

neutrality, or of foreign missions pledged, however honestly and philanthropically, to convert the natives to the Christian faith and civilisation.

V. Graduates referred to in clause I are earnestly requested to attend a meeting in H. N. R. College Hall, Trichinopoly, at 4 p. m. Tuesday the 23rd of December next, to consider the scheme and to intimate their views beforehand.

VI. The Theosophical Society, allied to the Hindu Sabha and interested in the up-keep of Hindu Religion and Literature, may render very valuable and efficient help in carrying out our scheme.

A. SANKARAIAH, B. A., F. M. N.

Note:—The Dewan Peishkar Sankariah should try to turn into going concerns on this physical plane some of the enticing schemes that his philanthropic imagination constructs in the astral world.—*Ed.*

THE ECLIPSE OBSERVANCES OF THE HINDUS.

TO THE EDITOR.

I am glad of the inquiring spirit which at present actuates the Hindus in respect of their Hindu religious observances and institutions, though sometimes the questions are put in a cavilling and discourteous spirit. However, all is well that ends well. The very name "Hindu" has been defined by me as a compound word denoting the combination of the sun and moon, or of Purusha and Prakriti, being the two aspects of the one Para Brahm. The Solar is the spiritual and the Lunar the physical or materialistic science. There is the gross sensuous world, and there is the subtle supersensuous world which is the inspiring life of the former. Secular literature treats of the former and religions of the latter. Why then should persons looking at the phenomena from different standpoints quarrel with one another? Of course religious or yogic wisdom is not within reach of every secularist, unless he works to transcend his secular plane. Now to turn to the eclipse; it will be noted that Rahu or Ketu causes the eclipse on the physical plane as the shadow which is typical of the ignorance or avidya conceals from us the true knowledge of Purush, and Prakriti. In our human body, the air-passage through the right nostril is called the Surya Nadi and that through the left nostril the Chandra Nadi, and for the novice in Pránáyámam there are eclipses in the course of his exercises from which he should recover his spirituality as even the sun and moon emerge from their eclipses. The outer eclipses are to the religious Hindu analogous to, and instructive of, the constitution of nature and of human nature. Whatever is objective, *i. e.*, external to us, has its subjective, *i. e.*, mental counterpart within us. Hence the eclipse is a fitting and inspiring event for religious observances and devotion. Physically also the Magnetism of the atmosphere is calculated to help the disengagement of the mind from terrestrial concerns. And it is usually the time when the Mahatmas and the Pitris take particular cognisance of the conduct of men in the world.

A. SANKARAIAH, P. F. H. S.

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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

[Family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares.]

FIRE ELEMENTALS.

STORIES like those I am about to quote become a tangle of absurdities, unless the reader bears in mind that there may be states of matter not yet discovered by physical science, and potentialities of consciousness other than our own. As regards the laws of combustion, we have acquired, since Lavoisier announced his grand generalisation, much exact information, and our Professors of Chemistry can discourse upon the consumption of fuel in a style at once instructive and fascinating. We know that increased temperature merely means an increased velocity of molecular motion, and the assumed explanation of the familiar phenomena of combustion is that a certain intensity of molecular activity is necessary in order to bring the molecules of oxygen sufficiently near to those of the combustible to enable the atoms to unite, and that the point of ignition is simply the temperature at which the required molecular momentum is attained.* The chemical change involved is extremely simple, and so far everything is comprehensible. But the case becomes much more difficult when we come to study such phenomena of combustion as those in the Arkonam narrative below. Granting that the chemical laws of ignition are acting, and that no acid, or friction, or development of heat by the compression of woolly or oily waste in heaps, can be postulated, nor any atmospheric change leading to an abnormal degree of heat be proved, *what is the power which sets up that degree of molecular activity* which is roughly indicated by the phrase, "the point of ignition?" It may be denied that there are such facts

**Vide* Cooke's "New Chemistry," or any other recent chemical authority.

as these at all—the easiest and most popular way out of the scientific difficulty. Then, in such case, discussion must be postponed until the sciolist evolves into the real scientist, or student of Nature, who prizes knowledge above all things and holds to no preconceptions. This article is not written for such sciolists.

Stories like the following are common to all times and all countries; it is from the *Hindu* of 1st January :—

“There is a family consisting of four brothers, of whom the first and the eldest is named Kalathur Vathathirilinga Moodelliar, the second, Vethachella Moodelliar, third, Siyala Moodelliar, the fourth, Singaravalu Moodelliar. The first brother is employed as second clerk in the Resident Engineer's Office, M. R. C., Arkonam, North-West Line; the second is employed as storekeeper, Telegraph Engineer's Office, at Arkonam, under Mr. G. K. Winter; the third is employed as Station-master, S. I. R., at Saidapet and Chingleput, and the fourth is employed as a Revenue Inspector at Chingleput. These persons have their own house at Arkonam and all live together with their family, while the last brother is living at Chingleput singly. Two months ago a Mussalman fakir begged the eldest brother to give him five rupees. He refused to pay the whole sum, but offered eight annas, which the beggar refused to take and walked away. In the same month, the son of the eldest brother was married to the daughter of the late lamented Baboo Moodelliar, brother of the late lamented Sivasankara Moodelliar at Triplicane, in Madras. From this month forward, all sorts of evil incidents have been happening in their house. At the commencement, the bridal dress of the daughter-in-law of the eldest brother was found burnt to ashes in the drawer. On the next following days, the clothes of the family were found burnt to ashes in the boxes, while the boxes were quite unburnt. Some clothes which were left hanging on the rope were also burnt in the same way. For this reason, the family used to tie up all their clothes in bundles which were taken care of by the males till they went to office and then were left in charge of their females, who, when they go aside to attend to their business for a minute or two, find the bundles carried away to the back part of the garden and burning; while the children are playing in the house the dress which they are wearing is burnt and they are physically unhurt. But a one-month infant was hurt in the shoulder while the cloth upon which it was laid was burning. All the dresses of the males, turbans, &c., were also burnt in the same way. When the washerman left forty of their cloths in a bundle, it was burnt “accidentally.” Once, the ropes of the cradle were burnt and the cradle with the child fell down. When the dresses of the family had been burnt in the same way, they purchased new clothes, which were also burnt. An exorcist was brought in to find out the cause of these ill chances; he uttered some mantrams and placed a piece of cloth on the verandah, and said that it should not be burnt for a week, if the incidents are to be stopped. But to his surprise the cloth was burnt to ashes as soon as he stepped out of the house. Seeing this the family were removed to a village named Mungammappet; even here they were not without these complaints. Such are the wonderful occurrences happening to their cloths. Those happening to their food are to be mentioned next. After the food has been prepared, when the family go to take it, the meal pots and dishes are found in different rooms of the house. While the food is being cooked, excrements appear on the top of it in the vessel, and thus the food is utterly spoiled. Some ten brass vessels used for cooking were also lost for a time. So even their very means of living are being encroached upon by evil chances. The family cup of misfortune is full to the brim. Their house itself was seen burning in the roof a week ago; while a hut attached to the back part of the house was burnt to the ground and the tenants were left helpless. Had it not been for the excessive care which Mr. G. K. Winter and his staff took in stopping the fire, the

house would have been a prey to Agni. A fire engine was immediately brought and fire was prevented from spreading. When the water was drawn from the well, the lost vessels were discovered. Even Mr. Winter was filled with wonder when he had heard and seen all these sad occurrences. Five days back, a one-year child disappeared, and on search, was found floating on the surface of the water in the well. When the child was drawn half way up by a rope, the latter gave way and the child was again seen floating. Then the child was again taken out with great care and is now getting on well. These occurrences are happening even to-day.”

I have taken the liberty of correcting the English of the above without altering a single statement of fact. I have had the good fortune to meet the writer of the letter within the fast few days, and from his own lips obtained a corroboration of the narrative with additional particulars. Among these is the fact that in almost every case a match or matches are found at the spot or even upon the article that is burnt, but without the apparent possibility that they could have been used as an agent in producing the combustion. The clothes on a child's back will suddenly break out in a blaze, or the teak rafters of the roof take fire, without any person being near enough to light a match. Smoke will be seen issuing from a locked chest, and upon opening it the costly clothing it contained is found burnt to ashes. The lucifer-match is an object of suspicion, but as it has no bearing upon the phenomena of the injection of dirt, ordure, kerosine oil, and other offensive substances into covered cooking-pots, or the sudden transport of the food vessels from the dining-place to other parts of the house, or the floating of the abstracted baby upon the surface of the well-water, or the breaking out of fire in bundles of clothes just tied up by the owners and kept under constant supervision, the weight of the match becomes light enough in the making of a theory of trickery.

About twenty years ago a Brahmin couple in Malabar were subjected to a series of persecutions of this same sort, which made them the talk of the whole country side. Their clothes were burnt mysteriously as fast as replenished, and while actually on their persons. The tricky incendiary sprites would allow them to wear only a single cloth each: if they put on the usual second one it was soon consumed by fire. Again and again they were burnt out of house and home. The persecutors followed them from house to house, until they had to content themselves with sleeping in temples. Poor Mr. Powell left at Adyar a large photograph of two burning wooden houses, which belonged to some individual similarly persecuted by the fire-elementals in America. What is strangest of all is that upon looking closely at the body of flame and smoke one can easily make out some monster faces and forms as of ethereal beings disporting in the fiery element. From persons at Headquarters I learn that Mr. Powell said that this unfortunate house-owner had been burnt out of other houses before this, and had also had his mill destroyed by fire, all in a mysterious fashion. In the Madura District the phenomenon is quite common. Clothes are burnt in locked boxes, sometimes but not always the box being also consumed. Sometimes—

and this is a most significant circumstance—one particular cloth in the box or hanging upon a line is burnt, while the others with which it is in contact will remain unscorched. Clothes are burnt upon the wearer's body, but his skin is unhurt: My informant, a well-known educated Brahmin official, tells me that it is entirely at the discretion of the *Man-triki*, or charmer, who has control of the fire-spirit or elemental, whether one cloth or more, or all shall be destroyed: the elemental blindly obeys the trained will of his conqueror, the charmer. A Hindu would doubtless say that the burning-bush of Moses was a phenomenon due to the action of fire-elementals, and he would be the more convinced of it from the fact that the flaming bush was not consumed. I have just now, while writing this article, come across the following kindred narrative in the *Madras Mail* of January 13th instant:

"In the village of Bishenpore, in Bengal, a wonderful tree is said to have been discovered in a jungle. 'Out of its trunk,' writes a correspondent, 'regular volcanic eruptions of cinders and ashes, accompanied with thick volumes of smoke, have been going on for some time past. Through a cleft in the hollow of the trunk can be clearly seen the bright blaze of a furious fire burning constantly within; but the tree is said to be in a state of full growth, and its green leaves and hollow trunk are in no way injured by the fire and smoke.'"

Of course, knowing nothing about the case personally, I only give the story for what it may be worth. Its value to me is that it exemplifies a law of "elemental" agency, and, if true, could not be covered by any scientific theory hitherto arrived at.

The fire-elemental—as we Westerns should call them—is a sub-race of a great family group of the denizens of the astral world. He is called in Tamil *Kōlli Pisach*—the black spirit; or *Kutti Chathan*—the little devil; or *Karim Kutti*—the black dwarf. By the practice of certain rites for a specified time, a man may invoke and gain the mastery over one of these children of the fire-mist. The procedure is very arduous and calls for the exercise of great courage and self-command. At a certain advanced stage the elemental appears to the aspirant under most threatening shapes, sometimes in dreams, often while awake. If one's courage falters reaction immediately occurs, the spirit attacks, perhaps kills the man: in any case his chance for getting the control over it is lost. So also, if the elemental is sent by the master to attack a perfectly good person, it fails to do him or her any harm, but the spirit rebounds back to the persecutor and works the injury upon him or the most sensitive of his family. There is an absolute ethical element, code or quality attaching to these viewless races, it seems. For the most part they are, as it were, mere elemental potentialities capable of employment for good or bad purposes, and as regards man, harmless if left alone. If used for a bad purpose, the sorcerer loses his powers and does not regain them. There are a class, called *Madans*, which are malicious and altogether devilish. Being very powerful entities—mesmerically speaking—they are very hard to subjugate; and when brought under subjection they must be kept con-

stantly employed in working evil, else they will turn like the dogs of Actæon and rend their master. Such, at least, is the belief of the Hindus.

In the Island of Itukusima, in Japan, a similar phenomenon happens. The mountain Misen takes fire and blazes in one conflagration, lasting for a week, after which everything seems as before, and as if no fire had ever burnt. This mountain is held sacred by the Japanese. Priests of the Shingonsu Sect ascend the mountain, take up their residence at the summit, and spend their time in meditation; Kobo-Daishi, the founder of the Sect, lived here for some time, engaged in meditation. The tradition has been kept up and the priests of the Sect live there, passing their time in meditation. It is said that priests who are not pure and who fail to face the "dweller of the Threshold" are killed invariably by some unknown agency. On the 6th of January of each year a bright light is visible at the summit of the mountain, crowning its peak with splendor. Yositsura Hogen San, and R. Asakura San of the Shin-Shu Sect of Japan, personally known to me and now studying Sanskrit in Colombo, under the high priest Sumangala, have been eye-witnesses of such a phenomenon. The story is that a certain family living in the District of Echizen had accepted the flesh of an animal called in Japanese "Tanoki"—a species of badger. After the members of the above family had cooked the flesh and eaten it, this strange fire phenomenon occurred. Everything of theirs seemed to burn—clothes, furniture, &c., yet a few minutes later everything was found unburnt and in its normal condition. Not only the inmates of the home but also visitors have witnessed this phenomenon.

Apropos of this animal, stories are current in Japan. They think it is a vampire. When a case of possession occurs, the Yamabushi is invariably invited to the house to drive away the obsessing spirit, which, when invoked, assumes the form of this "Tanoki." This animal lives, it is popularly alleged, for several centuries—a tradition that would be the better for a little confirmation, if the physical beast is in question.

One most interesting statement has been made to me in the course of my enquiries, viz., that each elemental has his own speciality among phenomena and does no other. The *Kōlli Pisach* deals with fire, burning things and protecting things and persons from burning. An ascetic who controls one of them will sit amid live coals and handle incandescent objects with absolute impunity. But this spirit neither throws stones, brings filth, nor carries objects about. The moving and apportion of heavy objects are done by the *Akharsama Yakshini*; money and metallic substances are brought by the *Swarana Yakshini*; the *Pushpa Yakshini* brings instantaneously any flower that may be called for orally or mentally; and the thought-reading which so astounds visitors to Govind Chetty, the wonder-worker of Kumbakonam, is performed by the *Kana Yakshini*, who whispers clairaudiently to its master what is passing in the querist's mind. These spirits are alleged to differ in, shall we say, mes-

meric aura, as magnets vary in magnetic power, and the rule holds with them, as throughout all the rest of nature, that the weaker gives way to the stronger. Thus, if a family or individual be obsessed by one of the weaker sort of elementals, it will be driven away by the mere arrival of a person whose familiar belongs to one of the stronger races. Apply this test to the whole history of mesmerism, magic, and spiritualism, and one is struck with the direct bearing the above-stated theory has upon the recorded facts. The full adept controls all elemental races, and dispossesses anybody for whose relief his help is invoked. The familiars of the wicked man are strong and evil, subservient only so long as he surpasses them in malignity and in control of his courage and will. The medium controls nothing, but is controlled by some one kind of elemental which his psychical temperament has attracted, and which vampirises his body and handles his aura. Thus we have Mrs. Thayer using the *Pushpa Yakshini* to make her rose-showers; Mrs. Saydam and Mr. Home protected against fire by the *Kutti Chathan*; Hassan Khan Djnini having his fruits, bottles of liquors and various solid objects brought him by the *Akharshanas*; Home, Margaret Haufe, Gordon, the Catholic Saints, and that whole class levitated by them; and "Materialisations" effected by another class of these flitting denizens of the Akas, these astral tramps—as some horrid brutes I have seen in mediumistic circles may well be called.

But it is not enough to know what these elementals are and how to attract them; to be able to drive them away is equally important. There are many, very many formularies employed for this purpose. The business is an important feature in ceremonial magic. There are the special dresses to wear, the special purifications of person and place, special courses of dietary to follow, special *Yantaras* or magical figures to draw, drugs to burn, plants to have ready, and verses or words to mutter. All these are based upon the generalisation that man and nature are in reciprocal relationship, and that the members of the lower kingdoms have all their specific aural and other properties, powers and reactive potencies. But the *ultima ratio*, the gist, the core and essence of the whole matter is that the developed spiritual power and masterful will in man, makes him sovereign over all lower kingdoms. The most cabalistic sign, the most magical plant, the most thoroughly consecrated sword, the most potent talisman, the most efficacious mantram, is but dust and inert air for effecting the conquest of the powers of nature unless joined with, and energized by, the human will. It is not the tracing upon copper of the double-triangle that makes it a *Yantara* so strong that it will bind demons to obedience, but the will-power of the adept infused into the lines of the figure and fixed in the metallic plate. The *mantra* may be spoken a lac or a crore of times, and yet have not enough power to compel the weakest of the elemental messengers to execute one's wishes, unless the speaker's mind has been kept from wandering and his will focussed upon the purpose for which he is muttering his charm.

The Hindus have handbooks of ceremonial magic—chief among them the *Mantra Shastra*—which prescribe the means to employ for ridding one of obsessing elementals. In the case of the fire-sprites, the following course is laid down: the ceremony occupies forty-five days—one *mandala*—during which period the exorcist must keep himself perfectly chaste, his body clean, and follow a special diet. Every evening he must trace on the floor of the obsessed house, in rice powder, a figure containing 24 squares. A square of plantain leaf of the same size must be laid in each of these sub-divisions. On each leaf sprinkle cocoanut water, and waters of charcoal powder, saffron powder, and honey. The certain mantram, or word, appropriate to this kind of elemental must be divided into its constituent letters, and before the expiration of the 45 days each letter must be pronounced 100,000 times. Thus, if the word is of five letters, the exorcist would have to pronounce the sound of one letter 500,000 times within 45 days, or above 11,000 times a day: each letter would be pronounced over 2,000 times daily. As the exorcism proceeds, the elemental—as I have previously stated—will make himself visible to the *Mantriki* and do his best to appal him. If he fails, he becomes the docile servant of his new master, and even waits upon his pleasure. The ceremonial includes, among other things, offerings of cooked rice and cakes of *ullunda* (black beans).

Observe that I am writing only for serious thinkers upon a problem of high scientific interest. We are discussing the question whether there is an astral world peopled by elemental races. It is abundantly affirmed that such beings have not only given numberless proofs of their existence and powers, by phenomena like those of Arkonam, Madura and Malabar—phenomena inexplicable by any known law of physical science—but have often been seen by mankind under various shapes. The folk-lore of the world attests it, the histories of magic and magicians record the details. The subject interests a large number of intelligent readers, and hence I have given this slight outline of some of its more familiar aspects. More may be attempted should occasion offer.

H. S. OLCOTT.

COMTE AND THE METAPHYSICIANS.

WHILE it would be inaccurate, nay grotesquely absurd, to dub the whole sweep of the last 50 years of Western thought as materialistic, we are all more or less aware that this epithet holds good of large departments of Science where metaphysic has temporarily lost its prestige. Realizing, however, the rhythm immanent in thought processes and the absorbing character of the magnificent fields of research traversed by physical inquirers,—still in the hey-day of discoveries which an old world regime only babbled of—one finds grounds for satisfaction even here. It needs only a moment's consideration to concede that to carry out any line of observation, experiment or reflection with efficiency, attention must be specialized, focussed on some particular department of research to the partial exclusion of others. Hence the most enthusiastic champions of the so-called "spiritual" philosophies should find something in this truism to give them pause. Whether formulated in materialistic phraseology or not, the splendid results of science constitute their own justification. They are possibly upreared against a background of materialistic or agnostic ontology, but that fact cannot militate against their intrinsic merits as products of a very important body of collaborators in the evolution of the world-thought. Quite apart from the philosophic interpretation read into them, they must be regarded as having immensely magnified our intellectual vista. Quite apart from rash attempts to misapply, as some would put it, their harvest, they have admittedly yielded us invaluable clues to the wondrous cosmos and the workings of human consciousness. Such treasures as these are not to be lightly ignored, and, indeed, no one who has competent acquaintance with them can fail to echo this sentiment. So rich is the galaxy of results that the most cultured of men can but feast his eyes on some small corner and congratulate himself if he has mastered it with tolerable success.

