

up, on hunting after the opposite sex.

We may not deserve to be called Theosophists, it would be enough for us to be called Hindus; that is what we aspire to.

Quite unperceived by Mr. Edge and his class, a great change has begun in our midst and we are, notwithstanding what may be said to the contrary by thoughtless, unobserving and prejudiced foreigners, *intensely active in regard to it. We are returning to the Religion of our Forefathers, that Glorious Sanatana Dharma of ours.* Books are being translated from the Sanskrit into the Vernacular, published and read by the rich and the poor, the Hindu Religion is talked about, discussed and supported, life shaped according to the injunctions of the Dharma Sâstras and a spirit of hankering for more light roused. We are rather a quiet nation, we do not like to rush into print for what we do, but nevertheless we do something; but our Edges want us to do work in their own way and when we quietly ignore their right of interference, they recklessly blame us for all sorts of things.

One thing more; some of us *are* translating Hindu literature into English; how many have of you?

K. P. MUKHERJI, F. T. S.

I have inserted the preceding letter, because it is an unique specimen of its kind. I will briefly advert to the main points therein.

1. Mr. Edge nowhere accuses the Hindus of beings "more selfish than Westerners;" nor is such a contrast in any way the purport of his remarks. But he does accuse them of being *selfish*, apart from all comparison with others.

2. The very small number of works produced, showing either *original* research, enquiry or thought, especially on spiritual subjects, is, at least, a powerful support to the charge of want of intellectual activity.

3. As Mr. Edge drew no comparison between Europeans and Hindus, Brother Mukherji's remarks here are irrelevant and uncalled for.

4. Most observers of India—whether Hindus or Westerners—agree with Mr. Edge, and not with his critic, as to the absence of "intellectual eagerness" among the Hindus, except when directed to rupee-getting.

5. The constant thought of "one's own Karma and of a life hereafter," is *thoroughly selfish*: and the fact that Brother Mukherji extols it as a virtue among Hindus, is a most effective illustration of the truth of Mr. Edge's position.

6. Surely our correspondent is not so foolish as to expect Europeans to translate vernacular works and books which are not in their native tongue. At the present time, most of their energy is devoted to stirring up inert Hindus who are the proper persons to undertake the task.

That Mr. Edge's remarks are well founded has been borne out by nearly every *native* journal in India which has noticed the article; as well as by an immense mass of private correspondence. The same evidence proves the perfect good temper and intense sympathy with India which led Mr. Edge to write the article and inspired him in its production.

Our Brother K. P. Mukherji thus seems to stand quite alone in his opinion of the article; and the tone of his letter leads me to think that it is precisely the *truth* of Mr. Edge's remarks which has stung him so keenly. At any rate, he seems to find it necessary to act on the old maxim of the Law Courts: "When you have no case, abuse your opponent's attorney."

B. K.,

Ag. Ed., Theosophist.

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THE THEOSOPHIST.

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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

[Family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares.]

OLD DIARY LEAVES.*

CHAPTER X.

THE evolution of the Society up to its perfected organization having been traced, we may now give attention to special incidents which occupied the attention of its Founders and more or less affected its interests. In a notice of this series of sketches, the reviewer of *Lucifer* said "it requires to be well versed in the history of the T. S. to follow the narrative with full intelligence." For this very reason it is written: if the details of early T. S. history were known to the majority of its members this historical retrospect might be left to some less busy person than myself to compile. In point of fact, however, no other living person knows them all so well as I; no one save H. P. B. and I assumed all the responsibilities, took all the hard knocks, organized all the successes: so, willy nilly, I must play the historian. The special incident to be dealt with in the present Chapter is the story of Baron de Palm's connection with our Society, his antecedents, death, Will, and funeral: his cremation will require a separate Chapter. This is not Theosophy, but I am not writing Theosophy; it is history, one of several affairs which were mixed up in our Society's concerns, and which greatly occupied the time and thoughts of my colleague and myself. These affairs threw upon me, as President, in

* I shall be under great obligations to any friend who wishes well to this historical sketch, if he (or she) will give or lend me for reference any interesting documents, or any letters written them during the years 1875, 6, 7 and 8, by either H. P. B. or myself, about phenomena, the occult laws which produce them, or events in the history of the T. S., or any newspapers or cuttings from the same relating to the same subjects. Loans of this kind will be carefully returned, and I shall be glad to refund, if desired, any expense for postage incurred by the senders. Reminiscences of occult things shown by H. P. B., if described to me by the eye-witnesses, will be specially valued. I may not live to get out a second Edition of my book, and wish to make the first as interesting and trustworthy as possible. One ought not, at the age of sixty, to trust too much to one's own memory, although mine seems not to fail me as yet. Friendly Editors will oblige very much by giving currency to this request.

particular, very grave responsibilities. When I say that I carried through the De Palm funeral obsequies with the conviction that it would cost me a professional connection worth some £2,000 a year, my meaning will appear. The thing apprehended did happen, because I mortally offended the gentleman—a bigoted Christian—who controlled the matter in question and who influenced its transfer to another friend of his. Of course, I should do it over again, and I only mention the circumstance to show that we two people were not opera bouffe Theosophists and did not lay the floor-beams of the house of the T. S. on a foundation of rose-leaves and swansdown. It cost something to be a worker with the Masters in those early days, before public prejudice had been softened by seventeen years of honest work into the feeble dissent our present associates have to battle against.

Joseph Henry Louis Charles, Baron de Palm, Grand Cross Commander of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre and Knight of various other orders, was born at Augsburg, May 10, 1809, in an ancient baronial family of Bavaria. Late in life he emigrated to America, lived a number of years in the Western States, and about December 1875 came to me in New York with an introductory letter from the late Col. Bundy, Editor of the *Religio Philosophical Journal*, commending him to my courtesy. Finding him a man of engaging manners, evidently familiar with the best society, and professing much interest in spiritualism and a wish to learn something about our Oriental theories, I made him welcome, and at his request introduced him to H. P. B. The acquaintance was kept up, the Baron joined our Society and, a vacancy occurring soon after by the resignation of the Rev. J. H. Wiggin, he was elected a Member of Council on the 29th March 1876. As he complained of feeble health, and of having no one in New York who cared whether he lived or died in the wretched boarding-house where he was put up, I invited him to come and occupy a room in my 'apartment', looked after his comfort and called in a physician to prescribe for him. Symptoms of pneumonia and nephritis showing themselves and the medical attendant pronouncing him in danger, he got me to send him Mr. Judge, the Society's Standing Counsel, and executed a Will devising certain parcels of real-estate at Chicago to two lady friends, making me residuary legatee, and appointing Mr. Newton, Treasurer of the T. S., and myself his Executors, with full powers. Under medical advice and at his own earnest request, he was removed to the Roosevelt Hospital on Friday evening, May 19th (1876) and died the next morning. The result of an autopsy was to show that he had for years been suffering from a complication of diseases of the lungs, kidneys and other organs; a medical certificate that he had died of nephritis was given and filed as prescribed by law in the Health Bureau, and the body was conveyed to the receiving-vault of the Lutheran Cemetery pending the completion of arrangements for interment.

In religion Baron de Palm was a Voltairean with a gloss of Spiritualism. He particularly asked that no clergyman or priest should officiate

at his funeral but that I should perform the last offices in a fashion that would illustrate the Eastern notions of death and immortality. The recent agitation of the subject of cremation in Great Britain and America, caused by the incineration of the body of the first Lady Dilke, the scientific experiments of Sir Henry Thompson, (*vide* his published essay "The Treatment of the Body after Death," London, 1874), and the sensational articles and pamphlets of Rev. H. R. Haweis upon the unspeakable horrors of the burial grounds of London, led me to ask him how he would wish me to dispose of his remains. He asked for my opinion upon the relative superiority of the two modes of sepulture, concurred in my preference for cremation, expressed a horror of burial, some lady he had once known having been buried alive, and bade me do as I found most advisable. A dilettante sort of body calling itself the New York Cremation Society, had been formed in April 1874 and I had enrolled myself as a member and been elected a member of the Legal Advice Committee; but beyond passing resolutions and issuing pamphlets the members had done nothing to prove the faith that was in them. Here at last was the chance of having a body to burn, and thus inaugurating the very needed reform. I offered it to the Society in question and it was accepted. The weather being warm for the season, urgent haste was called for, and up to the evening before the day appointed for the public funeral of the Baron, it was understood that after the ceremonies I was to deliver over the body to the Society's agents for cremation. Meanwhile H. P. B. and the rest of us bestirred ourselves to organize an impressive "Pagan funeral"—as the press chose to call it—compose a litany, devise a ceremonial, write a couple of Orphic hymns for the occasion and get them set to appropriate music. On the Saturday evening mentioned above we were rehearsing our programme for the last time when a note was brought me from the Secretary of the N. Y. Cremation Society, to say that they would have to give up the cremation because of the great noise that the papers had made about the funeral and their attacks upon the Theosophical Society. In other words, these respectable moral cowards dared not face the ridicule and animosity which had been excited against us innovators. Then the fires of my wrath were kindled, and I spoke certain strong words, and consigned moral cowards in general to torrid places needless to specify. The quandary we were in did not last more than a half hour, for I finally offered to take the whole responsibility upon myself and pledged my word that the body should be burnt if I had even to do it myself. The promise was fulfilled in due time, as the sequel will show.

