of the Caucasus.

“Odessa, 3rd (15) November [1881].”

(The signature is formally authenticated by the Notary of the Bourse at Odessa, and the letter bears his official stamp.)

We must add, in explanation, that the enclosed portraits are undoubtedly portraits of Madame Blavatsky, and that we have seen the formal certificate* of her identity forwarded direct (for the better assurance of sceptics, to the care of a gentleman in high official position at Simla) by General Rostislav A. de Fadeyeff, at present Joint Secretary of State in the Home Department at St. Petersburg. We have also seen the letter addressed to Madame Blavatsky as to an intimate friend by Prince Dondukoff, expressing, besides warm sympathy no small measure of (well-deserved) contempt for persons who could misunderstand her true character.

* No copy of this certificate is in our possession at this moment, or we would publish it herewith, but its tenor precisely corresponds with the explanation in the above letter.—Editor, The Pioneer.

The Statesman now argues at great length that Madame Blavatsky must have come to India in order to beguile any well-to-do persons she might be able to dupe, into giving her hospitality and possibly money. Of course, no one can escape beyond the limits of his own nature in estimating the motives of others; and the author of the article in the Statesman may be unable to imagine human creatures governed by any other motive but the desire to procure money or meals; but for most people it will be plain that if so, the imagination of the Statesman does not range over the whole subject in this case.

One element in the present libel is to the effect that in connection with the affairs of the Theosophical Society, Madame Blavatsky has incurred large indebtedness. This statement, which is entirely false, is a blundering misconception of the published fact that the receipts of the Theosophical Society have fallen short of its expenditure by Rs. 16,000 or more. But this deficit is not a debt by Madame Blavatsky; it would be a debt to her, if she cared to regard it in that light, she having supplied the money from her private resources supplemented by those of the other equally self-devoted apostle of Theosophy—Colonel Olcott.

The certificate sent by General R. de Fadeyeff and referred to in this statement runs as follows:*

I certify by the present that Madame Helen Petrovna Blavatsky now residing at Simla (British India) is on her father's side the daughter of Colonel Peter [von Hahn] and granddaughter of Lieutenant-General Alexis Hahn von Rottenstein-Hahn (a noble family of Mecklenburg, settled in Russia); that she is on her mother's side the daughter of Helen de Fadeyeff and granddaughter of Privy Councillor Andrew de Fadeyeff and of the Princess Helen P. Dolgorukov; and that she is the widow of the Civil Councillor Nikifor V. Blavatsky, late Vice-Governor of the Province of Yerivan' (Caucasus).

(Signed) MAJOR-GENERAL ROSTISLAV A. DE FADEYEFF,

Assistant to the Minister of the Interior, Count Ignatyeff,

Attaché of the General Staff of the Ministry of War.

St. Petersburg, 23 Little Morskaya St.

18/30 September, 1881.

* [The original French letter, preserved in the Adyar Archives, is as follows:

«J'atteste par la présente que Madame Helène Petrovna Blavaci, demeurant actuellement à Simla (Indes britanniques) est du côté paternel fille du colonel Pierre et petite fille du Lieutenant Général Alexis Hahn de Rottenstein-Hahn (maison noble meklembourgeoise fixé en Russie), et du côté maternal fille de Helène Fadéeff et petite fille du Conseiller Privé André Fadéeff et de la Princesse Helène Dolgoruki; qu'elle est veuve du Conseiller d'État Nicéphore Blavacki ci-devant Vice-Gouverneur de la province d'Erivan (Caucase).

Taken in connection with the official documents published in the Supplement to The Theosophist of December, 1881, concerning the social status in America of Colonel Olcott, these explanations may, it is hoped, lay at rest once for all the wonderful question on which many people in India have wasted a good deal of speculation, whether the undersigned are or are not “adventurers.”

(Signed) Général Major Rostislaw Fadéeff,
Adjoint du Ministre de l’Intérieur Comte Ignatieff,
attaché à l’Etat-Major du Ministère de la Guerre
S. Petersbourg, Petite Morskaia No. 23,
18/30 Septembre, 1881.»

We have reproduced this certificate without altering the peculiar spelling of some of the names. It was accompanied by a covering letter, also preserved in the Adyar Archives, and the text of which is as follows:

«A. P. Sinnett, Esq.
c/o H. W. Primrose, Esq.
Governor-General Camp, India
S. Petersbourg, Petite Morskaia No. 23,
18/30 Septembre, 1881.

«Monsieur,

J’ai l’honneur de Vous expédier à Votre demande et à celle de Mme. Blavacki le certificat de son identité; et pour Vous rassurer plus complètement encore Vous, Monsieur, et les personnes qui s’y intéressent, je m’adresse à M. le Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff, Gouverneur Général d’Odessa et de la Nouvelle Russie, par l’entremise duquel Votre lettre m’est parvenue, pour Vous faire tenir une attestation gouvernementale en forme, qui Vous sera communiquée sous peu de jours.

«Je Vous prie Monsieur de vouloir bien agréer mes sentiments très distingués.

(Signed) Général Rostislaw Fadéeff.»

They were most unwilling in the beginning to make any fuss about their own personality, or the worldly sacrifices they have made in the hope of serving the principle of “Universal Brotherhood” and of contributing to revive the philosophical self-respect of the Indian people. But when malevolent antagonists—as short sighted as they are vindictive—attempt to impede the progress of Theosophy by trying to represent its Apostles in the country as self-seeking aspirants for contemptible worldly advantage, it is time to show once for all, by an exhibition of the worldly advantages they have chosen to surrender, the abject absurdity of this miserable accusation.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

H. S. OLCOTT.

Bombay, December 31, 1881.

The English translation of the above being as follows:

“A. P. Sinnett, Esq.

c/o H. W. Primrose, Esq.,

Governor-General Camp, India

St. Petersburg, Little Morskaya 23,

18/30 September, 1881.

“Sir,

I have the honor of forwarding to you, at your own and Madame Blavatsky’s request, a certificate of her identity. In order to reassure you, and others interested in it, even more fully, I am asking Prince Dondukov Korsakov, Governor-General of Odessa and of New Russia, through whose intermediary your own letter reached me, to let you have an official Government affidavit which will be sent to you in a few days.

“I beg you, Sir, to accept my highest regards.

(Signed) General Rostislav de Fadeyeff.”

Consult Vol. I of this Series, pages xxvi-xxx, and page xxxv, footnote 50, for information concerning the various relatives of H. P. Blavatsky mentioned in the above documents.

Consult the Bio-Bibliographical Index in the present Volume for data concerning Major General Rostislav A. de Fadeyev.

The date of September 18th is old style. It would have been September 30th new style.—Compiler.]

**ZOROASTER IN “HISTORY” AND ZARATHUSHTRA
IN THE SECRET RECORDS**

[The original manuscript of this incomplete essay in H. P. B.’s own handwriting exists in the Adyar Archives. It was transcribed for the first time in 1958, and published in the pages of *The Theosophist* in October and November 1958. By consulting Colonel Henry S. Olcott’s remarkable lecture on “The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion,” which he delivered at the Town Hall in Bombay on the 14th of February, 1882, it will be seen that portions of it are identical with H. P. B.’s manuscript. It is most likely that Colonel Olcott was given special help with his lecture, and H. P. B.’s text itself, though fragmentary and obviously unfinished, bears in more than one place the characteristics of a higher authority. This is perhaps especially the case in regard to a long footnote concerning Zoroaster which was appended to Colonel Olcott’s lecture when it was published in book form, together with other lectures, under the title of *Theosophy, Religion and Occult Science*: (London: George Redway, 1885). On the authority of several of the early members, this footnote was supplied at the time by H. P. B. It is reprinted herewith also. The facts outlined above date H. P. B.’s manuscript as of the early part of 1882, or possibly even earlier. It is evident that it represents but a rough draft of an essay in preparation. Rather than to make any changes, we have left unaltered a number of peculiarities in style, uncertainties in the use of quotation marks, and occasional grammatical errors, which, however, are only of minor importance.—Compiler.]

Well-meaning blunders in history are often no better than willful misrepresentations in their effect, for they leave a false impression on the mind of the student difficult to efface. Thus some of our European philologists are unable to find a more philosophical meaning for *Zend-A-Vesta*, than that “it signifies a tinder box.”

Speaking of the religion of the great Aryan Reformer, in Nineteenth Century, Professor Monier Williams, after making the just observation that “perhaps few more remarkable facts have been revealed by the critical examination of non-Christian systems than the highly spiritual character of the ancient creed which it is usual to call the religion of Zoroaster,” makes it follow by some remarks, which, when analyzed*..... false.....*; as usual—with Christian professors—the whole truth is cleverly screened, and the spirit of partizanship—ever on the watch to make the best of the few meagre facts on hand—attempts, were it but inferentially, to glorify the Jewish Bible at the expense of all the other religions. So, for instance, he says:

Only within the last few years has the progress of Iranian studies made it possible to gain an insight into the true meaning of the text of the Avesta—popularly known as the Zend Avesta—which is to Zoroastrianism what the Veda is to Brâhminism. The knowledge thus obtained has made it clear that contemporaneously with Judaism an unidolatrous and monotheistic form of religion, containing a high moral code and many points of resemblance to Judaism itself, was developed by, at least, one branch of the Aryan race.

Nor does the certainty of this fact rest on the testimony of the Zoroastrian scriptures only. It is attested by numerous allusions in the writings of Greek and Latin authors. We know that the father of history himself, writing about 450 years before the Christian era, said of the Persians that “it is not customary among them to make idols, to build temples and erect altars; they even upbraid with folly those who do.” The reason of this Herodotus declares to be that the Persians do not believe the gods to be like men, as the Hellenes do, but that they identify the whole celestial circle with the Supreme Being.

We know, too, that Cyrus the Great, who must have been 8 Zoroastrian, evinced great sympathy with the Jews; and was styled by Isaiah “the righteous one” (xli, 2), “the Shepherd of the Lord” (xliv, 28), “the Lord’s Anointed” (xlv, 1), who was commissioned to “perform all God’s pleasure” and carry out His decrees in regard to the rebuilding of the temple, and the restoration of the chosen people to their native land.†

* [Manuscript damaged.]

