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THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

[Family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares].

OLD DIARY LEAVES.*

SECOND ORIENTAL SERIES, CHAPTER XVII.

AFTER a residence of only five months Mrs. Cooper Oakley found her health suffering so much in India that about this time she had to leave us for home under medical orders. Our loss has been the very great gain of the London headquarters where, under a more bracing climate, she has done a prodigious amount of work.

Our London news of that week was more calming as it appeared that, besides Mr. F. W. H. Myers of the S. P. R., nobody had resigned his membership. Whether or not a popular disbelief in the infallibility of professional handwriting experts influenced public opinion, or whether it was just the instinctive feeling that an accused person ought to have the benefit of the doubt, the fact above stated was gratifying to the colleagues of H.P.B. There was recently in the *Theosophist* (June 1898) a reference to the late Mr. Montagu Williams Q. C.'s opinion of the value of this expert testimony. Since then a copy of Mr. Williams' "Leaves from a Life" (Macmillan & Co., 1890) has been sent me by a friend in New Zealand, and I am able to show by the testimony of that eminent leading counsel, how unnecessary was our grief and distress on hearing that Mr. Nethercliffe had declared the K. H. letters forgeries by H. P. B. Mr. Williams tells (p. 263 *op. cit.*) the story of a case of alleged libel by publication on a postal card, brought against Sir Francis Wyatt Truscott by one John Kearn. Messrs. Poland and Grain conducted the prosecution, while Sir John Holkar, Mr. Williams and Horace Avory represented the accused. The prosecutor and a lady swore to the identity of the handwriting, and the evidence of Charles Chabot and Frederick George Nethercliffe, professional experts, was then taken. Both swore positively to the writing on the postcard as being that of the defendant, Chabot pointing out in detail to the jury

* Two full series, or volumes, of thirty chapters each, one tracing the history of the Theosophical Society up to the time of the departure of the Founders from New York to India, the other subsequently, have appeared. The present series is the third.

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the turns of letters and flourishes, the dots, cross lines and up and down strokes which bore him out in his decision, and Nethercliffe, pet of the S. P. R. and slayer of the Blavatsky Medusa, said "he had made handwriting a study during more than thirty years...and that, after minutely comparing the letters (of the defendant) with the postcard, he had independently come to the conclusion that the writer in both cases was the same. He produced a most elaborately written report, calling attention to the various similarities existing between the handwriting on the different documents, and, on being cross-examined, he adhered absolutely to the position he had taken up." Alas! for the poor man. The defence put upon the stand one Mr. Thomas Flight Smith, an acquaintance of both the parties, the accused and accuser, who swore that he had himself written the postcard as a friendly warning to Sir Francis, yet without malice to Mr. Kearns! His father, Mr. T. J. Smith, bore him out in the assertion, and produced three other postcards written by his son. Mr. Alderman Swan Nottage, who stated that he was a friend of the accused and the witness, Mr. T. F. Smith, and had received many letters from both, and was acquainted with their respective handwriting, swore "that the postcard was undoubtedly written, not by Sir Francis, but by Mr. Smith." Mr. Williams adds: "The jury stated that they did not wish to hear any further evidence, and proceeded at once to pronounce a verdict of 'Not Guilty.' So much for the evidence of experts in handwriting."

So much, indeed; and notwithstanding the Arab proverb about the malodoroussness of proffered advice, I will venture to recommend that copies of Mr. Montagu Williams' book and of the Report of the Parnell case be placed in the library of the S. P. R., for the benefit of those who care to know what the professional opinions of handwriting experts are sometimes worth. Poor H. P. B., how those S(leuthounds) of P(sychical) R(earch) made thee suffer under the knouts of these experts!

On the Good Friday of that year I had had an interview with a Telugu Brahmin astrologer, the possessor of a palm-leaf copy of that wonderful old book of prophecies, the "Bheema Grantham", who had greatly astonished me by his readings in that volume. In the *Theosophist* for May 1885 (vol. VI. number 8) will be found my account of it, under the title, "Indian Sibylline Books." As prophecies acquire no value until their fulfilment, but after that become most important as proofs of the predictive faculty in man, my habit is to put on record all I hear of this sort, so that they may be cited at the proper time. That is why I published the revelations of the Telugu Brahmin at the time, and as thirteen years have now passed since then, it will be interesting to turn back to that number of the *Theosophist* and see what he foretold and how he did it. Several friends of ours told us that they had had read out of one of these ancient *ollas* accurate details of their own lives and prophecies about their affairs which had been literally fulfilled. They had also been allowed to verify the astrologer's readings

by consulting the book themselves. These friends told me, moreover, that in the course of their consultations it had transpired that their connection with our Society had been mentioned and that the book contained much about the Society itself. On this account they had arranged the interview between the astrologer and myself, but only with much difficulty and after overcoming his objections to have a sitting with an European. Even then he would not do it until he had *consulted the book itself*, and learning from it the day, hour and minute for the interview, the number of witnesses permissible, and the positions (relative to the cardinal points) to be assumed by the Brahmin and myself. At the appointed time we took our seats on the floor, on a mat. in the Indian fashion. The book, on being unwrapped, proved to be an ordinary palm-leaf volume, the characters etched on the leaves with a stylus. I judged it to be very old. The edges were much discolored and worn and the characters black with age. The book was laid before me, the edges of the leaves upward, and I was told to take in my two hands the unwound binding-cord which passes through holes punched in every leaf, insert it between any two leaves I chose, and open it at that place. I did so, and the astrologer then read the contents of that and following pages. Notes were taken by one of the witnesses. The book said: "The inquirer is not a Hindu, but of foreign birth. He was born with the Moon, in the constellation Pleiades, having the sign Leo in the ascendant." Here follow some particulars of the personal sacrifices which I was said to have made for the public welfare. It then continued: "With a colleague, he organized a society for the propagation of Esoteric Philosophy (*Brahmagnyanum*). This colleague is a woman, of great power (*sakti*), high family and, like himself, a foreigner. Though born so well, she too gave up everything, and for thirty years has been working in this same direction. Yet her karma is such as to compel her to endure great trouble and anxiety; and she is hated by her own kind (the white race) for whom she has worked so hard." It then spoke of two white persons who had been most friendly, but had turned about, published bad stories about her and tried to make the public doubt the genuineness of our movement. "Many phenomena have been shown in connection with the Society" it went on to say, "and letters received by the Founders from their Teachers have been injudiciously made public: *this has been the cause of all the present trouble.*" The prophecy then followed that our Society would survive me by many years, and, to my surprise, for the two friends present were not aware of it any more than the astrologer, the book told about a private meeting of myself and others (that at Dewan Bahadur Baghoonath Row's private house which I have mentioned in the last chapter) held the day before, with the subject of our discussion, and prophesied the issue correctly. The Society, said the book, "is now passing through a dark cycle, which began seven months and fourteen days ago, and will last nine months and sixteen days more; making for the whole period, seventeen months exactly."

Counting backward from the date of the interview we come to the time, in 1884, of the attack of the Missionaries upon H. P. B., which goes to the book's credit; and tracing forward in the light of events, the prophecy as to the passing away of the Society's dark cycle and the beginning of a brighter one we find corroborated. Meanwhile, what had happened was my Indian tour of 1885, which proved a very great success, adding seventeen new Branches to our roll, and which certainly was not to be anticipated by either the astrologer or my two Hindu friends who brought him to me. That "dark cycle" of 1885 was a more serious crisis than any we have traversed since, even that of the Judge secession, for the Society was not then as impregnable in its organization, the numerical strength of its membership, or its geographical distribution as it was when the great blow was struck at its life by its quondam Vice-President, across the Atlantic.

The question, so often put me as to my belief in astrology, will naturally recur in this connection. I must answer it as I always have, that I have not yet had evidence enough to warrant my saying I either believe or disbelieve. Many facts in the experience of others, some in my own, go towards proving the truth of this alleged science, yet not enough for a cautious man to base thereon a positive belief. I am waiting, most ready to me convinced, yet determined not to say I am unless I have a good case to go with to the jury of sensible men. It seems as if we can never say what there is in astrology until we have learned all there is in thought-transference. Who is to say that when I sat with that Telugu astrologer he may not have clairvoyantly read my history and traced out its sequel in my own mind or my aura? And although I was permitted to examine his time-worn book of palm leaves, and his readings were verified by the two Telugu friends who took notes of his readings, that leaves open two questions, *viz.*, 1. Did he throw a glamour (*hypnotic*) over our eyes to make us see what was not on the pages; 2. Was he a cheat who had by hook or by crook found out about the T. S. and its Founders, prepared fresh pages of ollas, made them look old by discoloring them, and inserted them among the rest? There is not much weight in either of these hypotheses, still one must think of all alternatives and suspend judgment until all the needed proofs are in. The astrologer, or let us say his book, ventured one prophecy which ought to be recalled from time to time as a test of the science. He said that at the time of my death "the Society would have 156 principal Branches, not counting minor ones, and in them will be enrolled 5,000 members. Many Branches will rise and expire, many members come and go before then." I, myself, was to live from this hour, (*viz.*, 3rd April 1885, afternoon) 28 years, 5 months, 6 days, 14 hours," which would bring us to early morning of September 9, A.D. 1913. Here we have accuracy, beyond dispute, and it only remains for somebody who survives me to enter this prognostic in his common-place book and write to the then Editor of *Theosophist* about a thing which, probably, everybody else will

have forgotten! I am quite ready to believe that the prophecy will be correct to within a year or two. As to the strength of the Society at that time, it seems as if there is a mistake, for already we have about 400 living charters and more members. However, we shall see.

The interested reader will find much about the palm-leaf books of the Cumæan and other Roman Sibyls, and those of Egypt, in the article above mentioned (May 1885, *Theosophist*). It is a historical fact that the Sibylline Books were so accurate in all their fateful prophecies about the Roman state, that for over two centuries they were kept under the strict custody of *duumvirs*, until Sulla increased their numbers to fifteen. They were consulted only at times of great national crisis. St. Augustine (*De civitate Dei*, lib. xviii, c. 23) defends their veracious character and the Early Fathers generally held them in reverence, as it is alleged they prophesied the advent, life and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

Whatever the actual value of the astrologer's revelations to me on that Good Friday, it is the fact that they cheered us up at a time of gloom, and no doubt helped to give me the courage to go forth on my public tours of that year. Mr. T. Subba Row went with Judge P. Sreenevas Row to consult another astrologer in Madras, who also possessed a *nadigrantham*, but with most unsatisfactory results, as he tells the public in an article on "Nadigranthams and their Interpreters," which he contributed to the *Theosophist* for July 1885. He was an extremely enlightened and advanced esotericist and his views are entitled to the most serious consideration. The astrologer visited failed in every instance to give a correct answer, and what he read or pretended to read from his book proved to be rubbish. The one case therefore, offsets the other and leaves us as far as ever from having a satisfactory answer to the question whether the Nadigranthams deserve to be held in the high repute they enjoy throughout India. But then, again, we have the verified prognostics of my astrologer, and still farther, the open question of telepathy and clairvoyance. The late Mr. Judge took a hand in the discussion of the question, giving his views in an article ("The Nadigranthams") in the *Theosophist* for October 1885. He contends that my case and that of Mr. Subba Row are not identical, as I seem to have got hold of a genuine *nadi* and the other gentleman of a false one and a tricky astrologer. "It is" he writes "by no means proved that no *nadi* is trustworthy and that at no time could they be relied on...can, then, books or leaves be made or procured which may be used in the way pretended? I say that they can, and that there are two or more modes of doing it." He first postulates the astrologer's having the faculty of prevision or clairvoyance with which "he could have given all the details related quite easily with the aid of a few figures, letters or verses. His second is that "it is possible to cast up certain astrological figures to be used on certain days and hours, and for certain classes of questions, from which a large number of replies and predictions can be given that would

startle the average hearer, and be true not only to the past but also to the future... A large number of leaves could be prepared which would enable one to make replies to any kind of question at once"—i. e., at that same sitting. This again, I give for what it may be worth, having no great belief in Mr. Judge's having possessed any very notable predictive power of an occult kind. The one fact that there is throughout the world at this present moment an intense and growing interest in astrology and all the 'occult' sciences is sufficient excuse for my having diverged so widely from the episode of the astrologer's visit to headquarters, at the time with which our historical narrative is now concerned.

As I had no mind to accept blindly the revelations of the *Bhima Grantham*—the palmleaf book in question, and as I had not had time to handle and examine it during the seance with the Telugu Brahmin, I went to Mylapore with A'nanda to hunt him up. I was allowed to examine it as closely as I chose. Any doubt I may have had about the Pandit's having befooled me with bogus leaves intercalated among the others was set at rest, for every leaf was unquestionably ancient and equally time-worn with the rest. My notes say: "I saw the book, handled and examined it. It contains 300 answers to questions, written with an iron stylus on palm leaves, is perhaps 500 years old, and written in Telugu. There seems no doubt as to its genuineness." And yet the wonder but deepens that out of those mere 300 answers, the Pandit should have found a number relating to the history and destiny of our Society. Had these verses been waiting five centuries to be read to the right questioner when he should appear in the year 1885? It seems absurd on the face of it, yet the incidents of the interview have been truthfully reported, and my account will be corroborated, I am sure, by Mr. G. Soobbiah Chetty, now the incumbent of an influential office in the Madras Sea-customs Bureau. How, then, explain the riddle? First, fraudulent conspiracy between the Pandit and the brothers Chetty who brought him to me. But, they were ignorant of facts read, or seemingly read, from the *Bhima Grantham*; for example, the private meeting at Dewan Bahadoor R. Baghoonath Row's house, the nature of our discussion, and the policy determined upon; then as to the outcome of the events at that crisis, with the fixing of the exact times of their fruition. Secondly, (if the Pandit had the faculty of psychic vision) the reading by him of the pictures stored up in the "Astral Light." Thirdly, his power to compel subservient elementals to cast a glamour over the eyes of the two Telugu witnesses, to compel them to be blind to the actual writing on the leaves turned over and to read there the totally different sentences about the Society and its Founders which he read out to us. Fourthly, (and lastly, for I can form no other hypothesis) instead of his compelling enslaved elementals to cast the glamour over our eyes, it is conceivable that he might have been an ordinary medium, like the famed Govind Chetty, of Kumbakonam, and under the control of elementals or other entities who made him,

their passive agent, see what they wished him to see, and not what was on the page before his eyes. In either case it is a very interesting problem.

The Council decided, April 18th, to finish the rebuilding of the former "Shrine Room" upstairs which, in disgust at its defilement by the Coulomb conspirators, I had had demolished on my return from Europe, and to use it as a library, collecting together our several small stores of books. Our modest plan was very soon altered by the rapid accumulation of Sanskrit Mss. and other literature which about this time began. The Adyar Library building was soon projected and built, as we shall see later on.

Meanwhile our dear H. P. B. and party were on their way to Europe. I heard from them from each port of call and, May 20th, their arrival at Naples and landing. They found cheap lodgings at Torre del Greco, near Vesuvius, and settled down to bear their exile as best they might.

To be able to answer one of Mme. Coulomb's shocking slanders about H. P. B. having been the mother of illicit offspring at Cairo, I sent for a respectable Tamil woman who had helped nurse H. P. B. throughout her dangerous illnesses of February, and, of course, had had to discover her exact physical state. As might have been expected by all who knew H. P. B.'s character intimately, the *ayah* affirmed and declared her willingness to go into Court and testify, that her late mistress had never been a mother. She even went so far as to say that whatever marriage she had contracted, must have been a merely nominal one. Adult readers will understand my meaning.

At about this time news was received from Paris that our sole surviving French Honorary Fellow, Alphonse Cahagnet, was dead. He and the late Baron Dupotet were our only two, and both were distinguished authorities in psychical science. The first book of Cahagnet's that I read was his "Celestial Telegraph", which appeared in its English translation at New-York in about the year 1851. It was almost the first of my reading about the clairvoyant faculty and modern ecstatical visions of the world of spirits. Unfortunately, I never had the chance of conversing with its honest and enthusiastic author, but he sent me his photograph and that of his wife, the ecstatic "Adèle," which I keep hanging in my private rooms. Not a visitor, has ever guessed that the heavy-bodied peasant woman of the picture was even a clairvoyant at all, let alone that soaring visionary whose soul-flights through space took her to supernal planes, where she was swallowed up in a great blinding light, that drove back the less ethereal clairvoyants whom Cahagnet sometimes set to watching her in her upward progress. Elsewhere, when writing on the subject of clairvoyance, I have quoted from Cahagnet's book his description of the agony felt by him on finding himself powerless to draw Adèle's soul back into her body when she felt so merged in the spirit sphere as to declare she should

never re-enter the 'corpse' that seemed so repugnant to her. He tells us that the body began to even change color, like a real corpse, and show the preliminary signs of decomposition, while he in the greatest distress and fear, vainly brought his strongest will to bear upon her soul to come back, and not leave him to be perhaps tried for murdering the adored wife of his bosom. Poor man! his plight is one that many have and any one may experience. The last resource that he employed was prayer to God, which succeeded. Of course, it would in the case of a man of his temperament, for by praying he raised his consciousness and yearning to the celestial levels on which Adèle was functioning, and so got into touch with her as he could not by the mere use of his brain-power. If one sets out to chase a bird, one must get bird's wings and fly after it; to walk on the ground will be useless.

In pursuance of the policy of propaganda adopted by the Council, I left Madras, May 9, for Vellore, in company with Messrs. R. Raghoo-nath Row, P. Sreenivasrow, C. Ramiah and L. V. V. Naidu. Addresses were delivered by the Dewan Bahadur, in Tamil, and myself, in English. The Councillors returned to Madras but Doraswamy kept on with me. Our next station was Arcot, where we reorganized the local Branch, then in that sort of compulsory pralaya because of the transfer to other stations of active members in Government service, which is so often happening throughout India. We went to Arnee next where a new Branch was organized, thence to Chittoor, where there was prepared for our delectation much music, many fragrant garlands, and a procession of the 90 boys in the Sanskrit school that our Branch had formed. At 8 P.M. on the 17th we started for Madras and got home the following morning. The results of this short tour were 1 Branch revived, 1 new one formed, 10 new members admitted, and the T. S. movement put on a healthy footing throughout that district.