Through the obliging courtesy of the Rev. O. B. Frothingham, whose congregation were worshipping in the great hall of the Masonic Temple, at the corner of 23rd St. and Sixth Avenue, New York City, we were enabled to hold the Baron's obsequies in that vast apartment. An hour before the appointed time the street was crowded by an eager, even somewhat obstreperous multitude, and a strong body of police had to be sent for to prevent the doors being forced. We had issued two kinds of

admission tickets, both of triangular shape, one a black card printed in silver, for reserved seats, the other a drab one printed in black, for general admission; and the police were instructed to admit nobody without one or the other kind. But an American or British mob is hard to restrain, and there was such a rush when the doors were opened that the 1,500 holders of tickets had to find seats as best they could. The great hall, which holds 2,000 people, was crowded in every corner, the very passages and lobbies were blocked, and from the buzz of conversation and uneasiness prevailing it was easy to see that the multitude had come to gratify its curiosity, certainly not to evince either respect for the dead or sympathy with the Theosophical Society. It was just in that uncertain mood when the least unexpected and sensational incident might transform it into the wild beast that an excited crowd becomes at times. Through the whole of the previous week the leading papers had been lashing public curiosity into a frenzy, and one of the wittiest burlesques I ever read, that appeared in the *World* upon our anticipated ceremonial and public procession, set all New York laughing. For the benefit of our Theosophical grand-children I will quote the following fragment:

“‘All right,’ said the Colonel; ‘go ahead and make out your programme, but leave everybody out but the members of the society, for the Masons won’t have anything to do with it.’

“Two hours were then spent in making out an order of march and a programme of exercises after the procession reaches the Temple, and the following is the result. The procession will move in the following order:

“Colonel Olcott as high priest, wearing a leopard skin and carrying a roll of papyrus (brown card-board).

“Mr. Cobb as sacred scribe, with style and tablet,

“Egyptian mummy-case, borne upon a sledge drawn by four oxen. (Also a slave bearing a pot of lubricating oil.)

“Mme. Blavatsky as chief mourner and also bearer of the sistrum. (She will wear a long linen garment extending to the feet, and a girdle about the waist.)

“Colored boy carrying three Abyssinian geese (Philadelphia chickens) to place upon the bier.

“Vice-President Felt, with the eye of Osiris painted on his left breast, and carrying an asp (bought at a toy store on Eighth avenue).

“Dr. Pancoast, singing an ancient Theban dirge,

“Isis and Nephtys, beginning and end;
One more victim to Amenti we send.
Pay we the fare, and let us not tarry,
Cross the Styx by the Roosevelt Street ferry.”

“Slaves in mourning gowns, carrying the offerings and libations, to consist of early potatoes, asparagus, roast beef, French pancakes, bock-beer and New Jersey cider.

“Treasurer Newton, as chief of the musicians, playing the double pipe.

“Other musicians performing on eight-stringed harps, tom-toms, &c.

“Boys carrying a large lotus (sun-flower).

“Librarian Fassit, who will alternate with music by repeating the lines beginning:

“Here Horus comes, I see the boat,
Friends, stay your flowing tears;
The soul of man goes through a goat
In just 3,000 years.”

“At the Temple the ceremony will be short and simple. The oxen will be left standing on the sidewalk, with a boy near by to prevent them goring the passers-by. Besides the Theurgic hymn, printed above in full, the Coptic national anthem will be sung, translated and adapted to the occasion as follows:

‘Sitting Cynocephalus, up in a tree,
I see you, and you see me.
River full of crocodile, see his long snout!
Hoist up the shadoof and pull him right out.’”

With this sort of thing going on for days together in advance, it may be imagined in what sort of dangerous mood was the crowded audience, only a handful of whom were members of the T. S. and most of whom were positively prejudiced against it. All went peacefully enough, however, until an excited Methodist, a relative of an F. T. S. who was assisting me in the ceremony, rising and wildly gesticulating, shouted “That’s a lie!” just when I had pronounced the words “There is but one first cause, uncreated—.” Instantly the audience sprang to their feet and some turned towards the door, as people will in such crises, not knowing whether the confused shout may not mean an alarm of fire: some of the rougher sort mounted the chairs and, looking towards the stage, seemed ready to take part in fighting or skirmishing in case such should break out. It was one of those moments when the turn of events depends upon the speaker. As it happened, I had once seen the great Abolitionist orator, Wendell Phillips, by imperturbable coolness quell a mob who were hooting and catcalling him, and as the memory flashed within me I adopted his tactics. Stepping quietly forward, I laid my left hand upon the Baron’s coffin, faced the audience, stood motionless and said nothing. In an instant there was a dead silence of expectancy; whereupon, slowly raising my right hand, I said very slowly and solemnly: “We are in the presence of death!” and then waited. The psychological effect was very interesting and amusing to me, who have for so many years been a student of crowds. The excitement was quelled like magic, and then in the same voice as before and without the appearance of even having been interrupted, I finished the sentence of the litany—“eternal, infinite, unknown.”

The two Orphic hymns that we compiled for the occasion were sung by a volunteer choir of the New Yorker Sängerbund and the organ accompaniment was the music of an Italian Mass, 300 years old; “and”—says the *Sun’s* report—“as it swelled and then died softly away in the half gloom of the crowded but hushed room, with the symbolic fire flickering (on the triangular altar) and the ancient knightly decorations flashing on the coffin, the effect was very impressive.”

After the singing of the first Orphic hymn, an invocation, or *mantram*, was made to “the Soul of the World, whose breath gives and

withdraws the form of everything." "The universe," it went on to say, "is thy utterance and revelation. Thou, before whom the light of being is a shadow which changes and a vapor that passes away; thou breakest forth, and the endless spaces are peopled; thou drawest breath and all that went forth from thee returns again." Good Vedântism this and good Theosophy! The same thought ran throughout all the parts of the service—the hymns, invocation, litany and my discourse. In the latter I gave such particulars about Baron de Palm as I had got from himself (and very misleading they were afterwards proved to be when I heard from the family solicitor). I explained the character and objects of the T. S.* and my view of the complete inefficacy of death-bed repentance for the forgiveness of sins. I am glad to see upon reading the newspaper reports after the lapse of many years that I preached the doctrine of Karma, pure and simple. There was an outburst of applause and hisses when I said that the Society "considered the ruffian who stood under the gallows a ruffian still though twenty prayers might have been uttered over him." I immediately commanded silence and continued my remarks,—reported thus:

"He then went on to say that Theosophy could not conceive of bad going unpunished or good remaining unrewarded. It believed a man to be a responsible being, and it was a religion not of professions but of practices. It was utterly opposed to sensuousness and taught the subordination of the body to the spirit. There, in that coffin lay (the body of) a Theosophist. Should his future be pronounced one of unalloyed happiness without respect to the course of his past life? No, but as he had acted so should he suffer or rejoice. If he had been a sensualist, a usurer or a corrupter, then the divine first (and only) cause could not forgive him the least of his offences, for that would be to plunge the universe into chaos. There must be compensation, equilibrium, justice."

A pretty little speech perhaps, but it cost me the £2,000 per annum!

After the singing of the second Orphic hymn, Mrs. E. Hardinge Britten, the eloquent Spiritualist orator, addressed the audience for about ten minutes, in the capacity of a speaking medium, concluding with a strongly emotional apostrophe to the deceased Baron, bidding him farewell, declaring that he had "passed the golden gates wherein (*sic*) sorrow entereth not", and strewing his bier with flowers, "as symbols of full-blown life!" This closed the proceedings and the huge audience quietly dispersed.

The body of the deceased was given in charge of Mr. Buckhorst, the Society's undertaker, to be lodged in a receiving vault until I could arrange for its cremation. I was obliged to devise a better method of preserving it than the weak process of embalming that had been employed at the Hospital, which proved its inefficacy even within the fortnight. It gave me

* "This Society" I said "was neither a religious nor a charitable but a scientific body. Its object was to enquire, not to teach, and its members comprised men of various creeds and beliefs. 'Theology' meant the revealed will of God, 'Theosophy' the direct knowledge of 'God.' The one asked us to believe what some one else had seen and heard, the other told us to see and hear for ourselves. Theosophy taught that by cultivation of his powers a man may be inwardly illumined and get thereby a knowledge of his God-like faculties."

much anxiety and no end of enquiry and research was involved, but I solved the difficulty at last by packing the cadaver in desiccated clay impregnated with the carbolic and other vapors of distilled coal tar. Decomposition had actually begun when the antiseptic was applied in the first week of June, but when we examined the corpse in the following December before removal for cremation, it was found completely mummified, all liquids absorbed and all decay arrested. It could have been kept thus, I am convinced, for many years, perhaps for a century, and I recommend the process as superior to any other cheap method of embalming that has ever come under my notice.