It is not, however, my intention to defend this standpoint at length. Science needs no apologist. The average religionist ignores nature; she steps in an earnest and resolute inquirer. It has been neatly pointed out by Spencer that while the creedmonger praises God in words, he is, as a rule, most indifferent to his alleged creation. And he asks in this connection—what would be thought of a person who eulogized an author's ability without perusing his works? Let this, however, pass. We know at what reckoning to appraise the merely devotional mystic or religionist. As regards another often asserted notion, to wit the fundamentally materialistic impress of modern science, I have nothing to add here to what I have previously urged. There are, properly speaking, no materialists among the leaders of contemporary thought.* Agnostics there are many; both touching the problem of the Absolute and that of a future life. Outside Agnosticism, again, lie many centres of the deepest philosophic

* Professor Ernst Haeckel not excepted. His denial of the soft impeachment is sweeping.

speculation, only one of which is represented by the scattered units of the Theosophical Society. And these centres have radii which extend into many of our vigorous scientific societies. It would betray an entire want of conversance with these to be led astray by the noisy rhetoric of the Buchners, the Vogts and their like. There are times when the croak of frogs will outsound the dialogues of thinkers. Now Science has its frogs and its marshes and the frogs are sometimes too vociferous, but we must not forget that their croaks are but an incident in the landscape. To obtain a fair survey, one must turn the ear to other if less obvious quarters.

But in one respect the materialists and agnostics have a common understanding. They both alike deride the claims of metaphysic to attention. It is forgotten by materialists that their fundamental assumption, that of an independent external world itself, involves a huge metaphysical leap. It is forgotten even by the cautious agnostics that, previous to metaphysical analysis, thought and the simplest perception cannot be shown to rest on a basis other than sand—a view never lost sight of in the higher levels of German speculative philosophy. And descending from points of such very abstract interest to those touching the immediate futurity of the human ego, it must be affirmed that both systems alike suggest an indictment of inadequacy.

The term now given to inquiries which concern only the co-ordination of phenomena is that of positivism. Under this head would fall of course the dogmas of Comte. And as this legislative Frenchman has so considerably impressed on his readers what they are to investigate and what not, and above all the supreme virtue of systematising the sciences and ignoring metaphysic, it may not be amiss if he is selected as the objective of our subsequent remarks. Comte is an exceedingly useful figure to trot out in this connection; his assertion of the arbitrary agnostic attitude being so fussily dogmatic. The picture of this "grotesque Frenchman," legislating in his armchair for posterity, appears exceedingly quaint and serves also to throw strongly into relief the case for the opposite party. The brief sketch of his attitude appended is culled from a recent lecture at the Head-quarters.

"Passing from the realm of German thought into that of the blithesome Gaul, we come across another landmark in philosophic history in the person of Auguste Comte (1797-1857). The French eclectic school which rose into prominence towards the close of the First Empire had served to depose for a while the blunt materialism of the old Revolutionary epoch. Kantism and the Scotch psychology had constituted its backbone, while the accessory portions of its organism were contributed by such able writers as Royer-Collard, Maine de Biran, Jouffroy and last, but certainly not least, Cousin. It was on a field ploughed up in this wise that the seeds of Comte's "Positive Philosophy" were cast. Strictly speaking the system of the French philosopher only indirectly concerns our investigation, seeing that it absolutely scamps all the deeper discussion as to the conditions of knowledge. The sensationalism

of Hobbes and Locke pales before the sweeping asseverations of this iconoclast. In him Empiricism finds its most thoroughgoing and uncompromising advocate. Metaphysics and theology are his *bête noire*; they are effete methods of wasting valuable time. Even the introspective researches of subjective psychology stand condemned in his 'Index Expurgatorius'; the science on its physiological side being grudgingly accommodated with a niche intermediate between the spheres of Biology and Sociology. Humanity, in his view, evolves through the 'theological' and 'metaphysical' stages of thought to debouch on the far higher level of positivism, which confines itself to generalizing the co-existences, similitudes and successions of phenomena, without question as to their possible ground in the "Great Unknown."* All lines of inquiry are for Comte subordinate to Sociology,† the crown and consummation of Mathematics, Astronomy, General Physics, Chemistry and Biology, the hierarchy of sciences ranged according to his method of filiation.‡ The Worship of *Humanity* without king or God is his supreme panacea for the wound dealt to popular religion by liberal thought."

Despite, however, his sneers at psychology and ontology, Comte inculcated a very pronounced materialism of his own in settling the controversy regarding mind and body. Cerebral function he regards as including mind. When nerve perishes, consciousness, a particular mode of its working, perishes with it. So far, therefore, as this primitive type of negationism is concerned, Kant's works might have remained unwritten. Brain and nerve manipulated in this crudely realist fashion would scarcely have passed muster with the great Königsberg thinker, before whose prowess the tangible and visible world had melted away into mist. I think it is Lange who says somewhere in his splendid "History of Materialism," that Kant really disposed of the crude old XVIIIth century mechanical systems once and for all. Comte, however, utterly blind and indifferent to what the analysis of experience really involves, practically restates materialist psychology in its clumsy old empiricist garb. Materialism in ontology, that is to say, an ultimate explanation of the universe as matter in motion, he certainly did not accept. It was out of his province to say what things were outside our sensible experience of them. Nevertheless, a really consistent materialism in psychology does not run well in harness with an Agnostic, as opposed to a materialistic, conception of the Universe.

So much then for the Comtean system in its bearing on our immediate inquiry. I pass over, as irrelevant, his many valuable contributions

* Why after this pronouncement the science of subjective psychology, which is after all one of a strictly inductive character, should be tabooed, is justly a matter for astonishment.

† It is erroneous to claim for Comte the *parentage* of "Sociology." It is implicitly contained in the systems of more than one of the German transcendentalists. Nevertheless he is unquestionably to be accredited with its first definite formulation as the Science of sciences.

‡ An able criticism of this classification will be found in Bain's admirable "Logic," Appendix, Part I.

to the study of Politics, Science and History, the importance of which has been very generally recognized. I pass over, also, those extraordinary aberrations of intellect which induced him to frame the cult so cleverly stigmatized as "Catholicism minus Christianity." But touching matters philosophic, his arbitrary rejection of metaphysic may be said to conflict with an impulse lying at the root of our human nature. Devotion to the 'service of Man' in respect of furthering his material welfare, is admittedly a noble aim in itself. But even the most splendid results to which Sociology might be conceived to conduct us, would never relieve the individual of a craving to probe in some fashion or other the mystery, in which we live, move and have our being. Increased leisure consequent on diminution of the social struggle for existence tends, other things equal, to give an edge to the reflective consciousness. A healthy mind assimilates scientific culture only to find the riddle of the Universe thrown into still greater relief. The problems of ontology *may* indeed be insoluble, but is the momentous conclusion that they are so to be confirmed as final by even a hundred generations of philosophers? Emphatically no. Nay, more resolute pursuit after possible approximations to what in Carlylean phrase we may term the Eternal Verities, is itself a culture of the most elevating type. It is symptomatic of the 'mens sana' of a community. In Professor Masson's words, "Whatever nation has given up Philosophy—I will be bolder, and using a word very much out of favour at present, I will say whatever nation has given up *Metaphysics*—is in a state of intellectual insolvency. Though its granaries should be bursting, though its territories should be netted with railroads, though its mills and foundries should be the busiest in the world, the mark of the beast is upon it, and it is going the way of all brutality." Cf. his brightly written "Recent British Philosophy," p. 2.

Further than this, I will go so far as to maintain that the possibility of a great metaphysical ideal yet to be realized—something which shall throw a clear light on the, as yet, only superficially sifted phenomena of this world—will prove the sole sheet-anchor of the future races. Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, interpreters of the world-weariness of archaic Buddhist and Brahmanic thought, have clearly enough shown that the pessimist doctrine of life must assuredly win general adhesion, as time rolls on and the reflective consciousness of Humanity reaches its maturity. Here are von Hartmann's pregnant words, "The most contented communities are the rude barbarian races; among civilised communities the uneducated classes. Discontent increases with the growing culture of the people."

In those coming times, when the issue "Is Life worth living?" is mooted in all seriousness, what is the answer of the mere social philosopher to be? Men will begin to ask whether it is really worth their while to work for a "Humanity" which—for all their filiated sciences can say—a waning sun, a freezing planet must merge for ever in the eternal silence. Evolution is bought with continuous suffering—it will be questioned whether the purchase is worth a fraction of the outlay, whether Earth's

'poor joys' represent a fair return on the incessant investments of misery and effort requisite to attain them. Outside possible vistas yet to be opened up by a matured metaphysic, it will be seen that the comedy-drama of this physical life is a deception, and human actions and interests comparable to the dance of lunatics in an asylum. When we come to deal specially with Pessimism, it will be necessary to unfold this contention at length. Meanwhile, however, it is amusing to note, that, Comte's "positive stage" notwithstanding, the growing public interest in the great metaphysical issues—"God," Soul, world purpose and origin, &c.,—is one of the most striking feature of our times. The temporary absorption of intellect in the rich mines of positive scientific research, those mines which have yielded an output of such memorable lustre and service to the present century, seems to have begotten a taste for a complimentary spiritual metaphysic. Whether any logical sanction for this taste is discoverable, it will be for a critical posterity to determine. The nature of things, neither benevolent nor malevolent, is not always consonant with our petty desires and ideals, and what after all are the aspirations of man after a future spiritual bliss or an unveiling of the Absolute but the sublimated output of egotism. Who would rave for a Nirvana of misery for himself or others, who would hunt the absolute unless the search proved of interest?

Theoretically possible as the proof of an "unsatisfactory" universe may be, it does not however recommend itself to the sober intellect. Not that the problem is to be lightly trifled with by mere demonstration, in spiritist fashion, of the reality of a trans-sepulchral life. The mere fact that the human consciousness persists is by no means an answer to the *pessimism* of a Schopenhauer. Von Hartmann has justly remarked that, given all the spiritist assertions as valid, he would only add another chapter to his well-known work on pessimism. Great as is our debt to spiritism, we must, I think, recognize how exceedingly limited are its vistas. At best it would serve as an appendix to a comprehensive cosmic philosophy, while for the present it figures as a vortex of wild and fanciful interpretations. For the due treatment of the numerous problems which it and a hundred voiced Nature suggest, the freest and fullest inquiry will be requisite. And this aim will be attained only when the élite of modern thought abjure the foolish example of Comte, and apply themselves to that essentially metaphysical issue embracing all others—a comprehensive metaphysic which shall boldly grapple with the riddle of the Universe.

E. D. FAWCETT.

THE MAYAS OF YUCATAN.

ONE of the latest issues of the "T. P. S." series (No. 14, Vol. III.) contains a very interesting lecture by Mrs. Le Plongeon, delivered at the Head-quarters of the British Section of the T. S., upon the archæological discoveries made in Yucatan, Central America, by Dr. Le Plongeon and herself. These discoveries ought in themselves to command the respect of all thinking people, but coupled with the startling and audacious theories, by the aid of which the explorers seek to account for and explain the wonderful things they have found, they present a claim upon the attention of the world, before which those of all the Layards and the Schliemanns fade into insignificance. Other explorers may, indeed, have unearthed buried cities or brought to light forgotten civilizations, but to the Le Plongeon, if their theories be correct, has been reserved the glory of having laid bare the source and fountain-head of all Mythology,—of having, in fact, opened the actual tombs and chemically analysed the mortal remains of the very human beings, who, deified after their deaths, have, under various names, served as gods and goddesses for the whole human race. It is our intention to give the reader a general idea of the basis on which this breath-arresting claim is founded, drawing our materials both from the abovenamed lecture and from Dr. Le Plongeon's work, "Sacred Mysteries among the Mayas and Quiches 11,500 years ago," published in New York in 1886.

The Maya kingdom occupied the peninsula of Yucatan, together with the strip of land south of it, near which the various projectors of Panama canals have lately been running atilt against bankruptcy. This region is full of wonderful ruins of a prehistoric civilization, which the world has hitherto completely neglected. Indeed the Le Plongeon inveigh in bitter terms, and apparently with the best reason, against the almost incredible indifference of both the public and the Government of the United States, in regard to these wonderful relics of a great ancient civilization on the American Continent,—a civilization the peer of those of Asia and Africa, if, indeed, it be not their parent, as Dr. Le Plongeon claims. In vain did the explorers seek to interest men of science, of literature, of politics, of the Press, in their most valuable discoveries. The answer everywhere was "the public takes no interest in those things;"—the Doctor's book, "Sacred Mysteries among the Mayas and the Quiches," having been refused by two prominent publishers in New York on those grounds. That book, published in 1886, is dedicated to Mr. Pierre Lorillard, who, with the exception of Dr. John Stroughton Newbury of Columbia College, appears to have been at that time the only person practically interested in Maya Archæology.*

Mexico, Central America and parts of South America, have for some time been known to be rich in as yet unexplored antiquities, and

* Dr. Le Plongeon proposes that a school of Archæology should be founded in Yucatan by Americans; who at present neglect their own wonderful ancient relics, and have established Archæological schools in Athens and Alexandria for the study of Greek and Egyptian antiquities.

Dr. Le Plongeon has been a worker in that field for a long time. He began his archæological studies in Peru in 1862, and has worked at those of the Mayas for the last 12 years. He may be said therefore to be the authority on Maya Archæology.

The Peninsula of Yucatan juts out northward dividing the gulf of Mexico from the Caribbean Sea; its extreme length is 260 miles, and breadth 180. "The whole country is a fossiliferous limestone, elevated a few feet only above the sea, its maximum height in the interior being only 70 feet." The soil though shallow, is of surprising fertility. The whole country is now covered by well-nigh impenetrable forests, buried in which are the ruins of "stupendous edifices" worthy of Egypt or India, of ancient cities, and of other remains of the wonderful civilization. "A bird's eye view of it from the top of one of the lofty pyramids, that seem like light-houses in the midst of that ocean of foliage, impresses the beholder with the idea that he is looking on an immense sea of verdure, having for boundary the horizon, and whose billows come to die, with gentle murmur, at the foot of the monument on which he stands."

The Mayas resisted the Spaniards for 25 years with desperate bravery, and the remnant of their nation now inhabits the south-west part of the peninsula of Yucatan, where no white men dare penetrate. With the exception of these few Mayas, the whole nation was, some centuries ago, wiped out with hideous cruelties by the Spaniards. Many of the most interesting relics of ancient Mayas are in the territory of these irreconcilables, whose cry is "Death to the White Monkey!" Even when not actually trespassing on their domain, the Doctor and his wife, while exploring, had to sleep in their clothes, with their arms beside them, owing to this hereditary hatred.

The practical object of the Dr. and Mrs. Le Plongeon was to obtain photographs and measurements of the various buildings and statues, and "squeezes" or moulds of the latter, and of the inscriptions and ornamentation; and so well did they succeed that now they tell us that they could reconstruct several of the most important Maya temples and palaces. Another object was the recovery of statues and art treasures; but in this object they were in a large measure frustrated, by the opposition of the Mexican Government, and by reason of their inadequate resources.

Unprovided with any implement except their great Mexican knives (called *Machetes*), and with but the unwilling assistance of a few natives, who thought it sacrilegious to disturb the ruins, they dug out and hoisted up from a depth of many feet with improvised dericks and ropes, a statue weighing several thousand pounds. This they managed to convey for a considerable distance, but while they left it in the forest to seek for help, the Mexican Government seized it and took it to the National Museum in Mexico, where the Doctor saw it in a lamentable condition of neglect. Although this seizure was illegal under the Mexican law, no redress was obtainable from the authorities, and no interference

on the part of the American diplomatic representatives. Since then the Le Plongeon have unearthed several other statues and carefully buried them again, in anticipation of a more favorable opportunity for their removal; and their narrative chiefly concerns their early "finds," as, for obvious reasons, they are unwilling to give any clue to the whereabouts of the treasures they have concealed, in anticipation of better days.

The Le Plongeon found the vast ruins of Yucatan wonderfully rich in elaborate ornamentation of a florid and quasi-heraldic nature, eminently suggestive of symbolic meaning, and they also discovered numerous stone inscriptions, in characters to whose meaning no one could give them any clue. It was by comparing the stone inscriptions with the Egyptian hieratic alphabet that Dr. Le Plongeon solved the riddle of their decipherment. Besides these inscriptions a few, very very few, MSS. have escaped the Spaniards, who, led by Bishop Landa and following the example of the "Initiate," St. Paul, consigned to the flames every Maya volume they could find. The Doctor, however, more than hints that he knows where to put his hand upon a collection of MSS. (which may be described as Maya papyri) that were hidden away at the time of a Nahautl invasion about the beginning of our era. Towards the sixth century the knowledge of the hieratic language was lost; and the four Maya books that the Doctor has examined are written in an alphabet dating only from those early centuries of our era; but the language is the same as that now spoken by the Mayas of Yucatan.

Briefly stated, the Doctor found that the grammatical forms and syntax of the Maya and Egyptian tongues are almost identical, while the hieratic alphabets of Egypt and Mayax (as Yucatan was anciently called) are nearly the same. The Egyptian sacred language must, moreover, have been known in ancient Mayas, for on the tomb of Cay, high priest, and elder brother of Coh (of whom mention will be made presently) was found his name written in Egyptian as well as Maya hieroglyphs; and this is also a proof that Mayax was a contemporary language, not a derivative of the Egyptian.

Armed with this clue, the Doctor set about to read the stone inscriptions, and rapidly made out many important facts about this ancient civilization. He found that *Ma* means place, country, and by extension the universe. The hieroglyph for it is an oblong, which is supposed to have roughly represented the contour of the Maya kingdom; that the Mayas and Quiches had the same idea of a supreme and formless deity, composed of three gods, which is common to all nations of antiquity, and is confusedly echoed still in the Christian "scheme;" that, in Mayax, as in Egypt, Chaldea, Etruria and India, science was the privilege of the priests and kings, and that the sacerdotal class held pre-eminence; that the Mayas seem to have given their civilization to some other parts of America, notably Peru, and the Quiches were a branch of the Maya nation; and many other interesting

facts, impossible to detail here, but which set the Doctor reflecting that the influence of ancient Mayax may have been very extensive; for does not the term "Maya" occur in every part of the globe, now as the name of a god or goddess, now as a hero or heroine, sometimes as that of a tribe or caste, at others as that of a locality? And is not the name especially well known in India?

The college of the learned priests called *H. Menes* (which forcibly suggests "Menes," "Manu," and other old-world names) still exists, and on its walls the Doctor found sculptured "bearded men, whose features vividly recall those of the Assyrians of old, and the Afghans of today." Another most significant fact is that populations of black people (apparently negros of Africa) existed on the isthmus of Panama when the Spaniards arrived, and their portraits are to be seen in the mural paintings at Chicken to this day. Moreover, the decorations and ornaments of temples and priests are exactly like those found in various parts of Asia. "Could you see Maya and Indo-China altars side by side," he tells us, "you would be amazed at their astounding similarity."

