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# THE THEOSOPHIST.

VOL. XXI, NO. 2, NOVEMBER 1899.

THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

[*Family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares.*]

## *OLD DIARY LEAVES.**

FOURTH SERIES, CHAPTER I.

AMONG my visitors of the next few days was that very learned Sanskrit teacher and author, Pandit Jibbananda Vidyasagara, son of the greatest of Bengali pandits of his day, the late Taranatha Tarkavachâspati, author of the Sanskrit Lexicon, known to old members of our Society as the one who gave me the sacred thread of the Brahmin, his own gotra and mantra, thus adopting me, so far as possible under the caste rules. His son asked me to partake of food at his house the following day, which I did with pleasure. This is, I believe, a case without precedent, as I was a declared Buddhist and was asked to sacrifice nothing in the way of religious belief as a condition of the receipt of this distinguished mark of esteem and gratitude of the Brahmins for my services in India towards the Hindu revival.

One of my staunchest Indian friends from the beginning until now, is the Honorable Maharaja Sir Jotendro Mohan Tagore, whose guest H.P.B., I, and other Theosophists have been. He is a highly educated and thoughtful man, a great lover of religious discussions. In common with all Hindus, he loves the ancient ideal of the spiritual life and, in theory, admits its vast superiority over the life of the world. I remember a talk we had one day, during a later visit to Calcutta, about this very subject, and the good-natured laugh I had at his expense. He had asked me in great seriousness if I could not tell him the most effectual way to reach this high level while still living. "Of course" I replied, "there is one way that can be tried by you, with a fair certainty of gaining your object." "What is it? Do tell me", he unsuspectingly asked. "Well, drive home in that splendid carriage of yours; go up to your marble reception-room, where the silver lustres, the paintings, the mosaics and other things, make it a real princely apartment;

* Three volumes, in series of thirty chapters, tracing the history of the Theosophical Society from its beginnings at New York, have appeared in the *Theosophist*, and the first volume is available in book form. Price, cloth, Rs. 3-8-0 or paper, Rs. 2-3-0.

call your lawyers and dispose of your property by gift, keeping back not so much as one jewel ; then send to the bazaar and buy the orange cloths, the staff and the water pot of a sanyasi, bid farewell to your family, change your name, and go out in the world as a pauper ascetic ; stick to this long enough, as the Buddha did, as Dyânand Saraswati and thousands more have in our own times, and you will find ample recompense for your self-denial and your spiritual striving." A smile came over his refined features as he found how easily he had allowed himself to be entrapped, and showed no annoyance when I laughed at his dilemma. But I told him, with that affectionate frankness which our long personal friendship permitted, that unless he was brave enough to try the sovereign remedy for world-troubles which the Sages had prescribed and which the experience of hundreds of generations had verified, he had better not think of treading the Higher Path : the Buddha had said in the *Dhammapada*, " One is the road that leads to wealth, another the road that leads to Nirvana " ; and more familiar to the Christian world is that story in S. Matthew of the rich young man who put to the Christ the very same question as my friend had just put to me, and got the same answer, with the result that " When the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful : for he had great possessions." Moreover I told my valued friend that if I were in his place I should not run away from my wealth, but should stop and put it to the helping of the world, by which he would get farther along the Path than by any amount of asceticism he might attempt. For, unless, as the Hindu Shastras declare, he could come to look on gold as no more excellent than clay, the vivid recollection of his relinquished splendor would haunt him always : though he plunged into the heart of the forest, or shut himself up in a Himâlayan cavern, or descended to the bottom of the sea, the very air about him would vibrate with the tinkle and chink of gold and silver coin. It is good proof of the innate sweetness of the Prince's character that he has borne me no ill-will for my sharp frankness. In fact, these millionaires and princes get so much sickening sycophancy that, as a rule, they relish instead of resenting plain advice which has no ulterior motive. But sometimes they think you a fool to pretend to despise the idol of their lifelong worship !

On the 23d (July) I again lectured to an overflowing audience in the Calcutta Town Hall,—whose bad acoustic qualities entitle it to be called ' Orators' Despair'—on the theme of " Social Reform on Aryan Lines." Two more lectures were given the next day, and on the 26th, I left for Darjeeling, that peerless Himâlayan station whose name now recalls the awful catastrophe with which it has recently been visited as the result of a cloud-burst, cyclone and earthquake. At the time of my visit, however, it was in the height of its picturesqueness and beauty, and I had a most enjoyable time. With my host, Babu Chhatra Dhar Ghose, local manager of the Burdwan Maharaja's estates and President of our local T. S. Branch, I made a return call on that wonderful explorer of Tibet, Sarat Chandra Das, C. I. E., Rai Bahadur, Tibetan

Interpreter to Government, etc., etc., who showed me the priceless MSS. and printed books he had brought back from Lhasa and introduced me to a venerable Lama-Pandit with whose help he was compiling for Government a Tibetan-English Lexicon which, when finished, will be his chief literary monument. At the house of my old friend, Babu Srinath Chatterji, Secretary of our Branch, we met Gyen-Shapa, a Tibetan lama-ascetic, who has long practised Yoga and developed certain of the Siddhis. Srinath Babu had seen him, that very morning, while "sitting in dhârana," *i.e.*, meditating, rise from the ground and remain, self-supported, in the air. I visited him twice more and, with Srinath as interpreter, managed to get a good deal of interesting information from him about Tibetan lamaseries and lamas. There is, in almost all lamaseries, a school of Yoga under an adept teacher, and the feat of self-levitation is not an uncommon fact among them. The height to which one can rise in the air depends upon his natural temperament, in part, and largely on the length of practical training. His own Teacher could rise as high as the walls of the lamasery, and several of his fellow pupils could levitate themselves higher than himself. A strict discipline, physical and moral, must be followed, and great attention is paid to diet. Such phenomena are performed in private, vulgar display being strictly forbidden. Needless to say, the curiosity of casual travellers, and especially of the beef-eating, peg-drinking European explorer, is *not* gratified: search as they may, they would never see a real adept, to know him as such, as the cases of Rockhill, Capt. Bower, the Duc D'Orleans and Mr. Knight * sufficiently attest.

Sarat Babu's "Narrative of a Journey to Lhasa in 1881-82," is one of the most interesting books of travel I have ever read. It teems with accounts of dangers faced, obstacles surmounted, life imperilled, new peoples met, and plans and projects fully achieved, yet is free from bombast and vain boasting; in this, resembling that peerless book of Nansen's, "Farthest North." Leaving his home at Darjeeling, November 7th, 1881, he crossed the Himâlayas by the Kangla Chhen Pass on the 30th of November, after undergoing great hardships, and reached Tashi-Lhunpo, the capital of the Tashi Lama (whose Master of Ceremonies one of our own revered Mahatmas is). After living here several months, he managed to get permission to visit Lhasa, was received by the Dalai Lama, collected a large number of the most important Buddhist works, and surmounting innumerable obstacles on the return journey to the Sikkim frontier, reached his home on the 27th December 1882. I noticed in the shape of his head a peculiarity which struck me in Stanley, the African explorer, *viz.*, a marked fulness of the temples, over the articulations of the jaw bones, a sign to physiognomists of hardiness of constitution, the power of resisting disease. Sarat Babu's whole body conveys the impression of physical toughness, and the reading of his Report to Government, after meeting him, fully corroborated my first impressions in this respect. His

* See *Theosophist*, Vol. XVI, pp. 173 and 305.

thorough mastery of the Tibetan tongue, helped by his semi-Mongolian type of face, enabled him to travel to Tashi-Lhunpo and Lhasa in the character of a Tibetan Doctor. I had ample proof of his fluency myself when he served me as interpreter in my talk with the learned Lama-pandit and with the head cooly who had taken our beloved Damodar from Darjeeling to the distant station in Sikkim where he was to meet with the high functionary who had promised to take him safely to the place where our Mahatma was to take charge of him as resident pupil.

On the 1st August, I left delightful Darjeeling and its bracing air and plunged down the mountain by steam tram to the terminus station of Siliguri, where the mercury stood so high as to make the contrast very trying. I lodged and had my meals at the station that evening and the next two days, and enjoyed the novel experience of lecturing on "Theosophy and Religion" to a good audience on the railway platform! I then proceeded on towards Noakhally, in the Gangetic Delta; but was stopped at Khulna, where I had to wait for the boat. Being a perfect stranger in those parts I had anticipated a quiet and uneventful evening, but a clerk who had read my name on my portmanteau, having spread the news, my room at the Dâk Bungalow was soon crowded with educated Bengalis, who stopped until 10 o'clock, to talk philosophy, after which they went home to dine and left me free to do the same. Rising at 4 the next morning, I left by the boat for Barisâl, and after a pleasant sail down the River Bairab, which reminds one of the low-banked rivers of Ceylon, I got there at 5 P.M. and was put up at the Dâk Bungalow. Again I was caught by some local Hindu gentlemen and pressed to give a lecture at 7 P.M. in the large school-house. It only needed the sending around of tom-tom beaters and criers to collect a crowd, as I found on entering the hall, where fully a thousand people had gathered. My discourse was interpreted into Bengali by a Calcutta graduate named Aswini Kumar Dutt, with a fluency and fire that amazed me. I have always ranked him among the three or four very best interpreters I have had in India.

The Noakhally boat failing to arrive, I was obliged to stop over at Barisâl. My rooms were crowded all day with enquirers, and I had to give a second lecture the next evening to an audience quite as large as the first one. It was on emerging from the hall and while standing in the verandah that I heard the reverberations of that mysterious phenomenon called the "Barisâl Gun." Not one of the explanations thus far put forth by scientfic men, seems to explain the wonderful noises. Elsewhere * I have discussed at sufficient length the Barisâl Gun and the several scientific and quasi-scientific attempts at explanation. I think their palpable insufficiency was shown. For the benefit of later subscribers, it may be briefly stated that the "Gun" sounds are identical as to loudness and vibratory quality with those of a cannon-shot. They have the same peculiarity of suddenness of explosion without any pre-

* See *Theosophist*, Vol. IX., p. 703, and XI., p. 409.

monitory rumbling to prepare the listener for what is to come. In my case the first explosion came so suddenly and so loud that I thought a gun had been fired in the village and within a few hundred yards of me. My first supposition was that an 8 o'clock gun was habitually fired there as at other stations where there are military cantonments, but on looking at my watch, I found it was 8-45, so that could not be the case. Presently a second report came, and then, at short intervals five more, making *seven* in all. Upon asking what this all meant I was, for the first time in my life, told about the "Barisâl Gun." Bearing in mind the physical peculiarity of the sounds, the reader will be amused to learn that the following explanations have been gravely offered: the action of the tide (on the beach of the Bay of Bengal, sixty-five miles away); the surf; the crumbling of river banks (alluvial and only a few feet high); the crash of falling cliffs (non-existent); the impact of wind in caves or hill corners (non-existent anywhere near Barisâl); echoes reverberating from rocky sounding-boards (in the mind's eye, Horatio); the escape of steam puffs from submarine volcanoes; electrical detonations. Even the explosion of fireworks at local weddings has been mentioned, but not the bursting of soda-water bottles, a last hint which is respectfully offered without charge to materialistic scientific guessers. While it is easy to say what the phenomenon is not, it is not at all easy to say what it is, but I am best satisfied with the theory that the Barisâl Gun is due to the action of elementals and has some relation to an event or events which probably occurred in that vicinity long ago, certainly beyond the memory of the present generation, for old men told me that they had been hearing them ever since their boyhood. Sometimes they occur in the rainy season, sometimes not, as in the present case, when the day had been sunshiny and the atmosphere seemed too clear and the stars too bright to tempt one to adopt the theory of an electric disturbance. I noted the fact that I heard seven distinct explosions at regular intervals, and that the number was said to be unusual; which to my mind as an occultist, seemed to mark a purpose on the part of some controlling Intelligence to give me a friendly salute. And no more guns were heard that night, nor the next day or night, nor so long as I was in the place. I tried two or three times to have a serious talk with H. P. B. about the matter, but each time something happened to interrupt our conversation. She once said it was an exhibition of the power of the "Sons of Fohat" and referred me to the "Secret Doctrine," but her ideas seemed to me so vague that I at last put the subject aside, and there it lies ready for the study of Mr. Leadbeater and his fellow students of the Finer Forces of Nature. A couple of years or so ago, the matter was referred to in *Nature*, by Dr. Francis Darwin, who asked for information. I sent him the back numbers of the *Theosophist* in question, but have heard nothing from him since. Perhaps he was shocked by the other contents of our heterodox publication.

The Noakhally boat still not arriving, I was able to form a local Branch with excellent members under the name of the Barisâl T. S. It

finally transpired that the missing boat had been disabled and was lying up for repairs, so I had to give up my Noakhally visit for the present and return to Khulna, whence I continued on to Calcutta, reaching there on the 12th. The next morning I took boat for Midnapur but my visit was cut short by the steamer grounding in the canal and having to wait for the next tide, so the two lectures on the programme had to be given at one public meeting, on "The Spiritual Life" and "Karma," and I was kept on my legs two hours and a half. A special discourse to Hindu boys on the next morning was given, and at 8 P.M. I left by the same steamer for Calcutta. On the 17th, I lectured at the Oriental Institute and the same evening sailed by the "Euphrates" for Chittagong. She proved to be as buoyant as a cork and rolled so badly that we had scarcely a moment of quiet. We reached our destined port on the third day and a grand reception was given me. The principal Native gentlemen came aboard to welcome me, and the jetty presented a very gay appearance with the picturesquely dressed crowd that had come to cheer their white friend. On the 21st, at 7 A.M., I lectured to 1,500 people, on Theosophy, and at 5 P.M., to as large a crowd, on "Body, Mind and Soul." There was a third lecture on the 22d and some admissions to membership. The next day I went by country rowing-boat to Pahartali, an inland village sixteen miles distant, the inhabitants all Buddhists, of the race of Maghs. The house assigned to me was a hut of bamboo frame and matting sides, the roof thatched with grass. The Mahamuni T. S. was formed the next day with Babu Krishna Chandra Chowdry, a well-known leader and reformer of that community, as Secretary and Treasurer. The Maghs are the descendants of Arakanese fathers and Bengali mothers, the country having been conquered by an invading army from Arakan who remained there and settled down. My lecture at Pahartali was given in a *shamiana*, or open pavilion, which has great advantages in tropical climates where as much air as possible is indispensable for comfort. Many people present, I was told, had come in from distances of 30 and 40 miles to hear what I had to say about their religion. There is a gigantic image of the Buddha in the local temple, which has a royal diadem on its head, a feature I had never seen in any of my travels in Buddhist countries. True, one sees crowned images of the Bodhisattva, *i.e.*, the entity who finally evolved up to the Buddhahood, in the Kapilavastu birth, but never of the perfected World-Savior. I, myself, have an artistically modelled brass statuette of the Bodhisattva as King of the Tusita heaven, sitting in Padmâsan, which was given me by the Tibetan Envoy to the Indian Government, who was here some years ago and who had received it from the Dalai Lama himself. There is a copper plate beneath the figure, on which the conventional symbol of the Diamond Throne is engraved, and behind it, in the hollow of the image, a roll of Tibetan paper on which the Dalai Lama wrote with his own hand, some prayer-charms or mantrams for the protection of the hand-

some young Envoy from all harm from evil-wishers. This figure wears many jewels, on head, neck, breast, upper arm, wrist, waist and ankles, huge ones in the old Indian style. The hair is built up in a towering mass with pendant locks hanging over the shoulders and down to the upper arm. The hands are laid together in the lap, and support a flowery ornamented vase or statuette, showing the "Three Gems" of Buddhist symbology. Altogether it is a precious curio for our little museum at Adyar.

As Noakhally could not be reached by boat from Barisâl, and as the earnest friends there had well deserved an official visit, I went thither from the other side of the Delta, driving in an open spring-cart through a heavy rain, through a tiger-infested country, part of the way, and going on thence all night in a common springless ox-cart, so short in the body that to sleep I had to stick my legs out in front as far as my knees. At 4 A.M. we got to Mahajan's Haut where we took a heavy country boat up the river, in which I had 28 hours for sleeping and resting before reaching Noakhally, at 11 A.M. on the 27th. My reception was extremely cordial and I was most hospitably entertained. At 3 P.M. I received and replied to addresses in Bengali and English at the T. S. Hall, a neat structure in bamboo poles and "chicks," or screens, and thatched roof, which had cost the Branch Rs. 600. A lecture was given at 4-30, under the chairmanship of the local (European) Magistrate, in the Native Theatre, and in the evening a representation was given of that touching old Indian drama, "Pralad Charita," by amateurs who displayed real histrionic talent. But my self-possession was sorely tried by a Prelude composed in my honor, which embodied a striking incongruity. The curtain rose upon a forest scene, in which was seen an ancient Rishi (Bharata Rishi) sitting in deep meditation beneath a tree. Anon are heard joy-songs and from the two sides enter a number of Chelas, who cluster about the Yogî and recall him to consciousness. Asked why they are singing so joyously, he is told that "Colonel Olcott, the friend of the Aryan religion, has come to the place." The Yogî answers that this is the fulfilment of ancient prophecy and the dawn of a brighter day for India. He then rises, takes a flower-wreath from the hand of a disciple (*Sishya*), comes forward to the footlights, and beckoning to me to approach, throws the garland over my neck, uttering a blessing at the same time. The comical anachronism involved seemed to have struck no one but myself and the European Magistrate sitting beside me. But the intention to show the national love for myself was so evident that the inclination to laugh was overcome by a feeling of gratitude for this friendly ceremony.

Another lecture was given on the next day and my rooms were crowded with enquirers, of whom a number, including Nobin Chandra Sen, the great Bengali poet, joined the Society. At night I embarked on the steamer at Taktakally, after a drive of six miles, and on the 29th got to Barisâl, slept on the Khulna-Barisâl boat, spent the next day on the river, took train for Calcutta and got there at 5 A.M. on the 31st.

On the 1st September there was a meeting of the Ladies T. S. at the house of Mr. Janaki Nath Ghosal, a very well known and influential Calcutta gentleman, whose wife I have spoken of elsewhere as one of the loveliest and most intellectual women of modern India. Miss Anna Ballard, the American journalist, then living at Calcutta, accompanied me.

One morning I went with my host, our long-tried, faithful colleague, Babu Norendronath Sen, to the Esplanade to see him feed his pets. I have often seen people in the public gardens of Paris feeding the birds, but Norendro Babu feeds every morning the cows, crows, minas and other birds, the fishes in the ponds and the ants which swarm in the grass of the wide Esplanade. The animals and birds all seem to know his carriage and gather together to his usual feeding ground, and the fishes swim towards him in the pond. This thing has been going on for years, quietly and unostentatiously, unheralded by the reporter, unnoticed by the crowd. One could hardly find a stronger example of the tender compassion sometimes felt by men towards the lower creatures.