† “The Religion of Zoroaster,” *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. IX, January, 1881, p. 156.

Hundreds of students may read the above and yet not one of them notice the spirit of the inferences contained in those few lines. The Oxford professor would make his reader believe that the “nonidolatrous and monotheistic” Zoroastrianism was developed “contemporaneously with Judaism”; that is to say, if we understand the value of words at all, that the former system developed at the same period of history as the latter—than which statement nothing could be more erroneous or misleading. The religion of Zarathushtra is most undoubtedly attested by more than one well-known Greek and Latin author, in whose writings, by the way, one would vainly search for like reference to Judaism or the “chosen people,” so little were they known before the return (?) from the Babylonian captivity. Aristotle affirms that Zoroaster lived 6,000 years before Plato.* Hermippus of Alexandria, who claims to have read the genuine books of the Zoroastrians, shows the great Reformer as a pupil of Agonaces (Agon-ach or the Agon-God) and having flourished 5,000 years before the fall of Troy, his statement thus corroborating that of Aristotle, as Troy fell 1194 before our era and, on the testimony of Clement, some think that the Er or Erus, the son of Armenius, whose vision is related by Plato in his Republic, Book X, 614 ff., means no other than Zardosht.† On the other hand, we find Alexander Polyhistor saying of Pythagoras (who lived about 600 years B.C.) that he was a disciple of the Assyrian Nazaratus;‡ Diogenes Laërtius†† affirming that the philosopher of Samos was initiated into the mysteries “by the Chaldeans and Magi”; and finally Apuleius maintaining that it was Zoroaster who instructed Pythagoras.

* [Cf. Pliny, Nat. Hist., XXX, ii.]

† Clement Alex., Stromateis, V. xiv.]

‡ Zoroaster is often called by the Greek writers the Assyrian Nazaratus. [Cf. Clement, Strom., I, xv.] The term comes from the word Nazar and Nazir (set apart, separated), a sect of adepts very ancient and which existed ages before Christ. “They were physicians, healers of the sick by the imposition of hands, and initiated into the Mysteries”—See Mishnah Nazir in the Talmud, which has 9 chapters and gives statutes concerning Nazarenes.—I. M. Jost, *Israelite Indeed*, II, 238. They let their hair and beards grow long, drank no wine and pronounced vows of chastity. John the Baptist was a Nazarene, and Elijah of whom it is said in II Kings (i, 8) that “he was an hairy man.”

†† [Lives: “Pythagoras,” § 3.]

All those contradictions put together prove (1) that “Zoroaster” was a generic title and (2) that there were several prophets of that name. There was the primitive and pure Magianism, and one degraded later by priesthood, as is the case with every religion whose spirit is lost and the dead letter of it alone remains. Again we find the proof of it in Darius Hystaspes, shown in history to have crushed the Magi and introduced the pure religion of Zoroaster, that of Hormazd—he had, nevertheless, an inscription cut out on his tomb (recently found) stating that he, Darius, was “teacher and hierophant of Magianism.” But the greatest proof is found in the Zend-Avesta itself. Although not the oldest Zoroastrian Scripture, yet, like the Vedas in the case of the Deluge upon which they are completely silent*—these ancient writings do not show the slightest sign of its author having ever been acquainted with any of the nations that subsequently adopted his mode of worship, although there are several historical Zarathushtras: he who instituted sun worship among the Parsees; that other who appeared at the court of Gushtasp; and he, who was the instructor of Pythagoras . . .

Nor does the appellation bestowed by Isaiah upon Cyrus—“the Righteous One” and “the Shepherd of the Lord” prove much to any but those who believe in the divinity of Biblical prophecies;† for Isaiah lived 200 years earlier than Cyrus (from 760 to 710 B.C.) while the great Persian flourished and began his reign in 559.

* A fact going to well prove that the Vedas were in existence before the deluge, or that cataclysm which changed the face of Central Asia about 10,000 years B.C. Baron Bunsen places Zoroaster at Bactria and the emigration of Bactrians to the Indus 3784 B.C. and the historical and geological deluge at the date first mentioned, about 10,555 years before our era (Egypt’s Place in Universal History, Vol. V, pp. 77-78, 88).

† Many critics (Christian) suppose the latter portion of the book of Isaiah (chap. xl to lxvi) to be by some author of the time of the captivity, whose name is unknown.

If Cyrus protected them after conquering Babylon, it is because they had long before become converted to his own religious system; and if he sent them back (and many a learned archaeologist strongly doubts today whether the Jews were ever in Palestine before the days of Cyrus) it was for the same reason. The Jews then upon their return were simply a Persian colony imbued with all the ideas of Magianism and Zoroastrianism. Most of their forefathers had once agreed with the Sabaeans, in the Bacchic-worship, the adoration of the Sun, Moon and Five Planets, the SABAOTH of the realm of light. In Babylon they had learned the worship of the Seven-Rayed god—hence the Septenary System running throughout the Bible and the Heptaktys of the Book of Revelation; and the sect of the Pharisees (150 B.C.)—whose name might with far more reason be derived from “Pharsi” or Parsi than from the Aramaic Perîshîn (separated)—whose greatest rabbi was Hillel the Babylonian, and whose “beliefs and observances by succession from their fathers . . . are not written in the law of Moses,” says Josephus, a Pharisee himself (*Antiquities*, XIII, x, 5 and 6). By these the whole Angelology and Symbolism of the Persians or rather the Zoroastrians was adopted. And the Chaldean Kabala extensively read and studied by them at their secret Lodge, whose members were called the Kabirim from the Babylonian and Assyrian Kabeiri—the great mystery-gods, are good proofs of the above.* The present Jews are Talmudists holding to the later interpretations of the Mosaic Law,† and the few learned Rabbis-Kabalists remain alone to give the student an inkling into the true religion of the Jews of the two centuries preceding and the first century subsequent to Christ.

The true history of Zoroaster and his religion was yet never written. The Parsees themselves have lost the keys to their faith and it is not to their learned men that they are to look for any information upon the subject.

* The Kabeiri were worshipped at Hebron, the city of Beri-Anak or Anakim.

† No Hebrew MS is known to be older than Kennicott’s No. 154 which belongs to A.D. 1106 (Donaldson). “The Masorah was committed to writing in 506 A.D.” (Elias Levita).

Whether we accept the time when Zarathushtra lived on the authority of Aristotle—6,000 years B.C.—or on the more modern ones of Naurozjî Farîdunjî of Bombay who fixes it in the 6th century B.C. (Tareekh-i-Zurtoshtee or “Discussion on the Era of Zoroaster”)—all is darkness and contradiction and every statement conflicts with insurmountable facts. Nor was the Rahnuma-e Mazdayasnan Sabha, the Society organized in 1851 for the restoration of the creed of Zoroaster to its original purity—any happier in its investigations. Can we wonder then at the discrepancies, often nonsense, given by our modern scholars, when these have no other authority to base their researches upon, than a few classical but for all that unreliable writers, who are found to have mentioned what they had heard in their days, about that grand prehistoric figure.

Aristotle, Diogenes Laërtius, Strabo, Philo Judaeus, Tertullian and finally Clemens Alexandrinus with a few others are the only guides that our European scholars have at hand. And how trustworthy are the latter patristic fathers may be inferred from what the Rev. Dr. H. Prideaux, treating of the Sad-dar says of the teachings of Zoroaster. The prophet—he tells us—preached incest! Zaratusht teaches “that nothing of this nature is unlawful; but that a man may not only marry his sister, or his daughter, but his mother”!!* The “Sage of remote Antiquity”—as Plato calls Zoroaster, is transformed by Christian bigots into a “slave of Daniel,” the very existence of the latter being now regarded by the men of science as a myth, and [they] accuse the “Prophet of the Persians” of having been “a false Prophet” and teaching “a doctrine stolen from the Jews”! (Dr. Prideaux.) Truly remarks Warburton in his Divine Legation that “the whole is a pure fable and contradicts all learned antiquity,” one Christian writer making Zoroaster “contemporary with Darius Hystaspes and servant to one of the Jewish Prophets—yet in another fit of lying, they place him as early as Moses, they even say he was Abraham, nay stick not to make him one of the builders of Babel.”

* An Universal History from the Earliest Accounts of Time to the Present, London, 1747-54. Vol. V, p. 405, quoting Prideaux.

The Zoroaster of Dr. Prideaux, says Faber, “seems to have been a totally different character from the most ancient Zoroaster.” (On the Mysteries of the Cabiri, II, 154.)

In this jungle of contradictions the point at issue is whether (1) there remains any possibility of obtaining anything like a correct information on the last, if not on the original Zarathushtra;* and (2) by what means is the true religion preached in the Avesta (with the older Gâthâs included in it) to be interpreted from the allegorical dialogues of the Vendidad. We know beforehand the answer: “The most learned Orientalists—Haug, Müller, etc.—having failed, there is no help for it.” The Avesta has become and must remain a sealed book to the Parsees, and the teachings of Zoroaster—a dead letter to the future generations.

We believe the notion is a mistaken one—at least as regards question the 2nd. If everything regarding the personality of the Founder himself, however well authenticated by identical traditions and material proofs in the shape of his statues in various parts of the world and especially in Central Asia, has to be regarded as simple tradition (and what else is History?) his religion at least could be restored as faultlessly as exact Science restores the shapes of the antediluvian animals from bits of fossile bones collected in a hundred different places. Time, Patience and especially sincere zeal, are the only requisites. Our Orientalists have never bethought themselves of the only sediment of genuine Zoroastrianism now left among the old records. Nay—till very lately they despised it and laughed to scorn its very name. Hardly half a century ago it was not yet translated, and up to this day is understood but by the very, very few true Occultists We speak of the Chaldean KABALA, whose very name is unknown to hundreds of educated men.

* It is said of Zarathushtra that he had a renewal of life. “I am he who lives and dies” is the inscription in the Avestan or old Bactrian language running around the waist of his gigantic statue which remains for ages in the circular cave in one of the Mountains of Bokhara. The cave is in a rock and consecrated to Mithr-Az—the invisible Deity produced from a cave hewn out of a rock . . .