Another short tour began on the 21st when I started for Madura where a lecture was given and two candidates admitted to membership. "But for the Coulomb blight"—says my Diary, "the number would have been from 20 to 30." Yet the visit stopped the retrograde tendency, and the two men gained being of influential standing, I felt that we had done well. At Trichinopoly my audiences were large, especially that in an inner court of the ancient Sreerangam Temple, where the people massed in thousands. As on the occasion of my visit in 1882, the scene was most picturesque and striking, the dark-skinned multitude and the massive stone walls, huge gateway and carved monolithic columns being lit up by hundreds of torches, and the Brahmin priests with their snowy cloths thrown up into dazzling whiteness in the glare. With this picture vivid in my mind, I left at 1-30 that same night for Tanjore. My first public discourse there was given at the Reading Room; my second, in the vast open enclosure of the Temple, standing on the plinth of the colossal Bull, a monster measuring about twelve feet from the ground to its shoulder in the sitting posture. One feels dwarfed in such an environment, and as I

stood with the Bull beside me and the lofty pyramid, or *Goparam*, in front, towering up towards the sky, its numberless life-sized figures of Indian gods, goddesses and mythological heroes brought out in high lights and deep shadows by the moonlight, the thought of the strangeness of it all rushed in upon me and gave a peculiar tone to my impromptu discourse. The sense of my American modernity, in contrast with the hoary antiquity of the temple and the race which worship in it was overpoweringly real. A visit was paid, as usual, to the Tanjore Royal Library, once the richest literary collection in India and even now extremely important, but it was a not too cheerful experience, for the library is but little used by scholars, since scholarship is so poorly recompensed in these utilitarian days. These repositories of the high thoughts of ancient sages are like so many granaries where the seed-corn of future harvests is kept against the time of sowing.

A little tired and used up by the heat and travel, I laid my mat and cotton rugs on the stone platform of the station that night and slept a deep sleep, despite hurrying trains, until 3 A. M., when I left for Kumbakonam, a two hours' journey. I was kindly welcomed at the station, and lectured that evening at the Porter Town Hall, a fine and large room, to a very large, attentive and appreciative audience. Kumbakonam, known as "the Cambridge of Southern India", is a centre of culture and, of course, of religious scepticism—the two going too much together. Naturally, I attacked materialistic agnosticism, vindicated our Society's policy and record of usefulness, and defended H. P. B. as a true and brave friend of India, whose unselfish exertions on its behalf put to shame the majority of modern educated Hindus, who acted as if it were a shame, instead of an honor, to have been born in the land of the Rishis. Whether I did any permanent good is impossible to say, but most assuredly the sleepers were aroused to enthusiasm for the passing moment, and who knows what are the consequences of even a moment's awakening to the sense of duties neglected and opportunities slipping away? The next day's audience, in the same hall, were extremely demonstrative as I went on to treat Idols and Idol Worship from the side of psychological science. There were many college men present who had no clear conception of the actual process by which a mere block of stone, metal or wood, carved into a certain conventional shape, is changed into a sort of psychic dynamo, soaked with human aura, and efficacious for the production of psychological and physiological effects upon sensitive worshippers. The process is called in Sanskrit *Prana pratishtha*—the focalising of auric power (*prana*), and is intensely interesting to the amateur of mesmerism. Without going into details, it will suffice to say that the image goes through a process which extends over forty days, and includes the withdrawing from the image of all innate impurities and the subsequent imbuing, or saturating of it with a purified human magnetism, i. e., aura. Then to fix this supply, as it were, it is customary for the officiating adept, or chief Brahmin, to

prepare, or have engraved on a sheet of copper a geometrical symbol, called *chakram*, into which a magic power is imparted by the concentration of the trained Will.* This copper-plate is placed under the image when fixed in its place and there left, so long as the temple stands. Now, the wiser and purer the adept-consecrator the more real, effective and permanent the infusion of *prana* into the image, and the more carefully the *chakram* is prepared and placed, the more lasting its efficacy as a storage-battery of divine power. One sees, from all this, that the good Bishop Heber was more or less silly in saying:—

"The Heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone."

In point of fact, neither is the Heathen blind, nor does he bow down to wood and stone: quite the contrary, and the average Missionary is the real blind one, since he knows nothing at all about the Powers, symbols, customs or ceremonies which he reviles.

On to Cuddalore, my last station of this tour, where I lectured on Idols in the Temple, where I was surrounded by them, and on the 1st June I got back to Adyar, with a thankful heart for having escaped stroke or heat-apoplexy, and despite the high temperature having done so much to restore the old kindly feeling between the South Indian people and ourselves.

H. S. OLGOTT.

MISS EDGER'S INDIAN TOUR LECTURES.

V. THE FINDING OF GOD.

SELF-development, self-purification, and altruism shown alike to friend and foe, to each individual with whom we are associated, and to humanity collectively: these are the first duties of one who would lead a Theosophic life; and, if carried out to the fullest extent, they alone would make our lives far nobler and purer than they usually are. But there is something even beyond this, something which, if attained, would raise us from the human to the divine; and therefore I have called it the Finding of God. This it is which will supply the motive-power that will enable us to go on with our efforts to lead a higher life and to help humanity, in the face of all the disappointments and discouragements we shall encounter; this it is which will lead us to the highest goal that can be placed before man.

From what has already been said of the divine ray which is in every human being, and indeed in every object that exists, it will at once be seen that it is impossible truly to find God, until we find Him within ourselves, until we realise that we are one with Him because the whole universe is but the manifestation of Him. But in the earlier stages of our growth, when we are as yet too much influenced by the illusion of separateness for this, there is

* Vide the standard Western books on Magic for an explanation of the occult connection between geometrical signs and the Powers of the Elementary kingdoms.

still in us something that prompts us to seek a power greater and better than ourselves. Whether it be that the wonders of nature, the beauties by which we are surrounded, lead us to feel that there is an Intelligence that has brought these wonders and beauties into existence; whether it be the consciousness of our own life and thought that makes us acknowledge some higher source whence our being has been derived; or whether it be an inexplicable feeling that for all the perplexities of life there must be some solution, and that such solution can be found only if there be some guiding Intelligence; whichever of these it be, or whether it be a combination of all, there comes to every one, sooner or later, the irresistible impulse to try to find God.

At first we seek Him outside the Universe, and we think of Him as a Creator who has fashioned the world in some mysterious way, and guides and controls it from without. We at first attribute to Him such qualities as might be found in a human being who fashioned some wonderful machine, and then kept it working. Comparing any machine man is capable of producing with the world, we feel how stupendous must be the power and intelligence of a Being who has brought the Universe into existence; and thus, though the qualities we attribute to Him are human in character, yet they are possessed by Him in a degree far surpassing that in which they are possessed by any man. We think of Him as strong and mighty, but His strength is beyond our power of understanding; we picture Him jealous and angry if men, His creatures, slight or displease Him, and His jealousy and anger are such as to make Him an object of terror; or we imagine Him protecting His faithful worshippers and servants, and again His powers of protection are such as to guard them from even the greatest dangers, and make them successful in the most difficult and hazardous undertakings. We are awed with the power and greatness of God, and we offer prayers and sacrifices to Him to ensure His favour and protection, and to avert His displeasure and wrath. Or, looking up to Him as the sustainer of the Universe, we are filled with wonder and gratitude at the blessings He showers on men; the sunshine, the rain, all the beneficent forces of nature cause our hearts to rise in gratitude and adoration towards Him; and, if nature frowns on us and we suffer from her angry and destructive forces, we either feel that we have forfeited His favour by our own misdeeds, or, it may be, we conceive of some opposing force, which is antagonistic to Him, and at times is allowed the ascendancy for a while, during which it works havoc and destruction.

Thus in the early stages, when the struggle for existence is so keen and bitter, it is the quality of strength and power that we chiefly ascribe to God. But, as we grow, learning from experience and suffering, we find that there is something higher than strength, that physical life and success have no power in themselves to satisfy our inner cravings; and that sympathy and love are nobler than power. And then, without in any way lessening the power and majesty of God, we attribute to Him love and mercy, and the sterner aspect which first appealed to us;

is veiled under the tender beauty of the God of love, the Father who ever watches over, and cares for his His children. Still the shadow of suffering creeps between, and hides God from us. And again, in our ignorance, in the crudeness of our understanding, we can explain the existence of suffering only by the belief that by our wrong deeds, God's love has been turned aside from us, and that, before He will again bestow His mercy on us, He must be propitiated. So little do we at this stage understand the perfect selflessness of true love, that we attribute to Him the qualities of earthly love, which has not yet learned to remain unchanged whatever be the attitude of the loved one. And so we continue to offer prayers and sacrifices, now to express our gratitude, reverence, and love for the Father or Protector, now to propitiate the angry God, and induce him by our penitence to restore us to His favour.

There is some trace of both these conceptions among all nations, in the early stages of the development of their religious ideas. Some deify all the chief powers of Nature, and attribute to them now love and protection, now anger and desire for vengeance; others deify but a few of the most striking powers, or perhaps one only; while others again think of God as human in form. But there is the same thought underlying all, it is only the symbol that varies. There is further a tendency to mistake the symbol for the reality, thus leading to idolatry; but it should be remembered that all idolatry arises from the fact that the undeveloped human mind cannot grasp an abstract idea, and therefore must have its God presented to it under some concrete form.

In this gradual development of the idea of God, however, man was not left unaided. As has already been said, he is aided in his whole evolution by divine teachers, great beings who are the "flower" of a past cycle of evolution, and who take as a part of their especial work to aid him in this cycle. One of the first lessons They would try to impress on the awakening mind of man would be the idea of God; and it seems not unreasonable to imagine that They may have used the powers of nature as symbols to convey the conception to him. Of these, we meet none so frequently as the sun; for this, the source of all physical life and energy on the earth, would be the most fitting symbol for that source of *all* life and energy, both physical and spiritual, whom we may call God. And when these Teachers withdrew as was necessary in order that the infant humanity might grow strong, independent, able to stand alone, They did not sever Their connection wholly, but still remained in contact with the earth, watching over the progress of man, and ever ready to help him further, if he was in danger of going far astray, or if he had made all the use he could of the help and teaching already given. Thus when through his ignorance he fell into idolatry, mistaking the symbol for the reality, and beginning to worship the powers of nature themselves as if they were God, further guidance was given to lead him to the inner

meaning of the symbol. And so in the teachings of every great religious teacher we can trace some special element in the conception of God on which the chief stress was laid; now that of unerring justice, now that of love, now that of the intense joy felt by those who can realise His presence.

But a point was reached at length when man was ready to receive a higher teaching, when the divine ray within him was reaching out towards its source and was gaining strength and power of expression sufficient for it to enable him to begin to recognise his oneness with God. And so amongst the teachings given were many referring to the presence of God within the soul. There is a hymn written by a Theist of the present century, W. J. Fox, which illustrates this gradual growth of the God-idea. It runs as follows:—

“Make us a God,” said man;
Power first the voice obeyed;
And soon a monstrous form
Its worshippers dismayed;
Uncouth and huge, by nations rude adored;
With savage rites and sacrifice abhorred.

“Make us a God,” said man;
Art next the voice obeyed;
Lovely, serene, and grand,
Uprose the Athenian maid;
The perfect statue Greece, with wreathed brows,
Adores in festal rites and lyric vows.

“Make us a God,” said man;
Religion followed Art,
And answered, “Look within;
God is in thine own heart;
His noblest image there, and holiest shrine;
Silent revere, and be thyself divine.”

It may be noticed that all the great religious teachers of whom we have any record recognised the fact that men were not all at the same stage of development, and hence they gave two classes of teaching; the one was for the less developed and lay more stress on ceremonial; the other was for the advanced and emphasized the necessity of looking within. In the first part of their teaching purity of conduct and thought was enforced in order that the performance of ceremonies might be efficacious; for they were always recognised as being merely the external expression of religion. Thus in the “Li Ki,” one of the sacred books of Confucianism, we find the following:—“Of all the methods for the good ordering of men, there is none more urgent than the use of ceremonies. Ceremonies are of five kinds, and there is none of them more important than sacrifice. Sacrifice is not a thing coming to a man from without; it issues from within him, and has its birth in his heart. When the heart is deeply moved, expression is given to it by ceremonies, and hence, only men of ability and virtue can give

complete expression to the idea of sacrifice..... When nothing is left incomplete or improperly discharged, this is what we call perfection, implying the doing everything that should be done in one's internal self, and externally the performance of everything according to the proper method.....It is only the able and virtuous man who can attain to this perfection, and can sacrifice when he has attained to it." When sacrifice is thus performed, the purity of thought accompanying the ceremony causes the first glimmer of consciousness of the presence of God ; it seems to man in his undeveloped state, that it is an external presence that is around him. To quote again from one of the Confucian scriptures, the second of the " Four Books of the Chung-Tung" :— " When a man is moved to purify himself, and fast, and put on ceremonial robes, and offer sacrifice, it is almost as if the gods revealed themselves to him—he appears to be surrounded by them, they seem as if they were at the same time on his right hand and on his left. Hence the ode says :—

The gods come down
In their omnipotence ;
Take care, O man,
That thou hast reverence !
For, though hid from thee,
They are everywhere ;
Thou may'st not see them,
Not the less, beware !

But it is not in reality an external God of whose presence he is conscious ; it is the God within himself of which the expansive beauty and joy is making itself felt—So the Roman Stoic Seneca says :— " We need not lift our hands to Heaven, nor beseech the sacristan for permission to approach the idol's ear, as though we should be heard the better for that. No, God is near you, with you, in you. There dwells within us (believe me) a holy spirit, the watcher and guardian of all we do, good or bad. According as we deal with him, so he deals with us. No one is virtuous without God's influence, and no one without his aid can rise superior to fortune ; he it is from whom all high and noble counsels proceed." Quotations such as these might be multiplied, for the sacred books of all religions teem with references to these different stages in man's attitude to God.

With this more advanced conception, there comes a change in our attitude towards sin. We no longer feel that an external God is angry with us, and has turned His favour aside ; we realise that the change is in ourselves alone ; that by our wrong-doing we have raised a barrier which makes us unable to feel the presence of the God within. And then our prayers and sacrifices acquire a new meaning. They can no longer be offered for the sake of propitiating God, for we know that He does not need to be propitiated. Hence we begin to consider their effect on ourselves, and little by little we learn that if offered in sincerity and purity of motive, they open our hearts to the divine influ-

ence that is ever around and within us waiting only for the opportunity to fill us with peace and joy. So we learn that the only forgiveness for sin that has any reality in it is the breaking down on our own part of the barrier we ourselves have raised, separating us from God. Only by greater purity of life and at the same time an earnest endeavour to understand God and draw nearer to Him can this be done. Viewed in this way, the seriousness of sin is increased, as is also our consciousness of responsibility; we can no longer go on doing wrong, comforting ourselves with the wretched excuse that presently we will repent, and God will forgive us; now every wrong act adds to the wall of separation, and so increases the labour of breaking it down, which we shall at last have to do ourselves. Does it seem as if this view must fill us with despair, when we realise the difficulty of the task before us? Does it seem to take away all the comfort and help that we have been deriving from the thought that it was God who would forgive us whenever we asked Him, not we who must win our way back to Him? But there is another side to the matter; for we must remember that by getting rid of the thought of anger and displeasure in connection with God, our conception of Him has been infinitely raised, and hence our love and reverence has been intensified. Thus we have a stronger motive for seeking to reach Him. Also, as we realise that there is a spark from Him in ourselves, we also recognise that in that lies all the power and strength necessary for us to accomplish our task.

But as this thought grows upon us, a difficulty arises, before which the soul at times is apt to quail. Is there after all no God, in the sense we at first thought? Is He a mere abstraction, a mighty force of which a part is within ourselves, but which can in no way be conceived as a Father or Protector? Has all this growth in our conception been based on delusion, and have we now to find ourselves cast adrift, our old faith gone, and nothing but empty, meaningless abstraction to take its place? This is a rock on which the faith of many has split, leaving them to sink into the depths of a despairing agnosticism. But there is no cause for despair, and it is only those who have been strongly influenced by Western thought that feel this difficulty. The great sages of the past guarded us carefully against it, teaching us that though Deity, Parabrahman, the Infinite beyond all our understanding or even conception, is that of which we are a part, an abstraction to us, because the finite cannot understand the infinite; yet in God, Ishwara, the Logos, we have the manifestation coming forth from Parabrahman, the Sustainer, Protector of all, whom we can revere and trust and love. And so we do not lose the thought of the Father when we realise that God is within us; the two ideas blend and harmonise, and we are content.

We can now understand better what is the true purpose of worship and ceremonies. We see that it is twofold. First our ceremonies must be such as to convey to the less developed minds as clear a conception as is possible of what God or Ishwara is. And therefore symbols are,

and must be used. We must, then not condemn those who are entirely dependent on them, but must try to help them to see the idea they are intended to convey. There is a tendency among many to regard all use of symbols as idolatry. You of the East, for instance, are regarded as heathens and idolators by some in the West. They know little, if anything, of your religion ; but they know that in your temples you keep images of your gods, that on your great festivals you carry them through the streets with great honour and rejoicing and this appears to them as pure idolatry. And when they have seen these images, or read descriptions of them, they must have been surprised at what would to them appear the grotesqueness of the forms, the four arms of Brahmâ, for instance, or the elephant's head of Ganesh. And, even worse, perhaps, than that, they know that you are not contented with one god, but that you have many gods and goddesses, all with their own special characteristics ; and I am afraid they may sometimes hear that the worshippers of one god do not always show perfect friendship towards those of another, that the worshippers of Vishnu, for instance, are not always in perfect harmony with the worshippers of Shiva, and so on. Is it so very surprising then, that they should pity you in what seems to them your blindness, and that they should wish to teach you something higher ? But those of us who have tried to reach the spirit of your religion know that in all these forms there is an inner meaning, that even the most grotesque are pregnant with spiritual suggestion, and are intended to bring up before the mind of the worshipper the qualities of the god worshipped. Unfortunately, you cannot always explain to us the meaning of all these symbols ; it has been forgotten, and thus much of the usefulness of your worship has been lost. We know that the plurality of gods among you is not really polytheism ; that each is intended to symbolise and represent some particular aspect of the one God, Ishwara. Taking, for example, your three gods, Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Shiva, those who understand, know that they are all Ishwara, only under different aspects ; that Brahmâ is Ishwara in his aspect of the Creator of the Universe, the originator ; that Vishnu is Ishwara in his character of the preserver and sustainer of the Universe ; while Shiva also is Ishwara under an aspect sometimes described as the Destroyer, but rather the Regenerator ; for destruction is but the prelude to rebirth, forms disappear only that the spirit that animated them may appear again under a higher form ; and when the point is reached at which forms are no longer needed, then the perfection of the present evolution will have been attained and a new and far higher life will be entered. Viewed thus, the three gods are seen to be but one ; but so long as there is any lack of harmony between their followers, there is not a thorough realisation of their unity, and therefore there must be an imperfection in their worship. This, then, is the first essential in worship ; it must suggest the true idea of God to the mind of the worshipper, and, if thus practised and understood, it will be a help even to the more developed minds. The more we recognise the

real meaning of ceremonies, the more we shall feel tolerance towards other religions ; for we shall learn to see everywhere the reality behind the symbol ; then it will matter little to us *where* or *with whom* we worship, for the thought will always be the same. Tennyson quotes, as an introduction to his poem entitled "Akbar's Dream," the following Inscription by Abul Fazal, for a temple in Kashmir:—

"O God, in every temple I see people that see thee, and in every Language I hear spoken, people praise thee. Polytheism and Islam feel after thee.

Each religion says, 'Thou art one, without equal.'

If it be a mosque, people murmur the holy prayer, and if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to thee.

Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque. But it is thou whom I search for from temple to temple.