My long tour was now nearing its close, the only portion to be covered being the Coromandel Coast. On the 4th September, I sailed in the B. I. Steamer, " Khandalla, " for Bimlipatam, and after stops at Gopalpur and Calingapatam, got there on the evening of the 8th. Landing, on the 9th, I found the Maharaja of Vizianâgram's landau waiting for me and drove to his capital, where the Dewan, P. Jagannathraz, gave me hospitality. The next day I was kindly received at the Palace by His Highness, who put a gilt garland around my neck and engaged in a long discussion on religious matters. He presided at my lectures on that day and the next, and kept me talking with him privately in his library from 3 until 8 P.M., on the question of the existence of the soul, about which he seemed rather sceptical. Before my departure from Vizianâgram, he sent me a generous present for the Headquarters expense account and wished me every success for our movement. His carriage took me to the seaport of Vizagapatam, a distance of 36 miles. My host there was Mr. Jaggarow, son of the late A. V. Nursingrow, F. R. A. S., F. R. G. S., the owner of a very fine, well-equipped astronomical observatory which, since his death has been given to the Government of India and is now one of the chief meteorological and astronomical stations. At his house I assisted at an alchemical experiment by a Native Doctor, named Bulushu Soobbiah, who claimed to be able to reduce beaten silver to a white powder, for use as a medicine. Not having any silver ready we decided to experiment on tin. The process was as follows : He made on a piece of canvas a layer of Margosa leaves, half an inch thick ; on that was a layer of the same thickness of saffron ; on this the tin was placed, and the whole was then rolled into a sort of sausage and tied around with stout twine. This was burnt for two hours in a heap of dried cowdung fuel, four cubits in circumference and one cubit high. Upon taking out the ' sausage '

we found that some of the tin was calcined but most of it only melted. The alchemist said that the fuel was not of good quality else all the tin would have been calcined.

Rajah Gajapati Row, a well known figure in the Madras Presidency lives at Vizagapatam and we exchanged friendly visits.

The two lectures I gave in this place attracted very large audiences, including an unusually large number of Europeans, who seldom attend Hindu meetings of the sort, on account of the marked antipathy of the two races. On my way from the shore to the offing to board the "Ethiopia" on which I had booked my passage to Cocânada, I had a narrow escape from what might have been a tragic accident. The surf ran very high and three big rollers had to be crossed in the masulah boat in which I was. These boats are famous for surf work along the Indian Coast, being not nailed or pinned but tied together with coir (cocoanut fibre) yarn and caulked in the seams. Ordinarily they are very safe and I have made many trips in them between ship and shore. But this time, after we had passed the first roller and were atop of the second, the boat's prow was lifted so high up and the roller slipped from under her so quickly, that she came down on the water with a tremendous blow, and one of the planks split from the cutwater to the bilge and the water began to pour in. All the rowers but one were flung into the bottom and lay there in a mess together. I shouted to them to pick themselves up and go back to their oars, tore the calico covers off the stern cushions and made them stuff them into the crack, set half the men to bailing while the other half tugged desperately to get the boat's head around, did my best with the steering oar, put a safety belt on Babula, and had him tie the handle of my cash-box to the boat, so that if she foundered there would be a rather better chance of recovering it and the Society's rupees inside, which were my chief concern just then. We finally got the boat around, rode over the roller a second time, and by dint of very great exertions, just managed to beach her, half full of water. Another boat being soon procured I started again, and this time reached the steamer without mishap. What made the accident most serious of all was that the sea swarmed with sharks, of which I saw some on our way out to the vessel.

Cocânada, the birthplace of T. Subbarow, was reached the next morning, and after the usual lectures, receptions and admissions to membership, I continued my journey Southward by canal, landing at Rajahmundry, where I found a deep interest in our movement to prevail. During my stay of four days in the place, crushing audiences attended my lectures, in spite of the fact that the Committee charged for admission, in the hope of avoiding the great rush of the first day. A large and strong Branch was formed with one of the best men in India as President.

On the 24th, I left by special boat for Bezwada and spent the whole day and half the next, slowly moving down the Godavery Canal.

Friends intercepted me at Ellore, the beginning of the Krishna Canal, and induced me to lecture and to form a new Branch, under the name of the "Gupta Vidya T.S." Bezwada was reached on the 28th, and stopping there two days I organized a Branch, after which I moved on by bullock cart to Guntûr, an important place, the scene of much missionary activity. Among my callers after my first lecture was the Rev. Mr. S., a Presbyterian missionary, whose case was a very hard one. For two years past he and his wife had been persecuted by the other missionaries, their pay stopped and every effort made to drive them out of India, because, on discovering that the senior missionary had been behaving immorally with some of the women converts, they had tried their best to have him tried and removed. The policy of expediency, however, prevailed over that of justice, and these two honest Christian workers had been reduced to the direst straits. He had worked at carpentering and other odd jobs and she had done sewing, but there were days when they had to go hungry. The Hindu community held the worthy couple in respect and told me these facts, so I had my cook prepare a good dinner for them and sent it over and invited myself to come and help eat it. They received me with affectionate kindness as a compatriot and sympathizer, and Mrs. S. expressed the wish that I might leave the error of my beliefs and join them as a missionary; a proposal which made me laugh and make them the counter-proposal that they should disconnect themselves from a party where such iniquities could prevail and join me as earnest Theosophists!

On the 3d October, I presided at the anniversary of our local Branch's Sanskrit School, which was established by the good Mr. C. Sambiah Chetty, and had then 193 pupils, who had gained the unusual proportion of 97 and 82½ per cent. of passes, as against the average of 75 per cent. The same day I left for Bezwada by bullock-cart and thence went on by special boat on the canal to Masulipatam, which I got to on the 5th. My reception here was enthusiastic. The boat was bedecked with flowers, I landed under a leaf-pandal, or canopy, there were ornamental arches, complimentary addresses and jubilation generally. That evening I lectured to 3,000 people, among whom were all the local padris (missionaries), and to another monster audience on the next day, after which I formed the Masulipatam T. S. On the 7th I was honoured with visits by the Revs. Stone, Clarke and Peel, of the Church of England Mission, and enjoyed a friendly talk of three hours with them. An address to Hindu boys about their religion closed my public labors, and my last night at Masulipatam was spent on my mats on the stone quay, where I slept the sweet sleep of the weary. On the 8th I embarked on the B. I. coaster, "Umballa," got caught in the tail of a cyclone, and had a nasty, wet and comfortless time of it. But the next morning we were off Madras Harbour and I had hoped that my troubles were over for the year, but the sea was so rough that we could not enter and had to steam off and on the whole day, in sight of our haven yet unable to reach it. The

next morning, however, I got ashore, and with a feeling of immense relief saw once more our lovely Adyar, on the 262nd day from that on which the tour began. Whom should I find there but Mr. Alexander Fullerton, of New York, who had come to help me as Private Secretary. How that scheme prospered will be seen in the next Chapter. Meanwhile the reader who has followed me throughout my journeyings, will appreciate the significance of the entry of October 11th in my Diary—"Blessed rest."

H. S. Olcott.

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## *THE ASTRAL LIGHT.*

SINCE the philosophical writings of modern occultists have of late years become in some measure familiar to the public, we have been hearing of many things which were strange to us only some two decades ago; and among these may be classed what is now spoken of as the **Astral Light.**

But this goes also under other names, and the term Astral Light seems to have been used chiefly on account of its being so termed in the writings of the French occultist, Alphonse Louis Constant, better known under his *nom-de-plume* of Eliphas Lévi.* In other times and places, different phases of the same thing were known under other appellations, such as the Hindu A'kâsa, dating from the most ancient times; and the modern "Luminiferous Ether" of the science of yesterday and to-day.† The alchemists, as also other mystics of the medieval period and some two centuries ago, had a variety of other names for the same thing, covering nearly all the ground from the lowest state of matter cognisable to the ordinary senses, up to its most intangible phases, only perceptible under very abnormal conditions.‡

We may reach some comprehension of the subject by a brief consideration of what is called *matter*—that is, the assumed basis of material forms—the solids out of which they are elaborated, and which to our senses appear to be the most objective and tangible of all realities. Blocks of granite and lumps of iron, for example, appeal to us as realities—as facts which are beyond all doubt—for they possess weight, form, colour, and they resist alteration in a manner which seems to prove that, to bring about such changes, we must employ a force proportionable to the resistance they offer. They impress all the senses of sight, sound, touch; and they yield very nearly the same results to all persons under the same circumstances.

These are examples of only one state of matter—the concrete or *solid* aspect. The next stage is equally familiar to us, and is known as

* In his "Dogme et Ritual de la Haute Magie"; and cf. "Secret Doctrine," II., p. 427, n.e., note.

† Cf. "The Astral Light," by Nizida, p. 23, ed. 1889, and "Art Magic," pp. 187, 188, 326.

‡ Symbolically calling it the Athanor, and by Paracelsus, *Azoth*, *Anima Mundi*, &c.; see S.D., I, 110, and Mackey's "Hist. of Extraordinary Popular Delusions," I., 144.

*liquid*. We may look upon it as one in which the particles are in a less cohesive state, or in which they are somewhat further from each other, and thus permit of a certain amount of motion separately; so that the mass occupies a larger space for equal weight, lacks hardness or compactness, and as to form, is mobile in all directions.

And here we begin to perceive the necessity for some hypothesis as to the nature of matter—we must account for its different aspects, in order to understand what causes them. And the idea that matter is composed of minute particles, more or less attached to each other, has been among the first which thinkers have entertained, not only in modern, but also in ancient times;* because it appears to meet the phenomena (at least up to a certain point) and, therefore, is a reasonable theory for explaining the observed facts.

We have then further to indicate what it is which causes these assumed particles to occupy the different relations to each other which constitute the solid and liquid states. And to do this we assume, further, that there exists a thing called *force*;† which, under its form of *attraction*, more or less intense, is the cause of the hypothetical particles of solid and liquid matter occupying those different relations to each other which constitute these two aspects.

Therefore we may suppose that the solid state comprises a number of minute particles held together by a force which makes them attract each other with a given intensity; and the liquid state is one in which this force is either weakened, or *something else* is introduced which prevents the particles being drawn so near to each other.

We may then proceed to the gaseous or aeriform state of matter; and for illustrative purposes we may take the case of fuel converted into smoke, or water into steam. For these are equally states of matter; because, if a given number of cubic feet of smoke (as the total product of combustion) were to be weighed, it would be found to represent the difference between the weight of the fuel consumed in its production, and the ashes or other residue left thereafter. In the same way any given quantity of steam should weigh exactly the difference between the weight of the water before and after the steam was produced from it, considering the heat used as imponderable.

To picture to ourselves this gaseous or aeriform state of matter, we may imagine the particles still further separated by more of this foreign "something" being introduced, until the whole shall weigh not much differently from an equal bulk of atmospheric air. The atoms or particles then collectively assume a cloudy or nebulous aspect, in which they revolve about each other at a greater distance. For any two of these particles are assumed to revolve about their common centre of gravity,‡

*As by Dalton, cf. Thompson's "Hist. of Chemistry," Vol. II., p. 285, *et seq.* and Democritus, in Godwin's "Lives of the Necromancers," p. 68.

† The *Fohat* of the Orientals, as see S.D., I., 135, 350; n.e. 163-3.

‡ Cf. S.D., I, 142, 491, n.e.

just as do the gigantic suns called double stars—another instance of the Hermetic maxim that "as above, so it is below;" the greater being as the less.

At this point our illustrations may lead to a misconception, because we might assume therefrom that the amount of force involved would vary inversely as the degree of density in the matter; that where it was the most solid, there was a much greater degree of force present than in those cases where it was the most vaporous or gaseous in its nature. But the amount of force and the weight of material may be identically the same in each instance—it is only that in the one case they are (from whatever cause) included in a small space; in the other, a large one. The degree of force which holds together the particles of our block of granite or lump of iron is thus exactly the same that which would be present if they were spread over a vastly greater space by the introduction of that foreign "something"—which *has no appreciable weight*—and the amount of the space occupied will vary according to the change in the amount of this new agent present. Nor has the nature of the ultimate particles (or atoms) involved, anything to do with the case; for it is at least *supposed* that they are always the same,* whatever the resulting solid, or other material.

All the foregoing hypothesis may sound plausible enough, because it meets the conditions as they appear to our present senses, and accounts for the phenomena these may note. But these explanations may be wholly unsatisfactory, if not also fallacious.

For they rest almost entirely upon assumptions, and those of a very undemonstrable kind. They infer that there are things called atoms or particles—variously named by some scientists primordial atoms, by others considered to be temporary particles—by some assumed to be rigid, unchangeable, indestructible; and by others elastic, mutable, and not of eternal duration.†

Then, again, they use such terms as that the quantity of weight and force involved in a given quantity of matter are proportional: but this also may be mere assumption—for if these things are inseparable, they may be simply different aspects of the same thing. In such a case we might find ourselves quite without any proof that there is such a thing as solid matter at all, since every block of it—and, therefore, each particle or atom of that block—would only represent the appearance assumed by a certain amount of force under the given conditions. And as a matter of fact, physicists are now nearly convinced that there is nothing—not even the hardest solid known to us—which is really solid.‡ All things consist of minute particles more or less near together; and these may themselves be merely centres of force.§

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* By Prof. Crooken's theory of *Protyle*. See S.D., I., 566, 592-3, 640, n.e.

† S.D., I., 163, 557—540 565, 566, n.e., and II., 711, n.e.

‡ "Wireless Telegraphy," by Richard Kerr (1898), p. 16.

§ S.D., I., loc. cit.

Nor do our senses show us how the thing called force can act upon a material particle—why a thing having no weight can act upon that which has weight; and in fact they do not in any adequate measure show us the whole phenomena of matter and force. The last explanation of those things, or whichever of them may be the real one, might require other senses than we usually possess.

Moreover, there is that foreign "something" which was used to account for the liquid and vaporous states, which is not explained; but which may be nearly connected with a fourth state of matter—one which we must admit in order to explain phenomena; but of which our unaided senses tell us little or nothing. This is the *etheric* state, or that into which a substance will vanish when submitted to certain exceptional conditions capable of bringing about such a result. It is the *latent* state of matter, or that in which it loses all the qualities of matter as we usually know it, and in which it assumes more the aspect of force than of anything else to which we may compare it. And chemists, dealing with the material aspect of things, have shown that the quantity of matter in the cosmos is unalterable; while Mr. Herbert Spencer has done much the same in regard to force—the two things being interdependent—so that, once more, there may be only force present. In the etheric state of matter, the two things seem practically identical.

Then that "something" which was not named, is that into which the matter vanishes—it is, in fact, the *ether of space*,* which is at present so little understood, and over which there has been so much dispute,† but which nevertheless cannot be denied, and it is this Luminiferous ether which, as already said, is the Astral Light; or at least, one of its lower aspects.

Returning to force, we find it characterised by various rates of vibration; so that, as force and matter are inseparable, to every state of matter there will be a special vibratory rate—a certain length, that is to say, of the waves in which force is propagated, and rapidity in their motion. At one rate we have solidity, at another the liquid state; at a third the gaseous or aeriform, and at a fourth the etheric. And the characteristic of every material thing—such as weight, colour, resonance, and odour, are all connected with the special rates of vibration involved. Strike a piece of metal, and the slight temporary change in its normal vibrations thus introduced will cause a series of waves, which manifest themselves as sound. Or take a piece of zinc, and pour upon it strong nitric acid—there will arise dense fumes which, being different from either zinc or acid, have a different rate of vibration. The result is seen in the deep orange colour and pungent odour of the fumes. By a different method, the same thing may be seen in the case of coal-tar, in which lies latent all the gorgeous array of the aniline dyes. Change the rate by altering the chemical constituents, and we see

* See Richard Kerr, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
† S. D., I., 315, 347, 523—8, 552.

the colours proper thereto. Or again; from the same coal-tar we may obtain an array of the most aromatic odours, and a long list of essences having a wide range of taste.

And what thus takes place within the range of the senses at present known, may likewise do so beyond them, as chemistry indicates; for what happens in regard to the lower states of matter, may, by the law of analogy, also be looked for in its higher or etheric states; though in a measure which depends upon the altered circumstances. But here, owing to the nearer connection with the ether, some other phenomena begin to supervene, which, if less understood, may yet have a great deal dependent upon them.

For example, take a block of iron and a hammer. With that you cannot destroy the iron; you can only modify its form somewhat. The blacksmith's anvil receives many heavy blows, but still remains an anvil. If, however, we polish a small part of the iron to a brilliant surface, lay thereon a small bit of paper such as a postage-stamp or wafer, and breathe on it, the uncovered portion of the bright surface becomes dulled. Wait until the moisture evaporates, shake off the stamp or wafer, and you will see that there remains no trace of it on the bright surface—it is as though the object had never been there. And yet, if you again breath upon the same spot, immediately the imprint will reappear; for it has left an impress at least as great as all the blows of the hammer, or quite as indelible—and all the force of the blows had not made one atom of difference in the durability of the impression made respectively by the hammer and the small bit of paper.*

Or, to put it another way. Take a piece of ordinary white paper, soak it in a solution of common salt, dry it, and then again soak it in a nitrate of silver solution, drying in the dark. Then take any ordinary print, such as an impression from a woodcut, and expose it to sunshine for a short period. Now lay it face downward upon the other piece of paper, press them close together, and put them away in darkness, where no ray of daylight may reach them. In a few days or hours it will be found that the nitrate-paper has taken an exact copy of the print,† which is clearly visible through the darkening of the silver; but it would be there in any case—for the silver only renders it more visible than it would otherwise be.

Why are these things? Because the iron in the anvil is as much force as matter; and because the ether present in all solids is so extremely sensitive to every impress which falls upon it, that those impressions remain—for they are indestructible—and what affects one part is instantly communicated to every other part with more than lightning rapidity. And in the other case, because the luminiferous ether of space, without which light could not be conveyed to us, has enabled it to

* *Cf. Mercury*, Vol.V., p. 5, and Draper's "Conflict between Religion and Science," p. 132, Ed. 1879.

† Grove: "Correl. of Physical Forces," p. 110, and S. D, I., 554, N. E.

become a little concentrated in the print or woodcut; and so, when shut up in the dark, it begins to radiate therefrom, according to the different degrees of absorption by the paper and the ink, every bit of that difference being registered by the chemicals in the other piece of paper, and so forming a duplicate of the picture. Chemistry does not explain much more than that, but it tells us of this effect of the luminous ether; it tells us of the etheric state of matter, and, in so doing, it tells us, in reality, of the sidereal ether of the alchemist, the Magisterium of the Mystics, the azoth and yliaster of Paracelsus; and, in short, of the Astral Light.

In the Astral Light an impression once formed becomes indelible—it is made for ever;* and nothing ever happens but what leaves these astral records corresponding to it. If you wish to see whether the vibrations which any sound will set up in a tenuous medium such as etheric matter—the lowest planes of the Astral Light—will correspond to forms, it can be done very simply, and it will then be seen that the effect of sound upon the matter which is latent round about us, has a very real effect, even upon such a tangible thing as a heap of sand.

Stretch a sheet of parchment over a glass vessel or a basin, forming a cover or lid to it, and scatter the sand thereon. Take a violin and bow, and play the former over the sand; then when the key-note of the parchment is reached, the sand will be thrown up in little heaps, and will form itself into regular designs; but of the cause why it should adopt these peculiar forms, science gives little account.†

Or, cause a shower of the light powder known as Lycopodium to fall upon a thin rubber film stretched over the opening of a tin cone, arrange a mirror so as to reflect the stretched surface into the lens of a cinematograph camera, and take a few hundreds of impressions while a tune such as "Home, Sweet Home" is being played. Then project these photographs upon a screen in the way usually employed in cinematograph shows; and according to Dr. J. Mount Bleyer, there will result a series of the most beautiful changing designs, expressing every note and cadence of the air played.‡ For the powder has followed every variation as it caused changing waves and currents in the air and the etheric matter, and the forms which it thereupon assumed are correspondingly repeated in the Astral Light—they may all be found there, and they can never be obliterated.

There are other similar experiments, § but it is only a low stratum of the etheric matter and Astral Light which may thus be reached by means of physical sound; while on its higher levels it is far more sensitive. For there it is that our thoughts leave all their traces, and in descending thence, produce all their corresponding forms. With more than lightning rapidity does the subtle matter of the astral plane

* Cf. Nizida's work cited, pp. 93, 96, 154, 155.
† See Sir D. Brewster's work on "Natural Magic."
‡ See *Theosophy in Australasia*, vol. III., p. 62.
§ Cf. "Wireless Telegraphy," p. 24, 29.

correspond to the vibratory action of our thoughts; and while these are indelibly registered on its higher aspects, actual forms belonging to them are caused in the lower strata,* and endure for a time proportional to the energy expended in their origination.