Notwithstanding every denial of the ignorant, we say and repeat that the key to the right understanding of the Avesta and its subdivisions lies concealed at the bottom of the rightly interpreted books of the Kabala,* composed of the Zohar (Splendour) by Rabbi Shimon Ben Yohai; of Sepher Yetzirah or Book of the Creation† (attributed to the patriarch Abraham but written by a Chaldean priest); and of the Commentary of the Sephiroth—the latter being the creative Principles or powers identical with the Amshaspands. The whole of the Avesta is incorporated with the ethics and philosophy of Babylonia—hence must be sought for in the Chaldean Kabalistic lore, as the doctrines of Zoroaster spread through Zarathushtra the fifth Messenger (5,400 B.C.) from Bactria to Media and thence under the name of Magism (the Magavas or the “Mighty Ones”) became at one time the universal religion of the whole Central Asia. It is now called “monotheistic” on the same principle that vulgarized Magianism became the monotheism of the later Israelites. If the attributes of Ahuramazda or Ormazd are said to strongly resemble those of the Jewish Jehovah (albeit far more practical), it is not because either of the two was the true Mystery Deity—the INCOMPREHENSIBLE ALL but simply because both are human ideals evolved from the same stock.

* The Hebrew word Kabbalah comes from the root “to receive.” It is then the record of doctrines received by the Chaldean Magi, and the initiated Jews (Daniel was chief of the Magi) from Zarathushtra, whose teachings on account of their profound philosophy were meant but for the few, while the exoteric rites of Magianism dwindled down to popular vulgar magic, Judaism, and other degraded anthropomorphic and ritualistic systems.

† Rather Evolution. The book is the demonstration of a System whereby the universe is mathematically viewed, showing from the systematic development of “creation” and from the harmony reigning in all its laws that it must have proceeded from One Cause EN-SOPH—the Endless NO-THING. That it never had a beginning nor will it ever have an end; from which dead letter rendering in Genesis—incomprehensible without the help of the Kabalistic [Manuscript cut off]

As Ormazd springing from Primordial Light, which itself emanated from a Supreme incomprehensible essence called “Zeruane-Akerene,” the Eternal or Boundless Time, comes but third in the deistic evolution; so Jehovah is shown in the Zohar as the third Sephiroth (moreover a feminine passive potency) denominated “Intelligence” (Binah) and represented by the divine name Jehovah and Àralim. Hence none of the two ever were the ONE “Supreme” God. With Jehovah it is EN-SOPH, the Boundless, the ONE from which emanates AUR—“Primordial Light” or the “Primordial Point” which, containing the all of the Sephiroth, emanates them one after the other, the totality representing the Archetypal man, Adam Kadmon. Jehovah then is but the tenth portion (seventh Kabalistically, for the first three are ONE) of Adam or the Intellectual world; whereas Ormuzd is at the head of the seven Amshaspands or their Spiritual totality—hence higher than Jehovah, yet —not the SUPREME.

Let us confess at once that, gross and material in our conceptions, we have anthropomorphized and, so to say, animalized every grand religious idea which has descended to us from the antiquity. Physically and intellectually we progress and grow in strength and wisdom, but lose daily in Spirituality. We may “wax in strength”—never in Spirit. It is but by studying the relics of old; by comparing, free from every sectarian bias and personal prejudice, the religious ideals of all nations, that we finally acquire the conviction that they are all streams from one and the same source. Many and various are the lights and shadows which our dazzled eye can hardly follow on a sunlit valley. The fool will exclaim: “That shadow is mine—it is cast by my house! . . .” The sage will lift his eyes heavenward, and calmly remark: “it is but an effect and temporary!” [and] will rivet his attention to the One Cause—the Great “Spiritual Sun.”

[An unfinished note in a handwriting different from H. P. B.'s, and obviously having to do with one of her footnotes in the above article.]

“I am he who lives and dies” is the inscription that runs around the waist-belt of his statue in the circular rock-temple of Bokhara. It was the old belief that Z renewed his life from time to time but whether or not in the same way as the Lamaists claim to return in the reincarnation of Buddha I cannot say. The brother who visited Armenia as I have told you, found near the Lake Van and the great mountain chain South of Bayazid, “a whole library of cylinders”—similar to the precious clay-cylinders exhumed by George Smith at Nineveh. And he says that these cylinders “may serve one day to strongly damage the wild theories and interpretations of the Anquetil-Duperrons, the Spiegels and Haugs.”*

As the Hindu pilgrims affirm that on approaching the temple at Badrinath one sometimes sees far up amid the snow, etc., so in Armenia is there a similar tradition. The rumour is that daily at sunset there appears, etc.

[The second portion of H. P. B.'s manuscript is as follows It may have been intended at one time to be the continuation of the previous portion:]

Parsees justly complain that the Mobeds themselves have forgotten truth about their religion, and there are some learned scholars among them who try to unravel the mysteries of Zoroastrianism, but how? Not by reading and studying Zend MSS or exercising their own brain, but by giving forth to what the Western scholars tell them. How misrepresented is the religion of Zarathushtra can be inferred by a few instances.

* [The “brother” referred to is the Adept known as Hillarion Smerdis. See Compiler’s footnote appended to the second portion of this manuscript.—Compiler.]



PRINCE HARISINGHJI RUPSINGHJI OF BHAVNAGAR
Staunch Friend and Supporter of the Founders in the early days of the Movement in India.



GROUP AT CROW'S NEST, BOMBAY, 1881
Colonel H.S. Olcott seated in the center, and H.P.B. standing behind him; on Olcott's right is Dâmodar K. Mâvalankar; standing to the left of H.P.B., in white turban, is Tukaram Tatya.

The Rev. Dr. H. Prideaux, for instance, commenting upon Sad-dar assures his readers that Zaratusht taught his people incest! “Zaratusht,” he says, “teaches that nothing of this nature is unlawful; but that a man may not only marry his sister, or his daughter, but his mother.” Only in support of his argument he quotes no Zend work, nothing written by a Parsee, but such Christian and Jewish authorities as Philo Judaeus, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus (See An Universal History, as quoted above). Euty chius, a priest and archimandrite of the 5th century, of a cloister at Constantinople, writes on Zoroastrianism as follows: “Nimrod beheld a fire rising out of the earth, and he worshipped it, and from that time forth the Magi worshipped fire. And he appointed a man named Ardeshan to be the priest and servant of the Fire. The Devil shortly after that spoke out of the midst of the fire [as Jehovah to Moses out of the burning bush?]
—saying, no man can serve the Fire, or learn Truth in my religion, unless first he shall commit incest with his mother, sister and daughter as he was commanded, and from that time the priests of the Magians practiced incest, but Ardeshan was the first inventor of that doctrine.”

Now what does that mean? Simply a dead letter misconstruction. In the secret doctrine, portions of which are committed to writing in old Armenian MSS or so-called Mesrobian MSS (until the year 312 the Armenians were Parsees) preserved to this day at Etchmiadzin, the oldest monastery in Armenia, it is said of the Initiate or Magi:—“He who would penetrate the secrets of (sacred) Fire, and unite with it (as the yogi unites his soul to the Universal Soul) must first unite himself soul and body to Earth, his mother, humanity, his sister, and Science, his daughter.” No need of explaining the symbolic meaning of this. Everyone knows in what respect Zarathushtra held Earth, how he taught kindness to all; and Knowledge or Science will never become the daughter or progeny of man, never evolve out of his brain in its purity, unless he studies the secrets of Nature and man which beget Science or Knowledge.

ON THE TREES OF LIFE

As Yggdrasill is the Tree of Life of the Sandinavian Edda, so Haoma is the sacred Tree of Life of Zaratusht, which we may see represented in the Assyrian monuments (see Layard, *Nineveh* , p. 472). The Deity or God is Fire. The Rosicrucians understood it well and took it from the Magi, the successors of Zaratusht. There were several Zaratushts (a generic name). This is proved by himself in saying: “I am he who lives and dies”; but the Zoroaster of the Parsees appeared 5,400 B.C . and Persepolis (the City of Splendour) was founded according to the tradition of the secret records 5,000 B.C . by a Gian Jin, a priest of Oannes or Dagon (see Illarion's letter in *Theosophist*) . * Its ancient name was Ista-char, the place sacred to Ista, or Ashtar, or Esta, who finally became Vesta to whom the Romans burnt inextinguishable fire. Vesta was the divine anthropomorphic Divine Fire or Holy Spirit. Char means on the Assyrian monuments the Sun and Istar or Ista-Char the Vesta of the Sun and throne of the Sun translated by the Greeks Perse-polis . “Char-is” is the City of Fire . Ceres was also the Deity of Fire, of Heat fecundating Nature, and at Cnidus she was called Kura, a title of the Sun, her Roman name Keres, not Ceres (as Cicero — Kikero), originally the name of a city, Charis . In Arabic the meaning of the radical word Char-is is to preserve, and of haris, “guardian,” “preserver” (of the fire.) Hence the name of Cyrus which is the male name of Ceres, the female. But the name is Indian (for Heres is the same as Char-is) and Hara or Hari is a name of Hara-Deva, Hari meaning Saviour, I think. Koros is a name of Bacchus the son of Keres or Ceres, and Koros is Divine Wisdom or the Holy Spirit. In the first Vol. of Father Bernard de Montfaucon's *Antiquity Explained*, on a plate representing the Mother of Gods, one of her names is Suria, the Hindu name for Sun .

* [This has reference to *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, July, 1881, pp. 213-15, where was published the greater part of a letter signed X. . . . F.T.S. It was entitled “A Letter from Surb Ohannes.” See pages 211-218 in the present Volume. — Compiler .]

On another plate she is called Mater Suriae, black with long hair (hence Syria the land). The red dress of the Roman Cardinals has the same origin as the bronze-red yellow dress of the Sannyasi and Buddhists, from Divine Fire—knowledge. As Zerah in Hebrew means rising of Light, so Surya means Sun and the name of Zarathushta is a combination of the Indian and Hebrew appellations. Sir William Drummond shows that Hyde has most erroneously placed Zoroaster as contemporary with Darius. Suidas fixes his era at 500 years before the Trojan war; Plutarch at 5,000 before that time and Pliny many thousands before Moses. All these contradictions show that there were several Zoroasters, one of which, he of the Parsees, was an historical personage, an Initiate, and Sir Wm. Drummond in his *Oedipus Judaicus* places Zoroaster many centuries before Moses. After calling him the greatest mathematician and the greatest philosopher of the age, Rev. H. Prideaux forthwith calls Zoroaster an “imposter and juggler” as the Christian newspapers call us.