Our dear H.P.B. had no official part in the public celebration of the De Palm obsequies, but made herself heard all the same. She sat with the non-officiating members of the Society among the audience, and when the excited Methodist interrupted our litany and a policeman was getting him in hand to escort him out of doors, she stood up and called out "He's a bigot, that's what he is!" and set everybody around her laughing, in which she soon heartily joined. The members who took part in the ceremony were Messrs. Judge, Cobb, Thomas, Monachesi, Oliver and three or four more whose names I cannot recall.

The Council of the T. S., at its meeting of June 14th and the Society, in its session of 21st June (1876), passed Resolutions ratifying and confirming all that the officers had done in connection with the De Palm autopsy, obsequies and embalming. A Resolution was also adopted to the effect that,

"The President and Treasurer of this Society, who are the executors under the last will and testament of our late fellow be, and hereby are authorized and empowered to do in the name of this Society any and all further acts, which they may deem necessary to complete the disposal of the remains of our late fellow, according to his expressed wishes and direction."

The Baron's funeral being over, the next thing was to see what his estate was likely to realise for the Society (for although all was left to me individually there was an understanding between us that I should be free to hand over everything to the T. S.) Mr. Newton and I obtained probate of the Will and Mr. Judge was instructed to make the necessary inquiries. Our first shock came when we opened his trunk at the hospital: it contained two of my own shirts, *from which the stitched name-mark had been picked out*. This looked very cloudy indeed, a bad beginning towards the supposed great bequest. There were also in the trunk a small bronze bust of a crying baby, some photographs and letters of actresses and prima donnas, some unreceipted bills, some gilt and enamelled duplicates of his orders of nobility, a flat velvet-lined case containing the certificates of his birth, his passports and the several diplomatic and court appointments he had held, the draft of a former Will, now cancelled, and a meagre lot of clothing. Beyond this, nothing; no money or jewellery, no documents, no manuscripts, no books, no evidences of a literary taste or habits. I give these details

—in which Mr. Newton and Mr. Judge and others will corroborate me—for an excellent reason, to be presently stated.

The old Will described him as Seigneur of the castles of Old and New Wartensee, on Lake Constance, and his papers showed him to be the presumed owner of 20,000 acres of land in Wisconsin, forty town lots in Chicago, and some seven or eight mining properties in Western States. Upon the low estimate that the farming land was worth \$ 5 per acre, the rumour spread that I had inherited at least £20,000, to say nothing of the two Swiss castles, the town lots and the gold and silver mining claims. It ran through the whole American press, editorials were written upon it, and I received a shoal of letters, congratulatory and begging, from known and unknown persons in various countries. Mr. Judge communicated with the lady legatees, with public officials at home and abroad, and with a representative of the Baron's family. This took several months but the final result was this: the ladies would not take the Chicago lots for a gift, the Wisconsin land had been sold for taxes years before, the mining shares were good only for papering walls, and the Swiss castles proved castles in the air; the whole estate would not yield even enough to reimburse Mr. Newton and myself for the moderate costs of the probate and funeral! *Laboravit mons, parturit ridiculus mus.* The Baron was a broken-down noble, without means, credit or expectations; a type of a large class who fly to republican America as a last resource when Europe will no longer support them. Their good breeding and their titles of nobility gain them an entrance into American Society, sometimes chances of lucrative posts, oftener rich wives. I never knew exactly what our friend had been doing in the West, but through importunate creditors who turned up, I found out that he had at any rate been concerned in unprofitable attempts to form industrial companies of sorts.

Neither then nor since have I discovered one grain of proof that Baron de Palm had either literary talent, erudition or scholastic tastes. His conversation with H. P. B. and myself was mainly upon superficial matters, the topics which interest Society people. Even in Spiritualism he did not seem to have been a deep thinker, rather an interested observer of mediums and phenomena. He told us much about his experiences in diplomatic circles, and ascribed his present straightened circumstances (as regards the possession of ready cash) to his futile attempts, when an attaché, to vie with rich English diplomats in showy living and fashionable indulgences. He read little and wrote nothing: as I had ample opportunity of observing, since he was living with me as my guest.

It would be painful for me to dwell upon these personalities but for the necessity of my showing the man's character, and leaving my readers to judge for themselves whether he was fit to be a teacher or mentor to a person like the author of "Isis Unveiled" and "The Secret Doctrine." For that is the disputed point. With an inconceivable malignity certain unprincipled foes of hers have spread the calumny that her "Isis

Unveiled" is "nothing but a compilation from the manuscripts of Baron de Palm, and without acknowledgment." This will be found in a mendacious letter of Dr. Elliott Coues in the *New York Sun* of July 20, 1890, which the Editor of that influential paper has but recently, in the most honorable spirit of justice, expressed regret for having published and declared unsupported by evidence. The falsehood has been circulated, as I am informed, by Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, also by a learned calumniator in *The Carrier Dove*, and by other hostile newspaper writers: it has, moreover, been given a certain permanency of publication by an expelled French F. T. S., one M. G. Encausse (known by the pseudonym of "Papus") in his work "Traité Methodique de Science Occulte," which was reviewed in the *Theosophist* for August last. Finally, in the (N. Y.) *Truthseeker* of June 11, 1892, there appeared the following open letter from a well-known American *littérateur*.

"DR. ALEXANDER WILDER, *Dear Sir*: When "Isis Unveiled" was published in 1877, I corresponded with Madame H. P. Blavatsky and paid her for a copy of the book. She was a learned woman—could write Greek and Hebrew—but in one of her letters she said: "My only curse is that I know English so imperfectly. I am going to study it now that I have nothing better to do."

I then inferred and believed that she had an editor for "Isis Unveiled." Recently I have been credibly informed that you were the editor, and further, that you did not believe that she was the real author of the work, but that she came in possession of some manuscripts of Baron Palm, a learned Russian, who had died in New York and was cremated.

I now beg you to state what you know or believe in regard to the authorship of the book.

Respectfully,

W. H. BURR."

Washington, D. C., May 26, 1892.

Prof. Wilder's connection with the writing of "Isis" together with all other details about the book will be thoroughly explained in the proper place, so for the present we may leave Mr. Burr unanswered: my immediate concern is to show how this false rumour originated, and upon what basis it rested. To those who knew H. P. B.'s mode of life while writing her book, who were acquainted with Baron de Palm at the West and in New York, who were associated with him during his brief connection with the T. S., the above candid and easily proven details about his personality, habits and acquirements will suffice. For others, I reluctantly append the scathing letter which Herr Consul Obermayer, of Augsburg, Bavaria, sent Mr. Judge in response to his official and professional enquiry as to M. de Palm's supposed European properties, and which Mr. B. Keightley has obligingly translated for this publication from the original in my possession. From its date, the reader will see that we did not receive it, and consequently did not know the truth about the Baron's European antecedents, until a full year after his death, and five months after the world-famous cremation of his remains:

"CONSULATE OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, AUGSBURG.

May 16th, 1877.

No. 1130.

To,

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE,

Attorney and Counsellor at Law,

71, Broadway, New York.

"From your letter of the 7th ult., I gather that Baron Josef Heinrich Ludwig von Palm died in New York in the month of May 1876.

"The undersigned, Consul Max Obermayer (late United States Consul at Augsburg from 1866 to 1873), happens by chance to be in a position to give you the information desired regarding the deceased in a thoroughly exhaustive manner, and is very willing to do so.

"Baron von Palm was in his youth an officer in the Bavarian army, but was forced on account of his many shady transactions and debts to leave the service. He then betook himself to other parts of Germany, but could not remain long anywhere, because his great frivolity, his love of good living and his debaucheries constantly led him to incur fresh debts and involve himself in shady transactions; so that he was even condemned by the courts and sent to jail.

"After it became impossible for him to remain longer in Germany, he went to Switzerland to enter on a new course of swindling, and he actually succeeded, by false promises and misrepresentations, in persuading the owner of Schloss (Castle) 'Wartensee' to sell him that property, which he forthwith occupied. His stay there, however, was short; not only was he unable to raise the purchase money, but he could not even pay the taxes, and in consequence the property was sold for the account of the creditors and Palm fled to America.

"Whether or not he supported himself in America by frauds is not known here.