When a long series of such effects take place, and have a great degree of similarity, as in the case of certain habitual thoughts which are common to large sections of humanity, the forms generated become of so permanent a nature that they begin to impress themselves on lower and lower planes in succession, until at last they reach the physical, and express themselves there in animal and vegetable forms. In this way mankind becomes responsible for these forms; and this may well be the reason why we find the human passions and sentiments so aptly expressed in the vegetable and animal worlds. Not always, then, could it be truly said that the worst features of humanity are inherited from brutes; but rather that it is they who may have appropriated them from us, and we who are in a large measure the cause of them.†

In the same manner, the habitual thoughts we indulge or follow are operating on the astral plane, in the building-up of that special Thought Body or Astral Double which will serve as the model of our physical form in the next life we live on this earth. Our thoughts are continually building and modifying that form; and as are our thoughts now, so will be our next physical body, its appearance, capabilities, and powers—the replica of the astral counterpart which but awaits its due time to come out in its physical covering upon the objective world.‡

Not only is this the case, but it is also from the etheric matter—the matter of the astral plane—that is formed the temporary astral body in which the adept can transport his consciousness to any part of the earth, or to any plane of the astral regions, and since the primal matter (or that aspect of force and consciousness which passes for such) is found in the Astral Light, and thought can mould it, so it may be merely a question of the intensity of thought, how far the thing thought of will become a material object. In that case we could in a measure understand how the "materialisations" claimed by the spiritualists are brought about; and also how those articles which (to the astonishment of the onlookers) the Eastern magician will occasionally bring, seemingly from nowhere, are produced; § and this is how, it is claimed, the feat is performed.

Those senses which we usually have at the present time, do not make the things of the Astral Light visible and tangible to us, and there they have remained, for most people, practically unknown. Yet this is not universally the case; because the evolutionary course of humanity

* Cf. S. D., I., 149 n. e., "The Occult World," pp. 89, 90 and *Lucifer*, illustrated article on "Thought-forms."

† Cf. "The Astral Light," pp. 36, 48, 53; S. D., II. 280 n. e., and *Theosophical Review*, vol. xxiii., pp. 303, 363.

‡ "Key to Theosophy," pp. 154, 364. Tr. of Scottish Love, vol. III., p. 55, 56.

§ *Vide* Col. Olcott's "Old Diary Leaves," vol. I., pp. 43, 194-7, and his People from the Other World,"

causes the gradual awakening of further extensions to our sensory perceptions. At present, we do not perceive more than the seven colours of the spectrum which is formed by a beam of sunlight passing through a prism. But this is very much as though we were unable to hear more than one octave of a piano key-board, and be deaf to all the rest of its compass. For instrumental tests prove that there are other colours extending beyond the violet and red ends of the spectrum which we can perceive; and occultists assure us that there are many more colour-octaves in the ether or Astral Light besides those we usually see; but which would become easily perceptible if our sense of sight were further developed or perfected.* And it is said to be the same in regard to sounds; for though such as are usually audible to the human ear are only comprised within relatively small limits, yet they are by no means all which might be heard if our auditory nerves were of a finer organisation.

But it is now a long time since humanity passed the point of its development where the senses at present known to us reached their average state, as we know them to-day; and consequently, there are many instances appearing where a further extension of sensory perception has taken place. Such are the psychic faculties of clairvoyance and clairaudience, or the power to see and hear what is not within the range of our more ordinary senses. When these powers reach a certain development, we begin to see and hear upon the Astral Plane, much as we now do on the physical.

Hence all the many stories about "haunted" houses—all the seeing of ghosts, wraiths, spooks, and all the tales as to mysterious voices and sounds. But when more ordinary folk come to look into these matters, without such aid, the chances are that they neither see the forms nor hear the voices; and hence have no difficulty whatever in dismissing the whole affair as delusion or humbug. What *they* are unable to see and hear, they are of opinion no one else can; and at once the whole matter is relegated to that convenient sack for the reception of all psychic things not understood, which is called "Hysteria," and filled with "optical delusions," "affections of the brain," "unconscious cerebration," "mental hallucination," and all the other words and names invented to cover a learned ignorance or otherwise get rid of inconvenient or unexplained facts—in hope that the whole may ultimately reach oblivion.

Nevertheless, if there is a world in the etheric state of matter called the Astral Light, which has its own appropriate sounds, forms, and colours; and if we can develope faculties capable of perceiving the things of that world, then we ought to do so, and it should be explored. Let each one set to work to do this as best he may, and then it will be found that we have faculties but little suspected, and which only need exercise in order to become active.

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* Cf. S. D. III., 447, 448, 451, &c.

Such are the faculties of mental transference or thought-reading, where we intuitively perceive what some one else is thinking—a power we all exercise more or less, but do not always recognise; and without which our understandings would indeed be limited. Yet it is so great that a person may, in solitude, take paper and pencil, therewith drawing any simple object such as a pair of scissors, intently willing, the while, that another person, not present, shall do the same—and that other will do so. In a majority of instances, this experiment, if properly conducted, will succeed; * and it could not do so if the etheric waves of the astral plane were not a fact. Where any one makes an intense effort of the will, the effect sets up a certain vibration in the etheric matter of the Astral Light, which conveys that impress to the mind of any one who may possibly be open to its reception; and then, because all the images of that plane tend to reproduce themselves physically, the brain of the one so acted upon by the other's thought will lead that one to repeat the action of the person so willing; and thus the pair of scissors or whatever it may be, is sketched again. And in all probability the one who repeats the action does it quite unconsciously, and would thus be apt to think it the mere idle impulse of the moment, having no aim or object.

So it is that we all find a continual mass of confused thought-images surging through our brains—pictures of scenes we have gone through, faces of persons we have met—other scenes, faces, things, conversations, and what not, which we know are not of our own experience, and which we set down to fancy or imagination. They come and go like the wind; but however fantastic, they may all be real—they are all in the Astral Light, and if we could note them all down and sort them into groups, we might find they nearly all had reason and cause external to ourselves—nay, we might even determine their periods of recurrence; for that is also a law of the invisible world, as it is of the outward and more tangible one.

H. M. Voltec.

(*To be concluded.*)

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* See the bulky two-volume "Report of the Psychical Research Society" on this subject.

## *WHY SHOULD WE NOT EAT ANIMAL FOOD?*

(*Concluded from page* 22.)

IN the selection of man's food is the selection of a life which must die that he may live, and it becomes necessary to consider what effect he produces on what he utilizes to serve his purpose.

If he select a human being for his food, he kills an individual, and thus prevents the latter from having the fullest benefit of his incarnation. He is thus temporarily deprived of the experiences he would have had, had he been allowed to enjoy the full period of his life. From the human being he kills for his food, he receives in addition to what he would have received from the vegetable, only his kamic and mental impressions more or less organized, which he could have done without, and which only tend to produce discord and disharmony in him, and thus serve, if they do anything, to defeat the aim of his life. He thus injures a life, without any additional benefit to himself.

By selecting an animal for his food he equally injures a life, without benefiting himself. The kamic impressions of the animal are of no use to him unless he desires to be more an animal than a perfected human being. The evolution of animals has a purpose to serve, *viz.*, the organization of Manas-centres in the form of concepts, and the building up of a self-conscious individual. The organized sensation-centres of the animal he uses for his food, are not allowed to follow their natural development. Those that would have organized into concepts and would have gone to build up an individualized being, are suddenly cut off from their progress, for no other reason than that the human being may get nourishment which he would have equally well obtained from the vegetable. In the selection of animal food too, one injures the animal without benefiting himself.

Vegetable food, on the other hand, is free from the objections which attend animal and human food.

Every vegetable has developed irritability. That irritability has not settled in any particular form. Whether it is exposed to external impacts from the objects of the universe or from the kamic body of the human being, as when the latter takes it as food, its irritability is equally in a position to develop into sensation-centres which is quite in consistency with its normal course of evolution. Thus the human being who selects vegetable food, supplies himself with what he requires for his nourishment without disturbing the evolution and development of what dies to nourish him, and without being the cause or instrument of pain to any being.

From the presence of canine teeth in man we hear it argued that man needs animal food. That men do *live* without animal food and are

not any the worse for it, fully meets all such arguments. It would be more correct to say that, supplied with these teeth men *can* take animal food, than that they *need* it or that it is the best for them. Man is a complex being with human propensities which he needs to develop and animal ones which he needs to curb. He is placed in the universe free to choose for himself and supplied with means to enable him to live according to his choice. Merit lies in positive virtues, in progressing and making one's way in face of opposition, because with resistance only comes experience and firmness. The animal propensities woven in man's nature require to be curbed if he is to progress at all in his evolutionary course, and he himself has to effect this. He is perfectly free to yield to or resist the animal propensities of his nature, and thus mar or make his progress. His powers are his own, and he is his sole master. The animal propensities are as much his as the higher powers he may develop. To disable him from satisfying his animal propensities, if he is inclined to them, is to deprive him of his freedom, to dispossess him of what he can claim as his own, to throw obstacles in the way of his gaining experience, and delay his attaining to perfection as a self-conscious being.

The canine teeth with which man is supplied are but one of the many means which minister to his animal propensities if he is inclined to follow them. They indicate not that animal food contributes to his well-being but that he is allowed perfect freedom in his choice. Man *can* do a variety of things, but the question is, what *ought* he to do? In standing firm in the presence of temptations, in practising harmlessness while having the power to harm, in being fearless in the presence of fear,—in these consists real merit. Thus only is experience gained, positive virtues developed and real progress accomplished.

Having shown that vegetable food suits best the human being and helps most the purpose of his life, as also the course of evolution; that what a man *can* do is not always a criterion for what he *ought* to do; we shall consider some of the arguments which the advocates of animal food advance in support of their dictum.

Some say that if any kind of animal increase to such an extent as to endanger the existence of others, it would not only be right but even a duty of man to check its increase by killing it; and if at the same time it can be used as food in place of what it had destroyed (such as sheep, cattle, &c.), it would prevent want and starvation for many and therefore could not be wrong.

Such a statement is more a defence for killing wild animals than a justification for the use of animal food. Whether such killing is justifiable is beside the question in hand.

The question is not whether man should use for his food wild animals when they increase to a dangerous extent, or tame ones, as sheep, cattle, &c., but whether he should use animal food at all. If the increase of wild animals, and their spreading destruction, justify their use

as food in place of tame ones which they destroy, where is the justification of the use of tame ones like sheep and cattle and birds as food? Apart from its being justifiable, how many of those who use animal food do so with the object of averting the destruction of other animals, and utilizing to some purpose what would have been otherwise wasted. Very large numbers of dumb, harmless creatures are submitted to the butcher's knife in the slaughter houses in various parts of the world to supply food for human beings. Is it because they are pernicious or destructive to others, or that there is no better use for them? What advocate of animal food bases his selection of animals for his food on such grounds? The very reverse of it is the fact. The least pernicious and the most useful animals supply almost the whole of the animal food, as any one can see for himself. Do fishes and such other aquatic animals threaten by their increase destruction to others, or deficiency of food and consequent starvation to man, that he destroys them for his food? Does he use sheep and cattle and birds for his food from fear of their proving destructive or exhausting the supply of his food? Why kill a sheep or a cow to feed a pet dog or cat? Will man be justified in killing human beings for his food if increase in their number threaten scarcity of food?

Man's life has a purpose to serve, as said before, and therefore while trying to preserve it he must see that it fulfils its purpose. Thus a man will not be justified in using animal food unless it can be shown that it preserves life and at the same time helps it to fulfil its aim.

While some of the opponents of animal food bring forward its tendency to make man brutish and ferocious, its advocates deny any such tendency and thus see no objection in its use. The main point, however, is not whether it has or has not any such tendency, but whether its use favors the upward progress of the human being and thus furthers the purpose of his life.

In discussing, above, the effect of the ingestion of animal food, it was shown that the chief objection to its use lies in the matter of the kamic or sensation-body coming stamped with impressions which are discordant to the human being who uses it as food. The human being, before he can assimilate it in his kamic body, has either to efface or overpower the impressions stamped by the animal, or to make his own conform to them. In the former case there is some waste of his energy, which he would have avoided by taking vegetable food. In the latter case he conforms to the propensities of the animals from which he derives his food. These propensities are not necessarily ferocious, because ferocity is not an essential characteristic of animals, however much it may appear developed in some. Who can say that a cow or a sheep or a fish or a fowl is ferocious? The objection to animal food lies in the fact that it makes the man attached to his kamic body, while the purpose of his life demands that he should learn to be indifferent to it.

To give examples of entities like Buddha and Jesus, in support of

the use of animal food by human beings, is highly misleading. The current story about Buddha's having partaken of animal food receives its own refutation in the whole tenor of his life. But supposing even that Buddha did take animal food, it by no means follows that humanity in general should take it, unless it is shown that it furthers the aim of life, *viz.*, the expansion of one's individualized self. Buddha and Jesus were entities far above the mass of humanity. They had sacrificed the lower self, or more properly speaking had expanded the higher self to the extreme. No sensation nor passion nor desire ruled them. Their's was not an individualized life with any selfish purpose to serve. In what appears as death to mortal eyes, they continue to live. They vibrate in sympathy with all and contribute to the universal harmony. The vegetable, the animal and all are unified in them. They have no impression or propensity of their's to curb, and as they are themselves beyond all impressions and "I-ness," no impression influences them. Unlike the common humanity, they have nothing to accomplish which animal food may frustrate. It would be extremely dangerous for a common human being to rush where they fearlessly tread. And for a common human being to say that animal food cannot do him any harm, because he supposes that entities like Buddha and Jesus did partake of it, amounts to nothing less than courting the danger which he seeks to avoid.

Another argument advanced by the advocates of animal food, in its favor, is that the nearer the food is, in composition, to the body for which it is intended, the more easily it is assimilated and digested and the more rapid the recuperation of the lost energy; and that, therefore, meat is more akin to man's bodily requirements than vegetable diet, which has to pass first into the animal condition before it can be absorbed by the human system.

In the first place, not the physical body alone but also the subtler bodies, *viz.*, the Pranamaya kosha and the Manomaya kosha, require to be nourished. Man, for the nourishment of his various koshas or bodies, requires the matter of the corresponding planes; and to be easily assimilated, that matter must vibrate in sympathy with that of the corresponding planes in him. The more devoid of any settled vibration is the matter on the subtler planes, the more readily will it take the vibration of the plane it goes to nourish, and the more easily will it be assimilated.

As already explained, every atom or cell that goes to nourish a vegetable, an animal or a human being, becomes destroyed, or more properly speaking, breaks up into liberated energy playing in subtle matter of various degrees of grossness. Every objectified matter has within it the potentialities of all the subtle forms of matter which constitute the building material of the various planes, from the highest to the lowest. So breaking up, it goes to nourish the various planes which have been evolved in the being whose food it forms. If any plane is not yet evolved in the being, the potentiality of the subtle

matter corresponding to that plane remains unutilized, or latent in the being, as it did in what constitutes the food of that being. For objectified matter to be food for any being, what is essential is that it should be so constituted as to easily break up into its various subtle planes when acted upon by the vital energy of the being for whom it is to supply nourishment.

There is no material difference in the composition of the vegetable and the animal cell. Both have in them the potentialities of the subtler forms of matter which can build up the physical body—the Pranamaya kosha and the Manomaya kosha of the human being. The difference between the two consists in the animal cell having on it the stamp of certain organized sensations, which is wanting in the vegetable cell. But the human being, in the food he takes, wants matter for his various planes, and not particular impressions with which that matter may have been stamped. To have it assimilated with himself he has to stamp his own impression on the matter which goes to nourish him. Thus the freer from any settled impression is the matter that comes to him, the more easily it takes his vibration.

Nearer than the vegetable in composition, is animal matter, to that constituting the human being, because in the two latter are stamped certain organized sensations. But in the first place, the sensations in both are not the same; and in the second place, to get rid of such organized sensations by allowing their easy flow is the purpose of a human being's life; and therefore this nearness in composition of the animal matter, which results in a sort of conflict and disharmony between two dissimilar vibrations, in itself disqualifies it for food and gives the palm to the vegetable, which, if only so far organized as to break up into its various potentialities under the influence of the vital energy of the human being, while it, as much as the animal, supplies material necessary for the building up of the various planes, does so in the virgin state, unimpressed by any organized sensation, and therefore more ready to take the stamp of the vibration of the human being it goes to nourish.

The cells of the body of a vegetable eater in no way differ in composition from those of a flesh eater. But the physical body is not all that has to be nourished. There are the subtler bodies, the Pranamaya and the Manomaya koshas, that require as much replenishing as the grossest physical body.

It may be said that animal food, as being more advanced in evolution and having a greater amount of energy in it to be liberated, supplies greater energy to the nourished than does the vegetable. Perhaps so. But in what does this greater supply of energy consist? In certain organized sensations, and the Pranamaya kosha vibrating in conformity to them. The greater energy of the animal food would thus consist in strengthening certain emotions and passions which are akin to the organized sensations in the animal used for food—if the human being is

inclined to be partial to them—and thus supply a suitably energetic body for their gratification.

But to one who understands that the purpose of his life is to be free from such emotions and passions which only limit him, and who seeks the expansion of his self, to him such energy is more an impediment than a help. He wants the energy which consists in an easy flow of his own *Samskáras*, unimpeded as much as possible by any extraneous and discordant vibration, so that he may fulfil to the utmost the purpose of his incarnation.

The animal is more evolved than the vegetable and is therefore nearer in composition to the human being than is the vegetable. On this ground it is said that the flesh of animals supplies a more suitable food for the human being than does the distant vegetable. Now some animals feed on grass and some on flesh. Flesh being the product of a higher evolution than the grasses, applying the above argument, carnivorous animals are nearer in composition and evolution to human beings, and will, as food, supply them with greater energy than will the gramnivorous animals and others who do not subsist on flesh. To be consistent, the advocates of animal food, on the ground of nearness of composition, should preach and practise the use of the richer carnivorous animals as food, and declare the sheep and cow to be inferior and enervating, as they now do the vegetable. Among the carnivorous animals, too, those that subsist mostly on human flesh will be still nearer in composition to human beings and will therefore supply a still richer food for them. Very rich as this food ought to be, according to the advocates of nearness of composition, as it is called, in the selection of food, the richness has not yet reached its climax. Human beings are nearer in composition to human beings than are the animals, even carnivorous, and therefore ought to supply a richer food than they. And among human beings, too, those that subsist on human beings come quite close in composition to ideal human beings and thus (by this theory) ought to form the richest food for humanity. In utilizing cannibals to nourish our bodies, we thus reach the climax of perfection for food! And this cannibalism is, strangely enough, viewed with horror, and considered as a sign of a savage nature.

But in the present state of flesh-eating society, cannibals are not so numerous as to supply food for the whole population, nor would Government allow the use of human beings as food, as this would mean the breaking up of society. The only course that is left open, under the circumstances, is to be satisfied with the animals. The wild carnivorous animals who subsist wholly on flesh, and now and again feed on human beings, come first as best. But it is a rather dangerous game for the majority to try for the rich repast. While going to obtain food there is the risk of oneself becoming the food of the food. The strong sense of self-preservation asserts itself, and curbs the longing. But there are safe carnivorous animals, as dogs, cats, &c. They are no longer, it is true, purely carnivorous, but are more or less degraded in their food

by human association, and have taken to mixed food—animal and vegetable. But, even degraded, they are nearer in composition to human beings and are, therefore, better food than the purely gramnivorous sheep and cow which have their bodies built up from vegetable matter and are therefore, among the animals, the least near in composition to human beings. Will any one explain why, among civilized nations, the most harmless, docile and unoffending animals are selected for food, and among them the proverbially gentle sheep and cow?