Abul-Faraj [Bar-Hebraeus] in the *Book of Dynasties* (p. 54) states that Zaratusht taught the Persians the manifestation of the Wisdom (the Lord's anointed Son or Logos), “Honover” (the living manifested Word, or Deific Wisdom), and predicted that a Virgin should conceive (Saoshyant) immaculately and that at the birth of that Messenger a six-pointed star would appear which should shine in the noonday, in the center of which would appear the figure of a Virgin. In the Kabala the Virgin is Astral Light or Akasa and the six-pointed star the emblem of the Macrocosm. The Logos or Saoshyant born means the Secret Knowledge or Science which divulges the Wisdom of God. The prophecy of the Epiphany is in the *Zend-Avesta* .

Into the hand of the Messenger Prophet Zaratusht were delivered many gifts when filling the censer with fire from the sacred altar as the Parsee Mobed did in ancient times (and the Roman Catholic does now, only getting his burning coals and fire for his censer out of the kitchen grate)—the fire meant heavenly truth, and the smoke of incense waved into the faces of the worshippers— imparting the knowledge thereof : the everlasting Fire-Word of Zaratusht.

“The mortal who approaches Fire will receive a light from Divinity.” Krishna informs Arjuna in the Gita that God is in the fire of the altar. “I am the Fire; I am the Victim.” The Flamens (priests of the Etruscans) were so named because they were supposed to be illuminated by the tongues of Fire (Holy Ghost) and the Christians took the hat, the scarlet robes of the Cardinals symbolizing this Fire of Esoteric Divine Knowledge. “Pure and happy are they,” says Firdousi, the Persian poet, “who while worshipping One Supreme Wisdom, contemplate in sacred flame the symbol of Divine Light”—the Hiranyagarbha (ask Dâmodar for Sanskrit name) of the Vedas . “A mages,” says Pausanias, “when entering the temple performs an incantation and when finished, all the wood on the altar becomes enkindled without fire and emits a very splendid flame ” (Elis , I, xxvii, 6). Prometheus, or “Pra-Ma-Tha-Issa,” the divine Son of Issa in Sanskrit, brought fire from heaven . In an ancient Irish MSS Zaratusht is called Airgiod-Lamh, or the “Golden Hand,” the hand which received and scattered celestial fire (Sir Wm. Ouseley's Oriental Collections, I, p. 303). He is also called Mogh Nuedhat , the Magus of the New Ordinance or Dispensation. Zaratusht was one of the first reformers who revealed what he had obtained at his initiation, the six periods, or Gâhambârs, or the periodical evolution of the world. The first is Maidyôizaremaya in which the heavens or canopy were formed; the second, Maidyôisema in which the moisture from the clouds became the origin of the waters; the third, Paitishahya when the earth became consolidated out of primeval cosmic atoms; the fourth, Ayâthrima in which earth gave birth to vegetation; the fifth Maidyâiryâ when the earth slowly evolved into animal life; the sixth, Hamaspathaêdaya when lower animals culminated in man; the seventh period comes after the end of a certain cycle, after which will appear the Persian Messiah, seated on a Horse —i . e . , the Sun of our Solar System will be snuffed out— PRALAYA.

He who would unravel the mysteries of the sacred Parsee books has to study alike the Scriptures of other people and especially of the Hindus. Then he will find the mystery of the Sun, Fire and Horse . As his own Saoshyant, the Saviour of mankind, has to appear seated upon a white horse and followed by an army of good genii mounting milk-white steeds, so John in Revelation beholds a white horse with the “faithful and true” upon it and the armies that follow him are seated upon white horses, so Vishnu as the Kalki Avatara will appear as a warrior seated upon a white horse, etc., etc. The white horse is the horse of the Sun . “And I saw an angel standing in the Sun,” says John (Rev ., xix , 17). “And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the Sun” (II Kings, xxiii, 11)—“the fiery source of Spirit-Life.” The sacrifice of the Horses and the Sun, Asvamedha . The horses of the Sun are famous in all religions (Phaeton the Greek, driving the Chariot). The high priest or Mobed riding every morning to meet and salute the rising Sun is typical as the Chariot represents the body, the Horse the animating Principle and the four legs of the Horse—the four races of the world—the Black, the Russet, the Yellow and White, or Negro, Indian, the Mongolian and Caucasian (the four castes of Manu come from that); and the Chinese show it in their four orders of priests clothed in black, red, yellow and white; John saw these very colours in the symbolic horses of the Revelation .

There exists among the Persian Parsees a volume older than the Zoroastrian present writings. The title is Javidan Kherad,* or Eternal Wisdom, a work on practical philosophy of magic with natural explanations Thos.

* [In The Theosophist, Vol. III, April, 1882, pp. 180-81, there is an unsigned review of a work entitled The Javidan Kherad, or “ Eternal Wisdom, ” a Practical Manual of the Philosophy of Magic, a book written in Persian and presented to the Theosophical Society by the Editor, a learned Parsee gentleman of Teheran, Mr. Manekje Limji Hooshang Haturia.

Tradition says that the Javidan Kherad was written by King Hû-shang, one of the Peshdadian Kings of Persia; that it was buried in the Palace of King Nashirvan in Baghdad, and was dug up at the request of the philosopher Zouban, who received the permission to do so from Ma'mûn al-Rashîd, the son of Hârûn al-Rashîd.

Hyde speaks of it in his Preface to the *Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum* . The four Zoroastrian ages are the four races. Speaking of Zoroaster of whom he speaks as one possessed of an extensive knowledge of all the Science and philosophy then known in the world, Rev. George Oliver gives an account of the Cave-Temples of which much is said in the Zoroastrian doctrines.

[Zoroaster] retired to a circular cave or grotto in the mountains of Bokhara, which he ornamented with a profusion of symbolical and astronomical decorations, and solemnly consecrated it to the middle god or Mediator, Mithr-As, or as he was elsewhere denominated, the invisible deity, the parent of the universe, who was himself said to be born, or produced from a cave hewn out of a rock.

Zouban allowed only a small portion of this work to be read and translated by one of the scholars of the time. This is the fragment which has descended to us under the name of Javidan Kherad . It was first translated into Arabic, with the addition of various teachings from other ancient philosophers. The book presented to the T.S. is the Persian translation from this Arabic compilation.

At the end of the review giving the historical background of this work, there is a note which, to judge by its style, may have been written by H.P.B., although its authorship is not certain. To quote:

“As to the contents of this book, it would take a volume to comment even briefly upon them. In the first place, the hidden meaning of the original has been altogether neglected by the later translators. But even the outward meaning given to the words is full of precepts, moral and philosophical. In the whole compilation there is not a single sentence which can be pointed out as less important than the rest. If space would allow, we could quote passages after passages which may be read with benefit even by the most advanced moralists and theologians of the present day. This book alone is sufficient to show the learning and acquirements of the much-abused Ancients. If those, whom we are taught to look upon as primitive men in semibarbarity, could write such works on theology, morality, and even politics, as are hardly rivalled by any work of the present so-called age of Progress and Civilization, we must confess that we would like to follow in the steps of such semi-barbarous men, and leave the much. vaunted civilization to its own deluded followers.”

—Compiler .]

Here the Sun was represented by a splendid gem, which, with an insupportable lustre occupied a conspicuous situation in the centre of the roof ; the planets were displayed in order round him, in studs of gold glittering on a ground of azure; the zodiac was richly chased in embossed gold, in which the constellations Leo, and Taurus, with a Sun and Lunette emerging from their back in beaten gold, were peculiarly resplendent. The four ages of the world were represented by so many globes of gold, silver, brass, and iron.*

These “ages” were taught to the disciples as the 4 Races of men—the gold being the Mongolian, the silver the white or Caucasian; the brass—the Red Indian, and the iron the Negro. Minos received the laws from heaven in a Cavern on the Mount; Egeria gave his stabula to Numa in a grotto or cave on a hill; Moses receives on Sinai, etc.

Daghdai is the name of Zarathushtra's mother and Vallancey shows it with this spelling to mean Holy Spirit (or Wisdom); and Faber who writes it Day-dae says it is Divine Fish— so the Parsees accept it, I think. Ask why did Zoroaster consecrate during the sacred rites—wine (truth) extracted from vine (parable of Jesus?), a rose (a phallus), a cup (the womb) and the kernel of a pomegranate (the Messenger). The rose was sacred to the Sun. Zoroaster retired to a mountain of Armenia (Ariman) to speak with Hormuzd; and when the mountain burnt with fire he was unhurt. Then on the Gordian mountain he wrote the first Zend-a-vesta .

[The following is H.P.B.'s footnote appended to the printed text of Colonel Olcott's lecture on “The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion.”]

In the oldest Iranian book called the Desatir— a collection of the teachings of the fourteen oldest Iranian prophets (to make the number fifteen and include, among them, Simkendesh, or “Secander,” is a grave error, as may be proved on the authority of Zaratusth himself in that book)—Zaratusth stands thirteenth in the list. The fact is significant.

* The History of Initiation, London , 1841, pp. 94-95.

Respecting the period of Zoroaster the First, or his personality, there is no trustworthy information given by Western scholars; their authorities conflict in the most perplexing manner. Indeed among the many discordant notices I find the earliest Greek classic writers, who tell us that Zaratusht lived from 600 to 5,000 years before the Trojan war, or 6,000 years before Plato. Again it is declared by Berosus, the Chaldean priest, that Zoroaster was the founder of an Indian dynasty in Babylon 2,200 B.C .; while the later native traditions inform us that he was the son of Purushaspa, and a contemporary of Gushtasp, the father of Darius, which would bring him within 600 B.C . Lastly, it is asserted by Bunsen that he was born at Bactria before the emigration of the Bactrians to the Indus, which took place, as the learned Egyptologist shows us, 3,784 B.C . Among this host of contradictions, what conclusion can one come to? Evidently, there is but one hypothesis left: and that is that they are all wrong, the reason for it being the one I find in the secret traditions of the esoteric doctrine—namely, that there were several teachers of that name. Neither Plato nor Aristotle, so accurate in their statements, is likely to have transformed 200 years into 6,000. As to the generally accepted native tradition, which makes the great prophet a contemporary of Darius' father, it is absurd on the very face of it. Though the error is too palpable to need any elaborate confutation, I may say a few words in regard to it. The latest researches show that the Persian inscriptions point to Vistasp as the last of the line of Kaianian princes who ruled in Bactria , while the Assyrian conquest of that country took place in 1,200 B.C . Now this alone would prove that Zoroaster lived twelve or thirteen hundred years B.C ., instead of the 600 assigned to him; and thus that he could not have been a contemporary of Darius Hystaspes, whose father was so carelessly and for such a length of time confounded in this connection with the Vistasp who flourished six centuries earlier.