"Of property in Europe he possesses not *one cent's* worth; all that may be found among his effects to that purport is a *pure swindle*.

"The only property on which he had any claim whatever before he went to America, was a share in the Knebelisher inheritance in Triest. When he left he had already taken much trouble to obtain immediate payment of this amount, but in vain.

"Towards the end of the year 1869, Palm addressed himself to the undersigned in his then capacity of United States Consul, with the request to arrange for the payment to him of his share in the Knebelisher estate mentioned above.

"This request was at once complied with, and, as appears from the enclosed copy of his receipt, the sum of 1,068 Thalers 4/6= \$ 3247.53 was placed at Palm's disposal by a consular letter of Jan. 21, 1870, and he availed himself thereof through the banking house of Greenbaum Bros. & Co., as appears from his letter to the consulate of Feb. 14, 1870.

"I can only repeat that Palm possessed in Europe neither a single dollar in money, nor a single foot of ground, and that everything which may be found among his papers to the contrary is based solely upon fraudulent representation.

"Palm's only known relatives are the two Baronesses Von Th..... domiciled in Augsburg, both families in every way most respectable, and to whom Palm in the last year of his residence in Europe caused much scandal and annoyance.

"The above contains all that is to be known about the deceased Palm in the most exhaustive manner, and probably more even than you may have expected.

* * * * *

(Signed) MAX OBERMAYER,
Consul, Argentine Republic."

My compliments to M. Papus, Mrs. Britten and her 'pals,' and I hope they will enjoy the improving company of this erudite and congenial Bavarian refugee when they meet as "full-blown lives" "within the golden gates." *Palmas qui meruit, ferat!*

H. S. OLCOTT.

THE BABIS OF PERSIA.*

IN the latter part of the first quarter of this century was born a child at Teheran at a time when there is said to have been a large shower of falling meteors. This phenomenon recalled to the minds of several learned Persians the prophesy of the coming of the Mehidi, and in time the child came to be regarded as the promised Saviour. Toko-ullah is said to have been one of the first who declared this child to be a new prophet, but he was hanged by the order of the authorities, and the boy-prophet at the age of ten was banished to a plain called A'ká along with his followers. Sayad Mahamad Ali, for that was the name of the youth; at the early age of nineteen—some say twenty-nine—began to preach his doctrines at Shiraz and assumed the name of "Bab," or the Gate of Divine knowledge and grace. He also called himself "*Nuktch*," or the central point for the concentration and radiation of divine will and commands. He was better known however by the former name, and his followers have hence been known by the name of "*Bábís*."

An excellent speaker, a ready composer of verses, an able controversialist, Báb soon won the regard and affection of his hearers, while his extreme youth excited admiration. The learned Mullah Husein, hearing of his fame, travelled all the way from Khorassan to vanquish him; but was himself worsted in argument and became his staunch disciple. Another pious man, Mahamad Balfaroshi, became an ardent follower, and his third great disciple was the fair Zarin Taz or the golden crown, called also Karat-ul-ain, or the Balm of the eyes, owing to her wondrous beauty. Zarin Taz was a learned and gifted lady and worked strenuously for the promotion of the cause.

* Compiled from the accounts published in Guzrafi in the "Bombay Samactar" and "Jame-Jamud."

In the commencement Báb was not much noticed, but soon the Mullahs and the orthodox Shehahs were roused to indignation by the new teachings, and the aid of the Government was secured to hound the heretics to death.

The Bábis were thus put upon their defence, and Mullah Husein built a fort at Mazandaran and commenced warlike operations, but was killed in 1849. In Zendzan, Balfaroshi was killed in fight, and Báb himself was imprisoned at Chering and tortured, but he retracted not and clung firmly to his tenets. He was therefore ordered to be put to death at Tabriz where he and his disciple were suspended by ropes from the earth wall and shot to death. Thus ended, in 1850, a noble life, whose efforts to raise his nation from barbarism and bigotry were so grossly misunderstood and cruelly put down.

The Bábis however did not become dispirited; a young nobleman named Mirza Yahiya was elected chief in place of Báb, and was installed at Bagdad whence he issued orders, and the Bábis again grew in power. Soon after—whether rightly or wrongly—they were charged with planning the murder of the present king Shah Nassaruddin who had just then come to the throne, and a second great persecution was carried on in which large numbers of Bábis were massacred, and among them the fair and talented Tarin Taz.

No one could—after this—call himself a Bábi openly, and it came to pass that all the followers of this sect had to keep the strictest secrecy regarding their belief. Outwardly they observed all the Mohammedan forms while they freely communicated in private with those in whom they felt confidence. In the outlying districts their tenets again began slowly to spread. Many of the Persian Bábis went to Bagdad, Egypt and European Turkey and some came also to India. During the last fifty years and up to the present time the Bábis have slowly been growing in numbers. At the present day there are said to be in Persia a hundred thousand of them, but whenever any riot or feud is raised by the *Badmashes* in Persia, the authorities connive at the offenders, and the Bábis have invariably to suffer.

Some few Persian Zoroastrians are also said to have joined the Bábis whose teachings breathe an air of freedom.

Báb taught that women had the same right to freedom and equality as men, and he consequently condemned bigamy and concubinage. He valued charity above all, disliked the fakirs and the ascetics, and taught that everybody should live by honest labour. All obsequial ceremonies for the dead were said to be useless, and payments to Mollahs and priests for purchasing merit were strongly deprecated.

Báb looked upon the several Founders of the Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, Mahammedan and other religions, who believed in one god, as true prophets. These, he said, had taught certain truths according to the exigencies of the times and the peoples. Their teachings were often

fragmentary or veiled, as the masses in times past were ignorant, and even ordinary things and common rules of life had to be improved with the sanction of religious laws. The various prophets were like physicians who prescribed according to the wants of the different patients. The time, he said, had now come when a better state of things ought to prevail. Outward religious observances and forms degenerated the true religious instinct, and it was necessary to give prominence to the inner meanings of religious teachings. Belief in one God, the equality of all religions, the brotherhood of man, practical charity and promotion of kindly feelings among men, abstention from evil thoughts and acts are some of the principal tenets of the sect. They urge that prayers should be offered to God in a language that the devotee understands; that there is neither Fate, Heaven nor Hell, and all men get their just due on this earth.

Count Gobineau was the first to draw the attention of Europe to the Bábis. It is said that their religious book has very lately been published in Europe, and it will be interesting to know what it contains.

For a long time there have been several Bábis in Bombay, but formerly they used to keep themselves—as such—unknown to others. Of late they have been freer and it appears they number about a hundred or more at present in Bombay. They meet every Sunday in a large hall and discuss some of their doctrines. Replies to questions obtained from their Head-quarters in Persia, are read and interpreted and inquiries made by strangers are readily answered.

Some well-to-do Moghuls in Bombay belong to this sect. All the members behave towards each other on a footing of equality; and no consideration is shown to any one owing to his rank or wealth. When a stranger or any Bábi comes in—be he poor or rich—all get up and bowing to him give him a place to sit by them and discuss freely on religious matters.

The Bábis may be said to be the Protestants of Persia. They however show a great deal more breadth of thought and action than the Western Protestants. It is unfortunate that owing to the peculiar condition of the Persian Government and administration, as well as its bigotry, the Bábis have been thrown into hostile relations with the rulers of the country. If the tenets of the Bábis were to spread largely in Persia they would prove the salvation of the country, and from being ignorant, lethargic and fickle-minded bigots, the population of Persia would gain in solidarity, enlightenment, tolerance and industry.

In spite of continuous difficulties and persecutions the Bábis are ever hopeful, and they believe that their doctrines must eventually prevail and spread over the greater part of the Earth.

Their noble ideas about religious equality and fraternity; the freedom and equality of the sexes; charity and brotherhood among men; the riddance of priest-craft and useless rites and ceremonies must always

gain for them the sympathy of thoughtful men in all parts of the Earth.

The spread and existence of the Bábi doctrines in such a used-up and backward country as Persia is a significant sign of the times and shows that the dark cycle of religious bigotry, intolerance and persecution is seeing the beginning of its end.

A more detailed account of the teachings of the Bábis, their ways and adventurous history, will prove not only useful to the general reader, but more particularly so to the Theosophists, whose sympathies are always with those who honestly and sincerely try to break the shackles of ignorance, prejudice and dogmatism.

N. D. K.

OD AND ELECTRICITY.*

A PARALLEL WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SUPERSENSUOUS PSYCHOLOGY.