To me, the explanation seems to be that in the matter of food, coming down from cannibalism to the purely gramnivorous animals marks the upward progress of humanity evolving out of the animal into the human. And if the progress is to continue and the animal in man is to be curbed and subdued, man must, in his food, go down to the vegetable which amply supplies the required nourishment to humanity in general as at present developed.

The rule for the selection of food is not nearness in composition, and therefore in evolution, to human beings, but if anything, the very reverse of it, *i.e.*, remoteness in composition. Only one condition is necessary, and that is, that whatever forms the food of a being must be of such a nature that it will, under the influence of the vital energy of the being to be nourished, break up into its various subtle potentialities, and thus supply matter of the degree of grossness which obtains on the various planes of the being. By the same theory, the end, it will be seen, is not reached at the vegetable. The vegetable, too, is a complex organism and has its degree of grossness. It is nearer in composition and evolution to man than are some of the subtle elements. The man as he advances in spirituality with the expansion of his self, goes, in the selection of his food, still further down from the nearer vegetable to the more distant subtle elements or existences that are less evolved and organized than the vegetable. This is seen to be done by the Yogîs who leave off vegetables for simple water, the latter for mere air, and finally dispense with breathing air, too. It is as natural as the advance from cannibalism to vegetable food. This may sound like ridiculous nonsense and bring an incredulous smile on the faces of some of the readers who may not happen to have heard of Indian sages sitting in Samâdhi with their breath held for days and months and years. Live they did, all the while, because their bodies showed no signs of decomposition, as is the case after death. Their own vital energy kept up the life of the various bodies from the subtlest to the grossest, and perhaps drew nourishment and strength from the subtle planes of nature.

To us, all this is incomprehensible, because it pertains to the planes beyond the Manas and therefore beyond our ken. From the beginning of humanity to the fullest development of Manas, the range for the selection of food lies between cannibalism and vegetarianism. When the utmost development of Manas is reached, the human being will

have reached, in his food, the most satvic vegetables. We whose vision beyond the Manas is veiled, cannot comprehend what pertains to that which lies beyond the Manas. And there is nothing unnatural or strange if the state of life of the beings who have passed beyond the Manas—their state of consciousness, their food, and every thing pertaining to them—is beyond our comprehension. We are as far from comprehending all these things pertaining to these advanced beings, as are animals who have not passed beyond their sensations, from comprehending the intellectual development and achievements of human beings who have their passions and sensations controlled and who have passed beyond the influence of their kamic body.

Humanity in general in the present age has commenced its upward course. To continue onward along that course is and ought to be its aim. The Manas purged of any animal passion or propensity is a step in advance. There are many of these passions united with the Manas as now constituted, and keeping it chained to the kamic body. These are a legacy from the animal evolution. For the effectual purging away of animal tendency the life must be preserved. This requires nourishment. But at the same time, nothing should be added of the nature of what has to be purged away, nor anything allowed to enter which may impede the purging. Animal food does both, more or less, as already explained, and hence is not suited for the human being if he desire that his life shall fulfil its purpose to its fullest extent. Vegetable food does neither, and hence is unobjectionable.

C. G. Kaji.

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## *EXTRAORDINARY VIRTUES OF INDIAN PLANTS.*

HINDU tradition refers to several plants as possessing extraordinary virtues. One of these is a creeper known as *Jyothishmathi*. It can only be found in usually inaccessible valleys and recesses of the mountains in Northern India and Assam. The creeper cannot ordinarily be discovered in the day time, as it will be interspersed in the surrounding rank vegetation. Yogins and Sanyasins hankering after supernatural strength and powers of body and mind spend considerable time in quest of the plant. The search should be made in the night time, as then alone the plant can be detected—its leaves being phosphorescent, emitting luminous rays of light, as its name connotes. The searcher considers himself peculiarly fortunate if he comes in sight of the plant. The juice of the plant has the power of reducing to ashes a given quantity of molten copper. Copper of the oldest sort will have to be used. The powdered copper possesses wonderful medical properties. It has to be administered in infinitesimally small doses with admixture of ordinary drugs suitable for the various chronic diseases that baffle ordinary medical treatment. It is the surest cure for leprosy. Hindu science classifies leprosy into three kinds, as affecting the blood, the flesh and the bones, and says that the two former

are curable but not the last. It is also said that the copper dust prepared as aforesaid has the power of converting baser materials into gold. One will only have to drop a pin-head full of the dust into melting copper to convert it into gold. Even if this be an unrealizable statement the plant is certainly worth possessing on account of its medical virtues.

The plant possesses much fire element and some of those that give up worldly concerns take to a systematic eating of its leaves. The brain organism will thus be purged of its gross substance and so illumined that the person's knowledge will be simply superhuman. Some ten persons, it is said, once took to eating the leaves. The internal heat was so unbearable that eight of them died from its effects, but the remaining two were those known as Madhusudana Saraswathi—the author of "Siddhantha Bindu," and Gadadhara Bhattachari—the author of several well-known works on logic—works that are unapproachable to this day, and serve as monuments to which human intellect can soar.

Another plant of note is Rodanti. It is a small bushy plant, the twigs and leaves converging into the form of an umbrella over its trunk or stem. The name implies a weeping plant. The leaves continuously let fall pearly drops of water from their ends so as to moisten a line of circumference around the central stem. The searcher after the plant takes with him a jar or bottle of quicksilver and, making a circular channel in the line of the watered circumference, pours the same into the channel and covers it with earth. It is allowed to remain so for three days and nights, and when the covering of earth is removed it will be found to be a solid silver-like bar, a small piece of which is enough to convert melting iron or copper into gold. I write these lines not in the spirit of realizing any dreams of alchemy, but in the hope that any forest or itinerant officer or person whose business or inclination leads him far into forests and mountain fastnesses, happening to read these lines may, if he chance to come across the plants answering the above description, put the matter to the test and be unselfish enough to give out to the public the result if successful.*

K. Perrajie.

* [Why not, also, if unsuccessful? Let us have the facts.—Ed. note.]

## *THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.*

VAGUE ideas surround most people's minds on this subject. The origin of the idea of the resurrection of the body is very ancient—probably the outcome of a universal yearning in the human heart to survive. The personality becomes precious to the man and there is a shrinking with horror from the idea of perishing utterly. Let us try and quit ourselves of all or part of this vagueness and get something clear upon the question. If survival be possible for the man, what is it that does survive and resurrect, and why and how does it re-gather itself, or something of itself, sufficiently to say it is itself and no other self, and arise. Now, without being unnecessarily scientific, I want to base my thoughts on scientific lines; to introduce a little arithmetical accuracy and, in taking 2 from 4, to show 2 remaining, and not 3; to deal with the principles which we say mingle together to make man, as a proper analyst should do—in a word, to deal with the chemistry of the complete man.

The seven familiar principles, as we are most of us aware, can be taken as 2, as 3, as 5, as 1, or as 10. I propose to consider them as bound up in 3, or consider the one Ego as using 3 distinct garments or as presenting 3 aspects. Three bodies being used to manifest these and to relate him to every other Ego around him. (1) The physical, and the etheric, its framework. (2) The astral and the desire bodies—or the animal soul. (3) The intellectual and spiritual bodies. All of these find a place in the human aura, and with all of these, thoughts in connection with resurrection will have a proper place. First take the idea of the resurrection of the body as associated with the re-appearance of the world's saviours. It is undoubtedly to be taken as a sign of the triumph of the heavenly over the dark powers, that the actual grave was unable to hold the body of the sacred One. The central thought being that the spirit departs to its Father in Heaven, and the Holy One must not see corruption. Applied however to the common person, the resurrection of the physical was literally accepted by some people, and perhaps is now, as, witness the pictures of the graves opening and the figures coming forth. Now we smile at this, overlooking the fact that there may be a sense in which even this may be true—in which even this physical body does rise again. Let us consider its chemistry. It is so much solid, so much liquid, so much gas, so much etheric matter mixed in certain proportions, infinite grades of each. Of etheric matter alone there are even some few thousand grades, all probably represented in man's body, and none of them fixed in proportion—all constantly changing. In seven years (some say twelve months) we are completely changed. No atom of the man's body at 22 is with him when he is 30. So, much is given off by him and, in this process of going through his mill, becomes

impregnated with his character, and there is found a link between them, so that by the laws of affinity there is a tendency to seek each other—the man and his atoms. So we have, diffused through the great sea of matter, a certain part of it which will be more in touch with us and will seek us again in preference to any other. In this way the very same bodily atoms come again into the same one stream of a man's life in the great future and so rise again. This is the only sense in which we can recognise a resurrection of the gross body.

Take now the astral—the animal soul, the psychic. The same process of change goes on here also, but the impress received by modes of life and thought upon it are more subtle and far reaching. We say of a man who is a sot, a licentious man, that the body takes a stamp from the life, but if this be so, it is stated that the finer astral matter responds much more markedly to the impress given it. We are all familiar with the stamps of passion, sullenness and gloom, or their opposites, joy, and peacefulness, which the life of the man himself leaves upon his face, and indeed on his body generally, but these effects are in keeping and much more marked as easier worked upon in the next higher vehicle. This part of the man, roughly called by St. Paul, the soul, is, during earthly life, the very channel of the man's tendencies, his personal character; in it inhere his own personal peculiarities. It is chemically impossible that a pure and high-thinking soul could have a coarse astral body, or that a low and brutal life can use a fine astral one. This body begins its association with the man at each rebirth and, undergoing constant changes, as determined by the life led, keeps with him for perhaps 200 years and, like the physical body, after the changes of 70 of these years, of what Empedocles termed, a 'mingling of parts,' there is again a separation of the parts which had mingled; but there is an affinity again set up for us by a certain quantity of astral matter which will also have a tendency to resurrect with us again. In many of the old world religions, prominence is given to the idea of a second death. In Egypt, especially, the idea seems to be suggested that whatever commerce may be had with the earth, by the departed, up to this point—the second death—the perishing of the "Kha" puts a finality to it forever; after this the soul is only with the gods. We find that a good many of the 'messages' of spiritualism point to an end being put to earthly communion and to a passing over to a higher place. Whatever errors may surround their conception of this higher place it is a bourne from whence the personality at any rate does not return. In this view we would suppose a complete extinction of the astral personality as of the physical, but not so. As we get higher up we get nearer to the source of immortality, and the law of gradation which our Theosophy insists upon (the spectrum being its living embodiment), provides a higher degree of survival for the astral. It is true that our present actual astral body, when it has served its purpose for our present incarnation, will never again serve to resurrect the persons we are to-day; but it bears in its outlines,

in its character, so complete a stamp of what the personality that has used it has been, that on the formation of the next astral it is the sovereign factor, or, shall I say, the guiding model, in the formation of it. This will of course seem quite unwarranted on the idea that it has perished long before that other astral comes to take shape. This amounts indeed to a resurrection, some will say? How is this accomplished. This can only be answered by studying a little the next of our three divisions.

Consider the intellectual and spiritual bodies. Here we advance to a stage which is indeed resurrection in very fact, since we here reach the central focus of the whole Ego's forces, the citadel of the life which lasts throughout the whole course of our present system of evolution. We reach that vehicle of one aspect, of which the Bhagavad Gîtâ speaks: "As a man throweth away old garments and putteth on new, even so the dweller in the body," &c., &c. This is the dweller in the body, the undying Ego. Now let us consider this third vehicle also somewhat scientifically, and apply a little chemistry to it also. How is this body kept going, how does it take shape, how become what it is? Is there any process of building up here also? It would seem that here the process is greatly accentuated, the great difference being that instead of constant change, the building is actually permanent. It is profoundly slow, but absolutely sure. There have been various names given to this body we are now considering—that which St. Paul calls Spirit—the Indian Sutratma or the Karana Sharira. Sutratma means thread, and we can best think of this as having from each life some fresh strand of real gold worked into it by the life experience of the personality, having the effect of continually enlarging, and strengthening the chain of it. Perhaps, however, I can make it clearer by putting it before you as an auric cloud which, as the number of earth-lives accumulates, becomes more and more defined in outline, wider in extent, and more beautiful in colour; the infinitely refined matter of which it is composed being of a nature to receive and to hold permanently all those qualities which have been acquired by the effort of the past personalities as they come round; refusing the dross, but taking up and making its own all that is worthy of being thus saved. This is what is meant by the term, "the winning of immortality"—which is said to be conditional. This is what is meant by "working out our own salvation." It may perhaps be asked, if this body be so permanent, and ever adding to its growth, in what sense can resurrection apply to it? Surely only in this, that during the time of the probationary lives on earth, it is held down confined; it is debarred from its own proper sphere of experience; in the average life it again arises to this sphere; there is a resurrection of this purest of bodies, after the death passed in the physical body, and with this resurrection, the Ascension. The Christ has been crucified between the two thieves, which we may think of as the higher and the lower nature, and departs, taking one of them to paradise with him. It may be asked, what proof have we that there is indeed such a body, becoming in this way a store-

house of the accumulated characteristics of the individuality? In what way does the man, as we see him, give evidence of possessing such a storehouse, and what guarantee that, when he leaves us, all his greater qualities are not dissipated to the winds of heaven when the dust claims his body? Surely it seems that the infinite varieties of character we bring into the world with us, the stock in trade of more or less perfected qualities, such as honesty, industry, capacity for taking pains, for endurance, for long suffering, for forgiveness of injuries; capacities also for things of an opposite nature which are plainly not the result of any present environment—but often quite in spite of it—surely it seems that here is evidence of an individual line of life, quite its own, bringing its own harvest of qualities as the inheritance of experience, distinct from all other lines of life. If we take this theosophic view of the building up of each character amongst us by this repeated earthly life in a freshly arranged but not entirely new (to us) earthly body, we must, as our intellects improve, and we get into more and more accurate methods of thinking (and as to this we must all strive to get as near Hebert Spencer as we can), we shall one day ask ourselves by what methods, by what laws, are the accumulations of qualities handed on. The answer, for each one of us, will lie in an understanding of the construction and nature of the animal soul and spiritual soul of man.

A mere partial grasp of the great fact that qualities once woven by experience with the thread of life are never lost, but are ours or are our friends' qualities, everlastingly, possessions which no power in existence can rob us of, should bring to us one of the most encouraging thoughts that however great may be the separation between us and those we love, admire, or reverence the most; however deep the chasm that may yawn between their lives and ours; the qualities which have been most potent in binding us to them will have faded not one whit when we next come together. And here we may pause to consider for a moment the fact that these subtle threads of the past are constantly bringing to us, along their delicate fibre, thrills of profound feeling which move us instantly —sometimes in a way we are astounded at. It is along this particular line of thought that an explanation can be found of the instant effect which the presence of some people will occasionally produce upon us. Do we not all of us, sometimes in our lives, find ourselves in what we feel to be great company, when meeting some one who at once commands either our reverence, respect or love? On the inspiration of reverence of those capable of inspiring this feeling, Mrs. Besant has nobly spoken:

"It is not necessary that they should teach us anything orally, or indeed that they should talk to us at all; their very presence is a benediction, harmonising, raising, inspiring. To breathe their atmosphere, to be encircled by their magnetism, to be played on by their thoughts, these things ennoble us unconsciously to ourselves."

What is our relation to them, what is the nature of the bond between us that they should so affect us, that there should be this response in our hearts to them? The answer is that it is a re-vibration of an old

familiar chord. Often in times in ages ago has it similarly moved us. It is nothing more than the *resurrection* upon earth, back again with the probationary segment of the circle of life, of an affection of a far-away life, deepened, purified into reverence. That affection probably was broken off in the days long ago, by the apparently cruel separation of death, which probably seemed at the time to leave to us no hope of any rekindling. Yet here again, in the van of time, comes its resurrection. And to keep to the proper scope of our present subject we must hold before us the proper scientific explanation of the means by which this return to us of former friendships has been possible; to place the credit of this in the proper place, with the body of our long lost friend, in which has been preserved, unimpaired, nay greatly added to, everything that was so much to us in some one or other of our former lives.

This subject of spiritual friendship seems to me closely interwoven with that of the resurrection of the body. Few men have more thoroughly recognised the profound depths that are fathomed when we touch a deep friendship than Emerson. His essay on friendship should be read by all who want to find, outside our T. S. literature, a recognition of the ancient origin and absolute persistence of the higher feelings in regard to each other which our common-place life is capable of inspiring, creating, and preserving.

I say inspiring, because it is the very changes and chances of life's environment which make the fuel by which they light up. I say creating, because the incidents of some far-away earth-life must have set going the very first flutter of what grew into a life's affection and devotion; and I say preserving, because, however often our eyes have been closed by the ceaseless changes of births and deaths, from a sight of the path our departed friend has taken, that path has been unbroken, and along it he has taken, as an essential part of his spiritual body, every quality which has made the bond between his life and ours of one everlasting permanence.

W. G. John.

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## "THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE."

IN the *Theosophist* for August last (vol. XX, p. 652), is a very able article by Mr. C. A. Ward, F. T. S., on the above subject, in the form of a review of a work by Mons. Renan. Although agreeing in the main with the views expressed there, it seems to me that there is a complementary aspect, on strictly theosophical, philosophical and scientific grounds, which ought not to be overlooked.

Most writers appear to start with the assumption that language, as the expression of the ideas of the present states of humanity, was *invented* (*i.e.*, generated) at some definite period; that it had a "beginning" in its present form and scope, just as it once was held, and still is, in wide circles, that the various species of present-day plants, animals and human races were "created," generated, and had a "begin-

ning" on a certain date. But this idea seems to be opposed to the principle of evolution, which theosophists profess to accept in its widest sense.

From this aspect it cannot be too much insisted upon, that between the present multiplicity of species, or varieties even, and the progenitors of the genera, families, classes, etc., there was an unbroken series of offspring and sires, just as there is now between those of the widely different varieties of flowers, fowls, pigeons, dogs, sheep, etc., and their very unlike ancestors of a few centuries, decades or years ago. In such a chain each adjoining pair of links differs so little in appearance or qualities, even in the most rapidly developing cases, that only a most expert connoisseur can detect the variation; yet in ten, twenty or a hundred generations the differences are so great, that sometimes only most acute and trained observers can guess the relations and parentage correctly—for example, the connection between the Cochin-China or Hamburg breeds with that of the jungle fowl of India.

Similarly, on the principle of "As above, so below," the "origin" of language admits of being conceived as *evolved*, and not generated full-fledged; that is, that it was built up, as it were, and (just as the human intellect) was evolved, in fact, in unbroken sequence in time, from the point when the internal necessity was felt to produce audible sounds for certain impressions, to the exceedingly complicated requirements of, say, Mrs. Besant, Prof. Max Müller, or Lord Salisbury. The cause for clinging to the "beginning" theory is not far to seek, and so deeply seated in human nature, as yet, that it will take a long time to eliminate from our hearts the feeling of shame felt at the mooting of humble origin of ourselves or our acquirements, much below the present stage, *i.e.*, our "fall." Yet, after all, this was no fall at all—as little such, as that of a mother's pet to the school room, or as the drill ground is a degradation for the professor or soldier—but a needed qualification for progress!

It is commonly asserted that animals have only cries, but no language; but that is merely the outcome of acquired prejudice and superficial observation or intimacy with them. Many creatures, notably birds, have a distinct articulate language which they employ when they think themselves unobserved by man; and only heard by him when he has mastered some of these difficult sounds (not *cries*) and has learnt to understand the animals to some extent, and they him. It is they who have the advantage of man, by acquiring a better comprehension of what he says or means, than most people ever learn to do, *i.e.*, to understand what they mean or say. I *know* this much. Certainly animals have no *human* language founded on the 20 to 44 letters of the alphabet, but do these comprise all the sounds capable of serving as symbols of knowledge or ideas, *i.e.*, thought?