Dr. Le Plongeon was perfectly aware of the fact, at present generally recognized, that the nations of the ancient world had much more intimate intercourse with each other than we used to suppose, who are liable to fancy that before the discovery of steam and gas everyone sat quietly at home in the dark. He, indeed, quotes the curious circumstance that bottles with inscriptions on them in archaic Chinese have been found in Egyptian tombs, and that the late Dr. Schliemann discovered an ancient Chinese vase, similarly inscribed, while making his excavations in Asia Minor in search of the ruins of Troy. But there is no mystery in all that. A Chinaman would only have to walk on long enough in a westerly direction to arrive with his bottles and vases in Egypt or Asia Minor. To carry them over the Atlantic or across the Pacific was quite another affair. To account for the very evident intercourse that existed in ancient times between Mayax and the "old world," (which venerable title, by the by, Dr. Le Plongeon claims for the Americas) our authors fall back upon the lost Island or Continent of Atlantis. Dr. Le Plongeon quotes the story about the Egyptian priests telling Solon that the greatest cataclysm recorded in their books was the sinking of Atlantis under the waves, some 9,000 years before; since when, they added, all intercourse with the "Lands of the West" had been interrupted; and Mrs. Le Plongeon informs us that one of the four extant Maya books—the "Troano MS." says: "In the year 6 Kan, on the 11th Muluc, in the month Zac, there occurred terrible earthquakes, which continued without interruption until the 13th Chuen. The country of the hills of mud, the land of Mu, was sacrificed; being twice upheaved, it suddenly disappeared during the night, the basin being continually shaken by volcanic forces. Being confined, these caused the land to sink and rise several times, and in various places. At last the surface gave way, and ten countries were torn

asunder and scattered helter skelter. Unable to withstand the force of the seismic convulsions they sank, with their 64 millions of inhabitants, 8060 years before the writing of this book."

Accepting the Atlantean hypothesis, as the Le Plongeon do, it becomes evident that if the portraits on the monuments were those of persons living when those buildings were erected, the archæological remains explored by our authors must be about 11,500 years old, if not older, reckoning that Atlantis sank 9,000 years before the time of Solon, which would give a warrant for regarding the more recent European and Asiatic civilizations as almost modern, and their legends as the echoes of Mayax history. Going upon that theory, Dr. Le Plongeon satisfied himself that there are numerous philological proofs that the Maya was the ancient universal sacerdotal language. He tells us, for instance, that words occur in Brahmin ceremonies which are not Sanskrit, but belong to the tongue now called "Akkadian," which tongue bears a close resemblance to the Maya language; and we shall meet presently with similar coincidences.

The most curious item in the Doctor's philological discoveries, anent the Maya basis of old world languages, occurs in connection with the Greek. He tells us that each letter of the Greek alphabet forms a word or words in Maya. That would in itself be sufficiently extraordinary; but taken in their regular order, the Greek letters (*alpha, beta, gamma, etc.*), when "freely" translated into Mayax, give a perfectly astounding result,—no less, in fact, than a graphic description of some great and terrible cataclysm. Dr. Le Plongeon reads the following meaning *into*, or *out of*, the said alphabet: "Heavily break *the waters* extending *over the plains*. *They cover the land in low places where there are obstructions, shores form, and whirlpools strike the earth with water.* The water spreads *on all that lives and moves, sediments give way.* Submerged is *the land of Mu*, the peaks *only* appear above *the water*. Whirlwinds blow round by little and little, until comes cold air. Before where *existed* valleys, *now*, abysses, frozen tanks. In circular places clay is formed. A mouth opens; vapours *then* came forth and volcanic sediments." The words in italics are apparently added in, but the result remains little short of miraculous, *if true*. It may, however, strike the unregenerate as at least singular that while *Epsilon* means, "there are obstructions, shores form, and whirlpools," *Upzilon*, in which but the initial vowel differs, should signify, "now, abysses, frozen tanks. In circular places." Either the Maya language must indeed be a very marvellous language, or Dr. Le Plongeon a very marvellous translator—or both!

The Le Plongeon apparently rest their case at present upon their early discoveries, chiefly at Chicken-Itza, for these only have been published. Unless indeed their whole 12 years were occupied with these excavations, which is not impossible, as the chronology of their movements is obscure. The whole interest of their labours centres round the royal family, whose date our authors place as we have seen

11,500 years ago; the members of which, whose mausoleums they opened and explored, they believe to be the originals of all subsequent mythical deities and heroes.

"We learn," says Dr. Le Plongeon, "from the sculptures and mural paintings that adorn the walls of the palaces at Chicken-Itza and Uxmal that King Can (Serpent) the founder, or may-be the restorer, of these ancient cities, had three sons, whose names were Cay (Fish), Aac (Turtle) and Coh (Leopard), and two daughters, Moo (Macaw) and Niete (Flower): It was the law among the Mayas that the youngest of the brothers should marry the eldest of the sisters, to insure the legitimate and divine descent of the royal family."* Coh, the warrior, became the husband of Moo, and when King Can died the country was divided among his children; Chicken fell to Moo's lot, and after her death she became the goddess of fire and was worshipped in a splendid temple still extant. Aac was also in love with his sister Moo, but the law and Moo's own preference made his suit hopeless. He was not a warrior but a courtier, and therefore he conspired secretly, and having had Coh assassinated, captured Moo after a desperate resistance, together with the High Pontiff Cay, the eldest brother, who had aided with her. He killed them all, having *kicked his sister to death* after outraging her; and a statue still extant shows the victorious Aac standing upon the flayed bodies of his victims with their heads attached to his girdle.

Such, briefly, is the tragic and somewhat horrible story told in the various sculptures, stone inscriptions and papyri unearthed and deciphered by Dr. Le Plongeon and his brave and indefatigable wife; and upon that story the learned Doctor basis his claim to have discovered the originals not only of the myth of Isis and Osiris, but of the various sacred traditions of every other nation, all of which, he contends, present the same salient features, and afford too many points of resemblance to each other for it to be possible that they had not a common origin.

Can, the name of the dynasty, means "serpent" and also "king," and these Can serpent-kings, or Can-cans, were 12 in number, and are emblematically represented by 12 feathered snakes. The feathers, on the back were painted green, the scales on the belly yellow, the inside of mouth and the tongue red, and the teeth and fangs white. These twelve snake-kings the Doctor believes to correspond with the 12 deific Egyptian kings that reigned before Menes, the 12 divine kings of China and of Japan, &c.

Of the earlier Cans, there seems to have been no trace found, the last of the dynasty being the father of the interesting family whose history has just been given.

The first excavation was in the tomb of Coh or Chaacmol, i. e., the Leopard. Besides the symbolical statue, with a leopard's body and human head (now in the Mexican National Museum) several large stone urns were found containing embalmed human viscera, flint arrows.

* As among the Egyptians and several other peoples.

heads, and small ornaments; for, like the Egyptians, the Maya's preserved the intestines of the dead, but, unlike them, they cremated the body. These statues and urns were embedded in rubble and masonry with which the building had been carefully filled up. Then the mausoleum of Coh's brother, the High Pontiff Cay, was explored, and in it was found his statue, of which the following is Mrs. Le Plongeon's description:—

"The head rested on a stone painted bright red, representing a snake's tongue. The statue was in a squatting posture, but if standing would have been six feet high. It was of white stone, and was painted dark brown. The head was small and apparently hairless, painted blue, and over that, from the forehead down to the shoulders, were red streaks. Doubtless everyone of these things had a significant meaning. The eyes were open, and the lids painted blue. The lips were red. The ears were pierced, and so was the back part of the top of the head.....The figure was apish-looking, and the hands quite peculiar.....The loins were covered with a scanty garment, like that anciently worn by Egyptian labourers."

The proof adduced by the authors of the truth of their theory is of a collective and cumulative nature; each item thereof, scattered here and there through their publications, being in itself somewhat trivial, compared to the very important issue that has to be supported; and in an article like this it is impossible to do more than collect and juxtapose a few of these disjointed fragments of the collective argument. The following must suffice here:

"The family name of the kings of Mayax was Can (serpent), as Khan is still the title of the kings of Tartary and Burnah, and of the governor of provinces in Persia, Afghanistan, and other countries in Central Asia."

"No one with any knowledge of philology will ever deny that A-bel—A-bal—Bal:—Balam, are identical words. A, Maya contraction of Ah, is the Maya masculine article, the. Bal is the radical of Balam. Balam is for the superstitious aborigines even today, the Yumil Kaax—the 'Lord of the fields,' the 'Leopard,' which they also call Coh—the totem of the victim of Aac is the leopard—and it is so represented in the bas-reliefs and sculptures." As told by Plutarch, Isis was wife and sister of Osiris, and their brother Set conspired against Osiris and murdered him. The similar story of the murder of Bali related in the 'Ramayana' is "identical with that archived in the sculptures and mural paintings still existing on the walls of certain edifices at Chicken-Itza."

"Osiris in Egypt, Abel in Chaldea, Bali in India, are myths. Coh, in Mayax, is a reality—a warrior whose mausoleum I have opened."

"Isis may simply be a dialectical mode of pronouncing the Maya word *icin* (idzin) the younger sister . . . Isis was often called the great mother goddess Mau, a name strongly resembling that of the Mayax sister-wife Queen Moo."

"In the bas-reliefs of the queen's chamber at Chicken, the followers of Aac are seen to render homage to the sun; the friends of Moo to the serpent. So in Mayax as in Egypt, the sun and the serpent were inimical."

"The name Sougriva, of the brother of Bali, is a word composed of three Maya primitives, *zuc*, *lib*, *ha*; *zuc*, quiet, tranquil; *lib*, to ascend; and *ha*, water."

"In Japan the seven members of the Can family, deified and figured by the same symbols as in Mayax, are worshipped today in the shrine of the palace at Tokio."

The Mastodon-headed god of Mayax is the counterpart of the Hindu Elephant-headed god Ganesha. "In Ganesha," says the Doctor, "we have a dialectical pronunciation of Can-ex, the serpents." The Chaldean tradition is that in the beginning all things were ruled by a

woman. "Her name," says the Doctor, "in Chaldæ is *Thalath*, in Greek *Thalassa* (the sea), that is in Maya *Thallac* (a thing without steadiness)." Not only is the asp with a swollen breast, so well known on lower Egyptian monuments as the emblem of Nati the god of that country, common on Mayax remains, being used to represent roughly the geographical contour of the empire which somewhat resembles it in shape, but the curious "figure-of-eight" on its side (∞), which accompanies the Egyptian asp emblem is the usual Maya hieroglyph for the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean sea, separated by the Yucatan peninsula.

One of the most curious of these instances, which appear to be more than coincidences, is the following:

"The creation of the world, according to their conception, is sculptured over the door-way on the east facade of the palace at Chicken-Itza. It might serve as illustration for the relation of the creation, as we read of it at the beginning of the first chapter of the Manava Dharma Shastra said relation completed, however, by the narrative of the myth according to the Egyptians in the tablet we see represented a luminous egg, emitting rays, and floating in the midst of waters, where it had been deposited by the Supreme Intelligence. In that egg is seated the Creator, his body painted blue, his loins surrounded by a girdle; he holds a sceptre in his left hand; his head is adorned with a plume of feathers; he is surrounded by a serpent, symbol of the Universe."

Now, when the representations of Zeus or Jupiter and of Kneph, the creative deities of the Greeks and Romans and of the Egyptians respectively, are compared with the above Maya conception, the similarity is certainly striking, and the Doctor quotes Porphyry to prove that at least at the Orphic mysteries, Jupiter was represented very much in that way; he also cites the following from Eusebius.

"They (the Egyptians) represented Kneph, or the efficient cause, a man of a blue colour, with a girdle round his loins, a sceptre in his hand, a crown on his head, with a plume of feathers; emblematically they figured him under the form of a serpent."

Among the corroborative facts adduced by Dr. Le Plongeon in support of his theory is the following: The cross, whether simple, "ansated," or in the shape of the *tau*, is not found in Mayax monuments, though both of the latter forms thereof are found on the ancient structures of neighbouring nations. This, however, gives the Doctor the opportunity of showing that the *originals*, so to speak, existed among the Mayas. "*Tau*," he says, "is a Maya word composed of three primitives: *ti*—here, *a* for *ha*—water, and *u*—month; the name, therefore, translated freely, means "*This is the month for water*." As terrestrial life depends upon water, the *tau* became the emblem of life to come. But, how to connect the word with the figure? This is easily done when we know that it was in the month when the rainy season began that the splendid constellation known as the "Southern Cross" becomes upright and attains its highest position in the heavens.

Of the *Crux Ansata* Dr. Le Plongeon says:

"The complex form of the mystical T which is formed of a cone two arms extending, one each side, and an oval placed immediately above them, has been

denominated by the Egyptologists *cruz-ansata*. It is not of Egyptian origin. It has its prototype in the conoidal pillar, surmounted by a sphere, used by the Babylonians as symbol of life and death; death being but the beginning or nursery of life. This emblem was only a reminiscence of the *yaxche*, the sacred tree of the Mayas, under the roots of which, the natives assert, is always to be found a source of pure cold water. The trunk of the *yaxche*, from the foot to the top, forms a perfect cone from which the main branches shoot in an horizontal direction. Its leafy top, seen from a distance, presents the appearance of a half sphere of verdure. The *cone*, the *tau* and the *cruz-ansata* were for those initiated to the mysteries the same symbol, emblematical of Deity, of the life to come, of the dual powers, of fertility."

Among the illustrations in his book the Doctor gives a picture of this conventional tau-shaped tree of life, with a Macaw, the emblem of Queen Moo, occupying the position of the yonic circle in the *crux ansata*.

Very curiously, too, does Dr. Le Plongeon trace Freemasonry back to the ancient mysteries. He gives, moreover, several very ingenious reasons for believing that those ancient mysteries had their origin in Mayax. When the *Mystoi* took the degree of *Ephoroi*, the "holy mysteries" were read out to them from a book called *Petrôma*, because it consisted of two stones fitly cemented together. "I have discovered such stones last year," says Dr. Le Plongeon, "in the mausoleum of High Pontiff *Cay* in the city of Chicken-Itza, in Yucatan." Again, in ancient Greece, those who successfully passed through the final trials of the last initiation, *Autopsia*, were dismissed with the words: *Kon-x Om Pan-x*, which have no meaning in Greek or any other old world language. These very words, however, are excellent Maya for "Go, stranger, scatter," and indeed *Conex Omon Panex* is an exclamation which might be heard to-day among the modern Yucatanese. The High Pontiff of the Chaldeans, again, was called *Rab-mag*, and *Lab-mac* is Maya for "the old man" or venerable one, the *l* and *r*, and *g* and *c*, being, as everyone knows, among the letters most frequently substituted for each other according to philology,—the Chinese invariably turning the *r* into *l*, and the Germans very frequently making the *c* a *g* and *vice versa*. *Hach-mac*, moreover, or "the true man," was the title of the High Pontiff in ancient Mayax.

From what we have said it is evident that the Le Plongeon have made out a very interesting case for the consideration of the thoughtful. But the claims they make on our belief are very great indeed, as may be seen from the following:

"We have seen," he says, "that the family of King *Can* was composed of seven members, who became rulers of the seven cities that bear their names, the ruins of which still exist in the forests of Yucatan. . . . These personages, deified after their death, have been worshipped in various countries, and are yet in some, under different names. May not the remembrance of the existence of these seven ancient rulers of Mayax have been the origin of the tradition of the seven divine rulers of Egypt; of the seven *Manous* that, according to the Brahmins, governed the world in the night of times; of the seven *Richis* or holy personages who assisted them; of the seven *princes* of the Persian Court; and the seven *councillors* of the king; of the seven *Ameshaspants*; or the seven primitive gods regarded by the Japanese as their ancestors."

The Doctor continues for another half page in the same strain, adducing among the mythical personages explained, the *Seven Cabiri*, the *seven great gods* of the Nahuatl, the *seven-headed heavenly Serpent* of Vishnu, the *seven serpents* in the crown of Siva, &c. Even the "sacred" character of certain numbers is supposed, by our authors to be due to the numerical peculiarities of the *Can* family. The "mystification" of the numbers 3, 5 and 7 the Doctor believes to have arisen from, respectively, the three sons of Can, his five children (those three sons *plus* two daughters), and the total seven of the family, (the children *plus* the old folk).

It would, of course, be too much to expect the world to accept the Le Plongeon's theory of the origin of Mythology without evidence of a far more cogent nature than that which those explorers have adduced as yet. Eleven thousand five hundred years is not considered a very long time in these days, when many contend that man lived before the glacial period. To say nothing of the traces of man found underneath the stalagmite floors of sundry caves, excavations in the Delta of the Nile seem to prove an antiquity for Egypt four or five times as great as that attributed by our authors to the last of the *Cans*; and we may well ask: What did poor humanity do for gods and goddesses before the days of Coh, Aac, Cay, Moo and Nicté? It is a little too startling, moreover, to have the whole doctrine of Solar Myths roughly swept aside, and the elaborate theology of Nature Worship coolly and contemptuously ignored. The links in the Doctor's chain of argument, too, are somewhat wide apart. There is nothing to show the exact date of the *Cans*, which may even have been subsequent to the sinking of Atlantis, for that event is recorded in a MS. whose date is also unknown, unless we receive the 8,000 years therein mentioned and the 9,000 years spoken of by the priests of Egypt as reliable. Our authors, too, accept the Hindu doctrine of Mahatmas, and why should they ignore the larger doctrine of Mahatma, or Maha-Atma? And if they accept that fundamental doctrine of Hinduism, by what right do they set peremptorily aside all that follows and depends upon it, including a chronology which makes the last of the *Cans* seem almost our own contemporary. Surely Dr. Le Plongeon can hardly contend that the idea of Maha-Atma or Parabram, the Supreme Unknown, the sustainer of the Universe who is the Universe, arose from a tradition about King *Can* the 12th of Mayax!

Other writers on Central America, unanimously, as far as we are aware, refuse a great antiquity to the ruins there on account of the dampness of the climate, the very antithesis of that of rainless Egypt; and Dr. Le Plongeon himself intimates that this fatal dampness, will soon obliterate the wonderful ruins of Yucatan, unless steps be speedily taken to preserve them. One is tempted to ask, how it happened that this destructive agency, now so active, has left so few traces on these ruins during the last 11,500 years? It must be remembered, however, that Dr. Le Plongeon is an old and enthusiastic student of Archæology; and, as such, his opinion must be treated with respect,

especially by those who are not experts in his own field. Whether, or, how far, he is justified in attributing such enormous importance to his discoveries in Yucatan, time will show; at all events, he has given us a highly interesting narrative and a very curious theory, not the least suggestive corollary of which is the following:

"Would it not seem that civilization, like the heavenly bodies, following an eastward course, after completing a cycle of 10,000 years, at the end of which, according to the Egyptians, the souls gone west must return and begin a new earthly existence—civilization, I say, after many ups and downs, is returning to its birthplace to gather in its mother's lap fresh vigour before starting anew on its peregrination, around the world? Watch its course. See how western civilization is already invading Japan, China, India, and other Asiatic countries. History repeats itself. Its actual line of travel is that which it followed in bygone ages."

In conclusion, we heartily wish the courageous explorers every success in their efforts to awaken the world to a full appreciation of the wonderful antiquities of Central America, and also to an ample recognition of their own indefatigable labours in that field.

P. A. T., F. T. S.

THE FUTURE OF THE INDIAN SECTION OF THE T. S.

IN writing upon Madame Blavatsky's work in the West, in the December *Theosophist*, I pointed out, in the concluding paragraphs, how intimately the growth and spread of the Theosophical movement in India is bound up with the future of the Hindu race as a nation. All history teaches us the same lesson that no people has ever become great, no race ever revived from a state of torpor or decay, except under the impulse of a lofty and unselfish ideal; in other words, of a noble and spiritual conception of the purpose of human life and the nature of man's duty to the world around him.

The modern instances of Italy and Germany supply a commentary upon this text, whose significance in relation to the present condition of India and the Hindus cannot be misconstrued. I do not now propose to elaborate this theme, or to emphasise its lesson beyond what is indispensable to the purpose of this article. I believe that every Hindu, whom these words are likely to reach, especially every, even nominal, member of the Theosophical Society has sufficient intelligence to grasp it for himself. And I will not insult a nation, whose past glories and intellectual achievements are as yet but imperfectly understood, by assuming that its sons are today so utterly degenerate, as not to desire, at least, to put that lesson into practice.