Thy elect have no dealings with either heresy or orthodoxy ; for neither of them stands behind the screen of thy truth.

Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox. But the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the heart of the perfume seller."

As is said in the "Desatir," "The roads tending to God are more in number than the breathings of created beings." Or, to quote the words of Sri Krishna in the "Bhagavad Gita":—"They also who worship other Gods with devotion, full of faith, they also worship Me.* O son of Kunti ;"† and again :—"However men approach Me, even so do I accept them, for the path men take from every side is Mine, O Pârtha."‡ The following verses, bearing on the same thought, appeared in the *Indian Messenger*§ (Calcutta) for April 17th, 1898, and are well worth repeating here :—

Gather us in, Thou love that fillest all,
Gather our rival faiths within Thy fold,
Rend each man's temple veil, and bid it fall,
That we may know that Thou hast been of old ;
Gather us in.

Gather us in : we worship only Thee ;
In varied names, we stretch a common hand ;
In diverse forms a common soul we see ;
In many ships we seek one spirit land ;
Gather us in.

Each sees one colour of Thy rainbow light,
Each looks upon one tint and calls it heaven ;
Thou art the fulness of our partial sight ;
We are not perfect till we find the seven ;
Gather us in.

Thine is the mystic life great India craves,
Thine is the Parsee's sin-destroying beam,

* "Bhagavad Gita." IX. 23.

† "Bhagavad Gita." IV. 11.

‡ By G. Matheson, D. D.

Thine is the Buddhist's rest from tossing waves,
 Thine is the empire of vast China's dream ;
 Gather us in.

Thine is the Roman's strength without his pride.
 Thine is the Greek's glad world without its graves,
 Thine is Judæa's law, with love beside
 The truth that censures, and the grace that saves :
 Gather us in.

Some seek a Father in the heaven above,
 Some ask a human image to adore,
 Some crave a spirit, vast as life and love :
 Within Thy mansions, we have all and more ;
 Gather us in.

The second use of ceremonies is to help the unfoldment of the God within. Having used the symbol to bring before us the conception of God that appeals the most strongly to us, we then pass to the higher stage of worship, which is the contemplation of that idea. As we let our minds rest on the thought of God, the infinite goodness, beauty, and love that must be associated with every worthy conception of Him, fill our hearts with such reverence and love that we lose ourselves in our contemplation ; the divine ray within responds to the outer act of worship, and there wells up in us such a spring of deep devotion that our whole nature seems to be, nay, is for the time transformed by it ; we taste something of that "joy of the Lord" into which His servants are invited to enter, according to the Christian Scriptures. We are then strong to carry this influence and power with us through our daily lives, shedding it on all those who are associated with us, and making our whole day one long act of worship and prayer. This and this alone, is the power that will make us divine, for this is the action in us of the divine or higher will. It is a power that cannot be given by one to another ; it cannot even be described, for no words can express the intensity and sweetness of it ; but, once felt, it can never be forgotten and can never wholly cease to purify and beautify the life. This is the one motive power needed to enable us to live a perfectly unselfish life for when *true devotion* is felt, there is the beginning of the *realisation* of our oneness with God and with all living beings ; and this must flow out in love and sympathy to all. This is the first step in the Finding of God. Beyond that each one must trace out the path for himself, for it all consists of a steady growth from within outwards. The "Self" has then begun to dominate the life, and from thence onwards the man becomes the willing slave of the higher power within ; and the highest reward he can receive for his service is that the Self then gradually reveals itself to him. As is said in the Katha Upanishad :—"That Self cannot be gained by the Veda, nor by understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by Him the Self can be gained." But before the Self can choose him, he must render himself fit and pure. For "he who has not first turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil

and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest, he can never obtain the Self by knowledge.* And the first full realisation of devotion, or Bhakti, is the influence on the man of the choice made by the Self.

And what next? As has been said, the rest must be traced out by each for himself. He has found the entrance to that "small, old path, stretching far away," that path which, though the same, is yet different for all; and which each must travel independently, yet never unaided, for all along it stand those who are the helpers of humanity, and each step he takes brings him nearer to his Master and Teacher.

But though we cannot here follow out this path in detail, there are one or two important characteristics of it that may be noticed. The first is a steady, conscious development of the will. A great deal has been thought and said on the subject of Free-will in connection with Karma; and there are some who hold the opinion that there is practically no free-will as not only all our actions, but our character and our possibilities of growth and development, are fixed by our own past, and we are powerless to make any change. This is undoubtedly true to a very great extent, and in the case of but slightly developed persons it is probably entirely true. But there appear to be in man two wills, the lower and the higher, the former being that of the personality, the latter that of the individuality, or the divine will. So long as we live solely in the consciousness of the personality, the Higher Self having not yet been awakened, we are not free; we are to a great extent the slaves of circumstances, and the personality is driven hither and thither; this is necessary, for experience has to be gained; and it is also just, for it is no arbitrary driving, but the impelling force of the development already gained. And the point to which all experience and growth is leading is the awakening of the Higher Self. So that even at this stage, when the lower will is enslaved by its surroundings, there is a definite purpose running all through our lives, and that purpose being the divine one, is in reality identical with our own higher will. So we might even now say that though the lower will is bound, the higher will is active; but it is without any consciousness on our part of its action, and indeed, probably the higher will is itself unconscious of it. But when the Higher Self begins to awaken, there is a change. And it must be remembered that the awakening of the Higher Self is a very slow process, and begins long before that stage is reached which I have called the first step in the Finding of God. It indeed begins with the first utterances of the voice of conscience. Then man begins to realise the twofold force, or the dual within himself, and though he does not for a long while understand it, the higher will begins to act. At first it is but feeble and uncertain, nothing more than a dim consciousness that he ought to do differently; but little by little it gains strength. It cannot, however, touch his physical surroundings; indeed, it would not, if it could, for they are what will best help it to grow and make itself felt and it is dimly conscious of this fact. Nor can it at first influence his actions

* "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. XV, p. 11.

for the force of past Karma is too strong. But it works on his thoughts, and awakens in him a strong repugnance to the actions he feels to be wrong, and this repugnance gradually becomes a powerful thought-force which will counteract the tendencies which his past Karma has produced. Thus, while we (*i.e.*, our personalities) can in no way escape from the results of our past, yet at the same time we (*i.e.*, our awakening permanent selves) are free to an extent dependent on the degree of awakening in regard to the attitude of mind we take up towards those results. I think it is Tennyson who has somewhere said that our free-will is like that of a bird shut up in a cage; it can flutter about inside the bars, but cannot escape beyond them. We might expand this idea however; for according to how *we* flutter in our cage, so can we either expand or tighten its bars. If we beat against them aimlessly, fretting ourselves over our unfortunate surroundings, and the impossibility of escape, then we are not only strengthening the bonds for the future, but we are at the same time wasting our own strength. If, on the other hand, we bring to bear on the bonds the steady pressure of patient and contented endurance, combined with a desire to do better, and a firm resolution to let our thoughts at least be purer, then little by little the bars of our cage will recede, it will grow larger and larger, until at last we shall find that it has become as wide as the whole world. In other words, our higher will has grown gradually stronger and stronger until we find that it has become the ruling power of our lives, the personal will has come into oneness with the divine, and we are free. This is the only hope of freedom for the personal will, that it shall ally itself with the higher, which is always free, for it is always in harmony with divine law. And this is what happens as we travel along that "small, old path," for there it is that the higher will is first able *consciously* and fully to assert itself. There we take our fate into our own hands, and having knowledge and perception that is constantly growing, we become the masters of our circumstances.

The second important characteristic of this path is the result of the first. For as the personal will is brought into harmony with the divine, there is a gradual losing of the sense of separateness. It is the separateness in our own natures between the higher and lower, that causes us to feel ourselves as separate from other selves. But as we gradually reach the inner unity, so do we also recognise more and more our unity with all others. And there is therefore a gradual growth of unselfishness until instead of being mere unselfishness it becomes *selflessness*. The separated self, is lost, only that the Self may find itself more completely in the selves of others. And so our lives are lived not for the sake of the individual, but for the sake of all, and we make renunciation after renunciation until the final step of the path is reached. There the Great Renunciation is made, and the disciple having learned to the full the lesson of compassion and love, becomes the Master. He has passed the "seventh gate," and is now "self-doomed to live through future Kalpas, unthanked and unperceived by

men ; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the guardian wall.....Built by the hands of many Masters of compassion, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow."* And then all nature rejoices at the victory that has been gained by the soul. " Behold, the mellow light that floods the eastern sky. In signs of praise both heaven and earth uniteHark ! from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the victor bathes, all nature's wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim :—' Joy unto you, O men of Myalba (Earth)'. A Pilgrim hath returned back from the other shore. A new Arhan is born." And the conquering soul himself joins in the song of joy and love, for he knows that in losing himself, he has in very truth found God.

LILIAN EDGER.

CYCLES AND INDIAN CHRONOLOGY.

THROUGHOUT the theosophical literature and elsewhere, especially in India, there are some conceptions on Indian Chronology current, which seem to me without foundation in the shastras or rather contrary to their direct statements as well as to historical facts. One of them is the idea that 5,000 years are the term of a *cycle* and that we are now at the end of the first, or the beginning of the second, cycle of the present Kali Yuga.

This, I think, is a misconception. Moreover, the beginning of the sixth millennium would not be the year 5000, but 5001 ; for 5000 is the year which completes the *fifth* millennium. If you have to pay to some one, five thousand rupees, he will certainly not be satisfied with 4999 ; nor can we cut short the *fifth* millennium of the only year which really shows the *five* as the cipher of the thousands. Likewise the twentieth century of the Christian era does not commence on January 1st of 1900, but of 1901.

However, the cycles are not measured by round thousands and hundreds at all. This is but a common error which formerly prevailed in Europe, as it does in India now. When the first thousand years of the Christian era came to an end, the pious people of our middle ages expected also the world or the worldly age to come to an end, and the last millennium to set in, during which the Christ was to reign on a regenerate earth over his redeemed sheep alone.

In the same manner the Hindus expect that a new cycle and a new age will begin after the first 5000 years of the Kali Yuga have elapsed. But this is altogether contrary to the right Indian Chronology, as stated in *Manu* and in the *Siddhāntas*. And this Indian Chronology does not only coincide with the facts of history but also

* " Voice of the Silence," pp. 93, 94.

with the statements of European sages, who are likely to have had some esoteric knowledge.*

Plato rightly says, that all existence can be expressed in numbers, which, I suppose, is about equal to the hypothesis of modern science that everything which is, is vibration of a different kind and frequency. Plato's words are : " God reckons". That may be so ; but if He reckons. He does not do so by our decimal system, but rather by the duodecimal and by ternaries. This is fully shown in the Indian Chronology, which appears to be the only scientific one we have fitting in with the facts.† As to the principal divisions of time all chronological authorities agree, while there are differences in calculating the minor periods.‡ Those divisions of time fall in with our own, as far as they are taken from the revolutions of the earth and the moon ; but further on they exceed them very far. Those principal divisions of time are the following:

30 Muhurtas	=	1 day.
30 days	=	1 month.
12 months	=	1 year.
360 years	=	1 deva-year.
12 deva-years	=	1 cycle of 4320 years.
100 cycles	=	1 yuga of 4,32,000 years.
10 yugas	=	1 mahà-yuga of 4,320,000 years.
1000 mahà-yugas	=	1 kalpa of 4320 million years.

Every one know that days, months and years are no arbitrary calculations, but are derived from natural facts. The same, however, is the case with the cycles, yugas, mahà-yugas and kalpas. Where these mostly appear to be mere arbitrary multiplications by 10 or 100 or 1000, they are not so at all. Thus a mahà-yuga does not consist of 10 equal yugas but of

a satya yuga of	17,28,000	years.
a tretà yuga of	12,96,000	"
a dvàpara-yuga of	8,64,000	"
and a kali yuga of	4,32,000	"

together one mahà-yuga of 43,20,000 years.

Similarly a kalpa does not consist of 1000 mahà-yugas all alike ; on the contrary this calculation is rather complicated. Each kalpa of 4320 million years is composed of 14 manvantaras, of about 308½ million years each. A manvantara comprises 71 mahà-yugas. Every manvantara and every kalpa (like every cycle and every yuga

* Cf. *Bensley's Quarterly "Orient and Occident,"* Vol. I., Göttingen 1862, pp. 740—745.

† Indian Chronology has repeatedly been treated in the *Theosophist*; e. g., Nov. 1885, p. 115, in Feby. 1888, p. 278, in Nov. 1888, p. 99 and in Dec. 1893, p. 200.

‡ The most scientific seems to be Bhāskara's "Siddhānta Shiromani" (I. 19—20) *Manu* (I, 64), the *Sūrya-Siddhānta* (I, 11—12). The ordinary Purānic divisions are less explicit, but some of the *Purānas* (see Wilson's *Vishnu Pur.*, p. 22) carry the division still further than Bhāskara.

and also every day) has its dawn at the beginning and at the end, an *adi-sandhyā* and an *anta-sandhyā*. These periods are, for every *manvantara*, equal to one *dvāpara-yuga* = 864,000 years. But as the last dawn of such a period always meets with the first dawn of the next, the whole time of transition is equal to one *satva yuga* = 1,728,000 years.* The dawns at the beginning and at the end of each *kalpa* are of the same length.† Thus we get the following calculations of a *manvantara* and of a *kalpa* :

1 <i>adi-sandhyā</i>	=	864,000 years
71 <i>maha-yugas</i>	=	306,720,000 ..
1 <i>anta-sandhyā</i>	=	864,000 ..
<hr/>		
1 <i>manvantara</i>	=	308,448,000 years
<hr/>		
1 <i>adi-sandhyā</i>	=	864,000 years
14 <i>manvantaras</i>	=	4,318,272,000 ..
1 <i>anta-sandhyā</i>	=	864,000 ..
<hr/>		
		4,320,000,000 years.

We see from the calculation of all these periods, that the unit of this whole structure is neither a century nor a millennium, but a period of 432 years. This is one cycle in the life of a nation, 4320 years are one cycle in the life of a sub-race, 432,000 years a cycle in the life of a human race and so on, the whole time of the natural life of each of these ideal unities consisting of perhaps 10 or 100 or 1000 of such cycles; that of a sub-race may be 432,000 years, that of a race 4,320,000, that of a planet 4320 million years.

These figures 432, however, hide simpler numbers than are suspected at first sight. They consist of 3 and 12; 36 is the fundamental number and 12 times 36 are 432. This period is one *deva-year* with its *sandhyās*.

<i>Deva-year.</i>		<i>Cycle.</i>		<i>Yuga.</i>
<i>adi-sandhyā</i>	36 years	360 years		36,000 years
main period	360 ..	3600 ..		360,000 ..
<i>anta-sandhyā</i>	36 ,	360 ..		36,000 ..
	<hr/>	<hr/>		<hr/>
	432 years	4320 years		432,000 years.

Modern philology states that cycles of 432 years, or rather of half that time, 216 years, have been also alluded to by Plato‡. He says in the eighth Chapter of his *Dialogue on the "State."*

"A state cannot be everlasting, but must find its dissolution..... However far a divine production there is always a certain cycle of life, which comprises a perfect number, and for a human production one

* *Surya-Siddhanta* I, 18.

† *Idem* I, 19.

‡ Cf. *Plato's Opera*, Græce, ed. Schneider, Lipsiæ 1833, Vol. III, *Praef.* II—CXV.

which comprises a number, in the multiplication of which.....everything can be measured and expressed."

Plato continues to describe this number but does not state it. During all antiquity many writers have attempted to find it out; Cicero gave it up, as too obscure and mysterious for him. But *Schleiermacher* in his translation of Plato * has found it out to be 216 by the philological interpretation of Plato's text and by making use of *Aristotle's* remarks thereon †

Probably Plato calculated *half* cycles, because every cycle has its descending and its ascending arc or its evolution and involution. Each of these two periods consists of 216, that is 6 times 36 years. ‡

The number 432,000 is also found in other ancient traditions. Thus for instance *Berosus* states that the Chaldeans calculated the time from the creation of man up to the great flood to be 120 saros, or—as a saros is equal to 3600 years—432,000 years. §

In Northern Mythology this same number is given in the "*Edda*" (grimnismal); only there it does not signify years but warriors. In Walhalla, Odin's palace, there are 540 gates; and for the last fight before the destruction of the world or the end of the gods (the "*Goetterdaemmerung*"). 800 heroes or servants of Odin shall come forth from each of these gates; their whole number will, therefore, be 432,000. Every one of these heroes must have been slain as a fighting warrior, before he could have entered Walhalla; it may well be, I think, that this also symbolized so many years which must have been valiantly passed through before the present age (*yuga*) will come to its end.

Now, how far is the supposition of these cycles justified by facts?

The period of a *Kaliyuga* is, of course, too long to be verified by human observation, unless it be astronomically; and that, I think, has never been tried. But all the shorter cycles, I believe, can easily be shown and proved in the history of the nations and races—periods of 36 years, others of 360 and 432 years and their multiples. But we will deal here only with India; and in her history we can clearly see the cycle of 4320 years, but not any supposed cycle of 5000 years.

This year and the next are expected in India to be of the greatest importance for the welfare of India, or rather to be detrimental by an accumulation of calamities. The famine of last year, the pestilence, earthquakes and what not, have been pointed out as signs of the ensuing change at the beginning of the new cycle of the *Kaliyuga*. But, bad and sad as all these calamities were and are in themselves, they are chronic, and have been recurring in India since time immemorial; compared with

* Part III, vol. I, 2nd ed., Berlin 1862, pp. 261 and 381.

† Cf. *Politics*, Book V, chap. 10.

‡ 216 is equal to 6^3 and also equal to $3^3 + 4^3 + 5^3$, also equal to $2^3 \cdot 3^3 = 8 \times 27$; and the proportionate numbers between 8 and 27, viz., 12 and 18, are also numbers by which 216 can be divided without a remainder. All these qualifications seem to answer to Plato's description of his mystical number. The terms, however, of the smallest cycles are not 8 or 27, but rather 3 times 12 or 6^3 , viz., 36.

§ Cf. *Nork*, *Mythologie*, vol. V, pp. 122—124.

their occurrence in ancient times they are now considerably less injurious than they were formerly. Since India had the good fortune to come under English Government her condition has gradually improved; and of late no very important events have happened which concerned the *whole* of India.

This change of India's fate for the better has set in since the last hundred or 150 years. Who denies it must be absolutely ignorant of India's history, and particularly of its condition during the last century. While now hundreds and thousands die of famines, pestilence, tigers, and snakes, formerly hundreds of thousands and millions died uncared for. But worse was the social and political condition. Aurangzib, besides exacting high rent, taxes and excise, persecuted the Hindus by demanding a very high tax from every one who would not turn Moslim. But the times became worse after him; anarchy prevailed throughout the empire, and the Persians and Afghans constantly ravaged India in the most dreadful manner. The Gurkhas and other hill tribes invaded it and devastated wide ranges of the country. From the sea-side the pirates depopulated thousands of square miles by their robberies and massacres on the coast and along the borders of the great rivers. The former armies of the Moghul empire became large gangs of robbers; and thugs and dacoits thrived undisturbed in their devilish occupations. Now peace and order reigns throughout India. Whatever grievances there may be to be brought forward against the British Government, no European country, besides England itself, is nearly so well governed as British India; few natives in Europe have so much liberty as the Indians have now; and particularly we Germans would be very glad if we could have as free and liberal a Government as India has.