What are thoughts and words? Nothing but vibrations, ethereal and aerial. The one producing more or less similar sequences of impressions;

on the one who senses them, the other doing the same, more or less imperfectly, by conventional symbols (words), the comprehension depending entirely on the knowledge of their meaning by the hearer and their relation to the things they represent. To one who knows but one language, all others are so much "monkey" gibberish! It does not matter whether the utterer of the strange sounds be the most intelligent savant or the stupidest fool. So with the language of animals; only, without a grammar and dictionary, or even the capacity of the ear to catch and the mouth to imitate the sound, each is a thousand times harder to acquire than Chinese. Let him who will not believe, try. Yet for an habitual, minute observer it is quite unthinkable that such complicated societies as those of ants should be without a language—one as perfect for their requirements, as ours is for our needs! And if a language for some, why not for all? But we cannot hear it. Is that necessary? Are our ears, or even microphones, capable of hearing ethereal, or even all aerial sounds? Has not man inaudible modes of speaking, such as the deaf and dumb alphabet, flag signalling, telegraphing, etc., and is not telepathic communication, for its possessor, as effective as any other? Why should animals, birds, even insects and still lower beings, not be able to communicate telepathically with each other? If because it is being asserted, believed or supposed otherwise by such and such "authorities," then I would humbly suggest that assertion, belief or supposition can be as little evidence in Theosophy as in law. The proofs lie all around us that the same divine laws sway the greatest and smallest beings; only to discover them we must put ourselves in their places, we must learn to function mentally in their bodies, under their conditions, and then, when we try, we will discover how very little true knowledge we possess of them and how much one is apt to misapprehend even that little! That is at least my experience of half a century's trial to find out the truth.

But to return to the evolution of language. It is strange that it is constantly being overlooked that its history is daily enacted before our very eyes and under our very noses, yet "familiarity" has bred so much "contempt" that we miss the point. What I mean is, the progress from the thoughtless, merely "crying" babe, to the profound thinker and orator; from a stage without a single idea or word, to the acquirement of the contents of thousands of volumes and of half-a-dozen or more of dictionaries, there is nowhere, perhaps, a conscious break, no "origin" in a restricted sense—truly an epitome of the "origin" (evolution) of thought and language as plain as plain can be; in fact, too plain, for man is only too apt to waste his energies in the Dickensian problem "How not to do it," because it is so much more difficult to solve than its converse, requires so much more erudition and, therefore, proves apparently first class intellect much more effectively than the simple, straight, common-place, "How to do it!"

With deep regret it must be said that we (though theosophists) are still too apt to look with contempt upon things sub-human and prove

thereby that we are yet very far from comprehending the divine love at all.

HUMBLE STUDENT.

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## *HINDU RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY.*

THERE is hardly a subject which is of greater importance to man, in life and after life, than his religion, by which and through which he tries to trace his connection with the universe and with the Author of the universe. Count Tolstoi, the great Russian philanthropist, says that a man's religion is the relation which he believes himself to bear to the endless universe around him and to the source of that endless universe: and as every man believes himself to bear some relation to the universe, every man must have a religion. Man has been ever trying to find out something within himself in which he centres all his aspirations. This he makes the moving force of his life, and seeks in it peace and safety after his earthly pilgrimage. Whatever may be the creed of a man, be he a theist, deist, or pantheist, he is a link in the mighty chain of the universe, indispensably necessary for Nature's work, and has some purpose to serve in the drama of evolution. For an atheist who denies the existence of God, or for an agnostic who neither believes nor disbelieves in it, the connection continues all the same, which exists for a saint or a sinner. Literally interpreted, religion is a tie which binds us both objectively and subjectively to God: objectively to the universe which is the manifested God, as long as we are in the body; and subjectively, to the essence of the universe, the noumenon, when we are out of the body. From a practical point of view, whatever may be the individual opinion of a human being, he can have no escape from religion, in the true sense of the word, any more than he can have escape from time and space to which every manifested thing is, by reason of its limitation, subject.

Religion being thus a necessity for man, from the African savage to the greatest pantheistic philosopher, the conclusion we naturally arrive at is that no country on the face of the world can be said to be without religion. But there is one country and but one country which is pre-eminently the leader of all others in matters religious, and that country is our Aryavarta in which it is our good fortune to have been born. The Rishis of old, on the point of leaving their tabernacles of flesh, were anxious to send out a most ardent prayer that the land of their future incarnation might be India. From time immemorial the sons of this country have been celebrated for their spiritual wisdom no less than the keenness of their intellect, hardly leaving unsolved any problem of metaphysics or of the higher life, which to the present-day generation, so backward in occultism, appears strange and inexplicable. Times were, in this land, when groups of white-bearded, venerable sages on the banks of the holy Gunga were discoursing to their pupils on the mysteries of A'tma, how it was to be developed, and how they should lead

the life conducive to its growth. Men were taught in those days to be saints before they became sages, and purity was to be the pioneer of wisdom. The heart was to be cleansed of its impurities, while single-mindedness of purpose was required in no stinted measure, from the learner of *Brahmavidya*. Surrounded by romantic scenery, and shorn of the cares for corporeal comforts which modern civilization is so fussy and impetuous about; with the mind entirely consecrated to the search of the eternal, immutable Deity; wrapt in the most glorious meditation and divine ecstasy brought on by the mysterious powers of Yoga; chanting at times the mellifluous odes composed in Sanskrit, the language of the gods; these benefactors of our race have left a legacy of wisdom which is, at present, so much admired and devoutly studied in Europe and America. There were colleges of saints in which difficult problems of the life after death were solved; each brought in his own experience to bear on the question in hand, and when the notes of all were collated, Nature was reverently asked to give up her secrets; with an unerring intuition they compelled Truth to stand face to face before them, and what is denied to us in this age of doubt and scepticism, was poured on their heads in abundance. The presence of God in their midst was a living and palpable reality. Each one saw his own God seated within him, and each one true to his faith averred that he and his God were one. There were not the facilities of locomotion which we have in our own days, but there were those higher instruments, those subjective powers of the mind which made locomotion easy, and at times, useless. They were past masters in the art of mental telegraphy, and used to flash their thoughts, in a second, from China to Peru, without the least trouble or material help. Their pupils were trained to follow their path, and the thread of reciprocal sympathy and harmony was so firmly established between them that thought-reading was as easy a matter with them as the reading of a book or newspaper is with us. Thought communication was the order of the day, and these holy beings lived in an atmosphere of thought. They and they alone knew that if man, the thinker, was to control Nature, he was at first to know what a powerful instrument his own thought was, when properly curbed and disciplined. With mental purity they succeeded in arriving at the right knowledge of thought, and with that knowledge came to them the peace, the halcyon peace of the Logos, which is the goal of human evolution.

Here we will halt to see what effects, beneficial or otherwise, were left by these giant thinkers upon their descendants; whether India has lost or gained by their holy thoughts which have within the last quarter of a century attracted so much attention from the thinkers of the civilized world. It is certainly true that though the philosophical thought of India is, in a large measure, confined to investigations of the Divine in man, to the permanent and the indestructible within him, it cannot be said that the other minor spheres, in which life may be made more amenable to righteousness, sanctity and duty, were forgotten. In their disquisitions on law, the Hindus surpass the Romans

in more ways than one. To them a judge deciding a case between a plaintiff and defendant, was required to show that rigorous precision which the great Lords of Karma would exercise towards an individual being for the merits or demerits of his life. The *Grihistha* was told of his duty to his parents, to his family and to his relatives, with a minuteness and accuracy which leave us much room for surprise as to how these renowned thinkers of India could have anticipated so many contingencies which cross the path of a *Grihistha* in his every-day life. The wife's chastity and devotion to her husband, her implicit obedience to him as a veritable god on earth, worshipping whom she aspires to reach the feet of Vishnu; an obedience never forced, but as spontaneous and automatic as the circulation of blood within the body, are such favourite themes of the Hindu Sages that we are often tempted to think that the relations of the husband and wife in the Satya Yuga must have been more felicitious than those of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. There was but one paramount idea in everything that the divines of India did, *viz.*, to make every walk of life, in the end, a means of making a man conscious of the God within. Life on the material plane was to be led in such a way that man might be fitted for the Kingdom of Heaven. At home, or abroad, walking or eating, talking or trading, the Hindu was always reminded that he was not meant for the earth, his *Samsara* was but a means to an end. Even when deeply immersed in passing concerns he was never to forget that there were better and higher spheres of life for him, that he was here but as a traveller in an inn, a pilgrim on the path, whose goal was far, far above the physical world. With such a nice and elaborate body of instructions before him for the polity of life, the Hindu of to-day, however fallen from the great height at which the Rishis of old had called him to stand, still holds his own against the world, intellectually, morally and spiritually. It is really bad taste to twit the Hindus, and especially the Brahmins, of their present degeneracy. All well-wishers of India should hold before their eyes the glories of their sires and exhort them to revive them for the benefit of the Aryan race, and for the cementing of the East and the West. India's past greatness came from her spiritual teachers; her future regeneration must, as a matter of course, also come from their descendants, the Brahmins of our day.

Hitherto we have been directing our attention to the results achieved by the thoughts of the Rishis upon the lower plane of life, and now we will examine their noble work on the abstruse, the hidden path, the *Gupta Marga*. Fully conscious of the fact that nothing that has *Nâma* and *Rupa* (or name and form) imposing limitations upon itself, subject to time and space, or in other words to life and death, can be of much use in the investigation of the eternal Sat beyond time and space, life and death, they arrived at the conclusion that, for their object, the body was not a safe guide. Then they saw that in the body there was something higher and subtler—the mind, its regulator and its pilot. But the mind was worse than the body, absolutely un-

reliable, unstable, fickle, wavering, false, capricious, untamable, more unmanageable, as Sankara says, than the mad monkey drunk with wine. Then what was the course open, if the body and the mind were not to be trusted in the search after the eternal. Here their deductive system of philosophy proved to them of immense importance. If all things in the world change, and if manifestation means creation, growth and decay, surely there ought to be something which is above change, for how can there be a phenomenon unless the noumenon is at the back of it? They, therefore, posited in man, as well as in creation, an invariable principle not subject to the fluctuations of the body and the mind. Naturally mystical and thoughtful, they tried to rise above all and every phase of the transitory life. The *Indriyas* swayed by the mind were the first and the foremost to be discarded, and consciousness imparted by the externality of the world was to be thrown into the background. When thus they put the body to rest, and the mind was trained and disciplined not to rush to the phenomenal world, by slow and most persistent efforts, coupled with the most unswerving tenacity of purpose, those heroic souls at length succeeded in finding out that there was in man what they so felicitously expressed as the *Nitya Vastu*, which remained unchanged in the three *Avasthas* known as the *Jâgrat*, *Svapna* and *Sushupti*; "indestructible, perpetual, unborn and undiminishing," which was सर्वज्ञानि,सर्वव्याप-क, सर्वदर्शक, सर्वसाक्षि, सर्वन्याधि, or all-conscious, all-pervading, all-indicating, all-witnessing and all just. But they were not satisfied with this, there were still more dizzy heights to be scaled. If the sentient and insentient life around us contained, by the very reason of its manifestation, the *Nitya Vastu* within itself, there must have been a source from which it must have emanated. There must be the Causeless Cause, the Rootless Root of the Universe, Supreme Infinite Consciousness, the Absoluteness, the Parabrahm within whose sacred shrine no embodied existence is ever to enter, and about whom no intellect, whether it be that of a Dhyâni or of a Nirmanakâya, can form any idea. This is the pitch to which the Hindu philosophy has soared, where anthropomorphism is rigorously eschewed, and the Inscrutable is left to revel in its unfathomable depths. All honour to that religion which can teach us that the highest is not within our reach. Such a thought while dignifying the thinker, increases the glory of the Highest a hundredfold. How beautifully has this been described in the Rig-Veda.

"Who knows the secret? Who proclaimed it here?
Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?
The Gods themselves came later into being—
Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?
That, whence all this great creation came,
Whether Its will created or was mute.
The Most High seer that is in highest heaven,
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not."

Having established the unknown and the unknowable as the primal cause of manifestation, Hinduism assigns it a passive neutrality during the cosmic activity which is periodic. When the time comes for the forces of Nature to come into play, a certain portion of that unknown and unknowable gets itself detached from the whole, under the name of Brahmâ, for the stupendous work of evolution in the field of space. Here the gyratory motion of the atoms builds various forms, and herein the great Life of I'svara descends to impregnate the cosmic dust around Him. This is what is described in the Bible as the spirit of God brooding upon the surface of the waters of space. From the abstract space which is the body of Iswara when His will thrills forth the mandate, "the one shall be many," vibrations are set forth which give rise to the *Tanmatras* known as A'kâsha, Vâyu, Agni, Apas and Prithivi. The whole universe is a conglomeration of the *Pancha Mahâbhûtas*. Then a spiral motion supervenes, and the positive and negative forces of nature, which are premonitory of the cosmic duality, come into play. This has been so vividly described as the churning of the ocean of space by the gods and demons. From I'svara as the representative of Parabrahm comes into manifestation both the aspects of the universe known as the real and the unreal, or as Purusha and Prakriti. Everything is vivified by I'svara, but the form and the life which impregnates that form are two distinct entities. The form is the Mâyâ of Iswara with which He clothes Himself. So long as the form is considered Reality, the presence of I'svara is not felt therein. With Parabrahm is co-eternal the *Avyakta Mûlaprakriti*, the primordial matter of the Vedantins or the protyle of the modern scientists. For the purpose of evolution, both I'svara and Prakriti are necessary. Iswara cannot manifest without Prakriti any more than Prakriti without I'svara. The Mâyâ or illusion in which God is hidden, or which He uses as a veil to hide Himself, is compared to the cloud which, though created by the sun, hides the glory of that very sun. Mâyâ is certainly unreal and transitory, but how can the Real be known unless compared with the unreal to prove its existence. Again, this Mâyâ of Iswara, the phantasmagoria of the universe, is vested with three qualities, the sâtwic, the râjasic and the tâmasic. It is the play of the gunas upon Mâyâ that makes the wheel of evolution roll from manvantara to pralaya. Said the Blessed Lord to Arjuna :

"My womb is the mighty Brahman : in that I place the germ : thence cometh the production of all beings, O Bhârata.

"In whatever wombs mortals are produced, O Kauntêya, the mighty Brahman is their womb, I their generating Father.

"Sâtva, Râjas, and Tâmas, such are the gunas : Prakriti-born, they bind fast in the body, O great-armed one, the indestructible Dweller in the body."

On the hypothesis that there is one eternal, indestructible Life for the myriads of forms, and that the one indivisible Atma supports and sustains the Universe with its teeming millions, the Indian mystic phi-

losophers went about investigating whether the individualized human soul, or Jîvâtma, after its almost endless pilgrimage, was fit to be received back into the infinite bosom of the great Îsvara whose part and parcel it is. Some contended that a separate Jîva, however purified by experience and wisdom, was not sufficiently pure to be absorbed and assimilated in the highly ethereal quintessence of the Âtmic store not contaminated by matter during the process of evolution. So enthusiastic, even at the cost of discretion, the followers of Advaitic, Dvaitic and Visishtadvaitic schools have been in upholding their respective views, that at times their discussions have been more fruitful in sowing discord and ill-will than of adding anything new to the already vast religious literature of India. Whether the soul, after attaining perfection, remains one with Îsvara or persists in preserving its individualized consciousness, is a question to be decided by beings who dwell on the higher planes of life, but so far as an unprejudiced impartial observation goes, it may be said that each school represents a certain stage in the development of the soul. Each school is right in its own results, but what may be true at a certain stage of the soul's progress cannot be so at its higher advancement. If the learned Pandits of India, instead of wasting their time and energy on such a subject, were to purify their inner selves and examine their own minds, the salvation of India would be but a question of a few short decades.

But the glory of the Indian thought, which will shine as long as our globe remains habitable by humanity, lies in the Upanishads and in that one book which has been so justly styled the Bible of Humanity, "the Song Celestial," the Bhagavad Gîtâ. The best and noblest of what man can think about his God and his destiny are treasured here. They are not meant for the Hindus alone, they are not meant for any particular country or a certain age; they are the legacy of the Aryan race, the flower of its thought, the germs of the future cosmopolitan religion, the Theosophy of the world. They have put salve upon many wounded souls and have cured many mental diseases. They are the antidote for discontent and have brought peace and harmony where there formerly dwelt confusion and dismay. They are repertoires of wisdom and teach a man, unerringly, the mode of knowing himself. The teaching on self-knowledge contained in the Upanishads is thus summarised by Sir Edwin Arnold in a few lines:—

> It is not known by knowledge, man
> Wotteth it not by wisdom, learning vast
> Halts short of it: only by soul itself
> Is soul perceived—when the soul wills it so.
> There shines no light save its own light to show
> Itself unto Itself! None compaseth
> Its joy who is not wholly ceased from sin,
> Who dwells not self-controlled, self-centred, calm,
> Lord of Himself. It is not gotten else.

Hitherto we have been talking about the general deductions arrived at by the Hindu thinkers, of there being the indestructible

principle in man, which is his true Self ; but then the question is, whether any attempt was made by them to reduce these deductions into practice. Here it must be stated, without the slightest reserve, that if any race ever made religion a practical object to live by and die by, it is the Hindu. There have been people since the dawn of history who were eminently religious in their day : that is to say, they had tried their best to solve the problems of the Divine Life, especially the Persians and the Egyptians ; but then what are the remnants left of their researches, what effects have been produced upon the modern Persians and Egyptians? We cannot say of these two nations that they are religious now in the same sense as we can say it of the Hindus. Thousands of years have passed, monarchies have risen and fallen, but the Hindu, amidst all the vicissitudes he has undergone through foreign yoke is, still religious to the backbone. Fallen he has, from a material point of view, and deteriorated as his religion is, by an almost unpardonable indifference, it still commands the most sincere respect of the world. Now then, what is the reason that, in India, Hinduism still shows signs of wonderful vitality, while in other countries which were cradles of religion, it has well-nigh become extinct. The reason is not far to seek. It is this : that here, religion was made the part and parcel of every-day life. The Hindu draws his religious instincts with his mother's milk. In this blessed land there is religion for the shepherd and the milkman : there is religion for the trader and the peasant : there is here religion for the boy going to school and the *Grihastha* who sends that boy to school : there is here religion for the saint and sinner, the Sanyâsi and the Samsâri : there is here religion for the *Chakravarti* and the mendicant at his door : there is religion here for the voluptuous and the greatest transcendentalist : in short, in this God-intoxicated land the leaven of religion has permeated all the walks and grades of life. The Hindu has lost his kingdom, has lost his material rank and dignity, but he still clings to his religion as the oyster shell sticks to the pearl within its bosom. A Hindu atheist, of the genuine type of Ingersoll and Bradlaugh of the West, is a thing of rarity.