The present article, therefore, has for its object to consider one of the most important agencies, by means of which the national regeneration of India may be brought about, through the revival of a lofty ideal. The agency in question is the THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, or, more accurately, its Indian Section. The task before it, at the present moment, is to gather, guide, and direct the re-awakening spiritual forces of the nation, to develop among the Hindus a clear consciousness of their

brotherly solidarity, despite all differences of caste, sect, creed or race and lastly, to train them in a school of practical co-operation in spiritual and philanthropic effort. The task is an immense one, and the responsibility in proportion to its magnitude.

Something in this direction has already been accomplished by the splendid work of Col. Olcott in India. But it is only a beginning; and though there are many signs of national awakening in India, the Hindus are yet far from realising the greatness of responsibility which rests upon them. The National Congress represents mainly the material and political aspects of this revival; and I have already shown that the future of India depends upon the spiritual regeneration of her people. The only organisation at present working in that direction is the Theosophical Society; but before, however, the Theosophical Society can fulfil its mission, it is obvious that its organisation must be rendered much more efficient than it is at present.

Let us consider the conditions of the problem.

To make the organisation efficient, interest must be aroused in the objects, for the attainment of which the organisation was formed, and in the organisation itself, as the means of realising them. That interest must also be sustained and kept up. Lastly, the interest, having been aroused and being sustained, must find its appropriate expression in the practical daily life of men.

The men to whom the Theosophical Society chiefly addresses itself may be divided into three classes, *viz.* :—the intellectual, the emotional, and the practical. The interest of the latter must be aroused by bringing to their notice the work done by the Society in the domain of Philanthropy as generally understood, *i. e.*, such work as the establishment of free dispensaries, hospitals and schools; the revival of interest in Sanskrit learning and literature; &c. &c. By accustoming the Hindus to co-operate with one another in the practical carrying out of such schemes, we shall surely draw into the Society men of a practical bent of mind.

To all those in whose nature the emotions play a dominant part, the works just indicated appeal with almost as much force, as to those of a purely practical turn. But besides this, Theosophy offers them scope for the fullest play of noble emotions, by the exalted ideal which it ever holds before the eyes of its followers. What indeed can be grander, what more calculated to stir the emotional nature to its inmost depths than the thought of a life devoted utterly to the service of Humanity, a service rendered not blindly, but wisely, not tentatively, but with a profound knowledge of human nature and its workings, not based upon the pride-tainted ideal of negative self-abnegation, but upon the positive consciousness of the actual unity of all men in spirit and essence!

Among the intellectual, whom the Theosophical Society addresses, we must distinguish three well marked mental tendencies, *viz.*, the sceptical, the orthodox and the mystical.

The purely unscientific and undogmatic character of the Society particularly adapts it to form the field of work for that large class of men who are sceptically inclined. On their side they represent in the Society a most valuable and indispensable element. For through the keen and close criticism to which this class of members are in the habit of subjecting ideas put forward by their fellows, we mainly owe it, that, on the whole, the literature produced in the Theosophical Society compares favourably with that turned out by any body of men, whether in the East or West.

Since it is our primary object to ascertain the truth of things, no criticism can be too severe, no standard of accuracy of thought and adequate demonstration can be too high for those who appreciate the task before us at its true importance.

The orthodox, on the other hand, will find in our ranks the opportunity of presenting their own peculiar ideas to the notice of other students. They will find many who sympathise in the main with their fundamental beliefs, and who, without being orthodox themselves, nevertheless are keenly interested in the study of orthodox Hinduism and other forms of religion.

But it is above all to those who are mystically inclined that the Theosophical Society and its organisation offer their most congenial home, their true resting place. And there is a larger proportion of mystically inclined people in the world, more particularly in India, than is generally thought; for many of those who would probably call themselves orthodox, or sceptical, are, at heart, unconsciously, mystics.

Indeed, it may almost be said that there are very few men who, at one time or another, have not felt a profound longing for some view or theory of life and its meaning which would serve as a firm and sure basis for practical action, as well as afford, on purely intellectual grounds, a safe foundation for the hope that this life of ours, with all its pain, misery and suffering, is not without meaning and purpose. We have all felt how the crushing blank of purely materialistic science seems to deprive us of our energy, our hope, even of much of the enjoyment even of life generally. I do not claim that Theosophy, as yet, offers anything like a complete and full solution of these difficulties. But I do claim that in the direction pointed out in Theosophical literature lies the best hope of obtaining such a foundation as is imperatively necessary, unless we are to believe that the entire world-process is absolutely meaningless.

Our task then is to arouse the interest of the cultivated classes throughout India; and to do this we must place ourselves on their standing ground and speak to them in a language which they can understand. We must show them that in the Theosophical Society they will find the opportunities which they need. We must make the meetings of our branches open to all who choose to attend them; and those meetings must be rendered interesting and instructive to visitors,

as well as to members, by providing attractive and valuable materials for discussion and thought.

If the members of the Theosophical Society throughout India will set to work in earnest at the study of their own literature, both Sanskrit and vernacular; if they will endeavour to render, into the language of our modern mind, the thought of the ancients; if, above all, they will try to substitute for purely verbal conceptions a real understanding of the matters treated of, I am confident that not only will the theosophical movement grow mighty and prosperous, but that its influence upon the reviving intellectual life of India will be simply incalculable.

Hitherto the Branches of the Society in India, as well as the scattered members throughout the country, have languished from the lack of any continuous and systematic stimulus and support. With the exception of the *Theosophist* magazine, nothing has been done to draw out their powers of thought and study. They have been left to find their way as best they could, without the benefit of that mutual interchange and comparison of ideas which it is the special function of the Theosophical Society to promote and facilitate. The Branches, especially, have been left to carry on their meetings as best they could. No systematic scheme of work was ever sketched out for them, no materials provided for their study and discussion, no effort made, hitherto, to bring them into active relations and correspondence with one another.

But now this state of things has come to an end. By the increase of the permanent staff at Head-quarters, it has become possible to maintain active and continuous relations by correspondence with all the branches and with those individual fellows who are willing to share in the work. Directions and suggestions for the conduct and work of the branches, both in their meetings and outside those meetings, will be provided for all who choose to profit by them. Regular papers, in printed form, will be sent to the Secretary of each branch henceforward, at least once every month, containing material for discussion during at least two meetings of the branch in that month.

Members will be encouraged to think, to study, to write, by the new monthly publication called "*The Prasnotara*." By a system of carefully devised questions, their attention will be directed to special points in Hindu philosophy, religion or custom requiring elucidation; and the interchange of thought thus produced will, I am confident, draw forth a stream of able and interesting writing, which will be of great value to all the members of the Society.

But there is one department of our work to which I desire especially to call the attention of those who possess the necessary qualifications. I refer to the translation into English of works from Sanskrit and the vernaculars. A great mass of literature exists containing, I believe, most interesting and valuable matter. In the days of India's ancient glory, sciences and arts were known which now are forgotten. These lie at present buried in palm leaf MSS. often neglected and uncared for. It is our duty to rescue them from oblivion, and render them useful by

translating them into a language which has practically become the common tongue of all educated men throughout India.

Moreover, the ancient and time-honored systems of philosophy, in which may be found the germs of all philosophical and metaphysical speculations which have since been developed, require to be studied and understood in the light of modern thought and science. With the new and more efficient organisation of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society, the accomplishment of all this work becomes possible and practicable. But it cannot be accomplished without the active help and co-operation of our members. Therefore I appeal to them, in the name of their fatherland, in the name of their ancestors, in the name of the future of their country, to rouse themselves from their indifference and apathy and to work earnestly and heartily in our common cause. They will find at the Head-quarters of the Society men ready and anxious to assist them, in every possible way; to point out to them the lines along which such researches should be pursued; to indicate the books most worthy of translation; to provide the necessary funds for the publication of their translations, when made; to organise their labours so that no energy may be wasted, and no time and money lost, by the doing of the same work by different people at the same time.

Many of the most influential organs of the Indian Press have recently recognised, in a most generous manner, the great services which Col. Olcott, our President-Founder, has rendered in the revival of Indian national feeling. During Col. Olcott's extended tours, intense enthusiasm was aroused by his lectures, and numerous branches of the Society were brought into existence in all parts of the country. The fruit of his labours is to be seen to-day in the multiplication of associations, Sabhas, and so forth, all over the country. But these are still working in an isolated manner. Their efforts need to be organised and guided from a common centre. It would add greatly to their individual usefulness, and assist very materially in the growth of the new life of India, if all such associations, which are in sympathy with the three declared objects of the Theosophical Society, would formally affiliate themselves with us. Their work could then be assisted and facilitated by the aid which the Theosophical Society is prepared to render.

The first steps were taken by Col. Olcott. He aroused the slumbering energies of the nation. He gave a new direction to their aspirations. Now we must enter on earnest and systematic work if any permanent result is to be achieved. The immense progress made by the Theosophical movement in England and America during the last three years, shows how much can be accomplished by a few devoted and untiring workers. And let it be remembered, moreover, that the minds of men in the West are by no means so naturally ready to assimilate and understand spiritual truth as are those of the Hindu race. India is the home and the fountain-head of spiritual philosophy. The West has, comparatively speaking, no such spiritual treasure from which to draw inspiration and

guidance. India possesses it in abundance. These stored up hoards of spiritual knowledge must be brought forth to the light of day, and rendered once more current among mankind. The Aryan race generally, to which Americans, Europeans or Hindus alike belong, is nearing a crisis in its history. Old creeds, old forms of belief, old conceptions of life, are crumbling away on every side around us. In the West, the pressure of an industrial system, based entirely upon absolute individualism, has led to the growth of an intense selfishness which threatens to overwhelm the race in some terrible catastrophe. In India, on the other hand, the gradual decay and disintegration of its old forms of thought and social organisation under the influx of Western science and ideas, the contrast with the brilliant material civilisation of the European nations, added to the constant pressure of material necessities, are tending to bring about the growth and spread of a purely materialistic and selfish conception of life. But selfishness is a plant that is fatal to any soil in which it takes root. It narrows and cramps the sympathies, intellectual and emotional, of the individual, it crushes out all generous feeling from the heart, it breaks up the ties of family, of race and of nation; in a word, selfishness means death. It is useless to contend that any efficient weapon can be found, whether in the case of individual or that of nation, with which successfully to combat selfishness, unless it can be proved that man has some higher destiny before him than utter extinction and annihilation after the death of his physical body. For if there is nothing for a man to look to as the result of his personal self-sacrifice, whether for himself, for his nation, or for the human race as a whole, then there is absolutely no motive to lead him to deny himself in order to benefit others.

But many thinkers will be inclined to contend that the now generally recognised law of evolution can only proceed through the unchecked influence of the struggle for existence. And that, if this is so, all the attempts to make men unselfish, to encourage them to live altruistic lives are simply thrown away, as being contrary to nature's laws. But even modern science itself is beginning to recognise the presence and action in nature of another law, dominating even the struggle for existence. Some very able naturalists of the evolutionist school have recently shown, with great force of demonstration, that in many departments of the animal kingdom this law of the struggle for existence is superseded by the law of mutual help and co-operation. As regards humanity, its history in all times of which we have record, conclusively shows that human progress, human civilization, human evolution, are inseparably bound up with co-operation and union.

To a certain degree, co-operation involves the sacrifice by the individual of some of his personal desires and wishes for the benefit of the whole, and in order that the whole may exist as such; and at the present day, this law is imperfectly understood and still more imperfectly obeyed. But the careful consideration of the whole question will, I think, render

it perfectly obvious that the future progress of humanity must lie in the direction of greater, more perfect, and more complete co-operation rather than in that of increased ferocity and bitterness in the struggle for existence.

It is one most important part of the mission of the Theosophical Society to promote the growth of greater and more perfect co-operation, first intellectual and then in all other departments of life, between all sections of humanity. The tide of sympathy has already begun to flow in a very definite and tangible manner towards India from the West, especially America. It is our duty here to reciprocate this, and to give freely of our ancestral stores of spiritual knowledge, that the balance may be preserved and the co-operation be truly mutual.

In India itself, the Theosophical Society has a mighty task before it: the spiritual and intellectual regeneration of a nation. Let there, then, be no laggards, no cravens in our ranks; let us each honestly do our best, not looking to reward; let us feel ourselves, what in truth we are, Brothers one of another, indissolubly united in a solidarity of weal and woe that no power can break; let us rouse ourselves and work, as men, not as children, recognising that the seed time is short and the harvest must be reaped by each one of us, sooner or later.

Loyalty to truth; brotherly co-operation; devoted work for the good of all—let these be our watchwords, expressed also in our deeds, and the future of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society will be worthy the country of its name.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

THE SPIRITUALISTS IN CONGRESS.

(Continued from page 221.)

OCCASIONALLY we come across critical passages in the Report which apply to Theosophy as well as to Spiritualism, and contain a lesson for F. T. Ss. For instance: students of Theosophy of a few years' standing, very seldom realize the exceedingly small capacity for the reception and assimilation of new truths that exists in the average untutored mind,—and the minds of the vast majority, who have never examined the grounds of their beliefs, are "untutored" in this case, however "educated" their owners may be. When loaded up unmercifully at first with huge bales of Theosophical truths, the victim either collapses into a mere mechanical repeater of the doctrine taught, or kicks himself free of the load. Therefore there is wisdom for us, too, in what M. Camille Chaigneau says:

"Permit me to say that the majority of those who become Spiritists by study of the doctrine are generally impatient to make the neophyte accept the whole teaching at once. No time is given him to assimilate for himself; and, especially, not to assimilate what does not suit him. There is a tendency to force the whole block upon him, and if he rebels against some little point he is allowed no peace until he surrenders."

Again, in a "Note" presented to the Congress by M. Leymarie and others, the importance of verifying experiences is pointed out. As most of the experiences occurring to Fellows of the T. S. are subjective, such verification is not easy in our case, but it should be attempted always, if for no other reason than to guard against self-deception. Theosophists, moreover, should, we think, be more exacting in their verifications than this "Note" requires; for Spiritualists seem to be solemnly called upon to do formally the very thing which Mill tells us is constantly done informally by stupid people, and is in any case a dangerous fallacy—namely, counting the successes and neglecting the failures, and then adducing the successes to demonstrate their theories. The Note says:

"In many Groups important predictions of future events have occurred, which have no scientific value, because they were not authenticated at the time when they were made. For that reason we ask the groups of Spiritists and Spiritualists to enclose copies of such predictions in envelopes and to deposit these envelopes in the presence of witnesses with some public functionary. If the prediction be fulfilled within the given time, the opening of the envelope can be demanded and a *procès verbal* drawn up. If the prediction fail, it can be regarded by the Group as a negative result."

We have italicised the last sentence, since it shows such charming naïvety as regards the requirements of scientific evidence,—it actually consecrates the fallacy in question. The logical operation is, of course, to offset the successes by the failures; indeed, the record of failures is of only secondary importance to that of successes, for once the cause of failure is suspected, discovered and eliminated, failure becomes success.

M. Fauvety touches upon another weak point of Spiritualism,—the trivial nature of the communications. He tells us in his speech before the "United Sections" that he had at one time had the belief that the communications attributed to spirits were nothing but the "objectivations" of the thoughts of the medium or of the sitters, but was obliged to abandon that theory by force of the evidence he obtained. He now thinks that—

"We are in relations, in equation, so to say, in equation of degree or development, with these spirits; and we have *rapports* only with spirits of nearly the same degree of development as ourselves...in so much that those who are little enlightened receive communications from those who are no wiser than themselves. It is very rare that the spirits teach us anything new. We have been trying for a long time, a great deal has been published, a great many communications have been received, but I don't think it can be said that a single new thought, a single discovery, has been gained by those means."

M. Fauvety's criticisms of the pretensions of Spiritism are interesting. He was a friend of Allen Kardec, but is not a rabid Kardecist. He says:—

"Allen Kardec was successful in making a work of necessary transition between the Christian conception and that of the future, as yet hidden from us, but as to resolving all the difficulties before us, as to solving the social question, as you intend to do, as to establishing universal fraternity and solidarity upon a basis of science and truth,—no!—we do not know enough."

He thinks the first thing in those directions is to revive the idea of a Universal Spirit.

"If each of us is truly an immortal spirit, born of the eternal thought, and having to continue the eternal work, co-worker with the universal cause, then, there must be, and believe me there is, a universal and divine soul, which unites us all."

This Universal Soul is not "God," he points out; for God is a being that men have believed in only through sentiment or tradition; meaning, apparently, that "God" is an imaginary entity,—whereas, the Universal Soul is a great reality.

The tendency among the present Spiritualists is to accept the teaching of the spirits with far more reserve than formerly, and to draw more freely upon other sources. From the quotations already made, the reader will doubtless have observed the great similarity between many of the ideas put forward by Spiritualists in the Congress and those elaborated by Theosophists in their periodicals and pamphlets. Even the most distinctly individual of the Spirit teachers, as, for instance, M. A. Oxon's Imperator, gives us nothing original; and, indeed, the fact that the doctrines of such teachers conform to what we know from other sources is sometimes adduced as a proof of their trustworthiness. A striking exception to this rule meets us in the long communication from the "Spirit Jean" presented by M. George Marius. This spirit has been continuing in the columns of the Positivist organ, *La Vie Posthume*, the series of revelations commenced by "the Spirit Alpha," and this communication is taken from the columns of that periodical. The "group" of Positivist Spiritualists do not accept the reality of anything more ethereal than the astral man; they deny the existence of the Karana Sarira and "Higher Self," and some of them assert that when the astral man expires, as he is believed to do some time after the death of the physical body, it is "all up" with the individual. The Spirit Jean, however, teaches the reincarnation of the astral man. The astral man or perispit is, according to him, the progenitor or cause of the material man, and the latter in turn the father of the former. There is therefore a continual oscillation between the two worlds; death on one plane being the concomitant of birth on the other, or rather the very same thing under another aspect. This brings human life under the general laws of nature, for just as water is constantly going up to the clouds in vapour and descending again to earth in rain, without any *special* reference to its wellbeing as water, so man, according to a natural law, is constantly being rarified into spirit and again materialized into flesh, for the benefit of things in general, and for his improvement as a part of Nature.

"Life is a trial, say some; life is an expiation, say others; life is a mission, say yet again others; but the Spirit Jean declares life to be a *necessity*, having its direct cause in the intimate composition of our being which, formed by the union of three distinct principles, must in order to progress make each of its components progress singly."

These three principles, however, are not the familiar "body, soul, spirit." The Spirit Jean says:—

"Nature, as being the universal ensemble of all that is, is formed of three principles co-eternally and indissolubly united to each other; these are—*Spirit* or force, *Matter* or form, and *Universal Fluid* or movement. Individualized in particular creatures, these three principles may be conveniently represented to the mind as Soul, Body, and Vitality."

Soul, however, in this case does not mean individual soul, but the soul essence, as it were, common to all, and which enters into our general make up, just as carbon or oxygen enters into the composition of our bodies. The individual *spirit*, on the contrary, is composed of soul, body and vitality, and it is more perfect in proportion as the "harmonic homogeneity" of its components is complete.

The Spirit Jean divides existence into three recurring periods: Life, Sleep and Death.

"Each of these is characterized by the preponderance of one of the three constitutive principles of the universe: by Matter during life, by Universal Fluid during sleep, and by Spirit during death. From life to death, and from death to life, passing through sleep, the mediating and uniting manifestation of the two others, such is the incessant to-and fro which the individual must undergo, and the necessary consequence of which is the continual progress of each of the three principles that characterize it."

The progress of the individual is, according to this theory, subordinate to the progress of the whole, which in its turn depends upon the progress of the component principles. From this it naturally follows that merit depends largely upon the ultimate benefit of the individual to the whole, and that the happiness of the individual is not the ultimate aim of nature; therefore it is absurd to suppose that social or material rewards and punishments attach to what Theosophists call good and bad karma. The latter, the cosmic results of our actions, enter into the scheme of Nature, the former, the circumstances of life which make our happiness or misery, are merely conventional and man-made, and are utterly ignored by Nature. Of course it follows that any *intention* on the part of Nature in regard to any person's earthly career is a fallacy. Each one arrives here with a certain momentum, or capital of powers and tendencies, which *must* work themselves out somehow according to natural law. So, without any forethought or predestination on Nature's part, heroes, saints, and all kinds of leaders of men arise, simply because they are born leaders, saints or heroes; and, finding the opportunity, they function, each after his kind.