So much against the erroneous presumption that India is *now* on a descending cycle or is *at present* in the crisis of a coming new era. This, however, truly was the case of the end of its first cycle of 4320 years of our present yuga.

The greatest crisis that has befallen India, was her conquest by the Mahommedans; and this happened just at the transition into the new cycle. The Kali-yuga began 3101 B. C. its second cycle of 4320 years, therefore, began in the year 1219 of our era. That was the time, when the Mahommedans established themselves as rulers of Aryavarta at its ancient capital Delhi. The Mahommedan invasion began about 219 years previously, the first invasion occurring in 1001. Thus the minor cycle of 216 years was characterised by the rise of Mahommedan influence. The foreign (not exclusively Hindu) rule of India is the character of its present second cycles. For the last 680 years we are on the descending arc towards materiality and have to run deeper into it for 1480 more years; then a change for a comparatively better, more spiritual period may be expected. Spirituality will then again become the aim of a more general aspiration. Until that time, however, although some individuals may advance in spirituality, the ~~mass~~ of the

population is likely to become more and more material; and European civilization seems to be well prepared to lead India on in that direction.

What will be the end of this materiality? Who can say! But, no doubt, mankind has to go down much lower. At present it is only in the second cycle of the kali-yuga. Ninety-eight more of such periods of 4320 years will follow, each one more material than the preceding one; and then we shall only be at the end of the present mahâ-yuga. After that, mankind has to run along the descending arc of our present manvantara through eight more mahâ-yugas of 4,320,000 years each, until it has passed its *lowest* point of materiality and can then, as a whole, ascend again towards spirituality. This term will be 34,987,000 years hence. From the end of our present manvantara we are still distant by these

	34,987,000 years
35 more mahâ-yugas =	151,200,000 years
one anta-sandhyâ =	864,000 years

Altogether = 187,051,000 years.

And probably, on the whole, materiality will increase even up to the end of the present manvantara. For each two manvantaras form the descending and the ascending arc of one of the seven cycles of the kalpa. Thus the seventh manvantara is a descending and the eighth an ascending arc.

In the *Theosophist* the question has occasionally been raised, in which year of the present kalpa we are now. According to Indian Chronology there can be no doubt whatever on this point.* We have passed through :

1 adi-sandhyâ of the kalpa	= 864,000 years
6 manvantaras	= 1,850,688,000 "
1 adi-sandhyâ of 7th manvant.	= 864,000 "
27 mahâ-yugas	= 116,640,000 "
1 satya-yuga	= 1,728,000 "
1 treta-yuga	= 1,296,000 "
1 dvâpara-yuga	= 864,000 "
Of the present kali-yuga	= 5,000 "
	1,972,949,000 years

Until the end of this kalpa we have yet to run :

Through the present kali-yuga	= 427,000 years
43 mahâ-yugas	= 185,760,000 "
1 anta-sandhyâ of 7th manv.	= 864,000 "
7 manvantaras	= 2,159,136,000 "
1 anta-sandhyâ of the kalpa	= 864,000 "
altogether	= 2,347,051,000 years

* Cf. *Surya-Siddhanta* I, 22-23.

These figures have been rightly stated by Babu Ishan Chandra Dev of Dehra Dun in the *Theosophist* of November 1888, p. 100; but the full calculation has not been given there. However in the December number of 1893, p. 200 under "Cuttings and Comments" he is stated to question the figures which were given by H. P. B. in the "Secret Doctrine."* for the year 1887 as "from the beginning of cosmic evolution or rather that of our solar system". Calculated up to 1898 these figures are 1,955,885,000

But the difference of these figures from the above sum of 1,972,949,000 is justified by the "Sūrya Siddhānta," chap. I, verse 24† "one hundred times four hundred and seventy-four deva years passed while the All-wise was occupied in creating the animate and inanimate creation, plants, stars, gods, demons, and the rest."

A deva-year is 360 calendar years. This multiplied by 47,400 and deducted from

1,972,949,000

17,064,000

gives us the figures

of H. P. B. 1,955,885,000.

But H. P. B. herself in the "Secret Doctrine," on the page quoted above, does not account for the figures given (in the third line) as the "time from the first appearance of humanity on the planetary chain." These are obtained by deducting from our figures the complete period of one manvantara (not 300 millions of years only, as H. P. B. calculated):

1,972,949,000

308,448,000

1,664,501,000 for the year 1898 ‡

But if we deduct a period of years, we must not forget afterwards, that the number of years obtained does not state the time from the beginning of the kalpa.

According to the Sūrya-Siddhānta (I, 20—21) we can carry the calculation of time a great deal further, and we also know how

* Vol. II, first ed. p. 68, 3rd ed. p. 72.

† Burgess' translation, Newhaven 1860, p. 12.

‡ The calculations of the *Arya Magazine* of Lahore are rightly doubted in the "Secret Doctrine". This so-called "Aryan era" is simply a misreckoning. The figures 1,955,884,887 as given in the "Secret Doctrine" (loc. cit.) according to the calculation of the Tamil calendar "Tirukanida Panchanga" for 1887 must be a misprint for 1955,884,987; but it has not yet been corrected in the last edition of the S. D.—The calculation intended to be made according to Manu, as given in the *Theosophist* of December 1893, p. 200—1 seems to be wrong in applying terms of higher order for those of minor order and vice versa. Thus, "the sandhyā between each manvantara" is not 25,920 years, but all the sandhyās of a kalpa together are 25,920,000 years; viz., the sandhyās of each manvantara last 1,728,000 years; 14 of them=24,192,000; add one sandhyā for the kalpa=1,728,000, and the total is=25,920,000, equal to 15 sandhyās of a manvantara. And further, not a manvantara, but each mahā-yuga divides itself into four ages of different duration in the proportion of 4, 3, 2 and 1.

far we have advanced in the present larger cycle. The term of such a mahâ-kalpa or para is 311 billions and 40 thousand millions of solar years. This is a life-time of Brahmâ. "Of this half is past, and of the remainder hours is the first kalpa." The present year is, therefore, in the present mahâ-kalpa

155,520,000,000,000

1,972,949,000

Anno. 155,521,972,949,000.

DR. HUBBE-SCHLEIDEN.

FIENDS AND DEMONS.

SOME THOUGHTS ON A WORLD'S KARMA.

NO system of thought regarding man's purpose in the world and his future beyond it has ever proposed to itself a greater scope than has that which is known to the world as Theosophy. Most schools of philosophy are content to take up one side of life's mystery and to explain that, but Theosophy aims at explaining the whole, at offering a reasonable hypothesis for every kind of problem which the infinite changes press into our lives. The main proofs upon which our system of thinking revolves, the theory of rebirth of the soul again and again, and the regulation of its reincarnations by a grand law of eternal justice which we call Karma, are already well before the world, and very largely accepted by it. It is consistent with facts to claim that by the murmurs of these things which come into the public press, on to the platforms, and even into the pulpits in the mouths of public men, Western thought is largely saturated with the idea that man's life is not to be measured by 70 years, or by any mere happenings of chance. This much the world can concede to the new thought without destruction of the forms of religion or morality to which it is accustomed, but further pushing of the matter brings difficulties, which the world finds insuperable, so much so that the average man goes no further and stops just where he ought to go on. It must be admitted that on going on, real and difficult problems do present themselves, problems which at the first blush make us despair of any solution. The facts of life however are stern things, and if our Theosophy is able to meet the great claim it makes, it must, at the core of it, be ready with an explanation, in harmony with the Law of Justice on which it claims to be founded, of every problem of life which experience discloses. Those who follow the course of proceedings in our public meetings will know how constantly recurring is the question of the place of evil in our midst. Evil in the cruel, often ghastly, circumstances, in which some are placed, evil in sufferings brought on us by the ill-regulated lives of our fellows—evil to the extent of apparent utter ruin of the life, the result it seems almost of mere chance. So much of accident there seems to be in some of

the tragic events of life as would appear to set at nought and destroy all belief in the Law of Justice or Divine adjustment. I am not going now to attempt any explanation of what we regard as the uses of evil. Suffice to say here that we regard it broadly as relative good—good in the process of making. When the last word is said we shall all of us know that, without evil, good would be a closed book to us. I am going to limit myself to the much smaller task of singling out one presentation of the black side of Nature, and of trying to set forth our Theosophic explanation of it, and to try and give you something that may at least prompt you to some careful thinking over of the matter for yourselves, to place a few thoughts before you that will appeal to your reason, and perhaps to your intuitive perception of Truth.

If all men's lives were entirely controlled by the actions which naturally follow on a good and careful training, and if the life well surrounded and well started by painstaking care, always resulted in an even flow of well-being, unbroken by any of those events which we know to result from ignorance, carelessness, and sloth, we might look to higher education to solve at last the problem of evil and bring about the Millennium. But facts dispel any such illusive hope. Do we not see some lives of the greatest promise, surrounded by every advantage, aided by the most strenuous effort, end in most dismal failure? Nay, do we not see lives that deserve, to our limited vision, the best results, go down swiftly in disgrace, dishonour and despair? Nowhere is this more forcibly illustrated than by John Ruskin in speaking of the failure of the greatest of men, Shakespeare, Homer, or Dante, to solve the mystery of life. Take the first of these, our own Shakespeare. The noble Othello is brought, by the machinations of a villain, to commit a deed the most cruel the great Poet ever described—and two noble lives are brought to ruin by means of a rag of a handkerchief. The Homeric story is still more ghastly. The great Achilles, burning with noble love of justice at his heart, is yet brought to commit the most unjust of acts. Full of the deepest tenderness, he yet becomes the cruellest of men, and we see him, for the sake of mistress and friend, surrender to death the armies of his native land. To quote Ruskin's words we see "that by petty charm, by momentary folly—by broken message, by fool's tyranny, or traitor's snare, the noblest are brought to their ruin and perish without a word of hope."

Is life to remain without any solutions of these things? Where are such solutions to be found? They are found in the fact that our physical life is bathed in a sea of influences, unseen, but most potent—influences which had their birth in ourselves. They are found in the fact that Homer and Shakespeare, Othello and Achilles all have their lot and part in these influences, are, alike with the most commonplace of us, subject to them. They, like us, are also sharers of the Karma of the world.

I suppose it will be allowed that as a whole we have improved the tone of the world since the "good old times"—cruelty which then

was laughed at is now utterly condemned—in a word the world's Karma has improved. If we accept the idea of the survival somehow of good and its growth, we must accept also that of evil and its development. Let us follow these to the making up of the surrounding aura of our earth. The good I will leave till a future occasion. What of the evil? What is its effect on the world it surrounds? I am assuming for the time the survival of man's soul, that he is a centre of force not limited to this side of the grave. An evil, vicious, and cruel man dies, or, is violently expelled from his body, *he* however lives on, and his evil, his vice, his cruelty—what of them—are they dead? The centres of force round which such men as Nero are built up are not to be destroyed according to our thinking by any cup of poison or any gallows tree as high as heaven. By death their physical instrument is cut off from contact with yours only to intensify their efforts through the other instrument left to them. To suppose that we are then freed from them is blind folly. For countless thousands of ages such beings have passed out of the physical into the other world, and in their collectivity, accepting the theory of survival, they must be an enormous force. It is of these that the evil part of world's Karma is made up, and the army of Fiends and Demons recruited.

Passing from the evidences of ancient times and coming down to our own day to consider the cases of men and women around us whose lives we know to have been more or less spoilt by momentary possession of some force which seems to come from outside—what evidence have we of the influences of surrounding evil? The history of spiritualism furnishes an astonishing mass. The evidence we have points to the danger of the surrender of the will which has been necessary to procure the phenomena exhibited. Two cases at least here (in Brisbane) are on record by one of our leading Doctors, of lives ruined by the expressed malice of the entity which took possession, which entered in at the open door. The question presses upon us—why this singling out of some to suffer whilst others escape? The answer lies in the science of the Laws of Attraction. There is no chance about it. Populous as the world is, the number of Egos on the further side of the grave is enormously greater than that of those in the flesh, and of the former an immense number, by reason of their whole desire being fleshly and material, are ever seeking for contact with us: animal natures full of greed, lust and hunger for self-gratification.

We who believe in *post mortem* survival must recognise some receptacle for these units of the great life, who are at this critical and painful stage of their evolution, and since it is matter of discovery that thought-forms swarm around us, it is impossible to suppose that the mass of mankind is unaffected by these. The high Laws which control their relations with us shew they are governed by the attraction of like to like—this explains why some are affected and others are not. An evil suggestion thrown among a group of young men will illustrate the workings of the subtle influence. By some unmitigate-

able sign one will show that there is something in his nature which 'catches on' and with that one the poison works and it may come out in an act bringing sorrow and disgrace in its train. Some amongst us, alas, seem to be permanent mediums for the dissemination of the influences of the vast number of the unfortunate in evil who have passed from amongst us, and also for another section of conscious beings known to us by the name of elementals, many of which are of great power, sometimes very deadly, but always mischievous. The question will be asked: Why should the Deity who shapes our ends subject mankind to these risks? The reply lies in the necessity for knowledge of the forces that our life is placed amongst. Our Paradise is to be no fool's paradise. *Knowledge alone is the passport to Wisdom.* I think the fact that some are always buying their experience in this terrible school cannot be doubted. Can you question the effect produced by some of these unfortunate ones, unfortunate only for the time it must be said, on those who live in their company? Do we not know and feel that there are people around us from whom, in spite of all charitable and kindly feelings, we have to shrink? This with regard to still living people is too patent to require further mention. It is for us to help them with the best thoughts we can and to remember that the time of their liberation will one day come, when even *they* will be able to shut out the effect of the evil in the world's aura, and begin to climb out from the slough of Despond; but in the meantime we must not suffer them to hang like millstones round our own necks.

To come back to our own individual direct contact with the world's evil Karma, I want to insist on the reality of this and that we are all in touch with it to *some* extent—even the very best of us. The reality of it is evidenced by men who, in no way believers in man's immortality, have confessed to the effects of it, and to certain localities being specially affected by it. Napoleon and the sentry box story, the story of the French sensitive and the Marble Arch in London, Mrs. Besant and Chicago, will occur to some of you. What these show in a broad and a diluted form, Hypnotism illustrates in a concentrated form. Criminal Courts are already being exercised over the undoubted evidences of crimes committed by hypnotic suggestion. We seem to be on the borderland of a grave danger. May it not be that the opening of our eyes to this may bring about concerted action to deal with it, force us to get a knowledge of it, and so push mankind forward a great stage towards the knowledge of his higher potentialities?

Is any one incredulous of the dangers we speak of? Let him read R. Dale Owen's "Foot-falls" and in some of the ghastly accounts there given, mostly historical facts, find enough to seriously think over, if not to convince. Space will not allow me to go into evidences.

In view of the newest study of these old, old facts, what has Theosophy to say as to the gaining of knowledge of these things? What also as to the best method of defending ourselves against this

sea of evils ? As to the first—We must not close our eyes and refuse to get the knowledge, but before starting, learn to defend ourselves. How ?

By deliberate elimination from our individual aura of everything that will respond by affinity to these forces. By constant struggle with our own lower natures. By the gradual transmuting and exaltation of the passional and emotional nature—a constant and ceaseless appeal to the highest that is in us—to that conscience which as Theosophy says 'doth make cowards of us all.' We must develop this noble cowardice. By shirking this task, we do but prolong our slavery to the world's dark Karma.

A man given to the vice of drink prepares a soil fit for the cultivation and nourishing of the astral bodies of the departed population of inebriates. People gifted with psychic perception of the astral plane tell us that it teems with the animal souls of men and women, sensible that their astral bodies are slowly failing them, and hungry to get into touch, through living magnetism, with the habits they have been slaves to.

Now here is another very real and terrible thought. This conscious condition of life may be coupled with deeply rooted feelings of hate and revenge prompting them to use any chance of dragging others down to their own level. In the debased there is always comfort in this dragging down. In this they copy some of the still living. A certain notoriously evil living King, when told he was destroying his soul, chuckled at the thought of his boon companions being no better than himself, and that "he would be damned in very good company." Let us hope he is by this time in much better.

Think however of Revenge and the grave dangers we may be in from a personal wrong we may have committed. For who has not some enemy ? Of course we see some colourless people who seem to go through life without raising any enmity, but the initial energy of the world's development is not given by a colourless "milk and water" character. It is impossible for any man with real stamp of character to run the race of life without treading on some one's corns. If we were always morbidly held back by consideration for the feelings, often under no sort of control by their owners, of those who oppose our efforts, what would our work and efforts be like ? So we must be ready to run some risk of raising the enmity, it may even be the deadly hatred, of an evil person, in life or passed from it.

And here a great thought is suggested. By every movement raising the standard of physical life and improving its surrounding aura, we compel conditions by which only such a small proportion of the backward portion of our evolving human family will be able to come forward for incarnation at one time as our racial economy can easily deal with, so that we shall then with safety take up a smaller number at a time and be able to transform and raise them by improved

environment, to defeat as it were the battalions of the destroying evil in detail by bringing them up into our ranks in companies and raising them to the higher level. To me it is a great thought, that the Karma of the Humanity of the future will enable it to do this great and noble work.

The question may be put—Why risk so much? Are we our brother's keeper? The answer of Theosophy to this is plainly affirmative. It is written in capital letters across the sky of our horizon. *We are our brother's keeper.* We also helped to make some of the evil Karma of the world. Perhaps we may have taken up and cancelled most of our own share. But our share in what has yet to be done to finish the plan that has to be carried out is not to be doubted. It is for us to make ourselves as fit as possible for these contests presented to us. The task before the individual may be followed out into the National Arena. At the present moment one of the front rank nations of our time is engaged in ploughing up the ungoverned tyrannies and cruelty of a decaying and inferior people, whose proclivities must bar them as a nation from the progress of the near future. America in the work she is doing in driving Spain from the Colonies she is no longer fit to hold, is raising a demon of national hatred, of injured pride, which will find its legitimate and natural outlet, adding of course for the time to the evil in the spaces around us; though the ultimate good to the race at large cannot be questioned. You cannot set to work to clean any foul place without raising a dust. And the nation that takes up this task and runs this risk will also best defend itself against the evil genii so raised by framing its national life on lines of high motive and endeavour. If the best defence we individually can set up against the poisonous exhalations, physical, psychic, and mental of the depraved, of the Fiends and Demons, is to get rid of all atoms in our constitution which by affinity render us subject to their influence, so also will the nation find its defence in the purity and freedom from corruption of its body politic.