An unprejudiced observer who has studied and compared the various faiths of the world will see that in Hinduism there is a peculiarity which marks it out from all others. Man is a composite of emotions and intellect. In his heart are seated love, mercy, gentleness, and his own divinity : in his head the enquiries are going on as to the why, whence and whither of the universe. Christianity develops the heart and leaves the head to take care of itself. Buddhism gives stimulus to the intellect while the loftiest emotions are left unstudied. To Hinduism belongs the honour of training both these leading faculties of man. To go to God he is shown two entirely different paths which in the end coalesce into one another—known as *Gnyan* and *Bhakti*, Knowledge and Devotion. These two paths have many ardent admirers, though to get accomplishment in either, many, many, lives will be required. To the man of knowledge, from the tuft of grass to the sun there is nothing but so

many letters to spell the name of God. To him things differ only on the surface, while their substratum is the same. Infinite forms vary in infinite ways, but the thread which runs through the entire rosary is one and the same for each bead. The *Gnyânî* sees "God" indelibly written on each leaf of a tree, on each drop of water, and on every particle of matter of which the world is composed. The higher the progress of the intellect, the greater the humility of the *Gnyânî*, for he sees himself as the infinitesimally small part of the great whole. Knowledge alone does not help in the attainment of God. Higher than intellect there is the heart, the lotus seat of Srî Krishna in each one of us. When the heart expands to receive within its ever-growing folds the universe with its contents, the Lord descends in all His majesty to abide there. Then the individual becomes humanity, humanity becomes Kosmos, and Kosmos, the Supreme Infinite Wisdom. Genuine devotion to the Blessed Lord springs only when "fleshly eyes are rendered blind to all illusion." Knowledge and devotion are as wide apart as the torch is from the sun. In devotion, the soul opens its petals to the perennial light of the Over-soul, and in devotion, the shackles of Mâyâ get loose and fall. Said the poet Byron:

> "Devotion wafts the mind above,
> But Heaven itself descends in love."

If we examine minutely, success has come sooner to devotion than to knowledge, and Hinduism is full of instances of illustrious Bhaktas who have brought down Heaven in all mercy for their salvation. The whole world rose against Prahlâda, and his own father was the bitterest of his foes. Various were the ordeals he underwent for his unalloyed devotion. To Prahlâda every stone and wood was pregnant with the presence of Vishnu, who at length vindicated him, to show that God was ready to serve his devotees in the hour of need and trial.

It has been said that the sage, Narada, as usual with his favourite Vina, was once on a visit to Lord Vishnu whom he found busy arranging and rocking certain gold images in cradles. Narada, overcome with surprise, begged the Lord to let him see the images which represented the great Bhaktas, even Narada himself. Narada was mute, and bathed his bosom with tears. What a glorious picture this of human devotion—God worshipping his worshippers. Can human imagination go further? Can devotion rise to higher altitudes of perfection? Is there any religion in the whole world which can hold up before us such an ideal of divine love for human beings? To bring God and man to a level of equality, and to remove the insurmountable barriers between the finite and the Infinite, gives hope and courage even to the ordinary man that a day will come when he will stand in the presence of his Creator.

Whether a man tries to tread the path of devotion or knowledge, the one indispensable thing is the discipline of the mind, and unless that slippery monster, the giant of mischief—but at the same time the alchemist transmuting man into God—is brought under control, there

is no salvation. Hindu philosophy attaches the greatest importance to the mind and asserts that the great gulf between the finite and the Infinite can only be bridged over by it. Various schools of thinkers have suggested different modes of controlling it. Some are of opinion that to get supremacy over the mind, the body must be put to most excruciating pain, while others think that the only means of suppressing the mind is by suppression of the breath, for the mind and breath are interchangeable, and *Vrittis* cease to work when *Vayu* is brought under control. There is still a higher class of thinkers who say that the best method of putting a curb on the mind is to wean it from old associations, to persuade it, to coax it, to see and be convinced of the greater glories of the Higher Life.

Such are some of the main teachings of Hinduism which promises, at no distant date, to be the guiding spirit of Humanity. They who call themselves Hindus and who have means to revive their spiritual philosophy, once so great and grand, must lose no opportunity to show its beauty to nations outside the pale of Hinduism.

JEHANGIR SORABJI.

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## *ASOKA I., THE NANDA.*

OWING to some misconception, most scholars have been led to the denial of two Asokas. But there does not appear any relation between Kâlâsoka and Dharmâsoka in the records of the northern Buddhism. The Asoka reigning in about 100 A.B., and holding the second Buddhistic Council at Vaisâli, under Ratha, cannot be the same person, who was crowned in 218 A.B., and who convened in 235 the third Buddhistic Council at Pâtaliputra, under Tissa Mogaliputta, the head of the church from 176 to 244 A.B.

The most important date given in the Buddhistic scriptures, is that of the Vaisâli Council, which happened 100 years after the Parinirvâna, when Madhyantika introduced Buddhism into Kashmîr, under the patronage of Kâlâsoka, who was then reigning at Pâtaliputra. In chapter V., "Dipavamsa," Asoka is expressly said to be the son of Sisunâga, who was elected king by the nobles of Maghâda, and who is called the immediate predecessor of the Nandas. This first Asoka, who was black like a crow (*kâka*), and hence elsewhere known as Kâkavarna, is thus proved to be one of the Nanda dynasty, as is shown further on.

In the "Dipavamsa" we find synchronistic records of the Ceylon kings and the initiation dates of the *Sthaviras* along with that of Kâlâsoka. In referring to the chronological tables,* and to Oldenberg's "Dipavamsa," p. 137, we find that Siggava and Chandavajji received *Upasampada* in the 11th year of Kâlâsoka's reign, and 12th of Interregnum, when Saunaka was 40 years old, after his initiation. Now calculating from 16 A.B., the 24th year of Ajatasatru's reign, when Dasaka was initiated into the order, who, in his turn, initiated Saunaka in his 45th

* See pp. 752-753, September *Theosophist* (Vol. XX).

year, we get 16 + 44 + 40, the number of years elapsed after the *Upasampada* of the latter,=100 A.B. when Siggava and Chandavajji entered monastic life. Adding up the number of reigns of the Ceylon kings up to the 11th Interregnum, we get 38 + 1 + 30 + 20 + 11 = 100 years. Again calculating the Maghâda reigns from the 8th of Ajatasatru, we get 24 + 16 + 8 + 24 + 18 + 10 = 100 years after the death of the Buddha. Therefore, the statement in "Mahâvamsa," p. 11, that the 10th year of Kâlâsoka's reign was 100 A.B. = 10, times 10 years of "Dipavamsa," p. 139, when the Vajjiputtas of Vaisâli claimed the ten indulgences, appears quite correct from the three calculations we have made above. This 100 A.B. cannot be reduced on any account.

In the Brahmanical *Purânas*, Kâlâsoka is evidently referred to as Nanda-Mahâpadma, who, being very valiant and avaricious, is said to have, like a second Parasurâma, extirpated the Kshattriyas and brought the whole earth under one imperial umbrella. There is also a prophecy of the Buddha, that 100 years after his death, Upagupta, the son of Gupta, a merchant of Mathurâ, would be initiated into the order. In "Asokavadana," the Buddha says: "*mama nirvritim arabhya satavarsagate Upagupto namo bhikshur utpatisyati.*" He became the spiritual guide of Kâlâsoka, as narrated in the same book. The Vaisâli Council was actually held in 102 A.B. (110 A.B. according to the Tibetan tradition), and in the 20th year of the reign of Kâlâsoka. Now the President of the Vaisâli Council foresaw that 118 years afterwards Asoka Priyadarsi would become a Buddhistic emperor and hold the Third Council at Pâtaliputra in 235-36 A.B., and would build temples and stupas. From the inscriptions we know that this was held in the 17th year of Priyadarsi's reign, but in the 10th year according to computation. In the Tibetan scriptures, King Nanda-Mahâpadma convened at Pâtaliputra all the Aryas, the orthodox Bhikshus of the Sthavira school, in 137 A.B.; and Bigandet in his "Legend of Gaudama," records in the same year a council at Pâtaliputra to root out the five evils.

In a Tibetan work, a schism is recorded as occurring under a Thera Nâgasena, 137 years after the death of the Buddha. Nâgasena, the author of the "Questions of Milinda" or Nanda, according to the Tibetan and Chinese authorities, is said to have flourished 27 years after the Vaisâli Council, and was a contemporary of King Nanda, and lived by the side of Vipula or Pandava hill, Rajgriha (R. A. S. J. for 1896, p. 17; and for 1897, p. 228).

These concurrent testimonies show that Dharmasoka cannot be the same person as Kâlâsoka, the mistaken identity of whom has led European scholars to reduce the Buddha's date.

Like the *Paurânic* prophecy about King Nanda being a great conqueror like Parasurâma, the Buddha is said to have foretold that "more than 100 years after my Nirvâna, there will rise a king, named Asoka, who will rule over the whole of Jambudvipa." This prophecy was recorded by I-tsing in his Records, as translated by Takakusu, p. 14. In a foot-note, he adds that the Chinese *Tripitika* gives four dates of

Asoka, namely, 116, 118, 130, and 218 A.B., of which the last is found in the *Vinaya* of *Sudarsana-vibhâsha*. This book, which was translated into Chinese in 489 A.D., contains many dates, which all agree with those of the Ceylonese chronicles. The accounts of the Buddhistic councils, names of the Indian and Ceylonese kings, Asoka's missions and Mahinda's work in Ceylon, resemble much those of the southern records. *Sudarsana-vibhâsha* is a commentary by Buddhaghosha, being a translation of his *Sâmanta-pâsâdika* (*I-tsing's Record* of *the Buddhistic religion* in India in the seventh century A.D., by Takakusu). Of these four dates (p. 16), the first three evidently refer to one king, and the last, namely, 218 A.B., to another; for it is impossible to drag one king from one century to the next on the assumption of clerical or traditional mistakes; more so, when we have other dates to prove that A.B. 116, 118, 130 apply only to the Asoka of the Nanda dynasty, and not to the Asoka of the Maurya.

In the Jaina chronicles, Kâlâsoka is not mentioned, but Nanda is said to have been elected king after the murder of Udâyi by the nobles of Pâtaliputra, 60 years after the *Nirvâna* of Mahâvira, which happened in 527 B.C.; that is to say, in 467 B.C., only 4 years before the accession of Kâlâsoka, which occurred in 463 B.C., according to the Burmese records; and 13 or 5 years after the election of Sisunâga, in 63 or 72 A.B. = 480 or 472 B.C., according to the Tibetan, Burmese and Ceylonese traditions. This fact shows that Sisunâga was the first of the Nanda dynasty which, according to the Brahmanical *Purânas*, had a reign of 100 years, in round numbers. Now subtracting 63 A.B., the date of Sisunâga's accession to the throne, from 163 A.B., when Chandragupta, the first Maurya emperor, exterminated the Nanda dynasty, we get exactly 100 years,—a remarkable agreement which should be noted.

According to the Jainas, Chandragupta began to reign in 155 A.V., from which, deducting 60, we get 95 years, a difference of only 5 years, which, considering the independent, though fragmentary, chronicles of the Jainas, clearly proves that the true duration of the Nanda dynasty must have been between 95 and 100 years. And taking 72 A.B., as the year of Sisunâga's election, according to the Ceylonese, and deducting it from 163 A.B., we get 91 or 92, a difference of only 8 or 9 years, which instead of invalidating, rather proves the truth of the *Paurânic* 100 years and the identity of the first Nanda with Sisunâga. Now taking into consideration the remarkable agreement between the Tibetan and the Burmese authorities in regard to A.B. 63, and the distrust with which we are compelled to regard the rather long reign of Nâgadâsa of $3 \times 8 = 24$ years, which should be, I suspect, 14 years, we cannot but acknowledge the truth of the former figure of 100 years, and hence the identity of the first two kings of the Nanda dynasty with Sisunâga and Kâlâsoka.

That Sisunâga was the first Nanda, is proved by the Greek reference of Nandrus, king of the Gangaritæ, who was said by Diodorus Seculus, to be a beautiful son of a barber by the queen of a previous

king. The Jainas also say of the *first Nanda*, that he was the son of a courtezan, by a barber who was, in 60 A.V., elected king of Maghâda, by the nobles of Pâtalipura as the successor of Udâyin, who had been murdered and had no heirs. The Buddhistic chronicles also record that Sisunâga was born of a Lichchhavi princess of Vaisâli, who was made a courtezan by king Ajâtasatru after his conquest of the capital in 3 A.B.

Sisunâga appears to be the Nandivardhana of the *Purânas*, and Nemita of the Kuru race, the king of Champarna, (Champaran of the present day), who is said by Târânâth, the Tibetan historian, to have conquered from a Brahman king, Maghâda, which he gave to his son Kâma-Asoka. Bigandet says from the Burmese chronicles, that Sisunâga was king of Benares, before he was elected king of Maghâda by the nobles of Râjgriha and Pâtaliputra. The *Vâyu Purâna* also has records of him as king of Benares, where he left his son to rule in his place, before he was called to ascend the throne of Maghâda.

Nandras, the son of a barber being thus found in Sisunâga and Nemita, the first Nanda, we can identify Xandramas with Kâlâsoka, the second Nanda, who had the title of Chandramas, as we learn from a Tibetan source. This identification of Nanda appears to be an important discovery, another landmark of Indian history. Nanda is noticed in the *Purânas* as a great conqueror, whose date is fixed in a constellation of the seven *Rishis* (*Purbâshâra*) from which point, epochs of Indian history are given, and which we shall utilize so far as we can later on; for it will now be easy to fix the dates of the different dynasties, of which the detailed reigns are given in the *Purânas*.

### Date of Chandragupta,

### *The Founder of the Maurya Dynasty.*

The next important point to determine is the date of Chandragupta, the founder of the Maurya dynasty. Of him four independent dates are known. (1) The Brahmanical; the *Purânas* state that he ascended the throne of Maghâda, 100 years after the accession of the first Nanda. (2) Jaina;—from their chronicles, we find that he exterminated the Nanda dynasty 155 years after the death of Mahâvira, which happened in 527 B.C. (3) Bhadravâhu (156—170 A.V. = 371 B.C.) was Chandragupta's *Guru* and the 8th *Suri* patriarch of the Jaina Church, whose disciple and successor, Sthulabhadra (170—219 A.V. = 357—308 B.C.), was the son of Sâkatâla. Sâkatâla was the minister of the ninth Nanda (Dhana-Nanda), an important synchronism, which has hitherto escaped the notice of scholars. These facts fix the inauguration of Chandragupta in about 372 B.C. (4) From the Buddhistic sources we learn that in 163 A.B. (380 B.C.), Chandragupta stepped upon the throne of Pâtaliputra. There is here a difference of only 8 years (380 *minus* 372 B.C.), a matter of no importance, which, instead of invalidating, rather strengthens the finding that the truth appears to lie between the two dates. But since the dates of the Maghâda kings are given consecu-

tively in the Buddhistic chronicles, and but fragmentarily in the Jaina, 380 B.C., appears to be the more reliable date for Chandragupta, the founder of the Maurya dynasty.

In the "Dipavamsa," translated by Prof. Oldenberg, p. 143, it will be observed that the 2nd year of Chandragupta's reign was the 58th of Pakundaka's of Ceylon, when Tissa, the son of Mogali, was initiated by Siggava, in the 64th year after the latter's *Upasampada*. The same fact is repeated in p. 144, so that there is no doubt about any clerical or traditional mistake,—more so, when it is added that Siggava, the Sthavira, the head of the Buddhistic church, died in the 14th year of Chandragupta's reign, when he was 76 years old, that is, 12 years after Tissa's *Upasampada*. Calculating in the way we checked the date of Asoka I., by referring to the Tables (See pp. 752-753 of September Theosophist, Vol. XX), we find that the 2nd year of Chandragupta was 164 A. B. = (24 + 16 + 8 + 24 + 18 + 28 + 22 + 22 + 2 Maghâda regnal dates) = (38 + 1 + 30 + 20 + 17 + 58 Ceylon regnal dates) = (16 + 44 + 40 + 64 patriarchal years of *Vinaya* chiefship). Thus the year 163 A.B. as the year of the accession of the founder of the Maurya dynasty to the throne of Pâtaliputra, is established beyond the possibility of a doubt, which cannot on any theory be reduced.

From these independent and very closely concurrent testimonies of the Brâhmanas, the Bauddhas, and the Jainas, the date of Chandragupta is thus conclusively and without doubt found to be 60 years before 320 or 315 B.C., to which latter date European scholars try to reduce it arbitrarily and without sufficient reason, from a so-called Greek synchronism, as recorded by Justin, Strabo and other Greek authors, who quote the fragmentary and somewhat fabulous accounts of Megasthenes' record of Sandracyptus or Sandracottus as once visiting Alexander the Great in his camp, and then defeating Seleucus Nicator in about 310 B.C., and expelling the Greeks from the Punjab.

Now there are fragmentary notices of several Maghâda kings in the Greek accounts, such as Xandramas, (*Sk.* Chandramas), Nandrus (Nanda), and Sandracottus, Sandracyptus, or Sandracoptus, (Chandragupta). Xandramas cannot possibly be a contemporary of Alexander; for Diodorus or rather Megasthenes, from whom he presumably quotes, simply tells the story of his being in the Greek camp in the Indus plain, far away from Palibothra.

As to Sandracottus, it is said by Justin that, having offended by his haughty language King Nandrus, who had ordered him to be killed, he escaped by flight to the Punjab, and collecting an army of robbers, expelled Greek invaders, and became king of the country of five rivers. Seleucus Nicator invaded the Punjab in 315 or 310 B.C. But Plutarch observes that Sandracottus saw Alexander in his early years, and, afterwards when he became king, used to say that the latter could have easily subdued Nandrus, the king of the *Prâsians*, who, owing to his wickedness and low origin, was hated and despised. Not long afterwards, he conquered the whole of India with an army of 600,000 men,

defeated Seleucus and forced him to purchase a treaty by ceding considerable territory west of Cabul, and giving his daughter in marriage.

Now Chandragupta was never known to have visited the Punjab. Chânakya got him, not at Takshasilâ (Taxila), but in the village of Mayuraposhaka, in the *Golla* district, according to the Jainas, or Mayura-nagara or Pippalivana Tarai, according to the Buddhists. Sandracottus could not therefore be the Chandragupta, whose date is about 75 years earlier. But in *Asoka-vadâna*, Asoka is mentioned as being sent by his father Vindusâra to Takshasilâ to quell an insurrection, which might be no other than the Greek invasion itself. Kunâla, his son, was also deputed by Asoka to Taxila to quell another revolt, some years later. Since Asoka returned to Pâtaliputra in 329 B.C., when his father died, and Alexander's invasion took place in 326-5, the difference of 3 or 4 years cannot be reconciled, if we are strict in our calculation. The personal interview between Sandracottus with Alexander therefore appears to be doubtful; more so, as the former part of the Grecian story as chief of the robbers, applies to Ugrasena Nanda, who, according to the Buddhistic chronicles, usurped the throne of the true Nandas. But there are so many confused accounts in *Greek*, that the more we critically examine them, the less trustworthy they become; for example, there are so many material differences in the so-called historical accounts of Alexander's conquests in the Punjab that we find insurmountable difficulties in reconciling them.

Megasthenes, who was sent by Seleucus Nicator as ambassador to the Court of Sandracottus, and who wrote even a less reliable description of India, does not mention the personal interview between him and Alexander the Great, unless he saw him in about 329 B.C., 3 or 4 years earlier, when the latter was on the outer confines of India. At any rate, there is no chronological difficulty in assuming that it was Asoka who defeated Seleucus and married his daughter in about 310 B.C., for the title of Chandragupta was not confined to one king only, but was given to at least two;—one, the founder of the Maurya dynasty, and the other, Asoka the Great, his grandson. Mr. Rhys Davids, who studied deeply the *Pâli* literature of Ceylon, doubts that Chandragupta was ever a proper name, or applied to one king only. He suspects it to be a title. In his "Buddhism," of the series of the "Non-Christian religious systems," pp. 220-21, "Is it possible," he says, "that Chandragupta was the Asoka? Chandragupta, the moon-protected, like Priyadarsi, is not a name at all, properly speaking, but an epithet adopted probably after the rise of his power."