The experiments carried on under the general name of hypnotic increase in interest and significance. Perhaps the most startling are those of Dr. Luys, confirmatory of the "discovery" by Col. Roche that a hypnotized person was sensitive to stimuli applied at a distance from the physical body. It may be remembered that some months ago Col. Roche stated that he had found that a person, insensitive to stimuli applied directly to the surface of the body, showed symptoms of pain if the air was pinched at a short distance from the body, so that coma of the physical frame might be accompanied by great sensitiveness to impressions made at a little distance on—what? This curious "exteriorization", as it was termed, of sensibility aroused much curiosity, the rationale of the results obtained entirely escaping the experimenters, and Dr. Luys—the well known scientist and author—has been conducting a series of experiments, designed to follow up the line of investigation initiated by Col. Roche.

An account of some of these experiments has been widely published. Dr. Luys having allowed a Dalziel representative to attend one of his sessions, The following is the statement made:

"Dr. Luys tried the experiment to-day several times with an extraordinarily sensitive subject now at the Charité, and each time with considerable success."

"So complete was the exteriorization of the subject that Dr. Luys was able to transfer a woman's sensibility into a tumbler of water. The tumbler was then taken out of sight of the hypnotized person, and the representative was invited to touch the water, and as his hands came in contact with it the woman started as if in pain. This experiment was repeated several times, the requisite precautions being taken that the hypnotized subject should not see the contact between the hands and the water. The water retained the sensibility a considerable time, and, if drunk before the sensibility is exhausted, the patient falls into a deadly swoon. Dr. Luys was also able to confirm the wonderful discovery made by Col. Roche, administrator of the Ecole Polytechnique, who found that it was possible to transfer the sensibi-

lity of a hypnotized person to the negative of a photograph of the subject, and that the subject not only felt, but showed signs of any mark made on the negative. Supposing, for instance, a scratch was drawn with a pin across the hand on the negative after it has been charged with sensibility, the subject would shriek with pain, and a few instants later a mark similar to that made on the negative would be visible on the hand of the subject." (*Lucifer*).

These experiments seem to have such an intimate connection with those of Baron von Reichenbach, that we have felt it desirable to give the following translation from an important article, by a German physicist of the highest standing, which appeared in the *Sphinx* for May and June 1889. The bearing of the three sets of experiments by Reichenbach, Hertz, and Roche on each other is very striking, so that their connection and rationale deserve the most careful thought and consideration of our readers.

B. K.

The method which, in my opinion, can alone lead to an explanation, that is, to a rendering intelligible, of "occult" phenomena is that of natural science. But those who share this standpoint will justly accuse me of having, in the following pages, brought forward, almost exclusively, mere *possibilities*, scientifically based it is true, but still mere *unproven possibilities*. I too feel this reproach; still I have thought it desirable to write this short essay, the main purpose of which is to show how some of the most recent physically established results have to some extent approximated towards those phenomena, which REICHENBACH has described under the name of Odic phenomena in his ponderous tomes, and which are still at this day characterised by the whole body of official science as phantastic nonsense, brain cobwebs, and humbug.

The essential difference between the views of our present science of Physics and those of Reichenbach, may be stated as follows. According to current Physics every body—for instance a piece of lead or a bottle of sulphuric acid—is, in general, inactive, *i.e.*, possesses no special specific forces proceeding from it and acting at a distance. Magnetic iron alone possesses such forces in its natural state, *viz.*, magnetic forces; all other bodies can only have forces (forces acting at a distance) imparted to them by special means, *viz.*, by electrification. In their natural state they do not possess them. The only force which is common to all bodies, is gravity; still this force is not a specific one, depending on the nature of bodies, but a general force determined only by their mass. A kilo of lead and a kilo of sulphuric acid behave exactly alike so far as weight is concerned. Thus while bodies exhibit no specific force-effects at *measurable* distances; yet they do possess such forces, as is shown by their differing chemical affinities. But these forces only operate in actual contact, or at molecular distances. In opposition to this, Reichenbach maintains, on the strength of his 13,000 experiments regarding Od, that there proceeds from every body in its natural state a certain action at a distance: *viz.*, a radiation of force, the Od, which can be felt by sensitive persons, and even seen in absolute darkness. The action of this force is said to be polar, inasmuch as

* This Essay, remarks the Editor of the *Sphinx*, is from the pen of a very well known German physicist, who, however, in consequence of the prejudices prevailing among "exact" scientists or these subjects, has felt it better to withhold his name.

bodies can give out odically positive and odically negative radiations; but it is further said to be more than differentiated in polarity, inasmuch as the odic lights may appear in any of the colours of the rainbow, according to the nature of the body which radiates them. The Od is supposed to be a specific property of bodies, inasmuch as the brightness of the light, and the strength of the feeling caused thereby, vary from body to body. Now these Od-radiations are possessed not only by magnets and electrified bodies—in which actions at a distance are already well known—but they are possessed in a very remarkable degree by crystals, by all warmed and insulated bodies, all parts of the human body, and ultimately by all earthly bodies, whether organic or inorganic. Reichenbach closes the enumeration of his experiments on this head with the words: "It thus appears that all bodies on the whole earth, simple or compound, amorphous or crystallised, as they occasion odic sensations, so also act upon our senses and radiate Od-light."

Passing over the further properties of the Od, for the present, I will now briefly mention those new discoveries in Physics, which are calculated to lead us to regard the former view as erroneous, and to offer an approximation to those of Reichenbach.

The propagation of light through space, which as we know takes place with a speed of about 300,000 kilometers per second, has long since driven physics to the assumption that throughout all space is spread an exceedingly tenuous, elastic matter, the ether, which is the carrier of that wave motion with which light has been experimentally identified. No further properties beyond those of transmitting the vibrations of Light and also those invisible, but thermometrically recognisable dark heat vibrations, have hitherto been ascribed to the ether, because there was no experimental necessity for doing so. The luminous rays which show themselves in the spectrum, and the neighbouring ultra-red and ultra-violet rays have times of vibration counted by billionths of a second and wave lengths which vary from 0.3 thousandths to 3 thousandths of a millimetre, as has been determined by accurate measurements. Accordingly it seemed as if the ether was in the main capable of transmitting waves of extraordinarily short wave length; and true to the maxim of not predicating more of nature than can be proved, the possibility that the ether might have many other far-reaching properties was not spoken of, scarcely even thought of; even the mere assertion that the ether existed, oppressed the strictly orthodox scientist, because its existence cannot be directly proved.

This is now changed, and that mainly through the experiments of Professor Hertz of Bonn. This physicist was engaged in the investigation of electro-dynamic forces, and arrived at results of the utmost importance. It is known that a current of electricity flowing in a conductor exerts forces which are recognisable in its neighbourhood. In particular it exerts attractive and repulsive forces upon a neighbouring electric current, and at the instant of making or breaking the current it excites a current, the induction current, in any

neighbouring conductor in which no current is flowing. These forces of an electric current, which thus either set in motion the electricity of a conductor, or affect the conductor itself, are termed electro-dynamic forces, and have hitherto been regarded, because nothing more was known of them, as forces acting at a distance, like gravity. It was therefore assumed that an electro-dynamic force acts instantaneously in all directions from a current, and that this action does not require to be mediated by any intervening medium. This view gained ground because no effect of time could be recognised in the investigation of electro-dynamic forces. Now, on the one hand, this might result from the fact that these forces act instantaneously, and are thus truly forces acting at a distance, or, on the other, it might result from the fact that the transmission of the force takes place in an unrecognisably short space of time, at the comparatively small distances with which we can operate. Was not the finite velocity of light at last only recognised, because by astronomical methods colossal distances could be traversed by the light and so brought under observation? But if it is only the smallness of the distance, *i.e.*, the shortness of the time, which concealed from us the transmission in time of electro-dynamic forces, there exists a means of obviating the difficulty. It is, namely, only necessary to bring about exceedingly rapid and continuous reversals in the direction of the electro-dynamic forces, for us to obtain at not too great distances in space reversals of their effects. If this succeeded, then the velocity of transmission of electro-dynamic forces would be demonstrated, and that velocity itself would be ultimately measurable.

This was Herr Hertz's method. He produced an electric spark between the ends of two wires. As is known, the electricity in such a spark oscillates backwards and forwards with extreme rapidity: a reversal occurring about once in the millionth part of a second. If the path of the spark lies vertically, then in successive millionths of a second the electro-dynamic forces are directed once upwards and once downwards, and if this effect be transmitted through space with a velocity, say of 1 million meters per second, then the electro-dynamic effects would change their direction at distances of one meter each. Thus in conductors situated at distances of 1, 2 and 3 meters respectively, induction currents would be excited which would flow in the same direction in 1 and 3 and in the opposite direction in 2 and 4. This was the principle. Its execution answered to expectation. There was discovered a wave-like transmission of electro-dynamic effects, and its velocity was capable of being measured with great accuracy; and was found to be 3,00,000 kilometers per second, the same as that of light.