If we add to this the historical discrepancy between the statement of Ammianus Marcellinus—which makes Darius crush the Magi and introduce the worship of Ahuramazda—and the inscription on the tomb of that king which states that he was “teacher and hierophant of Magianism”; and that other no less significant and very important fact that the Zoroastrian Avesta shows no signs of the knowledge by its writer or writers of either the Medes, the Persians, or the Assyrians, the ancient books of the Parsees remaining silent upon and showing no acquaintance with any of the nations that are known to have dwelt in or near the Western parts of Iran —the date, 600 B.C ., accepted as the period in which the prophet is alleged to have flourished, becomes absolutely impossible.

It is therefore safe to come to the following conclusions: (1) That there were several (in all seven, say the Secret Records) Ahuru-asters, or spiritual teachers, of Ahuramazda, an office corrupted later into Guru-asters and Zuru-asters from “Zera-Ishtar,” the title of the Chaldean or Magian priests; and (2) that the last of them was Zaratusht of the Desatir, the thirteenth of the prophets, and the seventh of that name. It was he who was the contemporary of Vistasp, the last of the Kaianian princes, and the compiler of Vendidad, the Commentaries upon which are lost, there remaining now but the dead letter. Some of the facts given in the Secret Records, though to the exact scholar merely traditional, are very interesting. They are to the effect that there exists a certain hollow rock, full of tablets, in a gigantic cave bearing the name of Zarathushtra, under his Magian appellation, and that the tablets may yet be rescued some day. This cave, with its rock and tablets and its many inscriptions on the walls, is situated at the summit of one of the peaks of the Tien-Shan mountains far beyond their junction with the Belor Tagh, somewhere along their Eastern course. One of the half-pictorial and half-written prophecies and teachings attributed to Zaratusht himself, relates to that deluge which has transformed an inland sea into the dreary desert called Shamo or Gobi Desert. The esoteric key to the mysterious creeds flippantly called, at one time, the Sabaeen or Planetary Religion, at another, the Solar or Fire Worship, “hangs in that cave,” says the legend.

In it the great Prophet is represented with a golden star on his heart and as belonging to that race of Antediluvian giants mentioned in the sacred books of both the Chaldeans and the Jews. It matters little whether this hypothesis be accepted or rejected. Since the rejection of it would not make the other more trustworthy, it was as well to mention it.

SPIRITUALISM AND OCCULT TRUTH

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 5, February, 1882, pp. 113-15]

The Spiritualist of November 18th takes notice of the article published in The Theosophist for October under the heading "Fragments of Occult Truth," but it does not quite appreciate the objects with which that article was put forward, and still less, the importance of its contents. To make further explanations intelligible to our own readers, however, we must first represent The Spiritualist's present remarks which under the heading of "Speculation-spinning" are as follows:

The much respected author of the best standard textbook on Chemistry in the English language, the late Professor W. Allen Miller in the course of a lecture at the Royal Institution set forth certain facts, but expressed an objection to make known a speculative hypothesis which apparently explained the causes of the facts. He said that tempting but inadequately proved hypotheses when once implanted in the mind, were most difficult to eradicate; they sometimes stood in the way of the discovery of truth, they often promoted experiments in a wrong direction, and were better out of the heads than in the heads of young students of science.

The man who prosecutes original research must have some speculation in his head as he tries each new experiment. Such experiments are questions put to Nature, and her replies commonly dash to the ground one such speculation after another, but gradually guide the investigator into the path, and reveal the previously unknown law, which can thenceforth be safely used in the service of mankind for all time.

Very different is the method of procedure among some classes of psychologists. With them a tempting and plausible hypothesis enters the mind, but instead of considering it to be mischievous to propagate it as possessing authority before it is verified, it is thought clever to do so the necessity for facts and proof is ignored, and it may be that a church or school of thought is set up, which people are requested to join in order that they may fight for the new dogma.

Thus unproved speculations are forced upon the world with trumpet tongues by one class of people, instead of being tested, and, in most cases, nipped in the bud according to the method of the man of science.*

The religious periodicals of the day abound with articles consisting of nothing but speculations advanced by the authors as truths and as things to be upheld and fought over. Rarely is the modest statement made, "This may explain some points which are perplexing us, but until the verity of the hypothesis has been firmly demonstrated by facts, you must be careful not to let it rest in your mind as truth." By "facts" we do not necessarily mean physical facts, for there are demonstrable truths outside the realm of physics.

The foregoing ideas have often occurred to us while reading the pages of *The Theosophist*, and have been revived by an interesting editorial article in the last number of that journal, in which the nature of the body and spirit of man, is definitely mapped out in seven clauses.† There is not one word of attempt at proof, and the assertions can only carry weight with those who derive their opinions from the authoritative allegations of others, instead of upon evidence which they have weighed and examined for themselves; and the remarkable point is that the writer shows no signs of consciousness that any evidence is necessary. Had the scientific method been adopted, certain facts or truths would have been made to precede each of the seven clauses, coupled with the claim that those truths demonstrated the assertions in the clauses, and negated all hypotheses at variance therewith.

Endless speculation spinning is a kind of mental dissipation, which does little good to the world or to the individuals who indulge there. in, and has sometimes had in Europe a slight tendency to impart to the latter signs of Pharisaical self-consciousness of their being advanced religionists and philosophers, living in a diviner air than those who work to base their opinions on well-verified truths. If the speculators recognized their responsibility and imitated the example set by the great and good Professor Allen Miller, nine-tenths of their time would be set at liberty for doing good work in the world, the wasting of oceans of printing ink would be avoided, and mental energy which might be devoted to high uses would no longer run to waste.

* We do not want to be cruel: but where can one find "unproved speculations" more unproved, or that would be "nipped in the bud" by "the man of science" with a more ready hand than those that are weekly expressed in *The Spiritualist*? [H.P.B.]

† *The Theosophist*, Bombay, October, 1881, pp. 18-19.

The minds of habitual dreamers and speculators may be compared to windmills incessantly at work grinding nothing.*

Just at present there is far too much mental speculation afloat, and far too few people putting good ideas into practical form. Here in London, within the past year, grievous iniquities which might have been prevented, and grievous wrongs which might have been redressed, have abounded, and too few people have been at work ameliorating the sorrows and the sins immediately around them.

Now we do not want to discuss these questions with The Spiritualist in the way that rival religious sects might debate their differences. There can be no sectarianism in truth-seeking, and while we regard the Spiritualists as seriously mistaken in many of the most important of the conclusions to which they have come, they must certainly be recognized as truth-seekers—like ourselves. As a body, indeed, they are entitled to all possible honour for having boldly pursued their experiences to unpopular conclusions, caring more for what presented itself to them as the truth than for the good opinion of society at large. The world laughed at them for thinking their communications something beyond fraudulent tricks of impostors, for regarding the apparitions of their cabinets as visitors from another world. They knew quite well that the communications in a multitude of cases were no more frauds than they were baked potatoes, that people who called them such were talking utter folly, and in the same way whatever the materialized “spirits” were, they were not in all cases, even if they might be in some, anything like the pillows and nightgowns of a medium’s assistant. So they held on gallantly and reaped a reward which more than compensated them for the silly success of ignorant outsiders in the consciousness of being in contact with superhuman phenomena, and in the excitement of original exploration. Nothing that has ever been experienced in connection with such excitement by early navigators in unknown seas, can even have been comparable to the solemn interest which spiritual enquirers (of the cultivated kind) must have felt at first as they pushed off, in the frail bark of mediumship, out into the ocean of the unknown world.

* Verily so. For over thirty years have the dreamers and speculators upon the rationale of “Spiritual” phenomena set their windmills to work night and day and yet hitherto mortals and helping Spirits have ground out for the world but . . . husks. [H.P.B.]

And if they had realized all its perils one might almost applaud the courage with which they set sail, as warmly as their indifference to ridicule. But the heretics of one age sometimes become the orthodox of the next, and, so apt is human nature to repeat its mistakes, that the heirs of the martyrs may sometimes develop into the persecutors of a new generation. This is the direction in which modern Spiritualism is tending, and that tendency, of all its characteristics, is the one we are chiefly concerned to protest against. The conclusions of Spiritualism, inaccurate and premature as they are, are settling into the shape of orthodox dogma—while the facts of the great inquiry, numerous as they are, are still chaotic and confused, their collectors insist on working them up into specific doctrines about the future state, and they are often as intolerant of any dissent from these doctrines as the old-fashioned religionists were of them.

In fact, they have done the very thing which *The Spiritualist*, with an inaptitude born of complete misapprehension of what Occult Science really is, now accuses us of having done: they have given themselves wholly over to “speculation-spinning.” It is fairly ludicrous to find this indictment laid at our door on account of our “Fragments.” The argument of that paper was to the effect that Spiritualists should not jump to conclusions, should not weave hasty theories, on the strength of séance-room experiments. Such and such appearances may present themselves: beware of misunderstanding them. You may see an apparition standing before you which you know to be perfectly genuine, that is to say, no trumpery imposture by a fraudulent medium, and it may wear the outward semblance of a departed friend, but do not on that account jump to the conclusion that it is this spirit of your departed friend, do not spin speculations from the filmy threads of any such delusive fabric. Listen first to the wisdom of the ancient philosophies in regard to such appearances and permit us to point out the grounds on which we deny what seems to be the plain and natural inference from the facts.