One of the most pressing objects of our Theosophical propaganda lies in showing that the lowest grades of vicious and depraved lives are very long-lasting, that their roots go much deeper than any mere physical environment. Their spring is in the mental centre of things and works outwards to the physical world. When therefore we suffer by bodily contact with such, it is worse than folly to suppose that we dispose of or destroy them by violently thrusting them out of this life. We only translate their activities to another plane or condition. Therefore is it a most unwise course to put a dangerous criminal to death. You certainly make sure that he shall not meet you and strangle you in a dark lane, but you leave him free to prompt and entice by subtle means others possessing his desire to do so, and it may be that in many cases capital punishment has let loose upon the astral world some adepts in knowledge of the black side of Occultism, who wield great power in moving animality, hatred and bloodshed, thus leaving a dreadful legacy behind them.

I am aiming at making my paper on this dark subject as matter of fact and as intelligible to practical people, as possible, and therefore do not want to draw upon your credulity to any undue extent, but allow me one word or two upon a subject which even in the Christian era has forced its gruesome face into the records of Europe—the vampires and werewolves—there is a sufficient volume of evidence as to what has been done by these terrible creatures. We may refuse belief in the Theosophic explanation as to the cause of these, but this incredulity will not restore the lives which have undoubtedly been sacrificed to them. Hungarian early history seems unenviably rich in accounts of them, due, we are told to a strong strain in this people of Fourth Race blood, the Fourth Race being that which in its prime inhabited the great continent which now lies under the waves of the Atlantic—a race brought to its final ruin by practice of the black arts rendered capable of so high an altitude in evil as to have enabled some of their self-created fiends and demons to have survived even to this day. The races whom evolution has carried forward on to the higher mental level of the now leading and dominant peoples of the Aryan Race, are fairly safe from their influences, but in the backward races where the animal nature predominates they may still find a fertile field, for nourishing their horrible proclivities. How far some of the national leanings towards cruelty and bloodshed of our day are kept alive by these we can only conjecture—but the brutalising thirst for the sights of the bull fight of the Spain of our time, and the Roman amphitheatre of centuries ago, may reasonably enough be laid, some of it, at their door.

In leaving with you these few thoughts I should like to say that the lesson which seems to me to be behind them all is one of sympathy. I seem to see that whatever slavery to evil propensities any of our fellows may be labouring under, this does not divorce them from being part of myself. I recognise that violence and crime will be with us for many ages to come and that punishment must, in some form, always follow these, and I entirely acquiesce in its necessity. But to be of a kind in harmony with the ultimate plan of evolution it must be reformatory in its character, not revengeful—a means of education, not a Mosaic adjusting rod—of growth of the soul rather than vindication of law. And the time will surely come when the present methods of correction, from the great wars which bring whole nations to the treadmill, to the birching of a street urchin, will be entirely superseded as no longer necessary. And by cultivation of sympathy with each other along any lines, we shall surely hasten the coming of that day.

W. G. JOHN.

*FURTHER THOUGHTS ON CONTEMPORARY
NATIONAL EVOLUTION.**

IN a previous communication the writer sketched the broad general lines on which Western National Evolution is progressing, supporting the conclusions arrived at by copious references to statistics, and also by quotations from careful observers of national activities and tendencies. Prominent reference was also made in general terms to one of the chief contributory causes of the remarkable and rapid growth in numbers and power of the European Nations: *viz.*, the principle of *competition* which has given such stimulus to the accumulation of wealth and power.

In order to fill in the picture it will be necessary to pass in review some of the general lines which this stream of evolutionary life is taking, and with these before us we shall be able to gauge the moral and spiritual status which they indicate; and also, though it may be dimly, to forecast the future course of the most prominent of the great world powers who are now in the front rank, on the crest of the up-flowing evolutionary wave.

And incidentally as we pass on we shall endeavour to "separate the precious from the vile," the comparatively permanent qualities evolved, and containing within themselves the seeds of righteousness and truth, from the illusory, corrupt and impermanent which also carry within themselves the seeds of decay and death. I think that careful observers cannot avoid the suspicion, almost amounting to conviction, that the materials used, the energies put forth in promoting the rapid growth in progress around us, are of a very mixed character.

And we may rest assured that in proportion to the extent to which these activities are prompted by selfishness, and the love of power for its own sake, whether it be private and personal, or national and world-wide in its application, will be the reaction, the suffering and loss when the inevitable day arrives for the adjustment of the personal and the national accounts involved in the process. However inextricably mixed these activities and their impelling motives may appear to be, the Laws pertaining to national as well as private life, being immaculately perfect and inexorably just, will find means for their vindication. With the abiding conviction that the foundations of eternal justice are laid deeply in the *soul of things*, one can calmly estimate and give their approximate value to all we see around in the world of men and of nations; at the same time not losing sight of the fact that appa-

* This article should have been inserted last month, but was overlooked owing to illness of the sub-editor.—Ed. Note.

rent evil has a germ of goodness at its root; nations, as well as men, "rise on their dead selves to higher things."

That there has been an amazing quickening of the European Nations during the 19th century is a commonplace admitted as soon as named; and that this new impulse had its first rise in the great French Revolution at the close of the 18th century, is also generally recognized. That the new life has spread over a very wide field, including within its area all branches of physical science, of philosophy, of transcendental and spiritual science, as well as mechanical inventions and commercial enterprise, has been expatiated on in glowing terms by numerous writers.

There has indeed been an amazing generation of energy as a resultant product of this quickening of the western world. As decade after decade of the century has rolled on, its ever accumulating power has overflowed national boundaries and limitations until the hoary eastern world at last shows signs of being stirred to its depths, and will shortly be compelled to enter the stream and be either swallowed up or transformed by it.

The new life has shown itself in an almost innumerable variety of forms, perhaps none more remarkable than the growth and expansion of the intellectual faculties, so that pursuits demanding high qualities of mind have been ardently taken up and followed. The material universe has been explored, its tangible records examined and catalogued, and its varied products utilised. This has resulted in a vast increase of material wealth, and as a consequence in the increased and more widely extended power of organisation and association for the accumulation of the same.

As a further resultant, *knowledge* of great variety has been accumulated. The knowledge thus gained has generated an enlarged capacity for the investigation of the new and varied problems which have arisen in the onward flow of the new life. With the conscious possession of capacity has come the realisation of *power*; new and full power to manipulate and control nature's forces in their varied forms of manifestation. Ample illustration is seen in the vast array of mechanical inventions which the century has produced. This power has developed and extended a new form of command over the human intelligence and its physical powers and activities. These potentialities of man are utilised by those who by their superior force of character have obtained or usurped the control of these powers; in the pursuance of the mania of obtaining for themselves the possession of material wealth through the channels of commerce.

This is seen in the great organized manufactories of the world, all the myriads of human beings so engaged being the tools and instruments of the organisers and manipulators of the world's commerce. It is no less interesting than it is hopeful to note that the new quickening is universal in its character, all classes and orders of men have come under its influence, from the proud peer, the scion

of an ancient nobility, to the 'hewer of wood and drawer of water;' the tiller of the soil no less than the college professor, the lords of commerce and the working mechanic. As a consequence we see side by side the extended organization of commerce and capital, with that of labour. The toiler who sows and the reaper who gathers in, and appropriates the harvest are arrayed in hostile camps; the first-named ever and anon breaking into open rebellion, only, at present, to be starved into submission, and a continuance of grinding the corn which others eat, store up, or waste.

Mr. Frederic Harrison, whose name is so widely known and highly esteemed in literary circles, in a New Year's address, referring to the recent extended lock-out of the English Engineers said that he "had followed the steady progress of the trade unions with sympathy and hope, for the past forty years, and it was heart-rending to see the leading trade union of the world drained of its savings by this exhausting struggle. . . . and it would be an evil day for capitalism and a more evil day for England if we should be confronted with a dominant capitalism having control of an armed authority." In farther reflecting on such a contingency the same eminent writer said that, "politics, industry, science and art must be made religious again, by showing that religion rests in knowledge of real things, and has, as its mission to develop real life on the Earth."

Again, the organized armies and navies of the western world are vast implements which have been brought into existence, and are being maintained on an unparalleled scale, in order that they may be controlled and used for forwarding those designs which chiefly minister to the selfish interests and passions of man associated in Nations, which are now competing with a keenness hitherto unknown for the possession of the earth and of all that it contains.

Such is the picture which meets the eye as we contemplate contemporary national evolution. An accumulation of energy, of capacity, of knowledge and power of extraordinary dimensions; which is perhaps best seen by contrast with the same peoples as they were in the 18th century. As we do this we are still more deeply impressed with the view presented of the rapidity of the accumulation of capacity, of energy, of power and material wealth, as astonishing as the rapid growth in numbers of the populations of the countries under review, as sketched in our previous article.

And, we ask, for what purpose, to what end, are the hidden forces of Nature working in these directions? What more permanent, what higher results is it intended shall be wrought out through these intense activities now in manifestation on the lower planes of being, and what are the means which will be used for the transmutation of all this amazing energy? May we not, in part, answer that hereby a capacity is being developed and material is being stored for use in evolving the spiritual nature; that a matrix is in course of preparation wherein the germs of divine and spiritual philosophy may take root and bear fruit in due

season? As we survey the broader field, the process of the higher evolution and its purposes, are we not justified in taking this hopeful general view?

We may be approaching a crisis, catastrophes may follow each other in rapid succession, but if so, they will but clear the way for that higher spiritual evolution it is the one aim of all the purest and noblest in our western races to promote.

The inner eye clearly discerns that society as now developed in human life, and its varied activities, personal, national and international, is building on unsound foundations; on a misconception of the true relation of man to man, and of nation to nation. Man not being true to nature, to ideal nature; not yet fully seeing that a *real* society is an indivisible unit, a living entity on the ideal plane of thought, which is its only *real* though not realised basis. Catastrophe is therefore inevitable, there must be a "shaking of those things that appear, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

All we have been considering is really only an intensified form of slavery; to use an old simile, the new wine, (the life) has been poured into old bottles; these having to swell and burst: the selfish nature has been aroused by the greatly expanded area of man's knowledge of, and power over material nature, and he has for the time being become a slave to his own cupidities. And there is also behind this a mental slavery from which we are only just awakening; having in previous centuries passed through a long period of degradation of the mental powers by the suppression of their free action, there has been the martyrdom of the mental and spiritual nature. And thus as result brought over from the past, another phase of it is seen, for the axiom of competitive, commercial, professional, and even religious life, too frequently is selfishness, very largely the product of a kind of mental aberration. Viewing this social condition, so sad in its aspects, affecting all classes, this misuse of the impulse from the *new life*, who would not willingly apply all his mental and spiritual force and energy in order to bring about a removal of the obstructions to its free flow, that it may course through the social veins, renovating and turning its activities into purer and higher channels; and thus assisting in tearing up by the roots the upas tree of ignorance and evil which is overshadowing so many, and poisoning their mental and spiritual atmosphere.

We will now leave the more general aspects and bearing of the subject under consideration, and note a few concrete illustrations of the process of contemporary national evolution, as illustrated in the two great leading peoples on the earth. I am desirous of attempting a comparison in a few leading particulars of the inner spiritual and other forces which are being developed by the Anglo-Saxon and the Russian-Slavic and other members of that great empire; with a view to forecasting the permanence and predominance of their varied forms of civilisation into whose mould so many of the peoples of the world of to-day, are being cast.

Those who possess occult historical knowledge tell us of mighty empires, flourishing through many tens of thousands of years, rich in the golden fruits of a high civilization, blessing the earth with their wise and benignant rule. If such glowing pictures were facts in the brightest periods of the fourth Race in our evolution, may we not look for their repetition with added and even brighter characteristics in the ever upward trend of our fifth Race? And if so, and if we have, as it is stated, now reached a period far on in the evolution of our own *fifth sub-race*; may we not hopefully look forward as we contemplate these two greatest families of this sub-race? I think a little patient study in this direction will repay us. Let us first take a glance at Russia. And here we will avail ourselves of an article in a recent number of the *Theosophical Review* entitled 'The Soul of a Nation' by a 'Russian,' as a brief extract will be far more appreciated from such a source, than anything one who is a stranger to this remarkable nation can say:—

"Holy Russia her children call her to the foreigner, the general impression is certainly not of serenity, the luminous calm, the power of wisdom and victory which are conveyed by the word 'holy'. It is a dark cold despairing country; at the best a country in its teens, which has much to learn, and it seems yet far from deserving any sublime qualification making it worthy to serve for an example for Europe.

"Young it is, a child, a child giant, it has, as yet, almost everything to learn in practical life, much to change in its interior life, some great lessons to master in intellectual life. But to learn is generally to suffer, and our sorrow, bravely borne, deeply pondered over for the sake of the pity, love and renunciation it teaches the heart—this sorrow becomes knowledge truly, the science of the heart. This life of the heart, the life of renunciation, of devotion, and of pity, is the life of millions in Russia, and this long martyrdom—not seldom voluntary—is her crown of holiness. An old Russian poet says of her:

In thy soul, O my country, there is a pure, calm well;
The human passions never stir its crystal depth
It lives for God and his saints alone.

And this is true.

"Russia—at least as far as the nation, if not the clergy, goes—does not think its religion the only true one. The people often answer when spoken to about the strange ways of some sect or foreign cult, 'Well, God has opened their mind in another way' The great body of the nation, the peasants—ignorant and faulty as they mostly are, still carry through their humble, terribly hard life a faint glimmering of the old devotion; in them it takes the form of resignation, of an unshaken belief that somewhere Light is, that it must, and that one day it will come to them too. . . . The belief that Russia has a peculiar mission is nearly general. . . . These storms, this erring in the darkness and despair of life, lasting through the whole existence of some, lasting through so many centuries for the country, are nothing but the burning

fire of purification for the new race which, as yet, is folded in the heart of the nation as in the lotus shut in sleep."

In referring to contemporary Russia it would be unpardonable not to mention the noble, the patriotic (in the broadest sense), the gifted, the self-sacrificing Count Tolstoi. Surely he is making an enduring impression on the inner life of his Nation; generations yet unborn will look back on his commanding genius and self-sacrificing devotion in the early, the dark and struggling days of their emergence from barbarism and slavery, physical and mental, with feelings of gratitude and pride.

With the above peep into the 'soul of a nation' by a matured student of soul science, let us now turn to the more physical aspects of the evolution of this young giant. Russian advance in the East for some years past, has been steady, continuous, and rapid. Her intention has apparently been to absorb China as quickly and easily as she could. All the substantial results of the Japanese victories over China have been absorbed by Russia. It may be accepted that only now have the designs of years come to a head. Russia has been diverted from the Bosphorus, headed off from Afghan, Turkestan and the Pamirs, and is now checked in China by the same mighty rival—great Britain. The *London Times* of a recent date has the following: "It is our unpardonable sin alike in the eyes of Russian and German journalists that we manage some 80 per cent. of the trade of China. They are not quite certain whether it would be a more effectual remedy for this state of things to partition China at once, or to form a grand combination to elbow us out."

This shows us that the same compelling current of life is in full operation in all the nations named;—the competitive spirit of our times on a grand national scale of magnitude. We may think, and think rightly, that Russian diplomacy and conquest do not make for freedom, as in this great national acquisition she is far behind her competitor, but they certainly make for peace within certain well defined limits, and in Central Asia they have replaced anarchy by industry. And both Russia and Great Britain are feeding their acquisitions from overflowing populations at the centre. They are building up and consolidating their possessions with the best material the nations are capable of producing. Russia's work in Siberia is now taking a new direction. Colonization in the best sense of the term is now pursued by the Russian Government, so that an immense empire extending from the Baltic to the Pacific is growing into shape and power.

We will now turn briefly to a contemporary illustration or two showing the spirit and tendencies in British life and civilization. It has been said that the genius for successful business is in the Anglo-Saxon blood, and freedom is at the bottom of it. Both sentiments contain a modicum of truth, but there are other less desirable factors which have an undesirable way of asserting themselves. We call the following it is from the *Hongkong Telegraph* of a recent date. "It

suits Great Britain better that China should remain China for the present, rather than to annex any portion of the country outright, which would involve an unaccountable amount of hard work in many ways, and hardly more profit to us than at present. *So let the beggars suffer and let the trade go on, for it pays us.*" The coarse and brutal sentiment here indicated is, we fear, far too common. The Chinese nation, with its millions of human brothers, are viewed as merely existing to form the hunting ground of the British trader. Where, we ask, is the grain of fraternal regard, or the feeling of human compassion to sweeten this? And it is too often plainly observable in the studied actions of great commercial and trading corporations, that what this writer so bluntly states is the ruling principle, and is steadily kept in view. A recent exchange states that "a petition is in progress to the British Cabinet which has been signed by three million members of Benefit Societies, praying that an act be passed to prevent employers from coercing their employes into joining Benefit Societies established under the auspices of the Masters." Here it is plainly indicated that under the thinly veiled pretence of philanthropy, employers are not ashamed to forge a cruel instrument of oppression, to be brought into use when the poor worker is overtaken by affliction and bereavement.

But we must not lose sight of the reverse to this undesirable side of our picture. Extension of empire by the Anglo-Saxon has filled the wide waste spaces of the earth with some eighty millions of people enjoying a freedom, and an abundance of material blessings almost unknown in any other countries. And these great communities, including almost the entire continent of North America, that of Australasia, &c., &c., still have room for hundreds of millions more. Again, Anglo-Saxon extension of empire in those wide parts of the old world where they hold sway, has brought the blessing of good Government in exchange for strife, oppression, anarchy and bloodshed. To the hundreds of millions in the East the British Government, generation after generation, has meant peace, order and justice. The most perfect type of British empire is in Egypt, the old country of the Pharaohs, where England has taken nothing for herself, so that the country is not even counted among British possessions. Without annexation, without even a protectorate, without one single advantage for Englishmen that is not open to men of any other nation, Great Britain is silently doing in Egypt a work of which the achievement will be her greatest glory. This country of ancient civilisations, after almost two millenniums of suffering, of slavery, and of anarchy, is emancipated, regenerated and exalted by the genius, and we might almost say, through the generosity of Englishmen.

Having thus traced the course of the contemporary evolution of these two leading World Powers, endeavouring to faithfully, though briefly, sketch them as they are, noting their good and evil qualities; we must now largely leave it to the intuition of the reader to suggest to himself their *probable future*. There appears to us indications of growth

and permanence for them, such as the world has not witnessed within historic times. Each nation has a mighty soul throbbing almost audibly; their shortcomings, blemishes, and defects are evident, but they are not deep-seated; their vital parts give evidence of possessing enduring qualities. Their diversity qualifies each for its own work, and should eventually lead them to recognize each other's mission. It is evident that the old world, the wide stretches of northern, eastern, southern and central Asia will be pretty equally divided between them; their lines of division running through the original home of the Aryan Race. And may we not hope that in the far future, if not even in nearer times, community of interest and the recognition of identity of mission and of work, may lead to *union* on some enduring basis, which may give back to the world the Age of Gold?