"In the case of Jesus we can no more see an exception to rule of natural consequences than in those of Socrates, Galileo, Confucius or Newton; for were we to recognize a mission in their case as benefactors of humanity, we should have no good reason wherewith to combat those who, by antithesis—since the predestination of good implies necessarily the predestination of evil—might want to make us believe that the scourges of humanity, the malicious geniuses, the Neroses, the Borgias, the Torquemadas, the Napoleons, are missionaries also, voluntarily incarnated in humanity in order to bring destruction and misery."

The Spirit Jean gets over the "problem of evil" by invoking natural law, to which if we conform, evil, or at least the present gratuitous evils, will disappear; but he seems to thoroughly recognize the as yet imperfect results of "Nature's" strivings. He says:

"Nature is not a dispenser of justice (*justicière*), it is just; it does not punish, it determines. The inferior creature is irresistibly drawn into inferior circumstances, the superior one into surroundings in conformity with the degree of elevation it has attained; and if there be who unjustly have to sustain the collective inferiority, the suffering which results therefrom is a regenerating power, that saves them from suffering in the future."

We have here a great many of the elements we meet with in modern Theosophy; but this rendering of the doctrine of "eternal justice" is perfectly compatible with a recognition of the absolute callousness of Nature to the suffering of the individual, when larger interests are at stake. If suffering be the *necessary* condition of progress, as not only Theosophy, but also the theory of natural selection proclaims, then, more than one's share of suffering *ought* to mean more than one's share of progress; in which case the only justice possible on Nature's part is the apportioning of the suffering of each, so that no one may progress too fast!

M. Georges Marius himself, however, would probably give the doctrine of Spirit Jean a narrower rendering, for he seems to shut his eyes to the seamy side of Nature and, pouring away the vinegar, to soak his inner consciousness with the honey only. He says:

"We cannot believe in the idealized image of a justice which would not be synonymous with *absolute* goodness, and *absolute* generosity towards everything that lives, good or bad, without exception, or restriction. Such is moreover the inalterable aspect under which the living forces of nature manifest themselves here below; and no one would propose to call it unjust that the ray of sunshine which falls on the stretcher of the criminal in his cell should come from the same source as another ray which illuminates the cradle of the innocent babe."

Of course not; but, unfortunately, life is not all sunshine, and since one of the beneficent provisions of Nature consists in the providing for every creature of some other creature to devour it,—to say nothing of the millions of parasites, a condition of whose existence is the suffering or death of their unwilling patrons,—it would seem that M. Marius, to be logical, should either admit the existence of our old friend, an *absolutely* evil entity, to counterbalance his absolutely good one, or else indulge in a little of the now fashionable argumentative hocus-pocus to prove that evil is nothing but good in disguise.

Occasionally we come across quaint side-growths of Spiritualism, such as that of Signor Enrico Dalmazzo of Turin. That gentleman has had for fellow-workers a number of devout Catholics, among whom are several priests; and, somewhat like the Abbé Roca, he thinks that Spiritualism and Catholicism are natural allies, and ought to coalesce. The two are at present in direct opposition as regards the source of the phenomena, but that little difficulty can easily be got over if the Pope and Cardinals can only be brought to take Signor Dalmazzo's view of the situation. The Report says:

"With the Abbé Almignana, M. Dalmazzo thinks that the more and more frequent and marked occurrence of spiritualistic phenomena, far from being attributable to Satan, is decreed by God in order to eradicate the universal propensity of incarnated spirits at the present time to bury themselves in the mud of materialism, and in order to purify humanity from the miasmas which have infected it since it has forgotten the principles of Christianity. And if Heaven has chosen this process for manifesting itself, it is because it is the only one whose immediate objectivity could stir the minds upon which no metaphysical doctrine, no moral precept, has any longer an effect. Consequently we must open the eyes of the priests, and induce them to practise Spiritualism actively, so that instead of opposing the tide of scientific Spiritualism, as most of them now do, they may direct its flow towards Rome."

Signor Dalmazzo thinks that the result of this Catholico-Spiritualistic combination would be the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth, garnished with all those virtues of which each religion and each philosophy, claims the monopoly;—thus tempting the student of human nature to exclaim: "All systems of morality are founded upon the same great platitudes."

Very bold and with far reaching corollaries is the idea put forward by M. le Dr. Chazeraïn, but as to its originality, students of Theosophy will recognize it as an old acquaintance in a new dress; indeed in a certain sense it is but an echo of Paracelsus, Van Helmont and other great masters of Theosophy, and also an echo of Mesmer. Dr. Chazeraïn says:

"Every personal pleasure which does not result from the general happiness is a pleasure obtained to the detriment of another person, and its enjoyment is uncertain. That is why moralists tell us: Do not to others what you would not that they should do to you;—a precept to which Jesus added: Love one another. But how comes it that this human solidarity exists? How is it that we suffer from the misfortunes of others, and rejoice at their happiness,—that men cannot be happy in isolation? Why is it that we ought to love one another?"

"Well, it comes from the fact that men live in the midst of a boundless fluidic ocean, which put us all into communication with one another, whether with those who inhabit the earth, or with those who inhabit space. I mean the ether, which is at the same time light, electricity, magnetism, and source of all the forces and substances of which all things are formed; this I would call the *divine perispit*, which places the visible world and the universal soul *en rapport* with each other. In this fluid in which we everywhere bathe, which penetrates to the depths of our being, there cannot take place the smallest movement that has not its echo everywhere: vibrations of matter, vibrations of soul—it receives and transmits them all."

Signor Giuseppe Palazzi, of Naples, also explains the reason of human solidarity, but in a somewhat different manner. He confesses to belonging to the progressive party in Spiritualism, in contradistinction to the conservative, or followers of Allen Kardec; but it is necessary to understand his premises in order to judge of his conclusions. He says:

"There exists only one single substance, which has had no commencement, and will have no end, and which is infinitely perfectible. When a world is dissolved, either by the effects of time, or by any other rational cause, the matter of which it was composed is distributed in space (*se fond dans l'espace*) to acquire there a fresh vigour, and to re-become fit for the evolution of new life; then, it agglomerates

with the matter resulting from the decomposition of other worlds, forming nebulous masses, destined to differentiate into new worlds. In the substance of these, nebulae particles exist which are already vital, sensitive and intelligent, but as yet unconscious; these separate themselves, in virtue of the centrifugal force, and go, freely scattering through space, to unite themselves, according to their affinities, with other wandering particles. Thus is engendered a centre of life (*un foyer de vie*), a spirit. This spirit begins to incorporate itself in the minerals, which are themselves aggregates of particles not yet vitalized, sensitive or intelligent. From the minerals it passes into the vegetable kingdom, and thence into the animal, getting rid, in its ascent through an innumerable series of forms, of such of its own particles as have progressed the least. These thrown-off particles then become wanderers in like manner and attract other elementary atoms, in combination with which they constitute fresh spirits, that, in their turn, will have to evolve through the whole chain of being.

"When by its continual growth a spirit has assimilated the necessary ideas and aptitudes, from thenceforth, but only from thenceforth, it possesses self-consciousness (*conscience*) and the power of reasoning. It has to make use of that human embodiment, as of the preceding ones, until it has conquered the right of passing into superior forms.

"Thus is established,—and this is big with sociological consequences—the scientific proof of the solidarity of all existing things, from the most rudimentary mineral up to the most purified essence."

The Report adds:

"According to the theory of M. Palazzi; or rather, according to the ideas of the spirits who communicate with him, God is no more than the most developed of all spirits; and although it is certain that there are other spirits which follow him at a comparatively small distance, it is no less certain that none will ever overtake him in development, for God himself will continually progress (*ira toujours se sublimant*)."

Another curious eccentricity of Spiritualism is that contained in a long Memoire from M. S. F. W. Roorda Van Eysinga, giving the doctrine of the spirits received through a certain medium. This Memoire is "boiled down" into a few pages of the Report by "P. G. L."—presumably, M. P. G. Leymarie. P. G. L. seems to think highly of this spirit's teachings, for he says that it is much to be regretted that "the Volume" has not been translated into French for the benefit of Spiritualists and Spiritists alike. P. G. L. tells us:

"The question treated is: Why did the Christ incarnate in human form? In his introduction, in the Dutch language, M. Van Eysinga declares that the revelation of this spirit was to him 'like a blow in the face,' the ideas communicated being in direct opposition to his own. ... These ideas, following the example of Allen Kardec, of Roustaing, of René Caillié, he does not hesitate to make public, because he thinks it high time to shake off the still effective yoke of the Council of Constantinople. M. Van Eysinga, in fact, sees in modern Spiritualism the renaissance of Alexandrine Gnosticism, which the Church believed it had destroyed by the condemnation of Origen, but which, since it presented the synthesis of the most sublime traditions of India, of Iran, of Chaldea, of Judea and of Greece, could not perish. ... The Author shows that, since the vital law of humanity, as of the entire universe, is the battle between spirit and matter, history is incomprehensible for those who will not perceive the existence of a spiritual world, and its intimate relations with the world of men, for those who will not admit reincarnation, nor the

all-powerful influence exercised upon humanity by certain beings very high in the spiritual hierarchy, whose supreme guides they have been appointed."

The Report goes on to say that M. Van Eysinga, or rather the communicating spirit, refutes some propositions in the system of Darwin and Haeckel, for although that system is right in the main, its advocates make the mistake of supposing "that the intellectual faculties and moral dispositions have their development determined by the organism, whereas the truth is that organic evolution is absolutely dependent upon spiritual evolution."

As to Jesus, and the reason for his incarnation, M. Van Eysinga says that he is one of the highest of the guardian spirits of humanity, and came to earth "not to found the true religion, for whose comprehension humanity was not then sufficiently prepared, but in order that, by giving to the world a healthy (*saine*) conception of the Deity, and by the example of his own life, he might render possible the advent of a pure morality and of Universal Brotherhood."

A. K.

(To be concluded.)

A TODA CREMATION, OR "GREEN FUNERAL" ON THE "BLUE MOUNTAINS."

YES, we went to a "Green Funeral" in our innocence, little thinking the term would be as applicable to ourselves as to the "Man of the woods" on the eve of his cremation. For weeks we had been on the tip-toe of expectation. A wily Badaga had brought us spurious information on more than one occasion that had sent us wandering far in quest of the funeral pyre, when the occupant, alive and well, was tending his buffaloes on the hills, gaily blowing his hollow bamboo. Oh yes! the Badaga said, but how was I to know that he was not going to die? He was very sick, and they said he would die on Saturday, then the *Kéd* would have taken place next day." "Dry funerals" are certainties, unless Collector Dorée goes away and leave is hard to get for killing buffaloes. Now a "green funeral" is always doubtful. Sometimes the man gets well when preparations are well on the way for death ceremonies . . . At other times a man dies without any previous notice, and then there is a lot of trouble, for runners have to be sent off post haste to apprise the different Munds, order the Kota musicians, get leave from the Sircar to slaughter buffaloes, &c., the *Kéd* can only take place when everything is ready. The dry funeral is a sort of movable affair,—generally the relatives agree to commemorate the memore of several dead people at one time, and so—as the Sircar allows only two buffaloes for each person—by holding a big funeral ceremony the Todas manage to kill 14 or 20 buffaloes. In the old days the tribe used to kill as many for one man.

The "green funeral" was to take place for a certainty on the following Sunday. After a hasty breakfast a party of six of us mounted

our horses and set off,—driving was out of the question, for the road lay over hill and dale.

The morning was a glorious one as we rode over the beautiful billowy downs spangled with white anemones, pink sprays of the bee orchis (*mascula*) and clumps of the fairy tinted *acanthus strobilanthus*, the delicate amethyst bells still heavy with the dew drops of the night. The fresh pure air, the exquisite scenery of the far blue plain and rugged mountains in the foreground, all combined to make the morning exquisitely enjoyable. Overhead on every hill larks trilled their joyous songs, as they hovered in the clear air.

Woods nestled in the hollows in harmonies of green in every tint, save when perhaps a crimson *loranth* waved its banners defiantly drunk with the juices of its victim,—a vampire of the vegetable kingdom. As we rode along, across the valleys, the jungle-cock's sharp challenge woke the echoes as we briskly trotted towards the Mund where the cremation was to take place.

It was nearly midday when the Badaga halted. "There," he said, "is the *Kéd* Mund," or "dead man's house." We had expected to see the usual group of picturesque huts with their dome-shaped roofs, with the Buffalo kraal and sacred Elm tree. But here—on the borders of a lovely wood,—a lonely hut surrounded by a low wall of stones met our gaze. A sacred Elm in shimmering leaf flung its shadow across the grey thatch. The tender coppery sheen of the leaves standing out against the vivid green of the background of Shola running down to a ravine, where a rivulet ran trickling down to join a distant river. Against the hut a bamboo tressle leant waiting to bear the silent occupant to the pyre—women and tearful children sat mournfully about in quiet grief, while others crawled in and out of the tiny opening that did duty for a door. Far away over the hills a sad wailing dirge rose and fell, and as the mourners heard it their tears flowed afresh, "Aho! Aho! They come, the Kotars! Sing over our lost one—Ah ho—ho—Num Deveron." Standing about were groups of natives attracted by curiosity. We noticed that many of them had unwound a portion of their head dress and had brought it across their noses, and the Tamil word "narthum" fell from more than one pair of lips. Of "narthum" we fully understood the meaning, but thought it applied to the general odor of rank butter, &c., that usually haloes hill men. We had yet, however, to learn its meaning now. Yes, said a man who looked like a Government clerk, "There is much narthum there or is-stink—that man he dying five days ago."—Tableau. We fled incontinently to a respectable distance, and our friend Mr. Temple who had his head under his camera cloth, looked up at the general scattering, and suddenly getting a whiff too, fled in desperate haste. "Why did you not tell me," he gasped; we had only just found it out for ourselves. "In for a penny," &c., so keeping a good distance away we watched the proceedings. Evidently the mourners did not object to the

state of their beloved relative—and they crawled in and out of the pestiferous-smelling hut with the greatest unconcern. With the arrival of the Kotars* the trestle was carried in, and shrouded in a thick cloth, the dead man was borne out. The music grew louder from the distant hill, the stalwart youths driving in the buffaloes arrived, and very picturesque they looked as they walked beside their restive charges, the leading cow crowned with a garland of the leaves of a species of wild cucumber, with a bell tied round her neck; behind her came the rest of the animals, ready to plunge away at a moment's notice. Up the hill the cortege went with its attendants and drew up near the wood where the pyre lay. Here we vainly essayed to get the camera in position. The savage herd of shaggy buffaloes shaking their great curved horns, with snorts of rage and fear, with the splendidly made men picturesquely grouped around, made a picture not easily forgotten. As each buffalo was brought up for the death blow given by the pujari or Pala, two of the strongest youths would plunge forward, and each seizing a horn wind their arms round it and so hang on by main force, dragged about in every direction by the furious animal plunging and fleeing in terror. Brought to a standstill, the unerring hatchet descended swiftly, and in less than five seconds the huge brute lay dead. Instantly the bier was borne quickly to the spot, and the dead man's hand laid on the buffalo's head, and with its last breath messages were given to it by the mourners who crowded around caressing the creature, that till then had been herded and tended by its murderers, "Oh dying buffalo, take our messages to Armos. Tell him how we miss him, Aho! Aho!—Oh! go thou with him, etc." As each buffalo was slain, so the mourners crowded and wept sadly. The slaughter over, the mourners rushed about looking frantically for sympathetic friends or relations to weep with, and when satisfied with one they sat down in couples with their foreheads pressed together weeping in concert. It was a curious scene. Sometimes a couple would part and wander about looking for a fresh subject to grieve with, and, as often as not, wander aimlessly about with tears streaming unassorted.

At last the weeping stage drew to a close. The mourners having exhausted their fount of tears, rose up with one accord—men, women and children—drew up to the pyre, and solemnly flung a handful of earth over the corpse, saying, "Earth go back to earth," before it was placed on the dais of dry wood—made of seven sorts of trees. The chief mourner lit the pyre, first placing the dead man's ornaments, a supply of food, &c., close by.

Ranged alongside the pyre were sacks of parched grain, which was then handed round; and while the corpse lay grimly roasting—with an attendant on the watch with a big stick to keep down restive limbs,—the mourners ate their grain, with the tears still damp upon their faces!

Beyond the wood the Kotars started and fought like jackals over the buffaloes, while great vultures sailed over head waiting for their

* The Badagas and Kotars are Hill tribes,—wild and filthy.

turn. The grass so lately spangled with wild flowers lay sprinkled with gore, and the Kotars, hideous with the same fluid, tore and hacked at the huge skinned forms scattered about—a gruesome sight.

"Have you seen enough," asked the Badaga, "or would you like to wait till the dead man's head goes pop—which will be very soon now." Needless to say, we fled! "Well," said the Badaga, "as you will not stay to see the fun out, I will say 'Salaam' if all the Dorees and Dhosarnis will feel in their pockets for the Enam (present) I am certain they wish to give me."

"Is this all!" he exclaimed as an 8 anna piece shone on his hollow palm. "Make it a Rupee; think of all the fun you have had,—grand Tumash!—Kotar music, slaughtered buffaloes and much crying of the Todas."

"Look here," we said, "if you will tell us what becomes of the ashes we will give you four annas more."

He scratched his head and shifted his toga.

"What is the good," he said, "gathering up the ashes is very slow fun. Perhaps in the morning—say an hour before sun-rise—the chief mourner will collect them and put them on one side, then he will take an empty earthen pot on his head and muttering something about 'life's body being broken,' he will dash the pot down, breaking it to bits, and without looking back run away from the spot. The ashes are buried with such of the dead men's ornaments that have escaped the fire—now give me my four annas only make it six."

G. R. B.

BRAHMOPANISHAD OF THE YAJUR VEDA.

THIS Upanishad is intended to give a complete and clear idea of the nature of Atma, that has four states of consciousness (avasthas) and four seats, for the better consummation of the Nirguna Dhyana (contemplation on an object without Gunas).

OM. SAUNAKA MAHASALA questioned the holy sage Pippalada of the Angiras Gotra thus:—In this beautiful Brahmapura, the fit residence of divine beings, how are (the deities of Vak, &c.,) located? How do they function? To whom belongs this power? (manifestations of Buddhi, &c.). He to whom this power belongs, what is He?

Commentary.—Brahmapura means body, and is so-called as it forms a whereby to attain Brahm. There are four questions here. The first is, "What is that, depending on which, Vak and others function in this body?" The second is, "What is that that sets these in action?" The third is, "What is it that causes the Buddhi, &c., to manifest themselves?" The fourth is, "What is the real nature of that which exercises this power?"

Pippalada then having deeply considered, imparted to him the Brahmaidya (Divine wisdom—Theosophy),—that most excellent of

all things: "It is Prana (*i. e.*) Atma. It is Atma that exercises this power."

Comm.—Anticipating a question "Is this the material Prana," he says 'It is Atma.' This is a general answer to the four questions, but he gives a special answer to the third in saying, 'It is Atma that exercises this power.'

It is the life of all Devas (Divine powers). It is their death and (their) life.

Comm.—On the existence of atma, depends theirs.

The Brahma that shines pure, Nishkala, resplendent, and all-pervading, in this divine Brahmapura (body), rules (all).

Comm.—Here he defines its place. *Nishkala* means 'Without Prana, &c., which are the results of avidya.' Having given 'a negative' description, he gives a positive one by the following epithets: "*all-pervading*." The original is *akashara*. It comes from 'as' to pervade. 'He rules all.' This is an answer to the second question. As said in the *Brahadaranyaka*, 'He who is in the Prithvi, but pervades it, he who causes Prithvi to move, he whom Prithvi does not know, he is Atma, the Antaryami, (Inner mover), the Amrita (immortal).'