Megasthenes also records that, besides the title of Palibothri, from the city and the family name, the king of the Prasii (*Sk. Prachi*, easterners), had special appellations to distinguish them from one another. It does not therefore seem unreasonable to infer that, like Amitrachates (*Sk.* Mitragupta or Amitraghata), Sandracottus was only an official designation which the Greek writers used without specifying any one,

from a confused account that they heard in connection with that title. In the *Gupta* dynasty also, we have two Chandraguptas, grandfather and grandson, as pointed out to me by Mr. Smith,—which appears to be but a repetition of an old customary usage. "It is quite possible," he says, "that Asoka was also called Chandragupta, it being a common practice for grandfather and grandson to have the same name. The two Chandraguptas of the imperial *Gupta* dynasty in the fourth century A.D. were grandfather and grandson." Besides, the Tibetans specify several Chandraguptas, such as (1) Chandragupta, the first Maurya King, (2) Vindusara Chandragupta, (3) Dharmasoka Chandragupta.*—See "Five years of Theosophy."

P. C. MUKHERJI.

*(To be continued.)*

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# Theosophy in All Lands.

## EUROPE.

LONDON, *September 29th*, 1899.

The month has been an eventful one at the European Headquarters, for it has witnessed the removal of the Section offices and of the Blavatsky Lodge from their long occupied rooms at 19, Avenue Road. The change, as all readers of the *Theosophist* know, has been impending for some months and the members of the Executive Committee have been viewing many suites of rooms in well known and central positions where it was felt that the work of the Society might be successfully continued, but the move has been hastened by an unexpected opportunity for the disposal of the lease of the present premises, and as Mrs. Besant had arranged to leave for India on the 22nd of the month the business arrangements were hurried through in order that all might be completed before she left.

The General Secretary has been fortunate enough to secure a handsome suite of rooms in Old Burlington Street off Piccadilly, one of the most central positions in the West End of London, but as the present occupants do not vacate them until Christmas, rooms have been temporarily taken in Langham Place W., next door to the new premises of the *Theosophical Publishing Society*. Here the Library and Section offices will be located for the next few months until the new headquarters are ready for occupation. Meanwhile, the Blavatsky Lodge has secured the large room of the Zoological Society in Hanover Square, for its Thursday evening meetings, so the work goes on undisturbed and we doubt not that the move to more prominent and central positions will give added opportunity for wider presentation of Theosophy to those who need it, and bring us into closer touch with the intellectual centres of London life.

Of course the completion of arrangements in such haste has naturally put a considerable strain upon the working strength of the helpers in Section and Lodge activities, but unflagging energy and hearty co-operation have prevailed and when the continental express steamed out of Charing Cross

* The Maurya family was probably a branch of the Lunar race, and so adopted the moon as its protector. *Chandragupta* literally means the moon-protected.

Station last Friday night bearing with it the most earnest and eloquent of all the messengers of the Great Lodge, she had the satisfaction of knowing that all was in order for the furtherance of the work to which her life is devoted. The usual large crowd of members assembled on the platform to bid Mrs. Besant good bye, and mingled streams of good wishes for a happy voyage and increasingly successful work with not unnatural feelings of regret at the prospect of losing for many long months the bodily presence of the teacher who does so much to help and stimulate. In spite of the tremendous burden of work which the last few weeks have brought upon her, it was a source of gladness to all her friends to note that Mrs. Besant looked better than when she reached England in May.

The last course of lectures given in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's was a great success. The subject of dreams, which was treated in the first two lectures, proved of very general interest, and the last lecture, on "Eastern and Western Science" attracted a somewhat different audience and was one of the very finest which we have been privileged to hear during the past season. None of these lectures are being printed but they will linger in the memory of those fortunate enough to have heard them.

On Thursday, September 21st, was held the last meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge, in the room which was formally opened in July 1890 by the co-founder of the Theosophical Society whose name the Lodge bears. The occasion could not fail to be interesting and the room was crammed to its utmost limits. There was no lecture, but short speeches were made by Mr. Mead, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, Hon. Otway Cuffe and the President, Mrs. Besant. All the speakers emphasized the importance of realising that the *Life* of the Lodge and of the Section was not bounded by four walls and limited by bricks and mortar; the moment for expansion had come and the form which had sheltered the life of the Lodge for nine years might be cast aside without regret—it had done its work, and so, like the physical vehicle we all cast off at what the world calls death, might be left, with cheerful confidence that the new surroundings would prove exactly such as the karma of the corporate consciousness needed for its expression. It so happens that the new premises of the Section are at present occupied by the Kennel Club, a somewhat aristocratic body, of sporting tendencies, and the President laughingly remarked that as all the would-be-witty papers would be sure to announce that the T. S. had 'gone to the dogs' she would herself give currency to the joke of which we should be sure to hear. No doubt the joke will be repeated as a sober fact by lots of uninformed people, and others, perhaps not uninformed, but with whom the 'wish is father to the thought,' but no real Theosophist will give a moment's attention to the rumour of an hour, so we can afford to enjoy a laugh at our own expense.

On the first two Thursday evenings in September Mrs. Besant lectured to the Blavatsky Lodge on "Some obscure Problems in Karma," both lectures being crammed full of interest to the student and calculated to clear up many puzzling questions which arise in connection with sudden and inexplicable crimes committed by apparently advanced egos; the responsibility of teachers and parents; and of persons placed in official or ruling positions when wrong doing is committed within their knowledge or by people under their command. All these points have been raised often in discussions on the workings of karma, and it was most helpful to the Lodge to hear Mrs. Besant's lucid explanations, which, it is to be hoped, she may

later deal with in published articles in the *Theosophical Review*, so that they may reach a wider circle of students.

The British Association for the Advancement of Science has foregathered this year at Dover where, on the common ground of devotion to discoveries in physical science, English and French savants have forgotten the hot feelings aroused on both sides of the channel by the trial (or mock trial) of Captain Dreyfus. Nothing very startling has been given to the world at this particular meeting of the Association; practical results of the Marconi wireless telegraphy were shown to the assembled scientists, and a new form of motor for ships, which is to do away with the vibration of the existing screw system, as well as lessen the weight and bulk of the machinery, ought to commend itself to the travelling community among whom so many theosophical workers are to be reckoned. The age of the earth is still agitating the minds of geologists and physicists, whose varying estimates differ from a mere trifle of twenty million years to the enormous computation of 4,000,000,000 years assigned by Professor Perry. While these learned people are still in the uncertainty which H. P. Blavatsky so scathingly exposed in the pages of the "Secret Doctrine," students of Theosophy may rest with the more confidence on the approximate calculations derived from other sources.

Friends of Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, in different parts of the world, will be interested to hear that for some time to come her sphere of work will lie in Rome. In that Ancient Empire City a strong Lodge is growing up, and Mrs. Oakley went thither on Friday last in order to forward the good work. Strangely impressive is the working of the law of karma. That a strong theosophical movement should spring up under the very eye of the Vatican, on the very spot—so to say—where the agents of the Inquisition murdered the body of Bruno, the pioneer Theosophist of the sixteenth century, is indeed a striking illustration of the working of the law in which we trust. Theosophists, all the world over, might do worse than send a helpful wish for the furtherance of the work in Rome.

A. B. C.

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## NETHERLANDS SECTION.

Summer is changing for autumn, and with it the temporal inaction of the holidays for a renewed and vigorous start for active work. Since I wrote my previous report two quiet months have been lived through, a time of little outer activity, as meetings are suspended during July and August in nearly all our Branches. Nevertheless some other kind of work has been going on, not so much visible to the outer world but of the utmost importance in itself, i.e., the forming and strengthening of new and old ties of friendship and fraternity between individual members from different countries and so between the different Sections. Some six of our members went over to attend the London Convention and to dive deep into the great stream of theosophical force pouring forth from a well nigh classical centre in the movement. They brought home happy and friendly reminiscences of brotherly feelings and harmonious sympathies. Then our Headquarters in Amsterdam was visited in its turn by a number of pioneers and old well-known workers in the theosophical field, as well as lesser stars in that firmament. Mrs. Kate Buffington Davis from America won, during her stay amongst us, all hearts that had an opportunity to make her beloved acquaintance, by her sunny, unassuming and kind ways, and made an excellent representative of the American

Section, which we ought to congratulate for having such a member. Then Mrs. Annie Besant herself stayed with us for three days, to do some private work, and although there was not a chance for a lecture or any other public demonstration, her presence has been a source of renewed force and perseverance for those who had the advantage of seeing or hearing her. Spiritual greatness needs no words to make itself felt, but silently influences its surroundings by its own inherent purity. A valued companion of Mrs. Besant was Mr. Keightley, India's General Secretary, whose kind personality is as well known as beloved by so many of us here. A few weeks later the Countess Wachtmeister paid us a visit, on her way to Bavaria, accompanied by her son the Count Axel Wachtmeister. It was she who directed our thoughts to Adyar and our Indian Brothers, by telling us of her experiences during her latest travels there and of the general state of the movement in that flowery land. Of Mr. Kohlen, the energetic President of the Brussels Lodge, of Mr. King, the North London Lodge's Secretary, or of Miss Lilly Carter the Secretary of the Central Belgian Branch, at Brussels, as well as of several others, we need not speak at any length. Be it sufficient to say that all these visits have shown, for one time more, the existence of that living reality of brotherhood which makes our Society rank so high as a transmitter and propagator of spiritual truth, and which binds individuals together in close and warm unity now, as it will sometime, perhaps in the near future, unite whole nations and races.

Next time I may be able to write some news about our winter work.

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## AUSTRALIA.

*September 12th*, 1899.

Since the Convention was held, in March last, there has been little to report here of any consequence. The arrival of Dr. Marques amongst us has been postponed on account of severe illness, but he expects to be with us about the end of October or beginning of November.

Miss Edger arrived in Sydney on July 23rd, and although the notice was very short, an audience of nearly 200 gathered to hear a lecture from her on "The Origin and Use of Desire," which she gave during her three days stop in Sydney.

Passing then to Brisbane in spite of inclement weather, she gave a series of most successful lectures during the week she remained in that city.

From Brisbane Miss Edger went to Rockhampton where she arrived on August 4th. There is only a very small Branch of the T. S. in this city, but very intelligent and appreciative audiences gathered to hear what Miss Edger had to say. Cairns was visited from August 18th to 26th. This is also a very small Branch, therefore the added impetus and interest which Miss Edger's visit was able to infuse into it was much appreciated.

From Cairns Miss Edger was to proceed further north to Townville and the gold mining centre of Charter's Towers, where she would be breaking entirely fresh ground.

Then turning south again, she expects to visit and lecture in Maryborough and Bundaberg from Sept. 16th to 30th, arriving in Brisbane again about October 3rd. Here she proposes to remain about 3 weeks, after which she will come to Sydney and make a stay of about two weeks before returning to New Zealand for the New Zealand Convention due to take place at Christmas.

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## NEW ZEALAND SECTION.

There is fresh activity in connection with the Dunedin Branch, and lectures are now being given in Port Chalmers by Dunedin members, as an extension of the work that has been done there by the group which meets weekly for study. Miss Christie gave a lecture in the Currie Street Hall on July 14th, on 'The Basis of Theosophy,' and on August 15th, Miss Horne lectured on 'Some Teachings of the Ancient Wisdom.'

The "Georgia Magnet" visited Auckland recently and her clever tricks raised a good deal of interest in phenomena. On September 3rd, Mr. S. Stuart lectured on 'The Occult Forces of Nature' to a large audience, and there followed a highly interesting discussion.

From October to the end of the year, Mrs. Draffin's Auckland suburban lectures will be given weekly on Sunday afternoons, taking five different suburban centres in turn.

The Pahiatua Branch has lost a few of its members during the year, but new members have come in and activity has been resumed. Fortnightly meetings are now being held.

The Wanganui Branch seems likely to wake up again before long: there is a fresh growth of interest there and a number of students are drawing together. An active member, Mr. W. C. Smith, read a paper on Reincarnation, lately, to a literary society, and it was very well received. The conclusion arrived at generally being that we had a good deal to learn from Eastern thought.

Arrangements have begun for the holding of the next Convention, and all through the Section there is a waking to increase of activity for the coming summer months.

# Reviews.

## LA LUMIÈRE DE' L' ASIE.*

Through the kindness of the Translator we have received a copy of this work which should have a wide circulation in French-speaking countries. M. Sorg has done his part well, the mellifluous verses of the original having been rendered in classical French, faithfully following the Author's text. He justly observes that the saying of the writer, Chevrillon, is true, that "What our great European thinkers of to-day are saying, the Buddhist sages taught, twenty-three centuries ago." He is lost in admiration for that sublime faculty of insight which enabled the Buddha to discover under the frictions, strifes and antagonisms of nature, the golden link of unity, which makes the whole world akin.

## THE UPANISHADS.

*(By a Hindu.)*

Since his appointment as the Curator of the Government Oriental Library, Mysore, Mr. A. Mahâdeva Sastriar has been making excellent use of his opportunity in editing a series of Sanskrit works relating to the Phi-

* "The Light of Asia," by Sir Edwin Arnold: translated into French, with an Introduction and Notes, by Léon Sorg, Procureur Général, &c. Pondichéry. Paris, Chamuel, Editeur.

losophy of the Hindus. He rescued and collected several rare and important manuscript copies of a number of standard philosophical treatises which the Mysore Government has published under the title of "The Mysore Government Oriental Library Series." Recently he undertook, for the benefit of those who have no knowledge of the Sanskrit language, the translation of these learned treatises into English, the several volumes of translations being formed into a series appropriately called the Vedic Religion Series. The place of honour in this series was given to a translation of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* with Sankara's commentaries, as this work is regarded as containing the quintessence of Vedic Philosophy. Encouraged by the cordial reception which this work met with at the hands both of the learned and the lay public Mr. Mahâdeva Sastriar set to himself the rather difficult task of preparing accurate translations of the Minor Upanishads, of which there is a very large number. Until recently only about a dozen of the classical Upanishads have been made available to the English reading public through the unwearied efforts of Professor Max Müller, and during the last two years Professor Paul Deussen translated into German as many as 63 of the Upanishads. But so far as can be ascertained, Mr. Mahâdeva Sastriar has been the first in the field in this country to give English translations of the Minor Upanishads which treated of a more detailed system of Yoga by which to realise the unity established on the authority of more classical Upanishads.

Last year he published the translation of the Amritabindu and Kaivalya Upanishads, both of them minor ones with commentaries; and now he has brought out another volume of translations under the comprehensive title of "The Vedânta Doctrine of Srî Sankarâ Charya." The publication comprises the following works literally translated into English with explanatory comments:—(i) Srî Sankarâ Charya's Dakshinamurti Stôtra, an ode to the Divine Self, with Suresvara Charya's exposition named Manasollasa, "Brilliant Play of Thought"; (ii) Srî Suresvara Charya's Pranava Vartika, treating of the contemplation of the Supreme Âtman by means of Pranava; and (iii) Dakshinamurti Upanishad. These three works, though small in themselves, are very important contributions to the ancient Vedic literature which is the foundation of the whole literature of India, and epitomise the Vedânta doctrine as expounded by Sankarâ Charya and Suresvara Charya in their commentaries on the Upanishads. While the name of Sankara is familiar to every student of Eastern Philosophy, that of Suresvara Charya is unknown to many. The latter was the foremost of Sankara's immediate disciples and his literary collaborator, and his writings have long remained inaccessible to all but a very select few who were intellectually qualified to study his very learned exposition of Philosophy and Metaphysics. Suresvara Charya carried out Sankara's mission of spreading the system of Vedânta more widely by elucidating, systematising, supplementing and even improving upon his master's teachings. Mr. Mahâdeva Sastriar remarks of him in the preface, "that his exposition of the Vedânta doctrine is often so very original and is throughout marked with such thoroughness, precision and clearness that it forms a very valuable supplement to the teachings of the Upanishads, and its authority on all knotty points is acknowledged with due reverence and submission by all the Advaita writers of later days." In their commentaries on the works comprised in this volume, Sankara and his disciple establish the Advaita Vedânta on a thoroughly logical basis, and at the same time refute by elaborate arguments the doctrines of the other rival Indian systems of Philosophy. As in the course of the commentaries the tenets of the several

schools are discussed, the translator has added to his book a critical introductory dissertation giving a short review of the methods and the fundamental principles of the various systems of Aryan philosophy, to enable the reader to have a comprehensive view of the same. Mr. Mahâdeva Sastriar is not merely an accomplished Sanskrit scholar but an ardent and well informed student of Sanskrit philosophy, and this two-fold qualification has won for him the name of a sympathetic editor and conscientious translator.

Another native gentleman who is devoting his time and money in bringing out English translations of the Upanishads is Mr. V. C. Seshachariar, High Court Vakil, Mylapore. He has set apart a fairly large sum to be devoted to the promotion of charitable and philanthropic objects; and as an enlightened and patriotic Hindu he thinks it almost a religious obligation imposed on him to place the truths of the highest philosophy of his ancestors, as expounded in the immortal productions of the Aryan Rishis of old, within the reach of modern Hindus who are more proficient in English than in Sanskrit. With this laudable end in view he has secured the aid of competent Sanskrit scholars to translate all the classical Upanishads with the commentaries of Sankarâ Charya and Ramanuja Charya, two of the most learned of Hindu theologians and philosophers. Mr. Seshachariar is now going on with the Advaita commentaries and when he finishes their translation he will take Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita commentaries. The third volume of the first series is a translation of the first four chapters of the Chandogya Upanishad, by Mr. Ganganath Jha, M.A., the well-known Vedic scholar of the Dhurbhunga State. This Upanishad belongs to the Sama Veda and is regarded by Hindus as contributing the most important materials to their Orthodox philosophy—the Vedânta. This is also one of the several Upanishads translated into Persian under the auspices of Dara Shuksh, the liberal-minded and enlightened son of Emperor Shah Jehan. From the Persian it was translated into French by Anquetil Duperron in his Oupnekhat, and attracted the attention of the German philosopher Schopenhauer who entertained a high opinion of the teachings of the Upanishads. Portions of the Chandogya were translated into English by Colebrook and into Latin and German by F. W. Windischmann in 1833. It is devoted to giving an elaborate explanation of the mysterious syllable Aum, which is interpreted variously by various commentators. The most sublime meaning it has been made to yield is that it is a symbolic representation of Átman, the Highest Self, who is described to be the One Light and the Self in all. The word is also described as a mnemonic formula meant to be repeated by one in his daily *Manana* or contemplation, in order to keep constantly before his mind the truth of the *Mahavakya Soham*, "He I am," which again means *Tat Tvam Asi*, "That Thou Art." The Chandogya is one of the most difficult of the Upanishads, and, without the aid of the commentaries, it is almost impossible to comprehend its teachings. Mr. Seshachariar would have made the translations of Sankara's commentaries more lucid and interesting if he had instructed Mr. Ganganath to add short footnotes of explanation and write a prefatory essay giving in general terms the drift of the teachings of the Upanishad. An index and a glossary would also have enhanced the value of the translations, which have been rendered intelligently and faithfully.

Messrs. G. A. Natesan and Co. who are responsible for the printing and general get up of the series, have executed the work in a neat and attractive style.—*Madras Mail.*

[Mr. A. Mahâdeva Sastry, Mr. Ganganath Jha and Mr. V. C. Seshachari are all members of the Theosophical Society, the latter being the Secretary of the Adyar Lodge.—Ed. note.]

## EUROPEAN SECTION.

The official report of the Ninth Annual Convention of the European Section, at London, July 8th and 9th, is a most interesting document, very creditable to the new General Secretary, Honorable Otway Cuffe. Members attended from America, Holland, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy and Russia, as well as from many parts of the United Kingdom. Mr. Cuffe, General-Secretary, Mr. Herbert Burrows, Treasurer, the Executive Committee, with the substitution of Dr. Hubbe Schleiden for Mons. Courmes—who retires to take office in the new French Section—and Messrs. Digby, Besant and M. U. Moore, Auditors, were re-elected.