Even now, underneath all the diversity, and the complicated clashing of interests, a *unity* is being evolved, and as the upward flow of the new life is purified from the elements of selfishness which are born and nurtured in ignorance, the harmonious principle of unity will manifest itself. Unity, fed by knowledge, is, as we know, the solid basis of the Kosmos; and is destined to work out its harmonies through the life and activities of men and nations. If we have seeing eyes and hearing ears, we may now perceive and give audience to the first faint echoes of the future times; when the lightest spoken words of some Great Master and Teacher shall vibrate from pole to pole, upon the chords of the sensitive inner harmonies of a united humanity. Who speaks when the priest-prince of the Roman Catholic Church utters a command, when the Judge, the General, or the Statesman opens his mouth? As individuals, stripped of the power which they derive from the principle of *Unity*, in the practical life of the organized community which they represent, they would be powerless, mere units of small account in the general estimate. Of late we have witnessed the whole civilised world bending its ear to catch the faintest whisper falling from the lips of the young Russian Czar, or from any member of the oligarchy composing the British Cabinet. In these facts we see finger-posts pointing to the upward trend of suffering humanity. In unity with its potent power to blend the diversities of nature in a harmonious whole, we have the key-note of all progress, from the growth of a blade of grass to a human being; and from man as we are conversant with him to those divine Intelligences and powers, who, in calm serenity, guide and control the stars in their courses.

Unity can only be attained through painful experiences, which are utilised to the working-out of the principles of wisdom. Humanity as a whole will not, cannot be perfectly happy until it has absorbed the spirit of Divine wisdom and fraternal love. When this takes place the crowns of the world's rulers will be pure and unadulterated reason; their sceptres will be love; they will be anointed with power to liberate the peoples from superstition and darkness, and the external conditions

of mankind will improve after the internal improvement has taken place. Poverty, crime, and disease with their accompanying pains and penalties, as an incubus oppressing and afflicting the whole race, will then disappear before the rising beams of the sun of Righteousness, and the glowing warmth of Divine Love.

We will close our present study with an extract from a letter just received from an old and esteemed English friend and correspondent, who aptly supplies us with a key-note to the evolutionary paradox it has been our endeavour to elucidate.

After referring to some remarks of mine, my friend continues:—
 “ And that is only one more illustration of the great truth, that nothing is absolute, of right or wrong, good or bad ; and earnest thinking *into* life and its complexities reveals the *shade* of evil threatening every good, and the redeeming figure of good following close behind every evil ; the grandest and simplest Truths are paradoxical, it must be so while Spirit, to us—must manifest through matter. But to the eye of faith this is clearly visible—the good of evil always outweighs the evil of good, and the discerning mind rests content thereat, and though the ages appear very long, and the conflict between right and wrong very uncertain, the *knowledge* of victory to the first, is held by every master-mind”.

W. A. MAYERS.

BENGALI FOLK-LORE.

(Continued from page 613).

TREATMENT OF AN INFANT IN HEALTH AND DISEASE.

A prudent mother should see to the wholesomeness of an infant's food. Yellowish or greenish coloured milk is not considered wholesome. Rather than be allowed to suck such milk, the child should be fed on the milk of an ass or that of a cow, boiled and thinned, and taken in a tepid state. The child is given now and then a dose of lime water, or of an extract of *kalmeg*, an indigenous medicinal plant highly spoken of in the Aryan pharmacopœia.

What at first sight appear two mere playthings are necessary appendages to the bed or cradle of a baby. In reality each has a use of its own, one is called a *chusi* in colloquial Bengali. It is so called, because it is sucked by the infant. It is a small, alternately yellow and black coloured, round piece of stick, about four inches long with knobbed blunt tips colored red at both ends. The child sucks it, as I have said above, and thus assists itself to get safely over the critical period of teething, which, in the case of foreign babies, not unfrequently requires the application of a doctor's lancet. The thin membrane of the gums is cut through imperceptibly with the constant use of the *chusi** ; and the teeth begin to peep out one by one. The other plaything is called a

* This is merely the coral or ring of the European baby.—Ed.

latthein.* It is a round hollow toy colored red, having a small yellow handle, and containing within it small pieces of stone which produce a low dull sound when it is shaken. It is one of the simplest means to teach the ears to catch sound and at the same time to lull the infant to rest. At stated periods the child is washed with salt-water warmed in the sun in a metallic pot in which a blade or two of grass and some grains of paddy are thrown. When the infant happens to catch cold, mustard-oil is applied. Two processes are employed. Either the oil is heated under a lamp with a rotten or dry mango-leaf, or it is mixed with camphor and turpentine. The chest and the lower region of the neck are rubbed with this preparation, and purgatives and emetics are also resorted to. No wise matron would allow the fæces or vomit of a baby to remain to be dried up in the sun, as she believes that this would cause leanness and emaciation.

ANNAPRASANA.

When a male-child is six months old the ceremony of *Annaprasana* (or the first meal of rice) is performed. This observance is merely optional in the case of a female child; and if performed, it takes place when the girl is seven months old. The belief is that, if this ceremony is not performed, the child will be obliged to beg its food throughout its life. On all occasions, happy and sad, the spirits of the departed ancestors are invoked, and this ceremony forms no exception to the rule. The all-important (*māngalyas*) auspicious articles† are placed on the *barandala* (a round brass plate with which one is greeted or rather magnetised and mesmerised). An imitation tree covered with blossoms made of the dough of powdered rice, white and coloured, is a desideratum on this and similar auspicious occasions. It is also what one is greeted with. It is called *āg* or an imitation from its nature and use. Its other more elegant name is *Sri*, which is but another name for *Lakshmi*, the goddess of prosperity. An incoming or outgoing god or goddess, a couple to be united or just united, or, as on this occasion, a baby, is saluted by a bedecked and bejewelled woman with graceful movements of the fingers and hands placed one above the other almost crosswise. The forehead of the idol or the person or the little one saluted is touched with the hands thus disposed and dipped in water, holding betel, betel-nut, *Sri*, and *barandilā* and a lighted lamp. This is called *baram*, which is also made among other *māngalyas* with a small new bamboo-winnow containing four small earthen pots coloured white and red. In shape these taper at the bottom and are flattened at the mouth, which is slightly bent inward. They each contain grains of rice stained yellow with turmeric, *cowries*, pieces of turmeric, &c., and they are surmounted with

* The familiar 'baby's rattle'.—Ed.

† *Mudga* (*Phaseolus Mungo*), *Māoha* (*Phaseolus*) (*Radiatus*) wheat barley, rye, a small piece of looking-glass, a comb, a bunch of plantain, a figure of Sasti, the goddess of the nursery, honey, *ghrita* (clarified butter), curd, a pebble, a collyrium case and a reel of thread.—N. C. B.

thin earthen covers made for the purpose and similarly painted. They are usually covered with a piece of silken cloth. One or two grains of boiled rice are then put into the mouth of the bedecked and bejewelled child. It is said that if it happens to cry when the ceremonial rice is given it, that indicates that its former birth was a nobler one. It is then blessed with money or its equivalents and grains of paddy and blades of grass. And this ends the ceremony. On the following day the pulp of ripe plantains mixed with milk is first offered to the setting sun and then given to the child. The maternal uncle and other relatives take it in turn to feed the child from the third day onward.

VIDYARAMBHA.

When a male child is five years old, it is initiated, so to speak, into the mystery of letters. The priest is called in and certain sacred ceremonies are performed by him on an auspicious day previously fixed upon. The boy is not allowed to break his fast until the ceremony is finished. At the close of the ceremony the boy's hand is clasped in that of the priest or other learned man and made to write, or rather trace over the skeleton characters previously inscribed with chalk on the floor of the house. The next step is to write on palm-leaves. The third is to write on plantain leaves; and the last, on paper. This was the practice of the old school, or *pit shâlâ* system. Good penmanship was one of its beneficial results. But it had a drawback of its own: it was quite indifferent to orthography, hence it is fast falling into disuse and is being replaced by the new method, which however does not make good penmen.

MARRIAGE.

No marriage is brought about between clansmen or those having the same *gotra*.* Nor does it take place as a rule between parties, who are both of them *mouliks* and not either of them is *kulin*. These being settled, the horoscopes of the couple to be united are consulted. Should the *râshi* and *gan†* turn out favourable, the dowry and other conditions exacted on the part of the bridegroom's party are settled. But unhappily for us these beneficial arrangements are reversed in these less spiritualised and more materialistic days, and are more often violated than observed, excepting the monetary demands which are on the increase, and consequently tell on the pocket of encumbered parents. The next step towards the performance of marriage is the betrothal. The contract is put down in writing in red ink, and entered into in the presence of priests and caste-people, who each receive honorariums according to their social status, and of the match-maker who also receives his due. Into the written bond is put a rupee besmeared with vermilion. The bridegroom elect is then blessed with a gold coin or a limited number of odd silver coins, or with paddy and blades of grass, as the case may be, but

* A caste, a tribe or subdivision of it into families.

† Series of asterisms, which are classed under three heads, human, infernal and divine. *Vide* Wilson's Dictionary.

now-a-days this custom is not often observed. The marriage is celebrated in the months of *Baisak*, *Jaishta*, *Ashadha* *Srabun*, *Agrahayar*, *Magh* and *Falgun*. Nor is this all. There are days fixed in the Bengali Almanac for the celebration. And there are two preliminaries to it. The one is *Gātra Haridrā* and the other *Ayurbriddhyāna*. '*Gātra*,' means body; and '*haridra*,' turmeric. In the good old times the whole body of the bridegroom elect was besmeared with powdered turmeric and mustard oil by a bevy of married ladies amidst the joyous sounds of conch and *ulu*,* while a rural lamp shed its lurid rays in the broad daylight. But now-a-days a mere pinch of the semi-liquid compound is applied to his forehead. It is then sent with other articles of food (curd, sweets, and fish), wearing apparel, toilette articles, perfumery and a carpet, to the bride, who undergoes a similar ceremony. She fasts until the ceremony is performed. The bridegroom and his betrothed are on that day sumptuously fed and presented with cloths by their parents' or guardian's relations, who express wishes for the long life of the couple to be united. This is called *Ayurbriddhyāna* or the feast for the bridegroom, or bride, as the case may be, for whose benefit it is prepared. *Aibarhabhat* (literally, rice for long life given to a bachelor or spinster, who will no longer remain such) is but a corrupt form of it. Hence we derive the term *Aibarha*, most common in use, which means unmarried, i.e., a bachelor or spinster. According to what the party concerned can afford to expend on the occasion, the relations and others are entertained. From that day till the third day, or rather part of the night of the third day after marriage, the girl carries on her person a collyrium case, and the person she is to be united with, a nut-cracker—emblems of maternity and paternity and conjugal life—to keep the after-married-life and the felicity attending it intact. On the day of marriage, which takes place at night within the prescribed time termed *langna*, the bride's father, mother, or in her stead some married lady, herself, and her spouse-elect fast. By day *Nandimukh*, or the ceremony of propitiating the spirits of departed ancestors, is performed at the abodes of both the contracting parties by the father of the bride and of the bridegroom, or in his place by his own younger or elder brother. The father of the latter till then observes a strict fast. With the *mangalayas* the females observe the preliminary customary circumgyration while gently pouring out water from a pitcher, the custom termed *Striāchāra*, or the custom observed by females alone, both before and after the solemnization of the marriage. When it is over, the fasters break their fast. On the following day the bride is taken to her new home. At the entrance she is very warmly received by her mother-in-law with some ornament or other, and by the other female members of the household with a shower of kisses and greetings. Her feet are washed with milk and *alta*†. A live fish is placed in her hand in token of her life-long wifehood. Taking

* Sounds made in the mouth by a woman with the tongue turning about in quick motion.—N. C. B.

† Crimson powder preserved in round thin cotton cakes.—N. C. B.

off the veil her face is shown to those present, who bless her in her new home with money or presents. The finishing stroke is given to the ceremony the following night when the *phulshaya* (bed of flowers or bed with a profusion of fragrant flowers thereon, on which the couple just united lie for the first time) observance comes off. They are seated on seats specially arranged for them, and surrounded by a number of ladies. The first duty of these dames is to remove the yellow-coloured yarn knotted with blades of grass—the marriage tie—from the wrists of the couple. The nut-cracker and the collyrium case are then removed from their persons. The couple dine and then retire, while the ladies partake of a sumptuous treat. It should be noted here that all these articles of food, dress and toilette, which make up the *phulshaya*, are sent by the father of the bride.

NAKUR CHANDRA BISVAS.

THE CASTE SYSTEM IN INDIA.

FOOD.

(Continued from page 462).

IN our last paper we treated this subject from one point of view. To-day we shall dilate a little more upon the same from another point. We need not say that food cooked by a lower caste can be eaten by a person of a higher caste. We have shown that there is no prohibition of it in our sacred books, on the contrary there is express permission. We now proceed to prove this.

The great social union of the Aryans took place at the times of yajnas or sacrifices, and persons debarred from such assemblies were considered as social out-castes. What meetings of a "Bradari" are now-a-days, the yajnas were in ancient times, and it was considered a great privilege to be invited to such meetings. In those assemblies grave and important questions touching the welfare of humanity and the constitution of society were discussed and settled, but they were merely formal meetings like the present ones in India, and because they were merely formal, they were potent for good. They resembled the grand political dinners of English society. In these yajnas dining and eating formed no unimportant factor. Let us see who were the persons who prepared food in those yajnas. We shall begin with a small yajna called the Vaisvadeva. Every householder was bound to perform it daily. It was a type of large yajnas or dinners, being in fact nothing else than than one's daily dinner. Let us see what Apastamba says about it. In Prasna II, Khandha 3, we find:—

"Pure men of the first three castes shall prepare the food of a householder which is used at the Vaisvadeva ceremony. The cook shall not speak, nor cough, nor spit, while his face is turned towards the food. He shall purify himself by touching water if he has touched his hair, his limbs, or his garment.

“ Or Sudras may prepare the food, under the superintendence of men of the first three castes. For them is prescribed the same rule of sipping water as for their masters. Besides, the Sudra cooks daily shall cause to be cut the hair of their heads, their beards, the hair on their bodies and their nails, and they shall bathe while keeping their clothes on. Or they may trim their hair and nails on the eighth day of each half month, or on the days of the full and new moon.

“ He (the householder) shall place on the fire that food which has been prepared without supervision (by Sudras) and shall sprinkle it with water. Such food also they state to be fit for the gods.”

Here then we see that a Brahmin householder can employ as cook a person who is either a Brahmin, or a Kshatrya, or a Vaishya, or a Sudra, and that he can take the food prepared by them. The distinction made in the case of the Sudra cook is that the grihasta (householder) must supervise the Sudra's cooking, while in the case of the other three castes he need not do so. But even in the case of a Sudra cook, the supervision ceremony is not essential and may be dispensed with ; for one may use that food on sprinkling it with water, as above stated. Here then we see that the food cooked by a Sudra is a fit offering for gods, after being sprinkled with water, and, *à fortiori*, there can be no sin in eating such food. Such was the rule at the time of Apastamba. But will a Kanauji Brahmin now-a-days eat the food of a Bania, or a Rajput ?

We see then that at Vaisvadeva ceremony, the cooked food of a Sudra could be eaten. But many persons now-a-days do not know what a Vaisvadeva ceremony is. Haradatta, the commentator of Apastamba, explains this ceremony as follows :—

“ The food which is used at the Vaisvadeva, *i.e.*, the food prepared for the meals of the householder and of his wife.” In short, the Vaisvadeva ceremony meant daily food and nothing else. Thus in his ordinary life one may take food of a Sudra.

All these complicated rules about food were never made applicable to persons who were not *sui juris* or who did not belong to the first three classes.

An important exception to the orthodox rules of eating, even according to all Shastras of later times has been made in the case of Sudras and children ; according to the following text of Gautama (chapter II. V. I.) :—“ Before initiation, a child may follow its inclinations in behaviour, speech and eating.”

A Sudra who can never be initiated, may follow his inclinations in matters of eating. The Kayasthas of Bengal who are regarded as Sudras, commit no sin, therefore, if they follow their inclinations in matters of eating.

While treating of the subject of purifying the food by sprinkling it with water, we may mention an anecdote related of the Sikhs when they were as yet uninfluenced by latter-day Brahmanism and had attacked Cabul under the leadership of their chief Hari Singh. It is said a party of Sikhs on

their march on Cabul strayed away from the main line, and lost their way. Being oppressed by hunger, they were searching for food, when they saw some Afghans cooking some *pilau* for a feast. They fell upon them and seized the *pilau*; and purified it by a method peculiar to the Sikhs, that is to say, instead of sprinkling water, as here enjoined by Apastamba, they uttered their sacred Sikh formula and touched the food with a hog's bone to purify it. That was the rule of purification enjoined by their leader Hari Singh; for as a hog was an unclean animal for a Mahomedan, by a rule of contraries, its bone must be a clean thing for Sikhs, who were, in those days mortal enemies of the Mahomedans. This reason satisfied the scruples of Sikhs; and the Mahomedan food was eaten by them after this strange purificatory ceremony.

Similar purificatory ceremonies we find enjoined in the cosmopolitan religion of the Kaulas. What Freemasonry has done to develop the spirit of Brotherhood irrespective of religion, in Europe, what Theosophy is now struggling to do on a wider scale all over the world, the Kaulas did in India, in the face of the whole orthodox Brahmin community. Kaulas were persons who believed in the doctrine of universal communism. The word *Kula* literally means 'family', and a Kaula is he who believed that all men, nay all *living* beings, form one grand 'family'. To quote their own technical definition of Kula:—"The Jīva, the Primordial Nature, Time and Space and the five great Elements, constitute the Universal family or Kula. He who believes in the Oneness of Brahman in these is a Kaula". (Mahanirvāna Tantra, chap. 7, verses 99 and 100). This Oneness of all living beings constituted the chief article of the creed of the Kaulas. And as a logical consequence of their doctrine, the Kaulas gladly accepted all persons of every caste and creed and country into their brotherhood. In this respect also they differed materially from orthodox Brahmanism, the greatest pride of which is that no one can become a Hindu, but must be born a Hindu. As a protest against this exclusiveness, the Kaulas boldly proclaimed "every man in this world from the highest Brahmin to the lowest outcaste is entitled to enter into this Brotherhood. A Kaula who refuses to initiate another into Kaulaism because of the latter's being a Chandāl or a Javan or a low-caste or a woman verily goes on the downward path. The merit which one acquires by performing a hundred initiations, is acquired by him who brings one man into the fold of Kaulaism as all waters falling into the Ganges becomes sacred, so all persons entering into Kaulaism become holy". (*Ibid* ch. 14, v. 181—186). Thus Kaulaism was a universal social religion, meant for all mankind, be they Hindus or non-Hindus or Yavan. This universal 'familyism' was a practical religion of universal freedom and equality. At a time when the institution of slavery flourished rampant all over the world, when Hindu theologians and Christian clergy were trying to uphold it on the bases of the laws of Mann and of Moses, hundreds of years before Wilberforce enunciated his doctrine of emancipation, the

Kaula founder Sadā-siva had proclaimed, "This is my commandment that the human body shall not be the subject of purchase or sale, because with it is to be acquired merit and Moksha. It is the vessel of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha and hence it cannot become legally the property of another." (*Ibid*, chapter 8, v. 140). This Kaulaism, a child of Hinduism, and whose followers even now number millions in Bengal and other parts of India, proclaimed first the Brotherhood of all men and did not hesitate to denounce many of the prevailing vices of Hinduism such as idolatry, enforced widowhood, &c. A family among the Hindus connoted an assemblage of persons of various grades of progress, related together by one common tie of blood, and having a common kitchen or mess. The Kaulas expanded this idea of family and made it the model of their institution. They made no distinction of food. Repeatedly we find them asserting that food brought by any Kaula is to be eaten. There are various grades of Kaulas. The first and the highest of them are the Brahman Kaulas. The food offered to Brahman, is sacred for all Kaulas. Thus we find the following :—

"Whatever food or drink has been offered to the Supreme God by reciting the mantra 'Om Sat Chidekam Brahma' that even becomes the great purifier itself. Even in the Ganges water and in the Salagramnitā there is the possibility of impurity arising through contact, but in the food offered to the great god, there can never arise any impurity of touch.