And then we will proceed to explain what we have reason to know is the accepted theory of profound students of the ancient philosophy. We were repeating doctrines as old as the pyramids, but The Spiritualist not having hitherto paid attention to them seems really to imagine that we have thrown them off on the spur of the moment as a hypothesis, as Figuier does with his conjectures in *The Day after Death*, or Jules Verne with his, in his *Voyage round the Moon*.^{*} We cannot, it is true, quote any printed edition of the ancient philosophies and refer the reader to chapter and verse, for an article on the seven principles, but assuredly all profound students of mystic literature will recognize the exposition on which we ventured as supported, now in one way, now in another, by the cautiously obscure teaching of occult writers. Of course, the conditions of occult study are so peculiar that nothing is more difficult than to give one's "authorities" for any statement connected with it, but none the less it is really just as far from being "up in a balloon" as any study can be. It has been explained repeatedly that the continuity of occult knowledge amongst initiated adepts is the attribute about it which commends their explanations—absolutely to the acceptance of those who come to understand what initiation means and what kind of people adepts are. From Swedenborg onwards there have been many seers who profess to gather their knowledge of other worlds from actual observation, but such persons are isolated, and subject to the delusions of isolation. Any intelligent man will have an intuitive perception of this, expressing itself in a reluctance on his part to surrender himself entirely to the assurances of any such clairvoyants. But in the case of regularly-initiated seers it must be remembered that we are dealing with a long—an extraordinarily long—series of persons who, warned of the confusing circumstances into which they pass when their spiritual perceptions are trained to range beyond material limits, are so enabled to penetrate to the actual realities of things, and who constitute a vast organized body of seers, who check each other's conclusions, test each other's discoveries and formulate their visions into a science of spirit as precise and entirely trustworthy as, in their humble way, are the conclusions, as far as they go, of any branch of physical science.

^{*} [Original French titles being: *Le Lendemain de la Mort* and *De la Terre à la Lune*.—Compiler.]

Such initiates are in the position, as regards spiritual knowledge, that the regularly taught professor of a great university is in, as regards literary knowledge, and anyone can appreciate the superior claims of instruction which might be received from him, as compared with the crude and imperfect instruction which might be offered by the merely self-taught man. The initiate's speculations, in fact, are not spun at all; they are laid out before him by the accumulated wisdom of ages, and he has merely followed, verified and assimilated them.

But it may be argued, if our statement about the teachings of this absolutely trustworthy occult science claims to be something more than assertion and hypothesis, it is an assertion and, for the world at large, a hypothesis, that any such continuously-taught body of initiates is anywhere in existence. Now, in reference to this objection, there are two observations to be made, firstly, that there is a large mass of writings to be consulted on the subject, and just as Spiritualists say to the outer world "if you read the literature of Spiritualism, you will know how preposterous it is to continue denying or doubting the reality of spiritual phenomena," so we say to Spiritualists, if you will only read the literature of Occultism it will be very strange if you still doubt that the continuity of initiation has been preserved. Secondly, we may point out that you may put the question about the existence of initiates altogether aside, and yet find in the philosophy of Occultism, as expounded by those who do labour under the impression that they have received their teaching from competent instructors, such inherent claims to intellectual adoption that it will be strange if you do not begin to respect it as a hypothesis. We do not say that the "Fragments" given in our October number constitute a sufficiently complete scheme of things to command conviction, [in] this way, on their own intrinsic merits, but we do say that even taken by themselves they do not offend intuitive criticism in the way that the alternative spiritual theory does.

BY degrees as we are enabled to bring out more ore from the mine which yielded the "Fragments," it will be found that every fresh idea presented for consideration fits in with what has gone before, fortifies it, and is fortified by this in turn. Thus, is it not worth notice that even some notes we published in our December number in answer to inquiries about Creation, help the mind to realize the way in which, and the materials with which, the Elementaries in the one case, in the other the automatically-acting Kama Rupa of the medium, may fashion the materialized apparition which the Spiritualist takes for the spirit of his departed friend? It sometimes happens that a materialized spirit will leave behind as a memento of his visit some little piece cut from his spiritual (?) drapery. Does the Spiritualist believe that the bit of muslin has come from the region of pure spirit from which the disembodied soul descends? Certainly no philosophically minded Spiritualist would, but if as regards the drapery such a person would admit that this is fashioned from the cosmic matter of the universe by the will of the spirit which makes this manifest (accepting our theory so far), does it not rationally follow that all the "material" of the materialized visitor must probably be also so fashioned? And in that case, if the will of a spirit without form can produce the particular form which the sitter recognizes as his dead friend, does he not do this by copying the features required from some records to which as a spirit he has access; and in that case again is it not clear that some other "spirit" would equally have that power? Mere reflection, in fact, on the principles of creation will lead one straight to a comprehension of the utter worthlessness of resemblances in a materialized spirit, as a proof of identity.

Again, the facts of spiritual experience itself fortify the explanation we have given.

Is it not the case that most Spiritualists of long experience—omitting the few circumstanced in the very peculiar way that M. A. (Oxon) is, who are not in pursuit of dead friends at all—are always reduced sooner or later to a state of absolute intellectual exasperation by the unprogressive character of their researches? How is it that [after] all these twenty years that Spiritualists have been conversing with their departed friends their knowledge of the conditions of life in the next world is either still as hazy as the rambling imagination of a pulpit orator, or, if precise at all, grotesquely materialistic in its so-called spirituality? If the spirits were what the Spiritualists think them, is it not obvious that they must have made the whole situation more intelligible than it is—for most people—whereas, if they are, what we affirm that they really are is it not obvious that all they could do is exactly what they have done?

But, to conclude for the present, surely there need be no hostility, as some Spiritual writers seem to have imagined, between the Spiritualists and ourselves, merely because we bring for the consideration a new stock of ideas—new, indeed, only as far as their application to modern controversies is concerned, old enough as measured by the ages that have passed over the earth since they were evolved. A gardener is not hostile to roses, because he prunes his bushes and proclaims the impropriety of letting bad shoots spring up from below the graft. With the Spiritualists, students of Occultism must always have bonds of sympathy which are unthought of in the blatant world of earth-bound materialism and superstitious credulity. Let them give us a hearing; let them recognize us as brother-worshippers of Truth, even though found in unexpected places. They cannot prove so oblivious of their own traditions as to refuse audience to any new plea, because it may disturb them in a faith they find comfortable. Surely it was not to be comfortable that they first refused to swim with the stream in matters of religious thought; and deserted the easy communion of respectable orthodoxy, happily trustful of the future state prescribed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and in the safe arrival there, if anyone who takes a ticket for the right pew, as if it were a through carriage for Paradise without break of gauge.

Will Spiritualism only conquer incredulity to find itself already degraded into a new church, sinking, so to speak, into armchairs in its second childhood, and no longer entitled to belief or vigorous enough for further progress? It is not a promising sign about a religious philosophy when it looks too comfortable, when it promises too indulgent an asylum for our speckled souls with hooris of the Mohammedan Elysium, or the all too homelike society of the Spiritualist's "Summerland." We bring our friends and brethren in Spiritualism no mere feather-headed fancies, no light-spun speculation, when we offer them some toil-won fragments of the mighty mountain of Occult knowledge, at the base of whose hardly accessible heights we have learned to estimate their significance and appreciate their worth. Is it asked why we do not spread out the whole scroll of this much vaunted philosophy for their inspection, at once and so exhibit clearly its all-sufficing coherence? That question at least will hardly be asked by thoughtful men who realize what an all-sufficient philosophy of the Universe must be. As well might Columbus have been expected to bring back America in his ships to Spain. "Good friends, America, will not come," he might have said, "but it is across the waters and, if you voyage as I did and the waves do not smother you, mayhap you will find it too."

"NATURE-SPIRITS AND ELEMENTALS"

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 5, February, 1882, pp. 115-116]

A correspondent of Light having asked Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten, the famous Spiritualist speaker and author, to state her beliefs as regards the existence of sub-human orders of "spirits," our excellent friend has, in the number of that journal for 3rd December, given them without reserve. Before quoting them, we must inform our readers that Spiritualists have always opposed the allegations of Theosophists that such races of beings exist, and we have had to put up with no little hard scolding from them.

Mrs. Britten, incautiously, as we think, uses the word “Elementary,” to signify nature-spirits, or the forces of Nature. A clear distinction should be drawn between these nature-spirits, and the psychic shells of once living human beings, known in India as bhûtas. To mark this difference and, if possible, avoid confusion, we applied, in Isis, the name “Elementals” to the nature-spirits, and used the word “Elementary” to designate the bhûtas. Mrs. Britten says:—

Protesting in advance against being forced into the arena of literary warfare, the unspiritual character of which too often offends and disgusts the readers of our journals, I simply reply to the inquiry of “Student,” that I—as one who not only believes in Elementary Spirits, but claims to have seen them, and conversed with many others who have had similar experiences--am accustomed to classify all subhuman Spirits as elementary in organization, and I presume the term “Nature-Spirits” is simply applied to such existences from the position which they occupy in the realm of nature.

I have recently seen in one of the Spiritual journals, though I cannot at this moment recall which, a beautiful simile, used to represent the position of man in the scale of creation, namely, as standing midway upon the famous ladder whose foot is on earth and its highest round [rung] in Heaven. If this position represents a physical truth, of which material existence is the visible witness, is there no corresponding Spiritual ladder in which descending grades of being are as obvious and philosophical a necessity, as the ascending scale which Spiritualists so readily acknowledge? If the Darwinian chart of material progress presents features of absolute demonstration on so many points that its unsolved problems can afford to stand over, awaiting proofs which the future must yield up, can the Spiritualist be content to supplement Darwin’s merely materialistic footprints of being, with an advance into Spiritual realms beyond matter, yet utterly ignore the existence of Spiritual realms of being as the antecedents of matter?*

* We do not know what the eminent author of Modern American Spiritualism really means by the words “beyond” and “antecedents of matter” in this application. Surely, she cannot mean that there exists any realm of “being” beyond or outside of matter? Such realm would be one of pure Spirit, i.e., of absolute immateriality in which it is hardly necessary to remind any one there can be no being; as a “being” of any description whatsoever implies something organized, and that something can never be formed out of nothing. [H.P.B.]

Are there no embryonic states for the soul, as well as for the body; no realms of gestation for Spiritual, as well as for material, forms .