The Jiva, (identifying himself with) the Indriyas, rules them like a spider. The spider throws out from a single thread out of his body a whole web, and draws it into himself by that same thread, so Prana, whenever it goes, draws after it the objects of its creation (Vak, etc).

Comm.—As said in the latter part of this Upanishad 'as the spider throws out threads and draws them back,' so the Jiva goes and returns in 'the Jagrat and Swapna.' Here *atma* stands for the spider, Prana for the thread, and Vak, &c., for the web. As said elsewhere, 'As a strong horse, when it runs off, draws along with it the pegs to which the ropes were attached, so Prana (when it goes away) drags along with it the other Pranas.'

During 'Sushupti,' (the Prana) goes to its seat (Brahma), through the nadis of which it is the Devata, like an eagle, that making air as the means of communication, reaches his abode.

Comm.—Here he answers the question: "How does Prana attract them?" This also holds good during trance and death.

They say, as Devadatta, though beaten (during Sushupti) by a stick, &c., does not move, so also the actor does not suffer or enjoy for the merits or demerits of religious actions.

Comm.—They say, this is an answer to the question "How do we know that it goes to its abode, the Brahm and not anywhere else?" On awaking the person says, 'I have slept happily.' So he goes to his abode (*i. e.*) ananda (bliss) and returns from it, and ananda is Brahma. As Devadatta "How can he, while concerning himself with good and bad actions, enjoy happiness during Sushupti?" He answers it. The

person does not move, because he is conscious of nothing else but bliss, because there does not exist the cause of sorrow (*adharma*).

Just as a child obtains happiness without desiring for it (in play), so also Devadatta obtains happiness in Sushupti.

Comm.—Here he answers the question 'If *adharma*, the cause of sorrow, does not exist in Sushupti, then *dharma*, the cause of happiness, also does not exist? Then where is bliss?' By saying that the eternal happiness (*Nityananda*) exists, and the proof is simply the experience of the persons. The child plays, for play's sake, but he enjoys happiness withal. It is said, "There are only two who are free from anxiety and are drowned in *Paramananda* (supreme happiness)—the innocent and inexperienced child and the person who is freed from all *Gunas*."

He certainly knows, (being) *Param jyotis*, and the person desiring *jyotis*, enjoys bliss in the contemplation of *jyotis*.

Comm.—'There being no consciousness in Sushupti, how could he be said to enjoy bliss?' He answers this by saying that being *Param jyotis*, *i. e.*, *atma jyotis* that is independent of anything, he certainly knows it. As said in the *Srutis*: 'Being indestructible, there is no diminution in the power of vision of the seer!' 'But how does he enjoy it without desiring it?' He answers it thus:—'To him who longs after Atma everything appears dear.' So says the *Sruti*. So being always desirous of Atma, he thirsts for *jyotis* and delights in its enjoyment. During Sushupti there being no other desire, that which remains is only desire for Atma. Being tainted with desire he appears as acting on the *jagrat* plane. But in *Paramatma* there is no change. The *Srutis* say, 'He who longs after Atma, has satisfied all his desires.'

Then he comes back to the dream plane by the same way, like a *jalouka* (a leech). It, remaining on a blade of grass, first puts forward his foot on another blade in front, conveys his body to it, and having got a firm hold of it, then only leaves the former and not before. So this is the *jagrat* state.

Comm.—So also the Jiva having got into the *Swapna* body, then only leaves the Sushupti body, so also for *jagrat*; so also in death, where it takes another body before leaving this. The *Srutis* say, 'As the *jalouka*, so this person is under the control of and follows *Karma*.' By this example it will be seen, that the *jiva* experiences and is conscious of the three states.

As this (Devadatta) bears at the same time eight skulls, so this *jagrat*, the source of Devas and Vedas, clings to a man like the breasts in a woman.

Comm.—This answers the question, "How can one *jiva* experience all these states simultaneously?" But, "These three states contract and expand. How can they exist in *atma* that has no second form?"

The second example answers this. The breasts that contract and expand are found in a woman.

During the Jagrat Avastha, merit and demerit are postulated of this Deva (power), he is capable of great expansion and is the Inner mover. He is Khaga (bird), Karkata (crab), Pushkara (Akas). Prana, pain, Parapara, Atma and Brahma. This deity causes to know.

Comm.—‘How are we to know that Jagrat is the source of Vedas and Devas and not Swapna?’ He answers this thus: The actions of a person during the Jagrat state only are rewarded or punished, and not during the Swapna; these results are laid down in the Vedas and are influenced by the Devas. By saying that it is *postulated*, it seems that there is some connexion also with the Swapna state, because for seminal emission during Swapna, Prayaschitta is prescribed. *Expansion*, the universe proceeds from him. *Bird* as he knows what is going on elsewhere. *Crab* as he proceeds crookedly (spirally?). *Akas* being pure like it. *Prana* being its creator. *Pain* being its giver. *Para* the cause, *apara*, the effect. To show that he is not different from Jiva, he says *Atma* (*i. e.*) Pratyagatma. Being the soul of all, he causes everything to be known. ‘There is no other seer’ says the Sruti.

He who knows thus, obtains Brahma, the Supreme, the support of all things, and the Kshetragna (witness). He obtains Brahma, the Supreme, the support of all things, and the Kshetragna. The Purusha has four seats,—navel (Manipurakachakra), heart (Anahata-chakra), neck (Visuddhichakra), and head (Agnachakra).

Comm.—These are specially mentioned, as contemplation on these chakras facilitates progress.

There Brahm with the four feet specially shines. Those feet are Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupti and Turiya.

Comm.—‘Are these the only places? Are not the Muladhara, &c., mentioned?’ He answers this by saying that it shines in these places *specially* (*i. e.*), a slight contemplation there is enough. He calls the states *feet*; being only illusory, they are represented by the unimportant parts of the body, and it is only through these that it manifests itself.

In Jagrat he is Brahma, in Swapna Vishnu, in Sushupti Rudra, and in Turiya the Supreme Akshara. He is Aditya, Vishnu, Isvara, Purusha; Prana, Jiva, Agni, and resplendent. The Para Brahm shines in the midst of these (states). He is without Manas, ear, hands, feet and light. There the worlds are not worlds, Devas no Devas, Vedas no Vedas, sacrifices no sacrifices, mother no mother, father no father, daughter-in-law no daughter-in-law, Chandala no Chandala, Paulkasa no Paulkasa, Sramana no Sramana, beasts no beasts, hermits no hermits, so one only Brahm shines as different.

Comm.—*Light*, without the light of Indriyas, *Chandala*, one born of a Brahman woman by a Sudra. *Paulkasa*, one born of a Sudra woman by a Nishada (hunter). *Sramana*, also a man of a very low caste. Where does Brahm shine and in what form? He says:

In the Hridayakas (Akas in the heart) is the Chidakas. That is Brahm. It is extremely subtle (Chidakas). The Hridayakas can be known. This moves in it. In Brahm everything is strung.

Comm.—The Mantras say, ‘The heart should be known as the great residence of the All.’ What is the fruit of thus knowing him? He says.

Those who thus know the Lord know everything.

Comm.—As said in the Chandogyopanishad, ‘If he longs after Pitri-loka, by his very thought the Pitris arise; so he attains Pitriloka and is great there.’

In Him (the Gnani) the Devas, the worlds, the Pitris and the Rishis do not rule. He who has awakened knows everything.

Comm.—Each man is supposed to be indebted to three persons in his life, *i. e.*, the Devas, the Pitris, and the Rishis. He pays the first by studying the Vedas and performing the sacrifices, the second by begetting a son, and the third by daily giving Arghya (oblations of water). The Gnani being free from all the three, they no longer rule over him.

All the Devas are in the heart, in the heart are all the Pranas, in the heart is Prana, Jyotis and the threeplied holy thread. In the heart, in Chaitanya (consciousness) it (Prana) is.

Comm.—To impress upon the mind the necessity of renouncing everything known and unknown, he says that the worship of external deities is wrong and that everything is within. *Devatas*, Brahma and others, the deities of the Indriyas. *Pranas*, Vak and others. *Jyotis*, that which enables us to perceive objects. To show that the pure Brahm, though the source of all things and unmanifested, shines in the heart, he says ‘*The holy thread.*’ It represents the nine modifications of Satwa, Rajas and Tamas. He now gives the Mantra to be pronounced when putting on the holy thread.

Put on the Yagnopavita (the holy thread), the supreme, the holy, which came into existence along with Prajapati, which gives long life, and which is very excellent; let this give you strength and Tejas (spiritual splendour).

Comm.—The Yagnopavita is worn across the breast to show that the Chaitaniya is in the heart.

The wise man having shaved his head completely, should throw away the external thread. He should wear as the holy thread the supreme and indestructible Brahm. It is called Sutra, because it shows (that the Atma is in the heart). *Sutra* means the supreme

abode. He who knows that Sutra is a Vipra (Brahmin), and he has crossed the ocean of the Vedas. In that Sutra (thread) everything is strung, like beads on a thread. The Yogi, well versed in Yoga and having a clear perception of Truth, should wear that thread. Practising the noble Yoga, the wise man should abandon the external thread. He who wears the Sutra in the form of Brahm, he is a sentient being. By wearing that Sutra he is not polluted. They whose Sutra is within, whose Yagnopavita is Gnana, they only know the Sutra, and they only wear the Yagnopavita in this world. Those whose tuft of hair is Gnana, who are firmly grounded in Gnana, whose Yagnopavita is Gnana, consider Gnana only as supreme. Gnana is holy and excellent. He whose tuft of hair is Gnana, like the flame of Agni, he, the wise one, only wears a true Sikha; the others simply wear mere tufts of hair. Those Brahmanas and others who perform the ceremonies prescribed in the Vedas, they only wear this thread as a symbol of their ceremonies. Those who know the Vedas say that he only is a true Brahmin who wears the Sikha of Gnana and whose Yagnopavita is the same. This Yagnopavita (*Yagna* Vishnu and *Upavita* that surrounds, hence the form of Vishnu) is supreme and is the supreme refuge. He who wears that really knows, he only wears the Sutra, he is *Yagna* (Vishnu), and he only knows *Yagna* (Vishnu).

Comm.—Hereafter he begins to praise the Most Excellent, by attaining whom the various bonds are removed, by whose favour is obtained the Divine sight, and death avoided.

One God, hidden in all things, pervades all things and is the Inner Life of all things. He awards the fruits of Karma, he lives in all things, he sees all things without any extraneous help, he is the soul of all, there is nothing like him, and he is without any Gunas (being secondless). He is the great wise one (here the Gnana Sakti is postulated). He is the one doer among many actionless objects (here the Kriyasakti is clearly shown). He is always making one thing appear as several (by Maya). Those wise men who see him in Buddhi, they only obtain eternal peace. Having made Atma (Buddhi) as the Arani and Pranava the lower Arani, by constant practice of Dhyana, one should see the concealed deity. As the oil in the sesamum, as the ghee in the curds, as the water in the rivers, and as the fire in the Arani, so they who practise truth and austerities see him in the Buddhi.

Comm.—Arani is a piece of wood with a hole in it into which another sharp-pointed wood is inserted and made to rotate by a rope. It is used for getting fire for the sacrifices. It is very suggestive. For a detailed esoteric explanation of this, *vide Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, "Prometheus."

As the spider throws out and draws into itself the threads, so the Jiva goes and returns during the Jagrat and the Swapna.

Comm.—The heart being the place where it is to be contemplated, he proceeds to give a description of it.

The heart is in the form of a closed lotus flower, with its head hanging down; it has a hole in the top. Know it to be the great abode of the All.

Comm.—These lines appear in the Purusha Sukta too.

Know that during Jagrat it dwells in the eye (right); and during Swapna in the throat; during Sushupti it is in the heart and during Turiya in the head (in the nadi called Pureetati.)

Comm.—As said elsewhere, 'Having pierced by the manas and the breath the great bolt of Brahm in a moment, he should take rest in the great Ocean of supreme amrita. By bringing together the Prana and Apana to the Muladhara and contemplating upon Om (in the way laid down in the Tantras) the gastric fire is roused. The serpent Kundalini that lies coiled $3\frac{1}{2}$ times around the Sushumna closing the mouth (Brahmarandra) with his head, feels this and slowly begins to move. He should then force his breath (current) and his mind through the opening into Sushumna (for where the mind wills, there the breath current follows). There are three obstacles:—Brahma Granthi, Vishnu Granthi and Siva Granthi (granthi = knot). He should force his way through them and drink the nectar flowing from the moon in the Agnachakra. That process is referred to here.

Because Buddhi unites the Pratyagatama with the Paramatma, the worship of Sandhya (union) arose. So we should perform Sandhyavandana. The Sandhyavandana performed by Dhyana requires no water. It gives no trouble to the body or the speech. That which unites all things is the Sandhya of the one-staffed Sanyasis. Knowing that from which speech and mind turn back being unable to obtain it, and that which is the bliss of Jiva, the wise one is freed. The secret of the Brahma-vidya is to reveal the real nature of the Atma, that is all-pervading, that is like ghee in the milk, that is the source of Atma-vidya and Tapas, and to show that everything is in essence one.

So ends the Brahmopanisad.

C. R. SRINIVASA AYANGAR, B. A., F. T. S.,
Kumbakonam.

NATURE:

APHORISMS BY GOETHE.

(Translated by Prof. Huxley; "Nature," Nov. 4, 1869.)

NATURE! We are surrounded and embraced by her: powerless to separate ourselves from her, and powerless to penetrate beyond her. Without asking or warning she snatches us up into her circling dance, and whirls us on until we are tired, and drop from her arms.

She is ever shaping new forms : what is, has never yet been ; what has been, comes not again. Everything is new, and yet nought but the old.

We live in her midst and know her not. She is incessantly speaking to us, but betrays not her secret. We constantly act upon her, and yet have no power over her.

The one thing she seems to aim at is Individuality ; yet, she cares nothing for individuals. She is always building up and destroying ; but her workshop is inaccessible.

Her life is in her children ; but where is the mother ? She is the only artist ; working-up the most uniform material into utter opposites ; arriving, without a trace of effort, at perfection, at the most exact precision, though always veiled under a certain softness.

Each of her works has an essence of its own ; each of her phenomena a special characterisation ; and yet their diversity is in unity.

She performs a play ; we know not whether she sees it herself, and yet she acts for us, the lookers on.

Incessant life, development, and movement are in her, but she advances not. She changes for ever and ever, and rests not a moment. Quietude is inconceivable to her, and she has laid her curse upon rest. She is firm. Her steps are measured, her exceptions rare, her laws unchangeable.

She has always thought and always thinks ; though not as a man, but as Nature. She broods over an all-comprehending idea, which no searching can find out.

Mankind dwell in her and she in them. With all men she plays a game for love, and rejoices the more they win. With many, her moves are so hidden, that the game is over before they know it.

That which is most unnatural is still Nature ; the stupidest philistinism has a touch of her genius. Whoso cannot see her everywhere, sees her nowhere rightly.

She loves herself, and her innumerable eyes and affections are fixed upon herself. She has divided herself, that she may be her own delight. She causes an endless succession of new capacities for enjoyment to spring up, that her insatiable sympathy may be assuaged.

She rejoices in illusion. Whoso destroys it in himself and others, him she punishes with the sternest tyranny. Whoso follows her in faith, him she takes as a child to her bosom.

Her children are numberless. To none is she altogether miserly ; but she has her favorites, on whom she squanders much, and for whom she makes great sacrifices. Over greatness she spreads her shield.

She tosses her creatures out of nothingness, and tells them not whence they came, nor whither they go. It is their business to run, she knows the road.

Her mechanism has few springs—but they never wear out and are always active and manifold.

The spectacle of Nature is always new, for she is always revering the spectators. Life is her most exquisite invention ; and death is her expert contrivance to get plenty of life.

She wraps man in darkness, and makes him for ever long for light. She creates him dependent upon the earth, dull and heavy ; and yet is always shaking him until he attempts to soar above it.

She creates needs because she loves action. Wonderous ! that she produces all this action so easily. Every need is a benefit, swiftly satisfied, swiftly renewed. Every fresh want is a new source of pleasure, but she soon reaches an equilibrium.

Every instant she commences an immense journey, and every instant she has reached her goal.

She is vanity of vanities ; but not to us, to whom she has made herself of the greatest importance. She allows every child to play tricks with her ; every fool to have judgment upon her ; thousands to walk stupidly over her and see nothing ; and takes her pleasure and finds her account in them all.

We obey her laws even when we rebel against them ; we work with her even when we desire to work against her.

She makes every gift a benefit by causing us to want it. She delays, that we may desire her ; she hastens, that we may not be weary of her.

She has neither language nor discourse ; but she creates tongues and hearts, by which she feels and speaks.

Her crown is love. Through love alone dare we come near her. She separates all existences, and all tend to intermingle. She has isolated all things in order that all may approach one another. She holds a couple of draughts from the cup of love to be fair payment for the pains of a life-time.

She is in all things. She rewards herself and punishes herself ; is her own joy and her own misery. She is rough and tender, lovely and hateful, powerless and omnipotent. She is an eternal present. Past and future are unknown to her. The present is her eternity. She is beneficent. I praise her and all her works. She is silent and wise.

No explanation is wrung from her ; no present won from her, which she does not freely give. She is cunning, but for good ends ; and it is best not to notice her tricks.

She is complete, but never finished. As she works now, so can she always work. Everyone sees her in his own fashion. She hides under a thousand names and phrases, and is always the same. She has brought me here, and will also lead me away. I trust her. She may scold me, but she will not hate her work. It was not I who spoke of her. No ! What is false and what is true she has spoken it all. The fault, the merit, is all hers.

EX ORIENTE LUX:

A dialogue between a Christian Inquirer and a Student of Theosophy.

C. J.—I have been told that many Theosophists claim to be better Christians than those of the orthodox churches.

S. T.—The case might be open to argument, though in the first instance you would have to define what kind of Christianity, among its many forms, you would choose for your basis. Let me, however, assure you that students of Theosophy only lay claim to a better understanding of those fundamental truths, forming the essence of the Christian faith, and by their means arrive at a clearer conception of the inner Christian doctrines.

C. J.—But how can such higher understanding proceed from a source so distinctly non-Christian as Theosophy?

S. T.—Pardon me, Theosophy is no more non-Christian than it is of necessity Buddhistic or Brahminical.

That its advent at this moment should spring from the East, only shows that ancient science and tradition have been preserved there with more minute care and in greater purity than elsewhere. Hence the possibility of gaining from that quarter a more impartial analysis of original religious truths; for so long as you allow these to be essentially of a spiritual nature, you must grant that a system which proclaims the necessity and teaches the methods of spiritual development in man, has the highest claims to be heard and judged on its own merits.

Without a true analysis of the human soul, its nature, potentialities and aims, religion will remain a shrine with barred doors for the multitude. Religion, representing the inner life of the soul, must, therefore, always be helped to the clearer comprehension of its fundamental truths by a thorough knowledge of psychology, which acts as a husbandman in carefully preparing the soil.

C. J.—How can the most elaborate system of psychology claim common ground with revealed religion, such as we profess?

S. T.—More than you think perhaps. True knowledge leads to proper practice, and by gradual psychic evolution a revolution, or let us call it, a condition of receptivity if you prefer, has to arise in the soul, before it can be illumined by the greater revelation coming from above, or rather from within.

Psychology, so disdainfully treated by western science, marks out the road on which the level of spiritual understanding may be reached. Madame Blavatsky has not only produced the key and opened the barred gates to the world at large, but by her lucid and brilliant writings has led, and happily is still leading, the way to many capable and talented authors, who, eagerly following in her wake, have produced within a few years, an amount of valuable Theosophic literature, not only astonishing in its widespread importance, but especially notable in its pronounced effect upon the minds of European thinkers and students.