This is the first time that the transmission of a force through space has been experimentally proved. It further appeared that these electro-dynamic waves are of extraordinarily long wave lengths; wave lengths of from several centimeters up to several meters, which is very large and unexpected in comparison with the light-waves, which run in the thousands of a millimetre. These electro-dynamic waves pass unaffected

through walls and partitions, in fact through all non-metallic bodies. Sparks can be produced in closed rooms which are caused by electro-dynamic waves. These waves can, further, be reflected by mirrors, and refracted through prisms like light waves. Only, as is natural, the dimensions of the prisms must be considerably larger than those used in optical experiments, in proportion to the wave lengths. The experiment of concentrating the waves through lenses has, indeed, not yet been tried on account of the great expense of the experiments, but it is undoubtedly possible and practicable. In short, we have here for the first time a wave-like transmission of a force in space, a transmission which takes place in the ether, since its velocity agrees with the velocity of light. From these new facts, however, there result a series of obligatory inferences, a few of which I wish to cite, as they agree directly with the assertions of Reichenbach.

In a red hot body, according to the general and well-founded view, the molecules are in very active, rapid movement hither and thither. By this periodic movement, the ether, which occupies the inter-molecular spaces, is thrown into wave motion of the same period as that of the molecules, and the result of this motion we see as light, the body is *self-luminous*. If we take the same body, but not at so high a temperature as to be red-hot, but only highly heated, then its molecules are in movement of a longer period, in slower vibration, and the result of this motion is vibrations in the ether of longer wave length, which we feel as heat-rays, as long as the temperature of the bodies is an elevated one, some hundreds of degrees.

As long as we were ignorant that the ether was also capable of transmitting waves of much longer period, we could draw no further inference. Now, however, we both can and must say: at all temperatures the molecules of a body are in vibration, whose periods are the longer, the lower the temperature of the body. The ether must be affected by every such motion, and be thrown into vibration. Hence a wave-like motion of the ether must constantly proceed from every body, which motion is able to produce effects of a certain kind, optical, thermic, electro-dynamic and others which are unknown to us. From every body there proceeds a stream of force, no body is inactive, as physics hitherto assumed, but every body has a specific action at a distance, specific because the vibration period of each molecule and therefore also of the wave motion proceeding from it, depends not only on the temperature, but also on the nature of the body. *But we have thus reached, from a different side, the exact standpoint of Reichenbach.*

Assuming an eye to exist, whose retina was sensitive not only to the short light-waves, but also to waves of greater length—an eye such as must be ascribed to Reichenbach's sensitives,—then such an eye would necessarily observe the appearances which Reichenbach describes. It would see waves of lights proceeding from all bodies, the Odic light, differing in colour according to the wave length, differing in extent according to the intensity of the molecular vibrations. Such an eye, if

only sensitive enough, must even necessarily see the inside of certain bodies shining, *viz.*, when the bodies are regularly built up, so that the ether vibrations are in the main all polarised in the same direction. This is exactly the appearance which Reichenbach describes:—

§ 2106. Frau Bauer described in the dark-room a piece of perfectly black Moravian schorl nearly as thick as one's arm, the thinnest edges of which were perfectly opaque, as transparent, golden-yellow glass. She repeated this description when she received another piece of schorl from Saar to look at—I having previously given her several pieces of rock crystal and quartz, saying: "This kind I have had already, it is the yellow glass." After she had described several rock crystals successively as blue, she said when I handed her a yellow topaz: "I have already had several pieces of this, it is the blue glass."—Fraulein Sophie Pauer also and two other sensitives saw the same common, opaque black schorl as golden-yellow, almost orange coloured opaque glass. Frl. Hermine Fenzl saw the schorl as somewhat duller, but likewise yellow; to Frl. Poppe it seemed so bright that it threw a yellow glow upon the thumb upon which she held it.—But the transparent green and blue precious tourmalines were seen as equally yellow by the three sensitives.

§ 2107. Thus it was beyond doubt that pieces of common black schorl, smoked topaz and similar impure crystallizations, which are opaque by daylight to the normal eye, can become clear and transparent for the sensitive eye in the dark.

§ 2108. Clear rock crystals appeared to all sensitives transparent; the joiner, Klaiher, saw a plate of many layers of mica as so clear that he saw his fingers shining behind it. To Frl. Poppe, small crystals of gypsum appeared glowing and transparent like glass. Others found gypsum spar transparent like glass. All sensitives described a piece of doubly refractive Iceland spar as so perfectly transparent that its shining edges and corners could be seen, those in front directly, and those behind right through the shining transparent stone.

§ 2109. When I placed a large rock crystal before Dr. Machold in the dark room, he said, after describing the external luminous appearances: "it burns in the middle of the crystal;" he perceived in the inside of the body continuous shining movements, which he compared to those we sometimes see in fires. Years before, I had heard exactly the same thing from Frl. Reichel who, when looking at large rock crystals, described herself as seeing innumerable small sources of light which were in constant motion and mutual action and reaction, waving up and down in all the colours of the rainbow in the body of the crystal. Besides two other persons, Frl. Zinkel also described these brilliant appearances on being shown beryl, rock crystal, gypsum spar, alum, &c.; she found all these crystals translucent and exhibiting inside moving phases of light which mingled irregularly with each other.

That this conception of the Odic light as a wave motion in the ether, occasioned by the vibrating molecules, is justified, is shown in a most striking manner by the following observations of Reichenbach, which he did not quite know how rightly to interpret, but which, in my opinion, place the nature of the wave motion quite beyond question:—

§ 2590. The following most enigmatical anomalies have presented

themselves to me. I had placed upon the edge of a table a large rock-crystal with its negative pole towards the north. Frl. Geraldini advanced from the opposite end of the room from the north towards it. At first she found in her left hand a sensation of cold, and in her right one of warmth; thus being regularly affected by the negative pole. The sensation remained the same, increasing in distinctness, until she came within two and a half feet of the stone. At that moment a reversal of the sensations took place: her left hand felt warm and her right cold. When, however, she had approached scarcely half a foot nearer to the stone, the sensations were again reversed, returning to their first state, in which the left hand felt cold and the right warm. And thus it remained until she came quite close to the pole of the crystal.

§ 2591. I made the same experiment with a sister of Frl. Geraldini and with the same result.—Frl. Zinkel, on being led up close to the negative point of a large rock crystal, felt a cold wind on her left hand; when she drew back her hand, the feeling remained the same until she reached a distance of about two paces; but here she reached a place which all at once produced a warm, feeble shuddering. If she traversed the same space with her right hand, she felt the effects reversed, first warm, then at two steps distance from the pole, cold; further away still a warm unpleasant feeling again.

On another occasion I tried the same experiment with Frl. Joseph Geraldini using two rock crystals one over the other; and with the same result. If I made the Frl. Geraldini, as also Frl. Beyer, take the steps backwards, I obtained the same result; each time at a distance of from two to three paces there occurred a reversal of the feelings of temperature, which however did not extend beyond this distance, but was confined to a distance of from half to one foot and then gave place to the feeling previously experienced.

§ 2594. Passing to the poles of magnets, I laid two five feet long bar magnets with similar poles together in a vertical position and directed the negative poles towards Frl. Geraldini, and again towards Frl. Beyer. At a distance of twenty paces, the latter felt a cold sensation in her left side and left hand, and a warm one in her right. When she now slowly approached the poles, this sensation continued until she came within a distance of three paces from them, when the sensations were suddenly reversed. This held good for the space of one pace. As soon, however, as she began to take the second step, the sensations were again reversed to their former condition, left cold and right warm, and this lasted until she came into actual contact with the poles of the magnets. I reversed the position of the magnets and directed the south poles towards the sensitive; and now the same effects were experienced on both sides, only with the respective sensations reversed.

By the last named, exceedingly receptive sensitive, this result showed itself in another and very marked manner, *viz.*, when she remained at my request for sometime at a distance of two and a half paces from the south pole of the magnetic bar, the odic polarity acted upon her so strongly, that the hand affected by the pole of opposite name was cold and dry to the touch, while the other became not only warm but dripping with sweat, which I wiped off myself.

§ 2592. To answer the question as to whether an amorphous body was able to produce these zonal phenomena, I placed in front of Frl. Zinkel, a bag

of sulphur about the size of a quarto volume with the widest side turned towards her. At a distance of ten paces she felt its effect as cold in the left, and warmish in the right hand, as was to be expected from so very negative a body; by nearer approach it produced even shuddering in her right side, but none in the left. But approaching still nearer till within two paces, the reversal of the sensations again occurred in this case also; on the left it changed suddenly into warmth and shuddering, while the feeling of cold made its appearance in the right hand. This lasted only for the distance of a short step, after which the sensations were again reversed returning to their first condition.

Frl. Beyer assured me that she experienced similar sensations when she approached even the wall of an ordinary room.