.....

I will take up your space no further than to repeat that I have seen Elementary Spirits in many forms, and on many grades of the scale of being, and that I believe I have conversed or corresponded with many hundreds of intelligent persons who think with me, that they have as good evidence of the existence both of sub human and superhuman Spirits, as of simply human Spirits. That intercourse with these realms of being has been far more rare than with human Spirits I allow; hence those who have entered upon it shrink back with as much dislike and pain from the coarse denial and rude contempt of others who have not shared their experience as Spiritualists themselves feel when their belief is assailed by ignorance and bigotry. Hence it is also that little is said or written on this subject at present; and though I have reason to believe in the great unfoldments of Spiritual life and being, upon the mere threshold of which we are now standing, that far and wider and more astounding revelations from the Spiritual side of man's nature await us than the limited vistas we now gaze upon afford, I deem it in the best interests of truth that we should advance most cautiously; accepting only that which we can prove in ordinary experiences, and leaving extraordinary revealments to unfold themselves. . . .

I am, very faithfully yours,

EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTEN.

The Limes, Humphrey-street,

Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

In the same number of *Light* we learn from a correspondent signing himself "Ma"—that the "earliest Gods of Egypt, following the Mother of Gods, were the Eight who ruled in Am-Smen before the firmament of Ra was uplifted"; and that "they are known to all Egyptologists as the eight elementaries."

A new proof of the correctness of cyclic necessity: gods worshipped ninety centuries B.C., becoming candidates for the same in the nineteenth A.D.!

IN DESPERATE STRAITS

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 5, February, 1882, pp. 116-117]

The emotional letter to the Editor of a Christian journal of London, from a well-known native clergyman of Ceylon, which we copy below, is generously accorded the wide circulation of our magazine to show that we bear no malice even to such bitter and often truculent enemies as the missionaries have shown themselves to be. It does seem rather amusing, however, that this writer, himself a clergyman and presumably able to expound his religion, should be appealing for help to Dr. Sexton, once upon a time a well-known Spiritualist, and the editor of a Spiritualist paper, but at the same time not lifting his hand to stop the Buddhist revival in Ceylon. Mr. Spaar was one of the five Padris who were present at Panadure on the 22nd of June, 1881—the occasion, referred to in his letter, when a makeshift heterodox champion offered himself as an antagonist to Col. Olcott—but who did not open their mouths when that gentleman said: “If, either now or at any other time prior to my departure for India, the Christian party should put forward a champion whom I can without sacrificing self-respect meet in debate, their challenge will be accepted.” This year, again, the old game of putting up obscure laymen to challenge our President was repeated, but, of course, no notice was taken of them. Our mission is not one of aggression, but of defense. We defend, first, the principle of Universal Brotherhood and mutual tolerance, and then the right of all Asiatic peoples, to be left unmolested in the enjoyment of their ancient faiths.

Whatever we have ever done against missionaries in Asia has been done, because those propagandists are trying their utmost to stamp out and destroy religions far better suited to Asiatic moral needs than the one they would introduce, and taking advantage of the ignorance of youth to turn them into irreligious sceptics. As for the present editor of the *Shield of Faith* whose help is implored, he is a man of learning and eloquence, but may prove no more persistent in defending the “Holy Ghost,” than he was in advocating the cause of the unholy ghosts in general.* A whilom Spiritualist who has turned his coat, though he be, yet, his argumentum ad crumenum—to “raise the funds”—the usual appeal to the pockets of the faithful on such occasions—in the editorial which we copy below ought to be responded to by the Sinhalese Christians at once, and the Rev. Spaar should head the list. To help the worthy gentleman in his distress, we now quote from his plaintive letter:—

Kalutara, Ceylon, August 4, 1881.

Rev. Sir,—. . . Never was there such a revival of unbelief as there is at present in Ceylon. The battle for the truth must ere long be fought, and God grant that some valiant David may arise to stand up against the Philistines of error and infidelity who stalk through the land.

* The *Medium and Daybreak* (November 11) says:—

“Dr. Sexton continues to enlarge the profits of his ministry by condemning Spiritualism as “decidedly anti-Christian.” ‘A Humanitarian’ replies to him at length in the *South Shields Daily News*, we make one extract: ‘Could anything be more foolish than to censure a cause for doing the very work which it is sent into the world to perform, viz., to convert the sinner and unbeliever from the error of his ways? Does not everybody know that the worthy doctor was himself an Atheist for many years, and that it was through his association with Spiritualism that he became possessed of a belief in a future life, and in a Providence who rules wisely and well? The eloquence of Christendom was launched at him in vain: he remained a staunch Atheist; but—the Phenomena of Spiritualism being proved by him to be genuine—he now looks triumphantly over the grave, and gratefully advises his hearers to believe that it is all the work of evil spirits!’”

All this while we have had to deal with difficulties arising from the purely heathen Buddhist, but now there has sprung up in our midst, a “Theosophical Society,” whose President and Founder in Ceylon is a professed American, [sic.] Col. H. S. Olcott. He first arrived in the island towards the end of last year in company with Madame Blavatsky, who professed to work miracles.* Both of them visited several towns and villages, lecturing against Christianity, indulging in horrible blasphemies. They declared themselves converted to Buddhism, and worshipped at its shrines.† After preaching or lecturing, Col. Olcott usually challenges any one to come forward and meet him in debate. At one place his challenge was accepted by a native Christian, quite sanguine that some Christian English missionary would joyfully come forward in defence of the faith; but the idea of the missionaries is to let well alone, and that all this will come to nought. Col. Olcott is believed to be quite a master of the sciences, having lectured on those of an occult character. This native Christian having failed in enlisting the sympathies of the missionaries, got a member of the “Christo-Brahmo-Samaj” to take up the gauntlet thrown down by Col. Olcott; but when the opponents met, Col. Olcott declined to hold any discussion with a man who was not a Christian, on the subject of the Divine Origin of Christianity. Having made collections in aid of what is now known as the “Sinhalese National Buddhist Fund,” the Theosophists left for Bombay, where they endeavour to make us believe they are very strong, and where they issue a monthly magazine called *The Theosophist*. Whilst there, it appears from the papers that a split occurred, and several of Col. Olcott’s followers left for America. The Colonel himself, encouraged perhaps by the welcome accorded to him here on his previous visit, when he was hailed as the “White Buddhist” has come back with one Mr. Bruce (this time without Madame Blavatsky) described as Inspector of Schools. The former is busily engaged in publishing pamphlets, catechisms, &c., lecturing and raising money, and opening schools with the avowed object of stopping heathen children from attending Christian schools. I send you a copy of this man’s catechism. A pamphlet, by one Professor Woodroff, has been published and circulated widely. It treats of the so-called “discrepancies in the Gospels.” If ever the “heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing” it is now. The silence of the missionaries is construed into want of ability to meet this Goliath.

* Who never professed anything of the kind; the statement is a padri-born, barefaced untruth. We leave the claim of working “miracles” to the “Generals” and “Captains” of the “Salvation Army.” [H.P.B.]

† The latter never lectured in her life, and is a Buddhist for the last twenty years. [H.P.B.]

I am sure that there is more than one quite competent in the name of the Lord of Hosts to go out to battle; but as I said before, the convenient method of getting over it is by saying “Don’t be afraid, Col. O. won’t do much harm; it will all come to an end.” “There isn’t much good gained by controversy. It is not in my line.” “Let us preach the Gospel.” God only knows, however, the incalculable mischief that is done. A few native Christians have just formed themselves into an “Evangelical Union” for the purpose of doing something, but their efforts are sure to meet with the cold shoulder from those who are “the sent.”

I have just read that Rev. Joseph Cook purposes to visit India shortly. Oh! if it would please the Lord to send him or you among us for a season.

I must also mention that an English infidel paper is getting among us; the other day a railway traveller was giving away some, and I noticed copies on the library table of this town, where one of my friends also put in your Shield of Faith.

Yours in the Lord,

J. A. SPAAR.

P.S.—A supply of tracts, &c., against infidelity for circulation will be welcome.

Dr. Sexton editorially offers to not only visit Ceylon but make the tour around the globe if “the friends . . . in each of these countries form societies, raise funds, and make the preliminary arrangements.” Then he modestly adds, “they can, in their turn, challenge the Olcotts, the Blavatskys, et hoc genus omne.” Here is a chance for the Rev. Spaar that he should not let slip; and will not unless—as his behaviour at Panadure would seem to show—he too is disposed “to let well alone,” and not make himself appear ridiculous by playing the “David” when the theosophical “Goliath” is “to the front.” Since Dr. Sexton and his correspondent are fond of Latin may we not be permitted to remark that if the Theosophical movement for them is a—*Deo dignus vindice nodus* they ought to adopt more dignified means to get out of their difficulties than that of spreading false and slanderous reports against it in their Christian organs. *Abusus non tollit usum*; abuse and calumny are no arguments though certainly they do appear as the *deliciae theologiae*. At all events the time for arguing is past and they ought to resort to more effective means.

Let then Dr. Sexton or Rev. Joseph Cook hurry at once to Ceylon; and making a supreme effort to clear the korales of the fair island for ever of the “Philistines of error,” the “Olcotts and the Blavatskys”—have them slain by the American-London Samsons, in the name of the “Lord of Hosts,” and with the traditional biblical weapon —“the jaw of an ass”—which Mr. Cook handles in such a remarkably dexterous manner.

FOOTNOTE TO “THE PISACHA-DANCERS”

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 5, February, 1882, pp. 119-120]

[A description is given by S. Râmaswamier* of the unfortunate victims of obsession and some of the methods of exorcising the pisâchas or evil spirits are enumerated. Mention is made of the fact that, after a person’s death, his kindred offer sacrifice in the shape of rice-balls, calling upon the name of the departed spirit. “No educated person would for a moment think that the spirit of the deceased hears him, or—less than all—can taste the food so offered. It is done simply as a duty to the memory of the dead . . .” To this H. P. B. appends the following footnote:]

In Christian Russia the same custom of offering rice to the dead prevails throughout the Empire. For six weeks after the death of a person, dishes full of rice with a wax taper stuck in the middle of it are sent at regular periods to the parish church or laid on the tomb of the defunct. There, with the rice placed near, a mass is said for the rest of the departed soul in order that it should not become a bhûta, a restless wandering soul in the earth region—the latter being considered the greatest misfortune. In Roman Catholic countries it is the same thought or fear of the soul’s torments at being earth-bound that underlies the ceremony of the Feast of the Dead held throughout Christendom on the 2nd of November.