## MAGAZINES.

*The Theosophical Review* for September opens with a paper by G. R. S. Mead, on "Hermes the Thrice-greatest, according to Iamblichus, an Initiate of the Egyptian Wisdom,"—another of the fruits of Mr. Mead's indefatigable researches in Greek literature. "The Proofs of Theosophy" are plainly put in an able article by Alexander Fullerton. "The Hidden Church on Russian Soil," notes a movement on the part of certain so-called 'heretical' Russians towards a more spiritual religious life. It is from the pen of a Russian. "Love and Law," by Dr. A. A. Wells, is a successful attempt to throw light on the fundamental principles of Karma and Reincarnation, and to brush away some Theological cobwebs. "The Latest Step in Modern Philosophy" is in the line of a review of Mr. Shadworth H. Hodgson's late work, "The Metaphysic of Experience." Mrs. Besant contributes a thoughtful paper on "The Bases of Education," touching upon its physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual phases. "Ancient Peru" is the first chapter of what promises to be an interesting series on this subject, by C. W. Leadbeater.

*Mercury* for August completes its fifth Volume, makes its parting bow and retires, merging in the American *Theosophical Review* which is to be issued henceforth, commencing with the September number, simultaneously with the English edition, and from the office of the Theosophical Book Concern, 26, Van Buren St., Chicago. The good work which has been accomplished by *Mercury*, owing to the zeal and devotion of its editor, will live on, and other work is to spring up and be carried on under the same management. *The Theosophic Messenger* will henceforth be issued from the Mercury Publishing Office at San Francisco, and will be the monthly official organ of the American Section of the T. S. A children's magazine, *The Golden Chain*, will also be issued from the same place. This will be a reincarnation, so to speak, of the *Original Mercury* which, it will be remembered was, in its initial stage a magazine for children. May success attend these worthy efforts. This closing issue of Mercury contains a fine portrait of Mrs. Besant. Dr. Edouard Blitz writes on "The Soul and its Conscious Evolution." M. Lowthine on "The Value of Appearances," and W. G. John on "Nature's Laws." The article on "Prayer" (unsigned) is exceptionally good. The "National Committee Letter" contains valuable suggestions to Branches and members.

*Theosophy in Australasia* gives a report of the European Convention of

the T. S., short articles on "Modern Mysticism," "Theosophy in Daily Life," and "Inspiration and Infallibility," which are followed by "Questions and Answers" and "Activities."

*The Theosophic Gleaner* for October presents quite a variety of matter original and selected, and is fully up to the usual standard.

*Lotus Blüthen* for October contains three articles. A selection from the Chandogya Upanishad is given with explanations. "The Esoteric Meaning of a few Passages from Goethe's Faust" shows the mystic tendencies of the great German poet. "Beams of Light from the Orient" is a collection of some of the wise sayings of Zoroaster.

*The Arya Bala Bodhini* opens with a short paper by Miss S. E. P., on "The Lesson of the Great Stone Face." This is followed by "The Ideal Fulfilled," "Christian Claim," "Prayer" (reprinted from *Mercury*), and appeals for educational and protective institutions.

*Teosofia* (Italy) continues its excellent work under the Editorship of Signor Decio Calvari, to whom we feel obliged for a most brotherly word of welcome to the President-Founder on behalf of the Rome Branch, which hopes to see him in person next year.

*Sophia* (Spain) is enriched by the new series of essays on Pre-Christian Science, in which Señor Artino Soria y Mata is displaying his erudition and philosophical and literary ability. The usual translations of the books and essays of Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater and other English writers are given.

*Theosophia* (Holland) translates from H. P. B., Mrs. Besant, Mme. Jelihovsky, Mr. Sinnett and others—a plan which is worthy of all praise while at the same time throwing upon our leading writers the grave responsibility of putting their best thoughts into their publications, since they are to reach an audience of many nations and countries.

*Philadelphia* (South America) pursues the same good policy, and by the channel of our excellent Buenos Aires magazine, the teachings of our English Colleagues are brought to the notice of the enlightened readers of that far-off land.

*Revue Théosophique* (France) for August opens with a full report of a lecture (French) given by Mrs. Besant in Paris in May last, on her return from India. One has to read the discourse in the language in which it was spoken to appreciate the flexibility of mind which enables Mrs. Besant to expound her theosophical ideas with almost as much eloquence and richness of verbiage as she shows in her English lectures. Next to H. P. B. she is the most wonderful woman of the age. In the September Number, Dr. Pascal acknowledges the receipt of the Charter for the French Section. He announces that in the present season an Executive Council will be formed and a code of bye-laws and rules will be adopted. The official year will begin on the 1st January; a sectional bulletin or gazette will be established and Headquarters Offices opened. We wish every success to the new Section, and trust that it may shine with spiritual light amid the gloom that now obscures the sky of France.

*The Light of the East, The Light of Truth, Brahmavâdin, Prasnottara, Prabuddha Bhârata, Indian Journal of Education, Rays of Light, Vâhan, Light, Modern Astrology, L'Initiation, Harbinger of Light, Metaphysical Magazine, Mind, Immortality, Banner of Light, Phrenological Journal, Omega, Universal Brotherhood, New Century* and *Psychic Digest*, are thankfully acknowledged.

## *CUTTINGS AND COMMENTS.*

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

*Clairvoyance and "X-ray sight."*

In referring to the unusual powers of the lad who resides in Massachusetts, U. S. A., and who can examine the interior of the human body with the unaided eye, "as if with the X-rays," the *Theosophical Review* says:

The boy is exercising normal physical clairvoyance of a very simple kind: if, however, he were called a clairvoyant he would be suspected; but if the doctors rebaptise physical clairvoyance as 'X-ray sight,' it will become respectable and admissible to scientific society.

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*Practical Telepathy.*

We find in the August number of the *Psychic Digest* some interesting extracts from an article on "Telepathy," which originally appeared in the columns of a widely circulated Christian paper published at Little Rock, Ark., U.S.A., in which the editor, Rev. Thomas J. Shelton, relates some of his practical experiences. He says:—

The science of telepathy has been confirmed by the wireless telegraph and telephone. I have been using telepathy constantly for the past ten years, and it is now as natural to me as speech from the mouth. My daughter and I are in such close telepathic conjunction with each other that we now seldom communicate in writing, though thousands of miles apart. I heal the sick, answer letters and transact ordinary business through her by means of telepathy.

I will give you one instance out of an every-day occurrence. I was in Denver and she in Little Rock. She wrote me there was not enough "copy" for the printers. I knew it would take from three to four days to communicate by mail, so I sat by my desk and said: "You will find in my desk three articles: 'Getting Religion', 'Who are You,' and 'Half Truths and the Truth'; give them to the printers." In this same package there were at least a dozen different articles, but she had no trouble in selecting the ones I named. But this goes on all the time until it is as perfect as the word of mouth. If I am absent she seldom thinks of sending me a letter but answers it as I direct by telepathy, and in thousands of cases she has never made a single mistake. In ordinary business the other members of the family are used to hearing her quote me, whether I am miles away or in the next room.

Now we did not cultivate this; it came to us in the ordinary course of business and has grown into a regular habit. I am often absent from home (in the physical sense), for I practice what I preach. (I am omnipresent; therefore my office is in me, my kingdom is within me.) I must make this truth practical; therefore I go where and when I please. Every day, Edna and I talk to each other, and so we are never separated.

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*Human Windfalls.*

An exchange has the following item of truth:—

Life, as it is now lived by the average man or woman is slow suicide. In fact, it is rare to find any one who lives to a harmonious, ripe old age, just like matured and luscious fruit that falls to the ground. People, generally, do not die from ripeness but from corruption. They are like unripe fruit that decays before it matures.—L. A. M.

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*"Mist-puffs" and the Barisal Guns.*

An American physician is the author of the latest theory of the cause of those mysterious atmospheric phenomena known as the Barisal Guns. We cannot say it is very convincing since, in the Gangetic Delta, the gun-sounds are heard in clear as well as in foggy weather. An American paper says :—

"A year or two ago when the Spanish war ships were supposed to be off the coast of Maine, hundreds of truthful and unimaginative residents of the shore towns heard strange sounds which they mistook for the firing of cannon. At the time the Minneapolis and Columbia were patrolling the New England coast from Cape Cod to Quoddy Head, the people of Milbridge, Jonesport, Lubec and Seal Cove were startled as often as once a week by hearing a dull booming note, like the firing of distant guns, come rolling in from the sea. Though the Spanish war vessels were then off the North Coast of South America, headed for Santiago harbour, nobody could convince the Maine fishermen that the sounds which they heard were not the reports of cannon fired with deadly aim at some of the coasting fleet in the offing.

Few persons were able to give any definite account of the noises, which came at uncertain intervals between 1 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and which were most frequent and pronounced in times of dense fog. As a result of this scare, Bar Harbour's charms as a summer resort fell off greatly, and a good number of desirable cottages were deprived of tenants for the season.

Among the men who heard the boom of the ghostly cannons was Dr. G. H. Hay of Philadelphia, who was passing his vacation on Cranberry Island. Dr. Hay is a practical man who knows a cannon when he hears its talk. He was firmly convinced that the sounds were caused by some form of explosion either from blasting of ledges or quarries or from signal guns on board yachts. As the explosions were kept up long after the Spanish ships had been wrecked on the shores of Cuba, he made a record of weather conditions in order to solve the mystery. The reports were never heard except in foggy weather, and were loudest and most pronounced on hot muggy days when the fog was lifting to let in bars of sunlight. Meantime he had hunted up some French and German books and read accounts of similar sounds which had been heard near the North Sea and near Antwerp.

These noises were caused by fog rumblings which were common on warm days. The natives called them 'mistpoeffers,' which literally translated means fog hiccoughs. After comparing the two phenomena, Dr. Hay was certain that the mistpoeffer of the Old World is found on the coast of Maine. The sounds have been heard again this year when there was no Spanish ship within 3,000 miles of Maine, but nobody cares for them now that the war is over, and the louder and oftener they come, the higher goes the price of cottage rent.

Since announcing his discovery of the mistpoeffer, Dr. Hay has been asked to visit Gloucester and Newburyport and account for the phantom fleet that was seen off the coast of Massachusetts last May, but has declined. He says he believes there are many things seen and heard in Massachusetts that are beyond the reach of science."

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*Swedenborg on the Inner Breath.*

Though the practice of *pranayâma* is not to be generally recommended, it seems that Swedenborg recognized the relation existing between activity of the spiritual perceptions and temporary suspension of the act of breathing, though we are not informed that he ever practised the latter as a means of inducing the former. He says in his "Spiritual Diary" :

My respiration has been so formed by the Lord as to enable me to breathe inwardly for a long period of time without the aid of the external air; my respiration being directed within, and my outward senses, as well as actions,

still continuing in their vigour, which is only possible with persons who have been so formed by the Lord. I have been instructed that my breathing was so directed, without my being aware of it, in order to enable me to be with spirits and to speak with them.

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*Sanskrit Epic Text Society.*

The London correspondent of *The Indian Mirror*, after referring to the good work which has been accomplished in England by the Buddhist Text Society, speaks of the interest awakened there in regard to Indian epics, by the publication of Mr. R. C. Dutt's poetical translation of the chief portions of the Mahâbhârata, and says, further:

The impression is gaining ground every day that without a thorough knowledge of the Indian epics it will be impossible for the Western mind to understand Hindu life and character. Apart from this practical value, the Indian epics are as valuable to the student of poetry as the Homeric poems. By a critical, systematic and historical study of these epics, much light could be thrown on the history, religion, philosophy, laws and customs, indeed on the entire civilization of Ancient India. And with a view to help these studies, it is proposed, I hear, to start a society with the above designation, which will become the centre of all researches relating to ancient Hindu literature. The proposal will be formally brought forward, it is said, before the Indian section of the Congress of Orientalists which meets next month in October, with a view to the appointment of a Committee for enlisting the support of the various Governments, and the academies and learned societies both of Europe and America, and more particularly of the Hindu Princes of India.

We hear that Mr. Dutt is about to bring out a similar version of the Râmâyana.

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*Mrs. Besant's Views on Dreams.*

From the above-mentioned source we also clip the following concerning Mrs. Besant's recent lecture in St. James's Hall, London, on "Why and How we Dream." Among the curious stories cited in illustration of this subject, was one of an innocent woman who was imprisoned on a charge of murdering her husband:—

One night in her prison cell, she dreamed how her husband was killed, and recognised the features of the murderer. She subsequently asked to be allowed to relate the dream to the Magistrate, and her request being granted, the official was so interested that he sent for the man she accused, and to him told the story. He (the man) believed that further evidence had come to light, and forthwith confessed. How did the woman have such a dream? Some would account for it by a message having been sent by the husband to his wife, he desiring her to be saved a shameful death.

In dreams, time was measured in an uncertain manner. In the space of a few seconds one seemed to have existed hours, days, weeks, months and often years; and any impression one had was always dramatically, or rather pictorially, shown. Many stories of dreams had been collected, but of these the bulk, said Mrs. Besant, were mere rubbish, only a comparatively small residue deserving further investigation.

Mrs. Besant seemed to indicate that the middle-class intellectual beings were not much troubled with dreams. Those who were not masters of their minds, who were harassed at night by thoughts of which they could not rid themselves, these were the folk whose dreams were foolish and fragmentary. Highly developed mortals, who had their minds under control, frequently had coherent, logical, and instructive dreams. If one wished to dream wisely, one must think wisely.

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"*Myself and I.*"

In the *Metaphysical Magazine* (U. S. A.) for September—a periodical that furnishes its readers with much good matter—we find an excellent contribution by Mrs. Eva Best, from which we quote largely. The lesson which it teaches is an important one, and is entitled "Myself and I."

In ages past—in days of ignorance—
When Youth was ours, and we belonged to Youth.
Myself and I were indivisible;
The closest comrades, boon companions, friends,
Enjoying Life's delights in mutual
And honest sympathy.

* * * * *

But afterwhile, when I had older grown,
And grim Experience had led me through
Some fields of wisdom where more briers grew
Than fragrant blossoms—where the narrow paths
Were far less smooth than those which I had known
In earlier years—had shown me this and that,
And taught me why the other had to be,
I came, at last, although they differed so,
To prize the new thoughts and forget the old,
And then, somehow, to grow less satisfied
And patient with Myself.

I realized
That I was Spirit, glad, unfettered, free;
Chained only to this personality,
Myself—an obstacle, a hindering thing
That kept me from a purer, loftier life
On higher planes.

It grew unbearable.
And then I called Myself a host of names,
And wished I might be rid of that which I—
The god, the true Immortal Entity—
Felt as a clog, a weight upon my soul.* * *

I saw that I
Had in the past allowed Myself to rule,
To take command, to make an abject slave
Of that which I now comprehended should
Have been the Master, had allowed Myself
To lead me through the narrow, petty rounds
Of earthly pleasure's sensuous delights,
Which blinded my true sight to holy things,
And shut the crystal gates between Myself
And that I craved with all my yearning soul!

I *would* be rid of what so weighed me down!
I *would* be free, and Master of Myself!
But how?

* * * * *

Restricted, fretted, discontented, wroth
That I must be compelled to thus remain
A prisoner, a slave in durance vile,
I grew to brooding over these, my woes,
Until, at last, it seemed to me I found
The only way to reach the living Truth.
I would no longer cherish, foster, soothe,
Nor pander to that which I felt to be
My wakening Spirit's chief antagonist.

And, so, forswearing the insistent flesh,
I stifled all its natural appetites;
Choked back its clamoring, and starved Myself.
* * * * *

Myself and I, at last, were wide apart;
I loathed it, while it suffered patiently;
Nor did I dream how nearly I had come
To lose the substance in the shadow!
* * * * *

Here our pilgrim ("I") calls aloud to experience for light, truth and guidance, but no answer is heard.

And while I kept to my ascetic couch
My earthly frame uncared for and unkempt,
A physical inertia holding it
And all its vital functions, to a plane
Of life so low that only breath remained,—
Experience began, at last, to teach
The lessons I may nevermore unlearn.
In voice as tender as the sighing winds
That lift the perfume of a fragrant flower
From dark and dewy, sheltered garden aisles
To open, moonlit casement overhead,
The first words fell upon the listening ear
Of my rapt soul:

"O most mistaken One!
How dost thou think that I, experience,
Can teach thee when thou shuttest up the book—
The Alphabet of Being—in this wise?
In thine own self is all there is to know;
And this poor tenement, abused, despised,
Contemned and looked upon with erring eyes—
This casket wherein God hath placed His pearl
That it may grow to rounded glory here—
Is something excellent and beautiful;
So marvelous, so perfect, so divine,
That thou shouldst stand in very awe before
The dwelling Love itself hath builded thee.

"And yet what hast thou done, mistaken One?
Blind to the glories of the godly gift
Whose smallest mystery is far beyond
All solving of thine own, thou spurnest it,
And, undermining its most wondrous walls
Built by unnumbered elemental lives
That work for thee, O Ingrate, night and day,
Dost weaken that which thou canst not uphold—
Dost threaten with destruction that which thou
Shouldst cherish with all reverence and love!

"When in the time to come—*and not before*—
Thou canst say truthfully, '*Come, I will build
Myself a house*'—then thou mayst have the right
To look with what contempt it pleaseth thee
Upon thine earthly tenement. But then
Methinks," smiled grim Experience, "thou'lt be
In quite another mood from that which hath
So moved thee but a little while ago!

"What imperfections mar the perfect plan
Are caused by mortal ideation; for
As man thinks, so is he; each thought he holds
Will hang its banner on the outer walls.
As raiment to the body, so is thought

Unto the dweller in the tenement.
And if thy mind be strong and pure and clean,
Thy casket then must ever show itself
A fitting holder of the radiant soul.

"Teach thou thy body to be clean and pure;
Lift up the animal, and teach it sin
Is error—you need not drag it down.
Abide with holy strengthening thoughts,
Thine earth environments, and let the sun
Of perfect purity bathe with its light
All places which, in ignorance, thou hast
Allowed to stand in shadow far too long.
No longer slave—be Master! Dominate
Thy lower self, nor upon nature place
The burden of thy self-indulgences!"

I listened, breathless, to the chiding voice
Then turned to contemplate Myself.

A wreck—
A shadow of Myself was all I saw—
A ghost of what had been; a shattered frame
That scarce could shelter even my poor soul,
Which writhed in anguish at the ignorance
That set such piteous penance for Myself.

A strong revulsion seized my consciousness;
I vowed to cherish and protect and care
For that which I could no more comprehend
In all its wondrous mechanism than
I could create the thing I called Myself;
I saw that I, the Master of the House,
Must learn his lessons whilst he dwells therein;
Must look out through its windows at the world:
Must bring his senses up to altitudes
Which purge them of unnatural intent;
Must keep the heart of this same earthly home
As sweet and clean and pure and free from stain
As he would have his very soul to be!
Must sweep the cobwebs and the dust away,
And let the sunlight into every room!

And this, through many rounds of trying days,
I strove to do; my efforts crowned, at last,
With some success. And then it was I dared
(My dwelling made quite clean and orderly)
To ask Experience to come to me,
And make me know the A, B, C, of Life,
And how to crawl, then walk, then climb, then soar!
Again I heard the soft vibrating tones
Which thrilled me as I listened:

"O my child,
The first and hardest lesson of all life
Thou hast already mastered; and the rest
Will follow," said Experience: "and I
Perforce must teach thee as none other can—
*For all of Wisdom that exists is mine*
*To fetch to thee and add to that great store*
*Of living truths I'll help thee make thine own.*
But be thou patient; let thy steps be slow;
The path before thee—that which thou must tread
Through trying sun and rain, through frost and fire—
Is called Eternity.