Let us compare with these last statements of Frl. Beyer, the following remarks by Herr Hertz, which form the introduction to his experiments upon the reflection of electro-dynamic waves:—

But the following phenomena especially presented themselves to me constantly:—If I tested the sparks in the secondary circuits at very great distances from the primary circuit, where the sparks were already extremely feeble, I remarked that the sparks increased markedly in distinctness when I approached a solid wall, and then suddenly disappeared in its immediate neighbourhood.

What is here the primary circuit, are in Reichenbach's experiments the vibrating molecules of bodies, and the secondary circuit is the eye or hand of the sensitive. Still more striking is the resemblance in the following experiments of Hertz. He placed the primary circuit at 14 meters distance from a wall. When he approached the secondary circuit (the sensitive's hand) to within 8 meters of the wall, the effect was strongest on the side away from the wall. When he went nearer to 5.5 meters distance, a reversal had taken place, and the effect was greatest on the opposite side; at 3 meters distance, a fresh reversal took place, and at 0.8 meters yet another.—These are exactly the "zones" of Reichenbach.

The following is a still further analogy:—

The electro-dynamic rays pass freely through all non-conducting bodies, such as wood, masonry, glass, pitch, &c. They can be sent through the doors into closed rooms, and observed within them. Herr Hertz says on this point: "Insulators do not stop the current; one sees, not without astonishment, the sparks appear inside of closed rooms." Now compare this with what Reichenbach says of the Od:—

§ 29. Frl. Zinkel placed herself behind the closed door of a room next to my own; I then slowly approached her. She felt my approach quite clearly, but more feebly and later than in the experiments tried in the same rooms with open doors; and she only felt it when I was only three paces distant from her. The emanation had thus penetrated the wooden door, yet not without being obstructed. This experiment was often repeated. I now placed her behind the wall of a room and approached her as before; but after repeated trials she was unable to feel my approach at all.

§ 30. I placed Herr Gustav Auschütz behind a wall 1½ feet thick dividing two rooms; he stood close behind it. I now approached the place behind

which he stood in the other room and alternately advanced and retired. If I went towards him, he always felt a warm sensation; when I retired from him, he always felt the warm sensation diminish and change into one of cold. This always held good, however often I might repeat the experiment and though he could not tell whether I went towards or away from him, as he could not see me. Here too the sensations were felt more feebly and rather later.

Frl. Atzmansdorfer slept, as long as she remained in my house, with her bedstead touching the wall of her room. On the other side of this wall was a guest chamber, in which now and again some visitor stayed for a day or two. The position of the bedstead in this room corresponded with that of Frl. Atzmanusdorfer in such a way that the two bedsteads touched the same wall, and if this wall had been removed, would have formed a right angle, the head of guest against the feet of the sensitive girl. Now whenever any one slept in this second guest chamber, Frl. Atzmansdorfer could get no rest or sleep the whole night through. She felt the effect of the person near to her through the wall so strongly that it deprived her every time entirely of sleep.

On one of these occasions yet a third person slept in one of the adjoining rooms, also with his head next to the girl's feet in the other side of the wall, and this third person happened to be just the right man; it was, namely, Purkinje of Breslau, now in Prague. He was a witness of an occurrence like that described above. *Thus the emanations of human beings penetrate through doors and stone walls, even though more feebly and slowly than through the air, yet most decidedly they do penetrate, and there act upon sensitives in the same way as they do without any intervening bodies.*

(To be continued.)

AN ANALYSIS OF THE BHAGAVAD G'ITA'.

CHAPTER I.

AS is well known, the Gítá forms part of the great epic poem called the Mahábhárata and is, so to say, the crown of that group of poems. It is therefore necessary to understand something about the Mahábhárata before we can understand the propriety of the Gítá forming part of the Mahábhárata itself. Now this poem, like the Rámáyana and a number of other poems in the Sanscrit language, has several aspects, and each person is at liberty to confine his study to the aspect which interests him most. The aspect of the Mahábhárata best understood by the world at large is its historical side, though even here some scholars, extensively informed as they are on historical subjects, have committed many blunders. It is a marked piece of obstinacy on the part of modern investigators, both western and eastern, that they will pay no respect to Hindu ideas and traditions. These are cast to the winds before the spirit of time-contracting policy adopted by the Christians who compress history within the narrow space of 5000 years. The Christian is excusable, for he is caught in the net of shadows that emanated from the brains of the early Christian Fathers, but for the Hindu the only excuse is that the present age closes the first 5000 years of Kali-yuga.

The tradition prevailing in almost every portion of the Indian continent, from the rocky heights of the North to the plains of the South, is that the scene of the Mahábhárata war was enacted in the beginning of Kaliyuga, about 5000 years ago. As Mr. Sundaramayya says, it was the karmic punishment for the selfish spirit that had been developed during the previous cycles. In the Puránic phraseology of India, men had become Rákshasas on account of the decline of Dharma. Every cycle, be it 4,320,000 years, or 5,000 years, or a year, or a day, commences with the Deva and ends with the Rákshasa. About 5000 years ago, there was a most critical turning point in the history of this Karma-bhumi. It was the end of a great cycle and the beginning of a new one, the Kaliyuga, the yuga fore-ordained by the will of Brahmá, or the law of cosmic evolution, for the development of heterogeneous personal elements. The times demanded the appearance on the stage of life of a great soul, a Mahá-Purusha, to adjust the old order of things and give the initial impulse to a new order. That Mahá-Purusha is the Jagat-Guru S'rî Krishna: not a personal god as some would make him, but an entity embodied for the time, from the manasic planes of nature. He represents, as every yogi and pundit will grant, the ray of dark glory that dwells in the lotus of the human heart. The embodied Krishna is merely one of those divine beings who, living in the noumenal planes of nature, watch over and protect the field of human evolution.

To return to the epic of the Mahábhárata. It is an account of the doings of the great heroes who fought to settle how Kaliyuga was to begin, all written down in a most beautiful symbolic fashion. Some may be disposed to ask—why was the account drawn up in a symbolic way; why did not the writer put it in plain language? To this, if I mistake not, an answer, a complete one to him who has thought over it, has been given by H.P.B., in the first volume of the "Secret Doctrine." I refer you all to that page of the book which describes Sound as one of the Karmic agencies wielded by man. The ancient philosophers seem thus to have had a great objection to the literature which by describing purely scenes of human carnage, tends to inflame mankind, as do to-day the novels of Reynolds dealing so largely with the fairy-land, supposed to reside in a woman's smile. For this reason, the ancient initiate-historians conveyed information under a veiled garb. The account of exploits therein given is more like a fight between the angels and the satanic host than one between human beings. Much instruction, moral and spiritual, is imbedded in the account of the heavenly war. Advantage is taken of the opportunity to describe man and the cosmos, the relation between the two, &c. &c. The kernel of truth, from the standpoint of history, is always ready when the proper man, whose curiosity alone is entitled to be satisfied in these matters, comes to seek it.

Now the Mahábhárata is one of such historical epics, full of moral lessons and a mine of gold to him who hankers after a knowledge of the supersensuous planes of nature. The poem has a very great value

to the historian, a greater value to the moralist and a still greater one to the student of Theosophy, since the great war between the lower and higher selves of human beings is described in detail. The war is called the Bhárata war for a very strong reason. Those who have read the ordinary Theosophical writings will recollect the chain of seven globes described as the field of human evolution. These same seven globes are described in our Purânas as the earth of seven islands or Saptadwîpa-medimî. These seven islands or globes of the earth chain are said to exist on four planes. Numbers one and seven exist on plane one; numbers two and six exist on plane two; numbers three and five exist on plane three. Globe number four is the balance between one and seven and is therefore the battle-ground between the divine and the gross elements of man's constitution. These four planes represent the principles of the lower quaternary, the Linga S'arîra, the Nephesh or Prâna, Kâma and the turning point, Manas. It is because Manas is the turning point in the cycle that H. P. B. has considered it under the two aspects, higher and lower, the higher the attainer and experiencer of spiritual rights and the lower, the soul of the lower three, the triangle that completes embodiment. Manas is therefore the battle-ground of the forces contained in the microcosm and consequently the Bhârata khandam of our Pourânikas. The stage of evolution that we have reached is the very starting point of the great struggle.