C. J.—What is the reason that the West should be ignorant of this knowledge and should have to receive it from the East?

S. T.—This ancient knowledge is like a subterranean water-course which finds an outlet whenever favourable circumstances render the required assistance, sending forth a clear rill, to mark its way, in many meanderings, through the vast plain below. Iron-bound tradition, aided by human prejudice, rules however that the vital element can only be drawn from this secondary stream, although the far distance of its original source and the defiled state of its bed have impaired confidence in the purity of the supply.

Hence, independent thinkers of all ages, mystics, under whatever names history likes to record them, have tried to slake their thirst by striking for the eastern fountain-head, and drinking of the living waters in all their virgin limpidity and invigorating freshness.

The difficulty of their arduous task was considerably increased by the necessity of veiling the significance of their researches from the ruling powers. In order to secure this end, absolute secrecy was maintained, and a system of obscure verbiage was adopted, which possessed the one merit of repelling all, save the enthusiastic student.

The present era, with its freedom of thought, once more brings forth the hidden stream openly to the surface, irrigating and fertilizing whatever land can be brought within its reach. Strangely enough and almost simultaneously with the spread of Theosophy from its eastern source, western writers have spontaneously proclaimed the lost truth, in what may be termed identical language, though the gifted authors of the "*Perfect Way*" have preferred to clothe the divine verities in a highly mystical garb.

In all these various contributions we find the greatest importance attached to the division of man into the seven component parts of his complete self, for it is by the aid of this prism that a course of analysis will enable the student to construct a correct ground-plan, not only for his researches and conclusions, but also for his subsequent action. His various powers have to be examined, their limits defined and their interaction gauged, before the practical work of self-development in the desired direction can be attempted with any hope of success. Above all, the mystery of the dual nature of the mind (Manas) has to be partly solved, ere its divine and earthly tendencies can be separated with sufficient clearness to see light on one's path. In the Manas lies the centre of gravity, and hence the key to the esoteric doctrines which form the essence of all religions worthy of the name.

C. J.—Can such psychological studies lead to any practical result? Does not the ordinary mind lose itself easily in the mazes of metaphysics?

S. T.—If western science had familiarized the European mind with the plain, but firm, footholds for psychical knowledge, these ideas would hardly be considered beyond the range of the ordinary intellect. Psychology, however, was never permitted to ruffle the placid surface of the scientific mind; it was contemptuously dismissed as an offensive,

because awkward, intruder, who, if admitted, would enforce the reconstruction of all prevailing methods of research and thus undo the proud structure, materialistic science has been busy in rearing for centuries past.* It is only quite lately, that the now fashionable study of hypnotism has directed the attention of the scientific world to some of the hidden powers of the soul, and though the sensational nature of the experiments has helped to proclaim long known facts as grand new discoveries, these demonstrations have only touched upon the mere outskirts of a subject whose deeper secrets remain unsolved.

Most theosophical ideas are unapproachable from the natural plane, but the investigation of psychic facts procures for us the stepping stones to the higher ground. Any one acquainted with the much disdained phenomena of clairvoyance, lucid somnambulism and ecstatic trance, will have found the field of his vision rapidly widen in a metaphysical direction, and further concentration of his thoughts on the supersensuous plane will elicit in him not only a growing comprehension of the soul's inner power, but the possibility of developing, in himself, perceptions of a spiritual nature, alike undreamt of and sublime. It cannot be too often repeated that Theosophy ought not to be looked upon as mere theorizing, mere metaphysical gymnastics! As soon as your receptivity for higher truths has awakened, together with the conviction that rising grades of perception are opened to your understanding, the practical work of clearing the inner vision has to begin, and when every step you advance brings to you a lesser or greater token of success, the vitality of your faith in the absolute truth of the theory receives an ever increasing and welcome accession.

This practical work may be shortly described as a purification and spiritualization of your lower self. The conquest of all evil propensities, the loosening of material bonds, the practice of altruism, the concentration of your mind on the various grades leading up to its highest plane, will evolve in you an intuitional capacity for apprehending those truths, hitherto kept secret, which form the root of every religious revelation. Many persons, however, are naturally possessed of these intuitive powers, which in conjunction with pure lives and high aspirations may bring them into touch with the divine light.

O. J.—Our codes do not prescribe purely metaphysical exercises, in which I can only see so many disturbing influences to a contented mind.

S. T.—If your religious faith is to show vitality instead of stagnation, you must be ready to search for that living spring which alone can bring you spiritual health. Does not the whole historical development of the Christian Church prove the point? Unless you can trace the very basis of your faith it will gradually petrify into mere formalism, which, from the want of understanding, is ever inclined to discard as

* The author evidently means by this paragraph to refute the name of "psychology" to the study to which Science gives that name, and to which it certainly attaches importance.—Ed.

worthless those underlying primary ideas that form the original cause of the existence and growth of your church.

Jesus distinctly teaches two modes of religion, the outer and the inner. His gospel of divine compassion, of altruism, and of self-sacrifice as expressed in the sermon on the Mount, is so universally acknowledged as constituting the most sublime code of ethics, that among His followers perfect unanimity reigns as regards this part of His teaching. But if we trace the cause of the various controversies in the Christian Church to its true source, we shall have no difficulty in finding it in the inner or esoteric doctrine Jesus taught guardedly by means of parables and symbols, and whose true meaning He gave to His disciples with the admonition that these truths were for them alone, not for the multitude (Mark iv. 2).

These mysteries deal with the nature of *Christ*, with His relationship to His *Father in Heaven* and mankind, and with His work and mission. In them is to be found the hinge-point of all the Christian dogmas, and in them alone, by the loss of their true key, the great divergences among the various Christian bodies have arisen.

Unitarianism and Robert-Elsmereism, its modern variety, confine themselves to the outer Christian teaching which, appealing powerfully to our understanding of moral perfection, points out our road on the purely practical plane. Undoubtedly they thus gain a firm and undivided ground for their aims in this life, and the powerful vitality which characterizes every centre of their activity. On the other hand, by eliminating from their belief the consideration of all those passages in Scripture which cannot be explained literally, or whose accuracy is impugned by modern criticism, they place themselves beyond the pale of Christianity, and much to their displeasure find themselves classed among the profane, who refuse to subscribe to the specific Christian dogmas. Furthermore, by renouncing all belief in the possibility of developing their spiritual perception, they at the same time give up all search for "*the Way*," "*the Truth*" and "*the Life*." As recently stated by a German writer,* "true faith must attest its genuineness, that ultimately it does not depend on external things, but on the voice of the Eternal within the soul of man." He also quotes the opposite warning of Luther against the tendency of constructing stone pillars to support the heavens, for should these foundations begin to totter, the very heavens appear to fall. For the development of our faith (or spiritual knowledge as we prefer to call it), the value of so-called exact facts is comparatively insignificant, they may be likened to the scaffolding, needful for the erection of an edifice, but superfluous when the higher purpose has been attained.

Contrasted with Unitarianism, the Christian churches are therefore the possessors of the original priceless jewel, but it lies buried in their crypts, and the worshippers cry in vain for a glimpse of its radiance.

* Professor Beyschlag of Halle, in his review of Robert Elsmere,

So utterly materialized, distorted and mutilated are these divine truths, that instead of a source of vitality and power, they have gradually become the very leaven that works for dissension and produces innumerable heresies and schisms.

The Christian Church may be compared to a stately cathedral, so completely overgrown with ivy and parasitic plants, that all its pristine beauty has disappeared under this thick mantle of spurious growth. All the pure, heaven-aspiring lines are hidden from sight, all the fine contours of arch and pinnacle are blurred, the windows are choked by heavy curtains of entangled masses, shutting out the vivifying influence of light and air, while under this fatal cloak, slow but sure decay is eating its way into the very fabric itself.

H. A. V.

(To be continued.)

O B E A H !

CHAPTER I.

THE West India negroes, whose grand-parents were recruited from nearly every tribe living on or near the West Coast of Africa, have inherited from them, along with various grades of color and casts of feature, an almost unvarying belief in a variety of queer things of the kind known to the vulgar as 'superstitious.'

These are for the most part comprehended under the word "Obeah;" and while they are generally talked of as mere superstitions, it is evident that they are really regarded as something more tangible, and occasionally harmful in some of their ways, from the fact that in nearly every part of the West Indies there are in force special laws for the suppression and punishment of Obeah practitioners. This goes far to account for the difficulty I have experienced during my residence of almost five years in the West Indies in getting much real information on the point, and to that may be added the great unwillingness of the negroes to speak to a white man on such a subject.

The word 'Obeah' has been said to be derived from the Hebrew *Ob* = a bottle, "and is applied in divers places in Scripture to magicians, because they being possessed of an evil spirit, spoke with a hollow voice as from a bottle;" but it is not easy to see how this Semitic derivation applies to this (presumably) Hametic word; or how it is borne out by any of the examples of Obeah practices which I am going to relate. However, as the words Obeah and Vondou often go together, it is necessary to point out that they are by no means synonymous, though they may be, and probably are, connected; in so far that the latter,—from the little I have been able to learn of it,—seems to be a well developed phase of ceremonial Black Magic of a barbarous description, (including human sacrifice of the Ri-thlen type) and may include a

knowledge of the former, while the ordinary Obeahman is totally ignorant of Vondou. Anyhow, the word Obeah really means *killing*.

When a negro dies, on the night succeeding his funeral, the friends of the deceased meet in his house to "wake him;" and to prevent the return of his Jumbi or Duppy (ghost) to trouble the living, or to facilitate its departure to other regions, spend the whole night with music, (!) ringing and clapping of hands, alternated with periods of eating and drinking, and telling nonsense stories. These stories always have for their hero "Nancy" or "Anansi," who in them occupies the position of "Brer Rabbit" in the nonsense stories of the American negro. Nurses tell Anansi stories to the children, and the children to one another, and they each and all turn on the cunning, and wonderful feats and powers of Anansi. Who is Anansi? That is a question that took me a long while to get answered. It now turns out that it is the name applied to a large and very long-legged black spider, very common here, who is generally to be seen lugging about with him a large flat white bag, in which it is supposed his family are carried about. I am told too that Anansi is the pure Ashanti word for spider. This long, legged black spider, with his rapid movements, his venomous bite (to other insects), and his big medicine bag, is the prototype of the Obeahman, and Anansi stories are tales which keep alive the negro faith in Obeah and Obism, relating as they do to what may, in comparison, be called the bright side of Obeah,—such as it is. They invest Anansi with a halo of preternatural powers, cleverness, and luck.

Obism for the most part is based upon the infliction of diseases and death, and the cure of disease. It also includes a means of communicating with supposed departed "spirits" in a species of mantic phrensy, the protection of fields bearing crops by the use of either or both glamona (Máya) and elementals: the means of securing buried treasures by the propitiation of guardian elementals, or elementaries, &c., &c.; all by the use of very much degraded, and more than half-forgotten, ceremonial, and in some instances psychical, methods, which have been supplemented by a knowledge of vegetable drugs, especially poisons. And, in short, there is no reason to doubt that in West Indian Obeah we are face to face with the still active remains of a real, and not very incomplete as far as it goes, system of Magic,—mostly Black.

To begin at the beginning,—by initiation. The following story of an *initiation*,—which did not come off,—is told me by a negro school-master of some education.

"One Sunday in 1878, I was riding down to P——, and on the way met with an African called Pèbù, finding he was going to P—— too, we agreed to ride on together. This Pèbù was a man who had no visible means of livelihood, but always went about well dressed, and rode a good pony. He was said to be a great Obeahman, and I felt a good deal afraid of him; but being very curious to know about Obeah, I asked him to teach me some of it. He refused at first, but after a great deal of persuasion, he consented to do so.

He directed me to meet him at a certain place on the banks of the P— river, at 12 o'clock on the following Wednesday night. There he was to take me to a certain large stone which he knew of in the bed of the river, at that season nearly dry. Under this stone I was to put my hand, which would there be grasped hold of by another hand. That hand would pull mine, and I was to haul against it some time with all my strength. However much it might hurt me, I was not to give in. The seventh haul was to be the last, and so strong as to nearly pull my arm out of the socket, but it was to leave in my hand a small white stone, and a little of some slimy substance, both of which I was to put into a clean little bottle (which I was to bring ready with me) and to cork up securely. This bottle I was to take great care of, and "the fellow" who held my hand under the stone was to be always at my service when I shook up the bottle, and would do, or get me anything I wanted. But, when the time came, I was too much afraid and did not keep the appointment."

This, it will be seen, is part of some method of obtaining command over an elemental,—a "familiar." But it is a great pity my informant can tell no more about it. It appears not a little curious that he was not instructed to prepare himself by any particular diet or otherwise, for a set and certain time prior to the event. The bottle and its contents would have more or less taken the place of Alladin's "Wonderful Lamp."

A Ballade, Bella-bella, or Jumbi dance is a way of finding out the grievances of restless departed "spirits," or of communicating with deceased friends. These dances are forbidden by law, and are therefore conducted in secret. This is how one came about:—A man was killed last year by a falling tree; some months after that event a woman habiting the same village as the deceased had done, said his jumbi (ghost) which she had seen, was coming and disturbing her, making noises at night, and so on. So she concluded to find out what it wanted, and invited a select company of friends to meet in her house one night to hold a Jumbi-dance for the purpose of interviewing that jumbi. The preparations for the dance partly consisted in killing some fowls, a pig, and a goat, a portion of their blood being sprinkled round the house, and the meat was dressed for the consumption of the company, who were also to be regaled with some rum.

On the arrival of the guests, they arranged themselves in a circle round the apartment, the band consisting of a fiddle, a drum and three tambourines, forming part of the circle. The hostess began the function by solemnly oblation about half a bottle of rum in the centre of the floor to the jumbi, the bottle being also freely passed round amongst the guests. The band then struck up a monotonous sort of tune, consisting of six or seven notes repeated over and over, beginning very slowly and gradually getting quicker, the company keeping time by clapping their hands. When the music attained a certain pitch, five, or seven of the guests of both sexes, stepped into the middle of the floor and began

dancing to the music which was now very quick. Then the circle still clapping away, began to sing the 'Ballade,'—a particular set of words used only on such occasions;—when the singing had lasted about twenty minutes, one of the dancers suddenly gave a loud shout, and executing a frantic pironette, bounded up so as almost to touch the rafters of the house with his head, then fell on the floor, frothing at the mouth, and convulsed as if in a fit.

Immediately on this, the music fell to the slowest time, and that of the 'Ballade' and clapping followed. A man tied a handkerchief very quickly and tightly round the waist of the convulsed one, and this was no sooner done than the latter got on to his feet and began to reel about. Then the hostess asked him, "Who are you?"

He replied, *in the exact voice and accent of the deceased*, "I am _____ (naming the deceased.) After this, the questions proceeded and were uniformly replied to in the voice and gestures of the deceased. The music, clapping and singing continuing all the while; and the interview terminated by the hostess being instructed to visit the grave of the deceased on a certain day, and there to kill a black cock, and to sprinkle the grave with its blood and the contents of a rum bottle.

I am informed that at some of these dances as many as seven or more dancers become possessed, each by a separate jumbi, at one time, and that the possessed play all manner of strange antics. On one occasion, a man being possessed by the jumbi of a person who had committed suicide after going mad, sprung at one leap up on to the rafters of the house, where he remained for some minutes moving up and down in time to the music, and from thence shot out of the open window, and down a precipice behind the house, when he was found dead, with his neck broken. The possessed frequently speak in Spanish, French, and other languages, often in ones unknown to their hearer. I hear also that care is taken to arrange the sexes in the circle alternately, and that the music, &c., must continue until the jumbi quits the possessed, or if it stops before, it does so at great peril to their life and sanity. The possessed while under the influence answer all sorts of queries, and, it is said, can tell what is going on in distant places.

The words of the 'Ballade' and the tune used on these occasions are kept very secret; but should I hereafter manage to secure them, I hope to include them in a future chapter, first, because they will be of interest for comparison with certain Mantras and Runes; and second, for the edification of our spiritualistic friends, who in the above cannot fail to be reminded of the universality of their brotherhood, and its chosen phase of the occult. I can assure them, too, that by using the said 'ballade' and tune, and exhibiting at the same time some fresh pig's blood and alcohol, one of their circles would obtain some very striking manifestations from their departed friends,—and perhaps others,—and that if any one in that circle should happen to be clairvoyant at the time, they would 'see wonders!!' I need hardly say that the deve-

lopment of phrensy; in a similar manner and for like purposes; is by no means confined to the negro race, but is to be found in use among various races, from the Laps and Siberians in the north, to the Maories (New Zealanders) in the south.

The next department of Obism which claims attention is that known as "dressing a field," of sugar-cane, cacao or other crop, to prevent stealing. There seems to be at least two modes of doing this: one by getting "Obeah" from a practitioner to put into the field, and another by the performance of a prescribed ceremony in the field by one learned in the art.

Of the first, I am told by an eye-witness, that in 1872, a man called C——, wanted to have his cane field "dressed," to prevent the canes being stolen. He accordingly sought the assistance of a noted Obeah doctor who lived at M——. Witness met C—— returning from the doctor's, and asked him what luck he had had. For reply, C—— produced two little rods about 18 inches long, saying 'he gave me these two snakes to put into the field, and on throwing one of them down on the road, it at once turned into a black snake, which again assumed the form of a piece of stick as C—— picked it up. C—— places them in his field, and carefully told every one of the neighbours he had done so, and many people attempting to steal canes from it were pursued by a black snake, among others, witness himself. He says, too, that C—— used to put a cup of milk down in the field every morning, which he said was for the snakes to drink, and that when the crop was reaped the snakes disappeared. I am referred to several other people who saw these snakes.

It would appear from this, that the Egyptian magician's feat of turning their rods into snakes, is not yet an extinct art, nor confined alone to their corner of Africa. An enterprising Obeah doctor might do a good business in this line, in protecting crops from depredation, in various parts of the world.

Here is an instance of a second method. J. L. states thus: "In 1868 I became a Metager on C—— estate. Early one morning, being in my field among the canes, I heard voices in the field adjoining mine, belonging to J. C—— Looking through the canes, I saw C—— and a man called McS—— with him. They could not see me, as I was quite concealed from them by the canes. They had with them a three-forked pole about 6 feet long (like this ) , a bottle, and a wisp of dry plantain leaves. Being anxious to learn what they were after, I listened, and watched them carefully. After some preparation, they planted the pole in the ground, fork up. In the fork they placed a pad made of the dry plantain leaves, and on it seated the bottle, which was full of something; by the side of the bottle they put a hen's egg, with its small end up. McS—— then said to C—— 'What is it you have to say?' Then, placing his hand on the bottle, C—— talked to it in a low voice for about ten minutes, and then in a loud tone, said, 'No one but (so and so, meaning a number of

his friends and the members of his family) will I allow to come into this field, and if any one else comes, you must fly after them, and bite them to death.' Then they left the field."

"At this time I was living in C——'s house with him, and I was not well pleased that my name was left out of the list of those allowed to go into that cane-field, so I determined to keep a close eye on what should follow.

"In about 28 days, or a month after the above took place, a black ring had appeared by some means a short way from the top of the egg. After a second period of similar duration, I observed a hole in it, such as might be made by a chicken when it first breaks the egg-shell; and, in a few days after that, nothing but a few fragments of the egg-shell remained beside the bottle. About that time people began to say there was a snake in that field, and became afraid to go there, because some of them said they were chased by it. I myself often saw a snake there after that, and believe it was put there by that operation."

Still another way of protecting a field or garden, is to send for an Obeah doctor and promise him so much to protect the garden until the crop is reaped. In a case of this sort which came under my notice, the Obeah Doctor began by going to the field, and there hanging to one of the trees:—

1. A bottle containing (apparently) dirty water.
2. A triangular piece of board, on which a similarly shaped scrap of black cloth was glued, both point downwards.
3. A little skin bag containing an egg, some nails, beans of various kinds, and rags of different colors.