* [A high-caste Brâhmana, whose strictly orthodox family was closely connected with the High Priest of Travancore. He was a chela of one of the Masters in the early days of the Movement.—Compiler.]

A BOOK OF THE BEGINNINGS

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 5, February, 1882, pp. 127-28]

If one could summon to his aid the airy flippancy which seems so marked a characteristic of our literary critics as a class, he might dash off his column of remarks upon the strange book that lies before us,* without a thought of the consequences to its author. But one who has ever himself essayed authorship in a conscientious spirit of loyalty to truth, knows too well the pangs that torture the heart of a writer when he sees the monument of his research defiled alike by the fulsome praise or unmerited calumny of its reviewers. Since Mr. Gerald Massey's great work appeared, numerous criticisms of it have come under our notice. And of these scarcely one has indicated that the reviewer had closely studied the book, while most have shown but too plainly that its pages had been but skimmed over hurriedly and perfunctorily.

This is no paste-and-scissors compilation, made as a commercial speculation, but a conscientious compilation and analysis of all available material which bears upon the history of Egypt or throws light upon the beginnings of her people. That all this gigantic labour was undertaken by the author to support a theory that human speech, if not the human race itself, has sprung from the Nilotic Delta or primarily from the ancestors of the ancient Egyptians, in no way lessens his claim to our admiration for his learning and industry. If we mistake not, most of the world's knowledge has come from specialists and ideologists, for only such have sufficient impulse to carry them through all obstacles to the discovery of truth.

* A Book of the Beginnings. By Gerald Massey. Two Vols. 4to. (London, Williams and Norgate, 1881).

This book is an encyclopaedia of Egyptology in itself; and though the reader disagree ever so much with Mr. Massey as to an African rather than an Asiatic or American origin of the race, yet he must, all the same, value it most highly as the best repository extant of the data that every student of history and ethnology needs for a comprehension of those subjects. One often feels happy to find in the average volume of the day one fact to remember or one good idea to appropriate: but in this *Book of the Beginnings* every page teems with the evidences of painstaking research. Mr. Massey's theory is that man has evolved from the anthropoid apes, and through the Negro races, to the present variety of colour and stage of development. He seeks to fortify his position that Egypt and not Central Asia is the cradle-land of languages by comparative vocabularies of Egyptian words and those in British, Maori, Akkadian, Gothic, Burmese, Sanskrit, and other tongues. Were our purpose to do more than to call attention to this encyclopaedic work and recommend it to Asiatic and Anglo-Indian buyers, we might challenge the accuracy of the author's philological deductions, as of his ethnic theory. So liberal a thinker as Mr. Gerald Massey will be most unlikely to deny our statement that the last word has not yet been said about the origin and distribution of the races of mankind. Possibly he may even concede to us the reasonableness of our belief that the mist will never be cleared away until the treasures of certain hidden libraries in the possession of a group of Asiatic recluses shall be given out to the world. But be that as it may, we feel too thankful to him for the present compendious contribution to Egyptological literature to attempt any criticism upon a single reading of his book in the hurry of editorial and official duties. One thing we may at least say, that he has traced with minute painstaking the Egyptian parentage of the whole array of Bible myths and miracles.

The “impotent attempts” of Bibliolaters to convert mythology into history, dignified with the astounding title of the “Book of God” provoke the full scorn of one who, like him, has industriously searched out the origins of Hebraic ideas. These attempts, he says, “have produced the most unmitigated muddle of matter ever presented to the mind of man. There has been no such fruitful source of misconception as this supposed source of all wisdom, designated the Book of God, ignorantly believed to have been communicated to man orally by an objective Deity . . . The myths of Egypt are the miracles of the Hebrew writings, and a true explanation of the one must inevitably explode the false pretensions of the other . . . The key of those (the Biblical) writings was lost, and it is found in Egypt.” This is unpalatable truth for our benevolent enemies, the Padris, but Mr. Massey makes out his case. They may revile but they cannot answer him.

But we have one valid complaint to make about the book: it has no General Index. The student unaided must pick out the facts he wishes out of this bewildering heap of facts. This involves great labour and loss of time, and largely impairs the value of the work.

**FOOTNOTE TO “A FLASH OF LIGHT UPON
OCCULT FREEMASONRY”**

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 5, February, 1882, p. 135]

[To this article which deals with the dispute between the Râjâ of Travancore and the Râjâ of Cochin with regard to alleged rights of jurisdiction over the Masonic Temple of Kudalmanikkam, H. P. B. appends the following footnote:]

European and even Hindu students of Occultism are often deploring and even wondering, why all the “Initiates” or “adepts” seem to have died out in India. They have not “died” out, nor is their absence due to “Kali Yuga” as popularly yet erroneously supposed. The “adepts” have simply and gradually if not altogether forsaken India, at least retired from its public populated portions, keeping their knowledge and often their very existence as secret as they can. Many of them are gone beyond the Himalayas. Some yet remain—especially in Southern India, but few are the privileged ones who know of them; still fewer those who could point out their places of retreat.

A CONJURER AMONG THE SPIRITUALISTS

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 5, February, 1882, p. 137]

Following is an article* taken from the Bombay Gazette of January 30, in which we find a new and very important proof of the reality of the phenomena produced by some genuine mediums. The testimony of an eminent conjurer well versed in every professional and non-professional trick, and actually alive to the possibilities of legerdemain, carries more weight with it, we trust, than the denial of a thousand worldly sceptics educated in Greek and Latin, but utterly ignorant of the possibilities of nature and the limitations of legerdemain. We feel doubly happy for the opportunity offered us by adding the testimony of Mr. H. Kellar to those of Messrs. Maskelyne and Cook, Bellachini, and other eminent conjurers, to confound our detractors: happy for the Spiritualists who have found in Mr. Eglinton such a powerful and useful ally, and happy for those Theosophists who either believe in or themselves produce various phenomena. It matters comparatively little whether the latter are regarded as mediums or occultists, as being “controlled” and “guided” by “disembodied spirits” or inspired by living cis-or trans-Himalayan “Brothers.” Before the vexed question—“Do the BROTHERS exist?”—is settled, the reality and genuineness of the phenomena variously ascribed to both spirits and Brothers must be proved.

* [The article referred to takes the form of a letter by Mr. Harry Kellar describing a séance with the famous medium Eglinton when phenomena took place which could not be accounted for as the result of trickery or sleight-of-hand.—Compiler.]

In our deadly strife with society, it is far more important to us to gain our chief point with them—namely, the right to take our critics publicly to task, and challenge them to prove which of us—the millions of Spiritualists and Theosophists, or the masses of sneering and insulting sceptics who deny that of which they know nothing—may best be described as deluded fools, impostors and bigots. We have reason to hope and believe that the time when our good friends, the psychophobists and materialists, may be invited to keep company with those fossils of old who voted to burn Galileo—is at hand. Meanwhile, coolly waving them off, we might ask these importunate and infatuated Alexanders “not to stand between us and the SUN.”

MADAME BLAVATSKY’S REPLY TO MR. JOSEPH COOK

[The Theosophist, Vol. III, No. 5, Suppl. to February, 1882, p. 15]

Editor’s Office of The Theosophist, Bombay,

20th January, 1882.

Madame Blavatsky, while sending her compliments to Mr. J. Cook, offers him many thanks for the free advertisement of the Theosophical Society—of which she is one of the Founders—and of her work Isis, in his highly dramatical and sensational performances called lectures. Mr. Cook had the means of ascertaining last evening what effect his denunciation of, and false statements about the Theosophical Society, on January 17, had upon the native public. The long and unexpected applause of greeting upon the appearance of the two Founders in the Hall shows better than any words the esteem in which Mr. Cook’s denunciations are held.

Madame Blavatsky especially thanks Mr. Cook for the good taste and tact he exhibited in the opening sentence of his speech, so menacingly referring to four policemen—the mention of whom, as he thought, was capable of checking the expression of the good feeling of the natives towards those whom they know to love them unselfishly, and to have devoted their lives and means to defend them and their children from the demoralizing influence of those who would pervert them from their respective faiths into missionary Christianity. These influences are too well known to the rulers and the ruled to need detailed notice. The term “native Christian” in India is almost synonymous with a “drunken and lying rascal” in the mouth of the English themselves. Mr. Cook is welcome to try to tear down the Theosophical Society everywhere he goes—as he will always find Theosophists and Arya Samajists to answer him. At the same time Mr. Cook is warned—unless he would risk to have his triumphant progress through India checked by a disagreeable lawsuit—to beware what he says of Madame Blavatsky or Col. Olcott personally, as other and more influential persons than an American preacher—namely, Englishmen—have found that there are laws in this country to protect even American citizens from malicious calumny. As neither Col. Olcott nor Madame Blavatsky will ever return to America, Mr. Cook’s remark that they are trying to learn sorcery here to teach it to mediums in America is absurdly false and truculent—though little else could have been expected from such an exemplar of Christian meekness and charity. To show Mr. Cook who Madame Blavatsky is, a printed circular is enclosed. Mr. Cook’s aspersions will be fully answered and proved false tonight. If, instead of accepting the challenge, he runs away, all India will be notified of the cowardly act.

He did run away. As reports of the proceedings will be published in a separate pamphlet, and a copy sent gratis to each of our subscribers in the next number we need only notice, at this time, Mr. Cook’s cowardly rejoinder to the four challenges above noted, and append as the sequel a correspondence between Captain Banon and himself at Poona, in which his unfairness and moral obliquity are most clearly shown.

As men of his kind love to slander people behind their backs, but keep ever aloof and avoid to face those whom they denounce, Mr. Cook took care that his answer to the four challenges should reach the writers when he was already near Poona, and at a secure distance from the Theosophical audience. That answer was handed by a Mussulman to the President of the Framji Hall in the evening, and when he was already on the platform ready to open the meeting.

[This letter was followed by correspondence from Mr. Cook and others—
Compiler.]