"Whether it be cooked food or uncooked, having purified it with this mantra, let the worshipper eat it with his friends and kinsmen.

"There is *no distinction of castes* here, no scruples because food has been touched by another, no restriction about time, or purity and impurity. In whatever time, in whatever place, by whatever means obtained, let the food, sanctified by Brahma Mantra, be eaten without hesitation.

"Whether it be brought by a Chandala or fallen from the mouth of a dog, this food is sacred and dear even to the gods. What more need I say then, if such a food is brought by a human being?" (*Ibid*. ch. III, v. 79—85).

I have said above that the Kaulas were the Freemasons of India, and like the masons they had their secret Lodges called chakras or circles. These chakras were of various grades, some meant for the mere novitiates and the others for the highest initiates. In all, the banquet had an important place.

Whether we take the Bhairavichakra, the lowest of all social Lodges, or the Brahmachakra, the lodge of pure Brahman worshippers, we find repeatedly laid down the injunctions, that no distinction of caste should be made, and that food brought by every Kaula should be eaten.

“म्लेच्छेनश्चपक्वेनापि किरातेनापि हणुमा ।
मामं पक्वं यदानीतं कौलहस्तार्पितं शुचि ॥”

(*Ibid.* chapter VIII, v. 188.)

“The food brought by a Mlechha or a Chandāla, by a Kirāta or a Hun, be it cooked or be it raw, is pure as soon as it is placed in the hands of a Kaula.”

No stronger language could be used by any legislator to break down the almost invincible prejudice of our Hindu countrymen.

Similar injunctions, we find laid down in verses 218, 219, 281, of the same chapter, relating to persons belonging to the higher grades of Kaulaism. Thus we see, that, according to the teachings of the most ancient Sāstras, as well as of the comparatively recent Tantras, all Hindus professing one common religion, are enjoined to interdine with each other. Though commensality is perhaps the grassiest bond of union, yet it cannot be denied that the majority of men are gross, and if they be taught, as they are now taught, that every one of them is better than his neighbour, and should not dine with him, the result is, as we now find in India, that they soon come to look upon food as the supreme religion, and entertain most absurd notions of their own holiness and sanctity, because they imagine that they have kept their food undefiled.

SIRISHCHANDRA BASU.

Theosophy in all Lands.

EUROPE.

LONDON, 29th July, 1898.

With the close of the London season several of the Lodges are ceasing to hold meetings for a month's interlude, but this past month has been one of great activity at headquarters, as it has seen the successful gathering of the Eighth Annual Convention of the Society. Never was the preliminary reception so crowded, nor the photographic group so large. A most successful innovation was the holding of the first reception in the fine Council Chamber of the Westminster Town Hall, as it afforded opportunity for many more visitors to be present than could possibly have been the case at Avenue Road. The reception lasted from 7-30 to 9 p. m., and then Mrs. Besant delivered a lecture on “The Reality of the Unseen World” to a very large and intelligent audience. As this, and other lectures, both in public and in Lodge Meetings, which Mrs. Besant has delivered during her all too brief stay amongst us, will be issued in the form of pamphlets, or *Theosophical Review* articles, it does not seem necessary to note them at any length here. The audiences have been large and appreciative, and it is specially noticeable how much interest is being awakened, by the course of “Queen's Hall” Sunday lectures on Esoteric Christianity.

During the month Mrs. Besant has spoken four times to the *Blavatsky Lodge*; each time on subjects of greatest interest and value to students. The first three of these lectures will be issued as *Transactions of the*

Blavatsky Lodge. On the 28th instant the subject treated was the "Difficulties of the Inner Life," and in dealing with it Mrs. Besant gave expression to ideas which every theosophist present must have found of inestimable value and felt to be a mental "Keepsake" which the speaker was leaving behind her for our helping, ere departing to India and the far antipodes. The difficulties spoken of were those which specially were met with in the path of the man or woman who had definitely started on the course of self-evolution. The first concerned the question of the purification of the body, about which it had been urged to the speaker, that it was more important but more difficult to improve the ego within, and that our instruments were in fact already better than the music *we* could play upon them. It was pointed out that of course the improvement of the ego is more difficult than the improvement and purification of the body, which is a comparatively simple matter; but that traitor within the camp which we each of us find in our struggle upward—that sense of a dual consciousness, one which *wills* the end to be achieved, the other that which constantly wants something in opposition to that will—is due to the fact that we are only just struggling out of that stage of evolution (still normal in the average of humanity) when the centre of consciousness is in the astral body. It is a common mistake to associate consciousness with the physical brain and body; as a matter of fact it is in the astral centres that consciousness begins. In our thinking we should always remember that consciousness is only *one*, and that just as it happens to be functioning more or less fully in one vehicle or another, do we identify ourselves—the "I"—with the particular vehicle in which for the moment we are most alive.

In illustration Mrs. Besant pointed out how a galvanic current from a battery was one and indivisible, yet was made manifest in several different ways according to the kind of wire through which it happened to be passing. By the use of a different substance for the conducting wire, you could get your electricity in the shape of light, or heat, or an invisible but effective galvanic current. So with the *one* consciousness identifying itself first with the physical, then with both the astral and yet again with the mental bodies, we get different results, and it might well be that there came times when the consciousness of the higher body came down upon the lower with a *will to do*, which the lower would oppose with a *want not to do*. The consciousness recognizing itself in each of the vehicles from time to time, has yet in each the memory of the other "I's" which are the result of its working in the other bodies, and hence arises the difficulty which we find in our daily life of the jarring "I's". We find them more of an obstacle to be overcome than the mere instincts of the animal body, which purification materially helps us to subdue.

Another difficulty with which Mrs. Besant dealt was the ebb and flow of feeling on the path of progress, the alternation of spiritual energy and exaltation with deep depression and deadness. This was universal in the experience of disciples, it was inevitable and must be faced, and the only course was to try and let the one period balance the other, by remembering that they *would* alternate, and so allow the exaltation of the one time to be mellowed by a remembrance of the darker period, while the darkness of the other would be brightened by a recollection of the force and light of the first.

Mrs. Besant said that earnest students should ever be impressed with the thought of the essential oneness of life. It is, she said, a mistake to keep on asking "how much can I do in this life?" or to fret if the teaching

had not come to us as early as to some others. The question was entirely a question of making a beginning, and a link with the great Teachers, who could so vastly help our evolution during the devachanic period of assimilation. We must realize that our life was *one* not many, and in that realization we should see that the years passed in any particular incarnation meant nothing. What really was important was the making of the effort to begin.

E. A. I.

BELGIUM.

We have received from Brussels the first three numbers of *L' Idée Théosophique*, a four-page Theosophical journal appearing irregularly. The first number appeared in February, the last (six pages) appeared in July. From this we learn that at the beginning of March last there were just seven Theosophists in Brussels who formed themselves into the first Belgian Lodge. At the beginning of April, Mr. Chatterjee visited Brussels where he gave thirty lectures on Theosophy and Oriental Philosophy, the consequence of which was that, in July, the Theosophical Society had over fifty members in Brussels, grouped in two Lodges, while a third Lodge is about to be formed in Antwerp. This is progress!

NEW ZEALAND SECTION.

Mr. W. H. Draffin, who has been Secretary of the Auckland Branch since its formation, has resigned the position owing to increase of work on other lines. The Branch accepted the resignation with regret. Mr. W. Will, another old member, was elected to fill the position: his address is West Street, Newton, Auckland. An assistant secretary, Mr. Claude E. Hemus, one of the youngest members, was also elected.

There is nothing of particular moment to report from the Section. The branches are working steadily; the principal item of study just now being Mrs. Besant's "Ancient Wisdom," which has been taken up by most of the Branches in connection with the Chicago scheme of study. The "Secret Doctrine" classes continue however, and in Auckland, in addition, the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* arouses a good deal of interest.

In Wellington Mrs. Richmond's lectures are attracting attention, and a permanent audience has been gained; the questions and discussion following show that a decided interest is being awakened.

In Auckland and Dunedin there has been considerable newspaper correspondence on matters Theosophical, both in regard to the Society and generally.

SCANDINAVIA.

Mr. Zettersten, General Secretary, Scandinavian Section, sends very encouraging reports from his part of the world. The Section has such inherent vitality that it has recovered from the effects of the Judgeite secession of 1896, which took away about a third of its members, and now has as many as at the close of 1895. In fact, it has 417 as against 416 at the time indicated. The devotion of our dear colleagues is shown in their doing all the Headquarters' work in the spare hours left them after their bread-winning daily work is done. Mr. Zettersten himself occupies a very responsible situation under Government, and sets an example of ardent fidelity to our cause worthy of universal imitation.

Reviews.

DEVIL-WORSHIP IN FRANCE.*

Those who are familiar with the manners and customs of the inhabitants of India do not require to be told that there is, in certain parts, a considerable amount of „devil business” in that country. The magician who is reputed to be able to furnish his clients with charms to ensure “master’s favour” or to injure enemies still finds plenty of occupation. Indeed it is said that regular schools of Black Magic exist, in which neophytes are instructed in the art and method of utilising evil spirits for the purpose of harming their fellowmen.

Since the recent revival of mysticism in Europe, reports have from time to time appeared of diabolical practices of various kinds. These, however, for the most part, relate to sporadic incantations and evocations such as one might expect to find prevailing among a generation which had rediscovered the well-known *grimoires* of earlier centuries. Works of this kind are more numerous in France than elsewhere, hence it is not surprising to find the rumours of these practices especially connected with the French. Moreover the societies recently formed in France for the study and practice of practical magic are larger, better known, and better organised than elsewhere.

The book before us gives however but casual mention to the sporadic black magic mentioned above and deals chiefly with the evidence respecting the existence of one society, the ramifications of which are stated by its enemies to be world-wide. The society in question is called the Palladian Order and we are told by certain French writers, the most prominent being Leo Taxil and Dr. Bataille, that this society is a sort of inner Freemasonry—“it works through the powerful Masonic apparatus, and, according to the evidence which has been put in, it has obtained a substantial and masterful control over the entire Fraternity.” There is said to be “a secret directing centre” which governs Freemasonry throughout the world, and that centre rules Masonry wholly in the interests of the Palladian Order which practises a form of Devil-Worship!

To any Freemason it will come as a shock of surprise to be seriously told he is a “devil-worshipper,” but that seems to be the opinion of orthodox Roman Catholics. One great dignitary of the Church did in fact once tell the present writer that while he did not think there was anything wrong in English Freemasonry, Italian Freemasonry was quite a different thing for in Italian Lodges “they raise the devil.” It will be equally a surprise to Freemasons to be told there is a “secret directing centre” for all Freemasonry throughout the world, as every Mason knows that, by the constitution of the different Grand Lodges, this is impossible.

So extravagant are the stories told of the Palladian Order that it is difficult to understand how they can be taken seriously unless.

* By A. E. Waite, London, Redway, 1898.

we remember that they appear under ecclesiastical sanction. Mr. Waite has very successfully shown by an examination of the evidence presented, and there seem to have been volumes of it, that the Universal P^lladian Order is mythical, and, in fact it seems as if the whole body of this so-called evidence was simply manufactured in order to supply Roman Catholics with a weapon against the Freemasonry of which they seem to have such an abiding horror.

Perhaps the least justifiable part of the attack is the mention of several honoured names in English and American Masonry who are accused of being parties to the monstrous rites and doctrines of the P^lladian Order.

Part of the "evidence" consists in the production of what are said to be the rituals used by the P^lladians, but these turn out, under Mr. Waite's examination, to be compiled almost wholly from excerpts from the published writings of Eliphas Levi!

Dr. Bataille's share in the evidence seems to be an account of his own experiences, principally in the East, of P^lladian Mysteries. His experiences in India remind us of certain articles that appeared in the *Strand Magazine* some time ago, wherein gigantic man-eating spiders and tigers kept in temple vaults (I think at Coujeeveram) largely figured. This is what happened to the veracious doctor at Pondicherry for instance:—

He had been presented at Colombo with a "winged lingam," which would serve as a passport among all worshippers of Lucifer in the East. On landing at Pondicherry he at once fell in with one Ramasamiponnotamly—palé—dobachi (it will be observed that the name is given in full) who took him to "a house of ordinary appearance". Passing through a garden he entered a great dismantled temple devoted "to Brahma, under the unimpressive diminutive of Lucif." "The ill-ventilated place reeked with horrible putrescence. Its noisome condition was mainly owing to the presence of various fakirs, who, though still alive, were in advanced stages of putrefaction", the result of self-torture of various kinds. After some speechifying they tried to evoke Baal-Zeboub, but he wouldn't appear. So then "a tripod of burning coals was next obtained, and a woman, summoned for this purpose, plunged her arm into the flames, inhaling with great delight the odour of her roasting flesh. Result, *nil*. Then a white goat was produced, placed upon the altar, set alight, hideously tortured, cut open, and its entrails torn out by the native grand master, who spread them on the steps, uttering abominable blasphemies against Adonai". This having also failed, "great stones were raised from the floor, a nameless stench ascended and a large consignment of living fakirs, eaten to the bone by worms and falling to pieces in every direction, were dragged out from among a number of skeletons, while serpents, giant spiders, and toads swarmed from all parts. The grand master seized one of the fakirs and cut his throat upon the altar, chanting the satanic liturgy amidst imprecations, curses, a chaos of voices, and the last agonies of the goat. A final howl of imprecation resulted in complete failure, whereupon it was decided that Baal-Zeboub had business elsewhere."

Those who care to follow Dr. Bataille to Calcutta and other places, where his performances were equally fantastic and absurd, must read Mr. Waite's book for themselves.

THE MAHABHARATA (DEVANAGARI TYPE.)

We are glad to acknowledge the receipt of the first part of this important work, of 200 pages. The first printed copy of the Mahabharata was in Telugu characters with the Commentary of Nilakantha. Next came the Devanagari Edition of Protap Chandra Roy. In 1896 some gentlemen of the Tanjore District, Madras Presidency, associated themselves together to bring out a Grantha Edition of Bharata; they finished the first five *parvas* or cantos. The Editor of the present Edition was one of them, but as he would not consent to the others striking out some stanzas in support of the Saivite and the Sakta system of faith and putting in other stanzas of their own composition in praise of Vishnu, he severed the connection and established a Sanskrit press of his own at Coleroon, S. I. Railway, to bring out the complete text in Devanagari letters.

The Bharata consists of 100,000 stanzas, as asserted by Vyasa himself in the Anukramanika (index) that forms the first chapter of the work. The Telugu Edition is useful only to a small community in Southern India; the Bengal Edition is incorrect and defective in the text, and the paper and printing are very bad and unattractive. Many stanzas have only one line instead of two, and some three. Hence the sense is very often incomplete, which Protap Chander Roy tries, in his English translation, to reconcile by fanciful and unauthoritative explanations, entirely distorting the original passages. An instance in point is the important passage in the *Yaksha Prasna*, about the real test of Brahminhood, where very absurd conclusions are arrived at through the distorting process. On the whole, the Telugu and the Bengal Editions omit 16,000 stanzas. The Bharata rightly named the 'fifth Veda,' is important and is revered not as a connected interesting narrative, but as a collection of episodes utilised to convey the highest teachings of philosophy, metaphysics, morality and practical altruism. And one may conceive the great loss to humanity of the 16,000 stanzas, which treat entirely of these topics. Some glaring instances of important omissions are: three whole chapters in the episode of the birth of Vyasa; four chapters in the episode of the burning of the Khandava forest (treating of highly Vedantic subjects); three chapters in the marriage of Subhadra, the sister of Sri Krishna with Arjuna, ten chapters in connection with the discussion of the divinity of Sri Krishna, raised during the Raja Suya sacrifice; 6,000 stanzas in the episode of the initiation of Sri Suka by his father Veda Vyasa; twenty-five Chapters in the *Aswamedha Parva*; and many more such. This is really a very regrettable loss; the reason being, the mutilation of the manuscripts in the North during the Mahomedan rule. The Grantha Edition can never be useful to the generality of readers as very few persons outside the Tamil districts of Southern India can make out the characters.

The present Edition guarantees to print the 100,000 stanzas in full; the text is from many important manuscripts obtained from the various parts of India, Bhavnagar (Devanagari), Negapatam (Devanagari), Hanumatpoor (palm leaf in the Nagari or the Modi type), Kumbakonam (palm leaf, Telugu type), Erode (palm leaf Telugu), Udipi (palm leaf, Nagari); it has 6 commentaries by Sri Vadiraja (Dwaita), Srinivasa Teertha (Dwaita), Ananda Poorna, Vimala Bodha, Ratna Gurbha (all Adwaitic) and Sankaracharya (who commented only upon some select portions such as the *Yaksha Prasna*, *Sanat Sujateeya*, *Bhagavat Gita*, *Vidura Parjagarana*, *Vishnu Sabasranama* and *Uttara Gita*). It is printed on thick, superfine glazed paper, in bold, big Devangari type, very graceful and attractive.

The work will consist of 3,600 pages and will be brought out in 18 parts of 200 pages each. The price of the book to subscribers before October is Rs. 25 and afterwards Rs. 30, and it may be obtained from the Editor, V. Ramanujachariar, Proprietor, L. H. Press, Coleroon, South Indian Railway, Madras, India, or from the Manager, Theosophist Office, Adyar, Madras. For details of the instalments of the subscription, &c., apply to the Editor.

N. F.

THE MORNING STAR. *

Many interpretations have from time to time appeared of the meaning symbolised by the twelve Signs of the Zodiac, one of which, from the pen of the late Mr. Subba Row, will be remembered by our readers. The volume before us is devoted to the same subject, but from an entirely different standpoint.

"The writer's contention is, that the key to the faith possessed by the great souls of the early Church is to be found only in the Signs of the Zodiac. These Signs, when rightly understood give man an explanation as to his origin, instructions as to his course of conduct upon earth, together with an assurance of his immortality, and the means of eventually conquering the law of sin and death under which he now labours, sufficient at once to satisfy both his intellect and his soul."