After hanging these up, he walked round the tree several times, and then, from these different points, spoke to it, muttering—presumably reciting—spells. Returning to the house, he had all the labourers called, and informed them that the owner had given that field into his charge, because there had been so much stealing going on; and that he wished them to understand from that day onwards that if there was so much as one grain of plantains missed, he would know within twelve hours after who the thief was, but there would be no use for that man to send for *him* to cure the pains in the belly he would most certainly die of. I believe very little of that crop was stolen!

The negroes believe that when, as in J. L.——'s case, the egg and bottle business is performed, that a snake is hatched from the hen's egg, and that the contents of the bottle, whatever they may be, are to feed the snake while it is very young. Another favorite article used for the protection of fields, is a miniature coffin; sometimes empty, but usually filled with bits of bone, feathers and generally an assortment of things such as above mentioned as filling the skin bag. But with the exception of the first case of "dressing," in which the stick was turned into a snake, I believe that these bottles, eggs, triangles, and so on, are the exoteric drags of a more than half forgotten magical ritual; and are to

the average Obeahman very much what the symbols of masonry are to the average freemason,—*pro-forma* symbols for certain purposes, the complete details of whose use is forgotten or unknown, and have about as much "Serpent" left in them as remains in the sloughed off skin of a snake. Most Obeah men are, as far as these things are concerned, like a child with a stopped watch, which he is confident gives correct time, while he is quite ignorant of the proper way to wind it up, and even unconscious of the fact that it requires to be wound.

That this prevailing ignorance is not universal, is proved, I think, by the following little experiment. One old "doctor" laid claim to about half an acre of my land on which are growing some half dozen cocoanut trees. To prevent others—including my servants—from gathering the nuts, he erected a post there, on which were fastened a triangle like that above described, a bottle, and some other things. Going there one day, I found this erection and was promptly informed of its purpose. In order to test whether the old rascal knew anything beyond a mere belief in the efficacy of things so placed, I drew a circle round his post on the sand, and inscribed therein a certain figure, with an intention, and left it. He very soon discovered what I had done, and since that has left that place and my cocoanuts severely alone; with the result that I am now credited by him and his friends with being a much bigger Obeahman than he is, and dangerous to meddle with: which, on the whole, if not a complimentary, is at least a useful reputation.

When an Obeahman is consulted about buried treasure,—which is not an unfrequent event in several of the islands,—he generally describes the place where the treasure is, and all about it, but usually concludes by saying: There is a Duppy (ghost) of such and such a description who lives there in charge of it (or a big snake, as the case may be), and he won't let you take the treasure unless you "give him a soul." That phrase means now, whatever it may originally have meant, that the place has to be sprinkled with the blood of some animal, which must be sacrificed there, together with rum or some other spirit. The meat of the animal, and some of the liquor became the perquisites of the Obeahman; and, as may be supposed, the Obeah fraternity do not neglect such a magnificent chance of imposture when it comes their way. Of course one does not hear of the successful cases in which treasure is secured, though, they no doubt occasionally occur; but unsuccessful ones, in which no one but the cunning Obeahman is benefited, are frequently talked of. One such case occurred quite recently, in which it is reported that a black man, the owner of some 300 acres of land and all that goes to comprise a small sugar estate, has been treasure hunting under the guidance of one of the fraternity for the last two years or more; with the result, that he has from time to time sacrificed over twenty-five head of cattle, besides a large number of smaller animals, and a quantity of liquor, he has also sold over 100 acres of his land at a

ruinous rate to raise funds for his purpose, and he has had excavated four or five large holes 24 feet deep by 10 feet square, in which no treasure or anything of value has been found. Finally, he has absconded, leaving behind him a duly registered deed of gift conveying the remainder of his property to the Obeahman, his chief adviser.

This looks much as if the Obeahmen could give some points in the art of hypnotic (or other) suggestion, to M. M. Charcot, Luys et Cie. However, there is a distinct indication that the Obeahmen really have some idea of a propitiatory ceremony in such cases, where there happens to be an actual treasure under protection of elementals on elementaries, of which in a future chapter I may be able to cite an example.

MIAD HOYO-RA KORA HERI, F. T. S.

(To be continued.)

Reviews.

BAGAVAT-GITA.

We have received a charming pocket edition of the Bagavat-Gita from Mr. W. Judge, which he describes as being the "result of a careful comparison of all the English editions and of a complete re-translation from the original whenever any obscurity or omission was evident in the various renderings consulted." In type, in paper, in general finish, this edition is by far the best yet produced. As regards its contents, we must reserve any remarks till next month when, in view of the importance of the work itself, we shall endeavour to give the result of the careful comparison of Mr. Judge's edition with those of Max Müller and others.

In any case, however, Mr. Judge is to be heartily congratulated upon supplying the long felt want among the members of the T. S. for an edition of the Bagavat-Gita, which should be thoroughly handy and convenient as well as printed in clear, legible type, on good paper, without typographical errors of a disfiguring character.

B. K.

"THE SANMARGA BODHINI, BELLARY."

We congratulate the "Sanmarga Samaj" upon the appearance of its new journal named *Sanmarga Bodhini*. Its motto, taken from *Isis Unveiled*, is a paraphrase of that of the Theosophical Society; and its contents, so far as can be judged from its first issue, seem in every way to do honor to the motto adopted. In the English portion of the paper, we notice a well-written article upon "Ourselves," while among the items of news we are glad to see that our brother Mr. Jagannathiah has been delivering a series of lectures upon "Morality," "Education" and the signs of the Zodiac.

In the vernacular Supplement, the principal article is one upon Madame Blavatsky, and the name of Col. Olcott occupies a prominent place.

We wish every success to our youthful Contemporary, and trust that for long years to come *Sammarra Bodhini* may carry on the good work of educating and instructing the Hindu public.

The second issue, just to hand, also contains, both in English and Vernacular, able papers about Theosophy and the T. S.

B. K.

NEILA SEN AND MY CASUAL DEATH.*

By J. H. CONNELLY.

In the stories before us, Mr. J. H. Connely has produced two admirable novelties of the occult type. In the first, Neila Sen, the interest is well sustained throughout, the descriptions are vivid and life like; and the plot ingenious enough. Unfortunately, however, the gorgeous East is apt to be more gorgeous in imagination than reality. And this is above all the case with regard to the fair sex, in such a country as Ceylon. When the Women's Educational Society, recently started under the auspices of the Theosophical Society, in that lovely Island, shall have been in existence for half a dozen years, such a Ceylonese maiden as Neila Sen may become a possibility. At present, however, we must admit that she could exist only in the imagination of the novelist. Granting to the author, however, his fair share of a poet's licence, there is every reason to recommend Mr. Connely's stories, in the most cordial manner, to every one who is interested in the class of works which the recent revival of a tendency to look into the deeper things of life has produced. Both the stories, "Neila Sen" and "My Casual Death," are instructive and correct from the occult stand-point. They convey in an unobtrusive and entertaining form several suggestive ideas, and in the case of the latter especially, absorb the attention of the reader to a remarkable extent.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Connely will not stop here, but that before long he will give us the opportunity of spending some more pleasant hours in his company.

B. K.

Correspondence.

THEOSOPHY IN WESTERN LANDS.

[From our London Correspondent.]

LONDON, December, 1890.

I am sorry to have to begin my letter with news of "H. P. B.'s" ill health, again; this bitter wintry weather has been very trying to her, as she has to be so extremely careful not to take the very slightest chill, which Dr. Mennell said at one time—not so long since—might prove fatal. The Lodges are all shewing signs of vigorous life and work. I had a letter only the other day from Mr. Bandon Oding, the indefatigably active President of the Newcastle Lodge—formed not so very long ago—which proves clearly that the

* Lovell's Occult Series. John W. Lovell Co., New York.

cause will not die for lack of earnest hearts, and active brains and hands, to "set high the banner of Truth" before a selfish and material world. To Mr. Oding's exertions the Newcastle Lodge owes its final establishment; and he is at present engaged in sending out a little pamphlet, in the form of an open letter, inviting all those in and around Newcastle who may have been interested in the leaflets which they have already received, to "come and see;" i. e., to attend the meetings of the Lodge; and, generally, to follow up the interest which has been awakened in them, on the subject of Theosophy and its message to the 19th Century.

The Brixton Lodge, under the presidency of Dr. Coryu, is slowly but steadily increasing in numbers; and the new Lodge at Battersea, although numbering only seven in actual membership, has at its weekly meetings an average attendance of no less than thirty—visitors and enquirers. C. F. Wright has this new Lodge under his especial charge at present; and attends all their meetings, for the purpose of answering questions, and guiding the studies of the growing band of students. Yet another centre of activity has been formed at Chiswick (London, S. W.), under the guidance, and as a result of, the untiring efforts of Mr. W. Kingsland and Mr. F. S. Gardner; and it is confidently expected that an exceptionally strong Lodge will shortly be formed to crown their joint labours. Two meetings have been held, largely attended by those who are already interested, to some extent, in Theosophy. At each of these meetings Mr. Kingsland has lectured on the First Principles of Theosophy, including the Unity of the Universe, and the Septenary in Nature; while a third lecture, which falls on the 3rd January, will deal with the Laws of Correspondence and Periodicity. Mr. Kingsland believes that, in many cases, much harm is done by endeavouring to deal with what may be called *applied Theosophy*, before it is really understood what Theosophy is (*per se*), and its basis in natural law. This is especially the case here in the West, where men's ideas are so coloured and warped by orthodox religion and science; and where such doctrines as those of Karma and Reincarnation are not only unfamiliar, but appear at first sight to be mere arbitrary dogmas. The enquirer has to unlearn as well as to learn, and unless he can expand and modify the premises on which his ideas have hitherto been based, there is little hope of his being able to accept the Theosophic teaching in its details. Indeed, much profitless controversy is due to the fact that each is arguing from a different set of first principles!

The Countess Wachtmeister has sent a donation of some of the best Theosophical works, to form the nucleus of a Lending Library at Chiswick; while Mrs. Besant will also help the movement in this new centre, by lecturing at the Bedford Park Club on the 17th January.

The course of Lectures now going on, at the weekly Thursdays of the Blavatsky Lodge, is unusually well attended; and an increasingly thoughtful set of visitors and enquirers make their appearance, and re-appearance; these become in due course Associates of the Lodge; leading to final membership; and, in many cases, to active work and co-operation.

You will be glad to hear that another issue of the "Transactions, Blavatsky Lodge," is in course of preparation, and will very shortly be published.

In my last letter I gave you, I think, a good many instances of the growing dissatisfaction, among the thoughtful, with the present form

of exoteric Christianity; the dogmatism, and narrowness of the Churches; and their rapidly decreasing power over the masses of the people. This I may very well follow up with some apposite quotations from an outspoken declaration by Dr. Momerie (so well-known in his late capacity of "preacher," at the Foundling Hospital), which appear in the *Pall Mall* of the 12th inst. Says Dr. Momarie,—according to the reporter:—

"The Bible does not make the ghost of a vestige of claim to inspiration in the orthodox sense. All that is good and great in it is inspired. But the Bible is full of contradictions and inaccuracies which are not inspired, therefore it cannot be inspired as a whole. No educated man can honestly believe it is inspired in history or science. Huxley in science or Freeman in history are far more inspired. The inspiration of the Bible must be restricted to moral and spiritual matters, and even then it is as low at times as any book. . . . Take the Bible at its best in philosophy and then it only gets on a level with German criticism. St. Paul at times is quite up to Hegel (!) It is a mere question of degree and subject. All that is highest and best in us is inspired God (the 'jealous God' of the Old Testament) is but a false imagination of ignorant men. If you attribute to God characteristics unworthy of a man, and incompatible with infinite and eternal love, you are worse enemies to the cause of real religion than the most virulent of open and professed atheists Hell is another word for punishment which is a matter of experience. I, of course, do not acknowledge the orthodox hell. As regards miracles, simply I say that the whole trouble is explained thus: miracles are seen by those who *expect* to see them. There is no reason to suppose that when a miracle occurred 'a violation of nature took place.'

The interviewer then asked, 'Don't you believe Christ rose again?' Dr. Momerie replied:

"Certainly not physically." Why, do you? Come, I shall have to interview *you*. All great religious teachers have had an immaculate conception, a physical resurrection—Gautama as well as Christ did not rise in this body. Flesh and blood *cannot* inherit the kingdom. It must be a spiritual resurrection. . . . As regards the Church, 'I can only say that which the Christianity of Christ and of ecclesiasticism are as wide apart as the Poles.'

What is all this but a somewhat differently worded presentation of statements that Theosophic writers generally, and "H. P. B." in particular, have been re-iterating over and over again, for years past? To take only Mr. Kingsland's admirable paper on "Theosophy and Ecclesiastism"—the first part of which appears in the current number of *Lucifer*—we find him pointing the self-same moral, repeatedly; and urging home the essential distinction to be made between Christianity and what is so appropriately termed, "Churchianity." In the columns of *The Morning Post* for Dec. 18th appears one of Sir Edward Sullivan's trenchant letters: drawn forth—in this particular instance—by the recent outburst of (so-called) "moral indignation," on the Parnell question. For this outburst Sir Edward shews but small mercy. He says:—

"Honestly speaking, I think we are a little overriding our hobby 'morality,' and we should be careful, or we shall get a fall. *Quid hypocrisi fragilius?* Moral capital is a rotten reed to trust to. Most of it is on paper Any day there may be a moral bankruptcy that will astound us

'O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see ourselves as others see us.'—(Burns.)

Nothing is so easy; we have only to read the French and American papers Our candid friend (Civilised Mankind) does not spare us

England (says 'Civilised Mankind') is a bye-word for drunkenness all over the world; that our spirit-drinking causes more crime, more misery, more immorality, more mortality than all the opium eating and absinthe drinking in the whole world; that our streets at night are a disgrace to civilisation; that our repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act is a disgrace to humanity. Our missionaries are represented with a Bible in one hand and a rum bottle in the other; our boasted piety is represented by a Church supported on each side by a gin palace—a ghastly contribution of piety and vice we actually see every day of our lives I may be wrong I hope I am, but I have arrived at this conclusion, that *this present moral outburst is the most hollow, the most discreditable, the most contemptible, the most disgusting agitation I have ever seen in this country, and that if the self-righteousness of the Jewish Scribes and Pharisees exceeded the self-righteousness of the British Scribes and Pharisees they must have been very clever humbugs indeed.*"

I have italicised the last few sentences because they appear to me but as the echo of a reproach that "H. P. B." never ceases to cast at the boasted "morality;" only in this month's editorial—in *Lucifer*—she calls our present Christianity "Unadulterated Pharisaism;" and our age, one of "pretensions to righteousness, and skin-deep civilization."

The entire literary, and quasi-scientific, world has of late been occupied in discussing the wholly novel position taken up by the writers of the now famous "Lux Mundi." And the *Westminster Review* published a very good article, by Walter Lloyd, on the subject; he says that we may certainly regard the book—which covers a vast extent of ground—as a sincere attempt to say the last word on the problems which science, Biblical criticism, and political progress, have set the Church to solve. But the attempt to make out a good case of the Church, though it exhibits a wonderful amount of ingenuity, has—he considers—signally failed. That the book contains too many fallacies to carry conviction to any except those to whom the authority of the Church and the truth of its creeds are foregone conclusions. Mr. Lloyd considers, briefly, that this attempt to make good the intellectual claims of the Church—a course clearly forced upon the writers by the necessities of the present position of affairs—sounds its own death-knell. For, as he says, "As long as the Church demanded acceptance of its doctrines on extra intellectual grounds, criticism was comparatively powerless; but when it attempts to meet science and criticism on their own territory, *its end is not far off.*" Spiritual religion, (by which term Mr. Lloyd understands that religion caused by "the instincts of faith, hope, and love, which are as imperishable as mind"), he thinks, will survive; but the external body in which it has been partially, and only partially, confined, is doomed to decay. It has thriven and developed *in spite* of the Church, and will thrive and develop all the more vigorously without the Church. With sentiments such as these, we—as Theosophists—are in perfect accord. Mr. Kingsland has voiced them for us, in a most clear and succinct manner, in the paper to which I have already referred.

I see that a Mr. Bent has undertaken the investigation of the celebrated ruins of Zimbabwe—in "the land of Ophir"—of which I wrote you a short account two months ago. Mr. Bent will start for Mashonaland, says the *Pall Mall*, at the end of January, and expects to be absent for nine months; and adds, that, some of the features of the ruins would give the traveller the idea of the burial place, though the whole appearance of them seemed to Herr Mauch, the well-known German traveller, to be rather that of a fortress,

because of the many passages now walled up, and the rounded and zigzag course taken by the walls. These are in some places ten feet, in other places only seven or eight feet thick. These ruins, moreover, were found by the Portuguese, when they entered the country three hundred years ago.

The *New Review* for this month contains two interesting fragments by De Quincey recently discovered, and never before published. One of these has an especial attraction for Theosophists and mystics; it is headed "The Dark Interpreter," and deals with the creative power of thought, and that in a strain quite in accordance with the Eastern teaching, and ideas on the subject. A few extracts will, I think, prove not uninteresting. The fragment commences:

"Suffering is a mightier agency in the hands of nature, as a Demiurgus creating the intellect, than most people are aware of Perhaps you are aware of that power in the eye of many children by which in darkness they project a vast theatre of phantasmagorical figures, moving backwards or forwards between their bed-curtains and the chamber walls. In some children this power is semi-voluntary—they can control or perhaps suspend the shows; but in others it is altogether automatic. I myself, at the date of my last confessions, had seen in this way more processions, generally solemn, mournful, belonging to eternity, but also at times glad, triumphal pomps that seemed to enter the gates of Time, than all the religions of Paganism, fierce or gay, ever witnessed. There is in the dark places of the human spirit, in grief, in fear, in vindictive wrath, a *power of self-projection* not unlike to this The fact is, in point of awe, a fiend would be a poor trivial *bagatelle* compared to the shadowy projections, *umbras* and *penumbras* which the unsearchable depths of man's nature are capable under adequate excitement of throwing off, and even to stationary forms There are *creative agencies in every part of human nature, of which the thousandth part could never be revealed in one life.*"

The italics are mine. De Quincey must indeed have seen "beyond the veil," to have *evolved* the ideas contained in these sentences. They express identically the same truths, as are to be found in the "Secret Doctrine," and "The Voice of the Silence." For what says the latter? "If thou wouldn't be slain by them, then must thou harmless make *thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts*, unseen, impalpable, that swarm round humankind."

A. L. C.

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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

[Family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares.]

BURMA REVISITED.

TOWARDS the end of the year 1884 I received from King Theebaw an invitation to visit him at Mandalay to discuss Buddhism. The intermediary was his Italian physician Dr. Barbieri, F. T. S. Being anxious to get His Majesty to help the Sinhalese to build schools for their children and generally to revive their religion, I notified my acceptance of the invitation, and in January 1885, accompanied by Mr. Leadbeater, went to Rangoon. I had been there but a week, when I was telegraphed to return as Madame Blavatsky was apparently on her dying bed. By the time I reached Madras her illness had taken one of those astounding, one might almost say miraculous, turns, which happen with her alone, and after a week she was so far convalescent that I could safely return to Burma. So once more I reached Rangoon, rejoined Mr. Leadbeater, and lectured at the world-famous shrine, the Shway Daigon Pagoda. A Burmese Buddhist Theosophical Society Branch was organized, as well as a Hindu one, and a third composed of Europeans and half castes, who were specially occupying themselves with the practical study of mesmerism. While this was going on, I made careful enquiries (among Burmans, of course) as to the King's character, and the conclusion I reached was that he was a hen-pecked despot, whose hands were dyed in innocent blood, whose mind was full of plots, stratagems and politics, and who was not likely to do any good to my wards, the Buddhists of Ceylon, though he might make me personally presents that I should not care to receive. I had therefore almost decided to abandon the Mandalay trip, when a second and urgent telegram from Damodar recalled me to what was again supposed to be H. P. B.'s death-bed. Thus ended my first visit to the fertile land over which the Alompara kings had so long reigned in barbaric splendour.

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