The key to the whole is as follows:—"The aim of religion is, or should be to save the souls of men by preaching the Gospel—the Gospel namely, that incontinence kills the soul while continence saves it.....So long as the outward forms of law in connection with sexual relationship are observed, man is supposed to be acting rightly. He is spoken of as having lawful indulgence. But this is a great mistake; there can be no lawful indulgence whether sanctioned by custom or not. The sex organs were given for creative purposes only; if they are used for any other object than this fundamental one, whether in marriage or out of it, the destroying effects upon the souls of men are precisely the same."

This is the main thesis developed by the author and we may note in passing that this is also the teaching of the ancient sages embodied in the Brahmanical marriage laws.

The book before us consists of forty-eight divisions one being given to the exposition of each of the Signs of the Zodiac and to each of the thirty-six constellations, or *dekans*. The planisphere chiefly referred to is the well-known Egyptian circular Zodiac of Denderah, but other Zodiacs are also used as illustrations, while mythological sources are freely drawn upon. The book deserves serious study, but we would suggest that, in the larger edition which is promised with additional illustrations, a synopsis of the meaning of each sign and constellation should be given at the end of each division. A photograph of the Denderah Zodiac now, we believe, in the Louvre, might also be given as well as the present outline taken apparently from Denon's work.

* By Vitruvius, London, Theosophical Publishing Society, 1898.

MAGAZINES.

The Theosophical Review (July) "On the Watch-Tower" is followed by Mr. Mead's "The Sibyl and her Oracles" in which he gives a sketch of the civilisation of the ancient race from which the historic Greeks were descended. H. W. Green ("Saturn as a Symbol") is inclined to think Saturn represents "the tendency towards limitation and separation in man and cosmos." Mrs. Besant concludes "Problems of sociology." She gives a general view of the organisation of the society of the infant races under their Initiate Rulers showing that "all that modern Socialism aims at for the benefit of the masses—and far more"—was then definitely secured. This system faded away and, apparently as a necessary stage in human evolution a state of things arose in which "Rulers failing in their duties, discontent took birth among the peoples, tyranny bred hatred, and oppression begot rebellion." She hopes however "that through these very struggles, these shiftings of power, these experiments in government, these failures of the ignorant, the experience may be gained which shall again place the hand of the wisest on the helm of the state, and make virtue, self-sacrifice and high intelligence indispensable conditions for rule." In economics she thinks it "probable that this stage of competition and misery was necessary for the development of individuality," but that co-operation will be substituted for competition and brotherhood for strife. This result cannot, however, be brought about "in sudden fashion," wherefore, "in the present distress" as old Fuller called it, "It is for us who are Theosophists, who hold as truth the spiritual unity of mankind, to put our belief into practice by teaching peace, brotherhood, the drawing together of classes, the removing of antipathies, the recognition of mutual duty; let the strongest do the best service, the wisest, the loftiest teaching; let us all be willing to learn and ready to share; so shall we hasten the dawn of a better day, and prepare the earth to receive the coming race." W. F. Kirby contributes "The Hymn of the Birds to the Seemurgh"—the Sacred Bird of the Persians who "sits on the heights of Mount Alberz watching the changes of the world." Mrs. Cooper-Oakley writes a chapter in the history of mysticism in "Our more immediate Theosophic Ancestry," giving a list of the chief Mystical Societies and Orders which have influenced European thought during the last nine centuries. A. Fullerton pleads for Christian Theosophy. Professor Wikler writes on "Alchemy and the Great Work" in which he quotes the following "formula given by a resident of Chicago: 'Take of antimony chemically pure, five parts; sulphur, ten parts; iron, one part; caustic soda, four parts. Place these ingredients in a graphite crucible and expose to a white heat, or five thousand degrees Fahrenheit, from eight to forty-eight hours. Powder the resulting mass and mix it well with the slag. Combine this with charcoal, one part; oxide of lead, five parts; and caustic soda, four parts. Fuse the whole till a metallic button is obtained. Scourify and cupel this metallic mass, and the resulting head will be gold and silver.' There is nothing about Indian Alchemy in this paper, though in this country there are plenty of alchemical works, especially in Tamil, and also plenty of individuals who have brought themselves to poverty through excessive devotion to alchemical pursuits, and a few who state they have met people who can perform 'the great work.' We were once shown a button of silver said to have been produced alchemically, and once we were shown some 'powder of projection' which had just been produced by the calcination of a piece of copper in the flame of a candle. The copper was

wrapped in cloth and the process took less than an hour—so our informant said. The receipt for this process is to be found in the Vedas. Mrs. Marshall, begins a translation of Lessing's treatise on the Education of the Human Race.

Theosophia, (Holland, July) contains Dogmas, In the Outer Court (translation), the Tao te King (continued), Masters as Facts and Ideals (translation), questions and answers, local notes, etc.

Sophia (Madrid, July) contains translations from H. P. Blavatsky's works and from the *Theosophical Review*. Senor Soria y Mata continues his erudite "Genesis," and Micromya writes on the attitude of Theosophy towards the present social system.

Theosophia (Stockholm, July) contains "True and False Ideals," by A. E. Gibson, "Richard Wagner," by B. Crump, local news, etc.

La Revue Théosophique (Paris, July) contains translations from the writings of C. W. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant, and articles on "Possession" and "Buddhism in Japan." The translation of the second part of the "Secret Doctrine" is commenced.

Balder (Christiania, May) contains translations from the writings of C. W. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant.

The Theosophic Gleaner, (Bombay, August) contains extracts from *The Theosophical Review*, *The Brahmavadin*, etc.

The Prasnottara contains a good paper on "The Secret of Spiritual Life" by J. Sorabji, and a cheering account of the opening of the Central Hindu College, Benares—on the opening day 28 students applied for admission, two days after there were 65.

Lotusblüthen (Leipzig, July), contains a poetical translation of Edwin Arnold's Song Celestial and the concluding parts of "The Symbols of the Bible" and "Noteworthy Memories from the Life of the Editor" (Dr. Hartmann).

Mercury (San Francisco, June) opens with 'H.P.B.'s opinion of H. S. O. a fragment from the unpublished writings of H. P. Blavatsky in which she bears the strongest testimony to the sterling worth of H. S. O. and his fitness for the leadership of the Society. She says "Where hundreds in his place would have collapsed and given up the whole undertaking in despair, he, unmoved and unmovable, went on climbing up and toiling as before, unrelenting and undismayed, supported by that one thought and conviction, that he was doing his duty towards those he had promised to serve to the end of his life. There was but one beacon for him—the hand that had first pointed to him his way up; the hand of the Master he loves and reveres so well, and serves so devotedly." This number also contains "A study in Black and White Magic from the standpoint of a Rationalist" and "A Model Prayer" wherein prayer is defined as "the communion of the human soul with its source, that divine consciousness practically omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, from which the human soul descends into each incarnation."

Teosofia (Rome, July), contains the commencement of an essay on Reincarnation by Dr. Pascal and a continuation of the translation of Marques' Scientific Corroboration of Theosophy.

The Arya Bala Bodhini (Madras, August) contains a paper on the Reward of Bhakti, a report of Miss Edger's Lecture to students at Coimbatore—a lecture we strongly recommend to the perusal of all Indian Students, other reports of Miss Edger's tour, &c.

CUTTINGS AND COMMENTS.

"Thoughts, like the pollen of flowers, leave one brain and fasten to another."

*Muni-
isvara.* A correspondent of the *Hindu* asks whether the worship of *Muni-isvara* which is so widely spreading among the non-Brahman communities of South India, has any connection with Buddhism. "*Muni-isvara* is given in Mr. Monier Williams' Sanskrit Dictionary as one of the names of Buddha. Not being a Sanskrit scholar myself, I do not know if this is one of the names given to Buddha by Amarasinha in his *Kosa*. In this worship of *Muni-isvara*, the peepul tree plays an important part. This is the tree under the shade of which Buddha attained *Nirvana*. It is also interesting to note that a Brahman is not called into service in this worship as in the worship of Vishnu, Siva, Ganesa or Saraswati. I might also mention that only recently Professor Hara Prasad Sastri of the Presidency College of Calcutta proved the identity of *Dharma*, the god of the *Doms* of Bengal, with Buddha, one of whose names is Dharma-rajah. If an identity can be established between *Muni-isvara* and Buddha, it will prove that Buddhism has not really disappeared from South India though its leaders and its external paraphernalia have disappeared from the country."

* * *

*For the
S. P. R.* A correspondent of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, of July 9th, states the following relating to Dr. Playfair, who died the next day after Mr. Gladstone's funeral, and who was one of his old colleagues:—

"A friend who was at the funeral on Saturday, tells me he saw Lord Playfair walk in to take part in the ceremony.

He knew him personally, and it would seem strange that he could have been mistaken on such a point, as Lord Playfair, he said, passed close before the pew in which he was seated. The subject is one suitable for investigation by the Psychical Research Society, for whilst the body of his old chief was being lowered into the tomb at Westminster Lord Playfair lay on his death-bed in Onslow Gardens, dying on Sunday."

* * *

A Convent Bell. In the big Hindu Temple of Shunkar Naraina Siva, of Cundapore, there is a large bell which bears an inscription in Portuguese and figures of the Virgin and St. Joseph in relief. It is not known as to how a Christian bell happened to be in the possession of a Hindu Temple. It appears that it was taken either from Petropally [Petre's village] near Brahmovar, once a Christian village, before Tippu demolished Christian Temples, or Siddapur, a ruined town near Hosungadi. The Bednore Kings encouraged the Christians to settle in this territory and probably there were flourishing Christian settlements at Siddapur and Petropally before Tippu demolished them.

* * *

More Fire-walking. Mr. Andrew Lang writes in the *Westminster Gazette* :—The feat of fire-walking is performed yearly in the Mauritius. The walkers are natives of Southern India, who carry this rite also to Trinidad and the Straits Settlements. The process is religious, and is usually undertaken in fulfilment of a vow. The police do not permit women to take part in the function. A shallow trench of about fourteen yards in length is dug and dry wood is piled on it to about four feet in height. This is kindled, and burns down to red embers. These are then raked smooth with long rakes, the heat being intense, so that the fire cannot be closely approached. A goat is then decapitated and carried round the pyre. A priest next enters, walks through the fire, and dances in the middle. He then stands by the edge, and watches the others who walk through. Several seemed under the influence of drugs or strong excitement. My informant who saw the affair twice, thinks that the rite is in honour of Kālī; but, in India, Durapati is sometimes honoured. Details will be found in "The Fire-Walk," in my "Modern Mythology." In Mauritius the walkers wear only waist-cloths. They seem to feel no discomfort. I trust to receive official information—this account is from a careful oral description.

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A Correction. Mr. Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai writes, with reference to the dishonest yogi mentioned on page 702, to say that the thief was not a yogi at all but a poor brahmin of Tanjore District, who knows something of medicine, and came to Coimbatore in search of some medicinal herbs which are to be found on the Velliangiri Hills. Hence all that was said about the discipleship of Mr. Meenakshi is incorrect. We regret the insertion of the cutting and apologise to Mr. Meenakshi for the mistake.

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Prince Henry of Orleans in Thibet.

A journal says : "The Prince was struck by the resemblance 'between the creeds and ceremonies of Roman Catholicism and Thibetan Buddhism.' If he was not almost persuaded to become a Buddhist he betrayed some ghost of a shadow of a leaning towards Blavatskyism. For the Prince was not disposed to reject contemptuously those Lamaist miracles of which he heard. 'It is easy to dismiss them with a shrug of the shoulders,' but may not there be something in 'levitation;' may not your occultish Thibetan walk unharmed with bare feet 'upon the sword's edge,' and 'open his stomach and readjust the intestines without a scar remaining,' and 'heap up water drops with his hand, as one might ice morsels'? It is a pity that Prince Henry did not go forth to grub up the Mahatmas from their holes in the Thibetan mountains and interview them on the aerial postal service between them and Madame B."

* *

Miss Edger and the "Bodhini."

Miss Edger has been so much interested in the welfare of Hindu youth that she will write for the *Arya Bala Bodhini* a monthly paper on the best means to promote the spiritual enlightenment and moral well-being of their class. Her fine scholarship and sympathetic temperament make it certain that this promised series of articles will be most valuable.

THE UPLIFTING OF THE PARIAS.

THE movement inaugurated among the Pariahs, or Panchamas, for the return of their great community to Buddhism, the alleged religion of their Dravidian ancestors, proceeds slowly but surely. During my present tour with Miss Edger through the Madras Presidency, I have heard but one expression of opinion about it from intelligent men of that nationality, and that a favourable one. Some have written me in terms of deep gratitude for giving them this ray of hope that their social disabilities may be lessened by entering into the old religion which ignores caste and teaches the brotherhood of the whole race. The High Priests of Ceylon have sent me their joint reply to the prayer of the Panchama committee for advice, sympathy and help, and it is highly satisfactory. It is signed by the abbots of the two Royal Viharas at Kandy, by Sumangala, Subhuti, Weligama, Piyaratane and Chanda Joti, that is to say, by the most influential senior monks of the Island. A national subscription has been started to raise funds for the building of a Vihara at Madras and other purposes. My engagements on tour have prevented my personally arranging for the mass meeting of Panchamas in the Town Hall, Madras, at which the new Dravidian Buddhist Society, proposed by Pandit C. Iyothee Dass, will be formally organised, but it will be attended to as soon as practicable. Meanwhile the Indian press have begun to discuss the question, their views, of course, being colored by their Editorial leanings towards or against the outcastes and the Missionaries. The *Times of India*, a leading Anglo-Indian paper of Bombay, in its issue of August 23rd., said :

“The movement started by Colonel Olcott for educating the Pariahs and restoring them to Buddhism will be watched with considerable interest. The first step necessary in their elevation the Pariahs regard to be a change of their racial name; and there is, indeed, considerable force in the argument from association of ideas. In deference, therefore, to their harmless aspirations, we are cheerfully ready to call them Panchamas—meaning to say, members of the fifth caste, in contradiction to the customary four ones—the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, and the Sudras. We have noticed with sympathetic comment the resolutions passed time after time by the Indian Social Conference, in reference to the raising of the status of these poor outcastes; but it would appear that the first earnest step towards their social amelioration has been taken by Colonel Olcott. The Christian missionaries have laboured much to improve the lot of the Panchamas who have become Christians; and, strange to say, though the high-caste Hindoo cherishes a sublime notion of his superiority, as soon as a Panchama converts himself to Christianity, even the high-caste Hindoo treats him with more deference than he used to do when the convert was as yet a mere Pariah. But though the missionaries have undoubtedly done much

for the Panchamas—and we suppose they are grateful for it—perhaps their ‘wholesale restoration’ to Buddhism might really produce more immediate and apparent results. We are not disposed to go into the question whether it is a restoration or a conversion to Buddhism. That would be invidious. But the one religion in the world that has been absolutely virgin of coercion,—the one religion that, before Christianity was preached in India, proclaimed the universal brotherhood of man—might fitly take into her fold the race that has been the down-trodden of Brahmanism for centuries together. It was precisely to protest against the system of slavery, and the caste system, and mediation of the priests, and the institution of sacrifices—that institution of securing one’s good by killing the weak—it was to protest against all these, and to give woman an equal dignity with man, that Buddha preached his religion of love. It is, therefore, considerably in the fitness of things that Colonel Olcott has taken up the beneficent task of restoring the down-trodden ones of India to an Indian religion which extends its charity even to the meanest ones. The Buddhist high priest of Ceylon has been moved to take the Panchamas under his protection, and the cause has, fortunately, drawn to itself the sympathy and support also of Mr. Dhammapala, the Honorary Secretary of the Maha-Bodhi Society. It is, indeed, possible that the time may come when justice shall at last have been done to the rejected ones of Brahmanism—a justice, though so late, yet so efficient. It is fairly clear that, as Buddhists, the good Panchamas will not be as raised in the eye of the high-caste Hindoo as if they were Christians. But as long as the status of these helpless ones is raised, the high-caste Hindoo may very well be ignored. Brahmanism has been a force that has shown its capacity more for contempt than for charity. It is matter, therefore, not for very much regret that it should, now and then, have its self-respect rather severely shaken. As for the poor Panchamas, Christianity or Buddhism could have been their only refuge. The Buddhist scriptures record many winning incidents; but, perhaps, none may prove more consoling to the Panchamas than the beautiful history of Sunita, one of the elders of the Buddhist Church. ‘I,’ says Sunita of himself, ‘have come of a humble family, I was poor and needy. The work which I performed was lowly,—sweeping the withered flowers. I was despised of men, looked down upon, and held in light esteem; with submissive mien I showed respect to many. Then I beheld Buddha and his band of monks as he passed to Magadha. I cast away my burden and ran to bow myself in reverence before him. From pity for me he halted, he the highest among men! I bowed myself at the Master’s feet and begged of him, the highest of all beings, to accept me as a monk. Then said unto me the gracious Master,—‘Come unto me, O monk’—that was all the initiation I received. ‘O monks,’ said Gautama himself, ‘let your light so shine before the world, that you, having embraced the religious life according to so well-taught a doctrine and discipline, are seen to be mild and forbearing.’ We can but express our sympathy with the Panchamas in their aspirations.”

On the other hand, the *Madras Mail*, the correspondingly influential organ in the Southern Presidency, views it thus :

“The *Times of India* supports Colonel Olcott’s ambitious, and, as it seems to us, visionary project of raising the Pariahs by converting them to Buddhism, and calls it ‘the first earnest step towards their social amelioration. This, of course, is both nonsensical and untrue. ‘First earnest steps’ have

long ago been taken both by Government and by the missionaries. Hardly more judicious, too, are the following comments of our contemporary :—' It is, indeed, possible that the time may come when justice shall at last have been done to the rejected ones of Brahmanism—a justice, though so late yet so efficient. It is fairly clear that, as Buddhists, the good Panchamas will not be as raised in the eye of the high-caste Hindu as if they were Christians. But as long as the status of these helpless ones is raised, the high-caste Hindu may very well be ignored. Brahmanism has been a force that has shown its capacity more for contempt than for charity. It is matter, therefore, not for very much regret that it should, now and then, have its self-respect rather severely shaken.' "

Both papers make the same mistake in crediting me with having started this grand movement. That honor is due to the Panchamas themselves, and it was a committee headed by Paudit C. Iyothee Doss who broached the idea to me on last White Lotus Day, and implored my help. That I have, of course, given them and shall continue to give, for in all my life I have not been engaged in a more necessary or blessed public work. Whether they will reach the full fruition of their hopes and aspirations is a problem of the future, and will mainly depend upon the possibility of infusing into the whole community some part of the hot zeal that is consuming the heart of Iyothee Doss. At any rate, we, Theosophists, will help them and leave the rest to Karma. By the time the next number of the *Theosophist* reaches its readers there will be much more to say upon this subject.

H. S. O.