The two important figures, Arjuna and Krishna, must be very clearly grasped before one can properly understand a great part of what is said in the Bhagavatgîtâ. A common saying goes in India that they are Nara and Nârâyana, and the saying is, I think, quite true. Nara or Arjuna, is the human Monad of evolution, the manvantaric shadow, on the screen of Prakriti, of the A'tmic ray, one with A'tma or the central spiritual sun, which is called Nârâyana in our Purânas and the Unmanifested Logos in theosophical works. There is a common Sanscrit saying "The Mind alone is to man the cause of both bondage and release, from conditioned existence." Mind is the central point of all existence and A'tma manifested, and it is the human Ego that is at liberty to work towards the north pole of Devas and unconditioned existence or the south pole of Râkshasas or conditioned bondage. In the present stage of evolution, Manas is personal in its nature and if it seeks to work towards the north pole or A'tma, it has to work itself out of all personal elements. It is during this process of working one's self out of personal elements that the situation described in the first chapter of the Bhagavatgîtâ occurs. Numerous affections spring up, for son and daughter, brother and sister and other relations established in the land of embodying matter. "The whole future cannot but be a waste. It is but a future of woe." The entity thinks as above and will gladly take a retrograde step to the land of kinship and conditioned existence. It will gladly renounce all battle if some encouragement and instruction do not come from higher sources. The fighter needs most of what is called *vivekam*, or the discrimination between the true and the false, the light

and the shadow. He has to completely grasp the situation, the laws of universal and cosmic developments in all their departments. He has to understand the law of Karma and he will have to go on performing duties in life irrespective of all prudential and worldly consideration. It will not do, if a man goes on performing his duties in the fond hope that he will reap the reward of it and attain unto the ocean of conscious bliss known as Nirvâna or Moksha. Such a hope of reward will be quite detrimental to progress. Thus all pleasure and pain, whether in experience or expectation, will have to be packed up in a bundle and thrown aside by one who wants to know the truth irrespective of all consequences. We shall understand the necessity for all this if we only realize that the universe is described as One Essence under an infinite variety of manifestations. If a man wants to merge himself into that One or to establish his existence on the highest manasic plane, he must of course cultivate a feeling of oneness or the feeling of universal brotherhood—the great cause for which the present Theosophical effort is made.

The first chapter of the Gîtâ, giving merely the circumstances under which instruction was given to Arjuna by S'rî Krishna &c., I intend to pass on at once to a consideration of the succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER II.

I have already touched upon the initial mental attitude of the practical student of Brahmavidyâ, represented by the attitude of affection for relations of the earth and of a blank despair as regards the things of the spirit. The student needs true discrimination a discrimination that shall realize "the fullness of the seeming void and the voidness of the seeming full." The discourses of S'rî Krishna commenced in the second chapter of the lay are intended to produce that discrimination or a knowledge of the secret doctrine, the six aspects of which are the six schools of philosophy that are said to exist in India. Every one must have heard that the Veda has six *angas* or auxiliaries, and those who have had the benefit of reading the theosophical works may conceive the Veda and the auxiliaries as forming a double triangle of knowledge with a central point. This central point is of course the Secret Doctrine or the thread doctrine, which may be called after the fashion of the Pourânic teachers, the Pourânic or ancient doctrine or the Vedic doctrine. According to the conception that I have been trying to give, true discrimination is produced only from the central stand-point, or only by a complete study of and meditation on, the Secret Doctrine; while the solitary studies of the other Schools of philosophy are only one-sided views concerned with the different aspects of the central and eternal truth. The reader will please bear in mind in this connection that our Pourânic philosophers described the eternal truth that underlies the birth, growth and decline of all cosmic systems as a seven-tongued fire, as illustrated in the saying:—"Nârâyana becoming a yogee, or a fire of seven forms, dries up with his burning rays the waters of all the oceans." If therefore the number seven is the number of the eternal type, it necessarily follows that that number must assert itself on all

manifested planes, be they the planes of the highest Dhyan-Chohans, meaning Bramha-Rishis, or the planes of the Dhyanis, or ever-liberated entities. One may guess the nature of the school to which our teacher H. P. B. belonged, from the great stress she laid on the number seven, which she gladly carried to even the highest manifested planes of existence, even though these planes are represented by numbers one and four in our ordinary Vedantic works.

To return now to the subject in hand. We must remember that the Bhagavat-Gitá is supposed by all thinkers to represent the only true doctrine, or the highest philosophy of the ancients; and can therefore be grasped by us only if we place ourselves in a mood completely void of wrong conceits and fully receptive of the truths on the ground of intuition. We all differ from each other only in the degrees to which we have grasped the truth or received the light which illuminates the field of knowledge, and I am therefore entitled to the fullest leniency from any readers when I err, since I am like them a seeker after truth. In my expositions I am resolved to be bound only by my own thought and knowledge and I would advise all readers to stand each on his own feet irrespective of what has been said on the Gitá by modern exponents. In trying to understand such an occult Sanscrit work as the Bhagavat-gítá, I think it is very essential to think in the language of the book, and I shall explain a few Sanscrit terms that very often occur, for the meanings of terms must be correctly grasped.

The most important term, as all know, is Parabrahm. There is not one word in the whole range of Sanscrit literature that has such a mysterious grandeur about it as this Parabrahm. As a result therefore of this awful grandeur, tending to abstract the mind from the plane of the earth to the prime fount of all majesty and sublimity, we find that every religious partizan in India is careful to assert that the God of his own special worship is Parabrahm to the exclusion of the other gods. The word Bráhm is derived from the root *Brih* to expand, to grow, and the adjective Brahmic is applied to any cosmic principle which has the tendency to manifest itself as something. A certain cosmic essence which sustains all this manifested solar system by its own circulation, and called technically food or *annam* in the Upanishads, is Brahmic in its character.

The body of the four Vedas consisting of various mantric formulæ representing in sound the pulsations and beats of life, that working on the principle called food, has produced this wondrous world harmonious in the adjustment of its parts, is called by the name Brahm. From this point of view of the Vedas, which take into consideration mainly the Vedic intonated chanting or pronunciation, this entire world is but the Veda in manifestation, and I have no doubt that this view of the Vedas is the view taken by the Pouránic philosophers. On the above line of understanding the word Brahmic, several other cosmic principles deserve the qualitative Brahmic. But that Thing or No-Thing, which is the basis of all these cosmic principles

and upon which all these are strung and in which they all grow, is called the highest Brahm or Parabrahm, which is therefore no principle. The prefix para means transcendent, and Parabrahm is that which transcends the consciousness of even the highest yogees, and can only be described by negatives and is so described in the Hindu S'ástras. It is called the No-Thing by the Buddhists on account of that metaphysical necessity which makes the Hindu philosophers resort to a negative mode of description; and so the modern Hindus who take objection to the word No-Thing must first find fault with their own philosophers. Is there Parabrahm or not? so asks a modern Vedántist. Now let us consider what the word means when it is used by a conditioned man. It necessarily means "is such." The best answer therefore to the question—Is there Parabrahm? is the silence of Lord Buddha towards the wandering monk Vachagotta. The same is the answer to the question—Is there not Parabrahm? The *that* of the Vedas neither is, nor is not. Non-existence is only a negative kind of existence, and I request all my readers to fully consider this idea. Parabrahm may therefore be considered as the absolute ground of all manifestation or the absolute silence, which is, and underlies, all sound or the No-Word which precedes and is Word. Parabrahm is neither Prakriti nor Purusha, neither object nor subject, has neither will nor consciousness and in fact is nothing that we can postulate. It is the bare possibility of everything in the infinite cosmos and hence called Beness in the "Secret Doctrine". I may also add in this connection that this Beness is the point of mystic union of Prakriti and Purusha. If we refer to the lectures of Mr. T. Subba Row, we shall well find that it is called the abode of S'ri Krishna who stands in the Gitá for what is called the Unmanifested Logos in Theosophical writings.

This Unmanifested Logos is called by various names in the Sanscrit writings, but the most prominent of them is the word Náráyana, the Pouránic name for the Vedantic Paramátma. It is therefore of extreme importance to understand the meaning of this term. It may facilitate, perhaps, a grasp of the situation if I mention that the Pouránic philosophers have sometimes written about the solar system we are concerned with, and occasionally about the entire universe. The spirit of ideation of one solar system is called Brahma in Sanscrit, and in what relation Brahma stands to our solar system, in the same relation does Náráyana stand to the entire universe. This absolute, unconditioned Purusha is therefore the spirit of absolute thought, and the supreme secret yet unrevealed to the ken of even the highest intelligences. I say unrevealed because the secret is behind the universal veil called the Avyaktam. Just as what is called ether by European scientists is the sea in which all orbs of the solar system are said to live, float and move; so likewise this Avyaktam is the root of all material manifestation, enveloping the entire universe and shrouding the secret from the view of even the greatest seers. For this reason, the Unmanifested Logos is called Avyakta Múrti in Sanscrit; and in this connection I may mention the

well-known couplet which runs "that which is beyond the Avyaktam is known to the knowers of Nārāyaṇa." To those of you who have read the Gītā lectures, the expression—the veil of Parabrahm—will naturally occur. The late Adwaita philosopher, T. Subba Row, said, that to the Logos, Parabrahm appears as Mulaprakriti. So far as I have read the Bhagavat Gītā and understood it, I find that Krishna identifies himself with the All-Self of the universe—Nārāyaṇa, and gives his teachings. If my view is correct and consequently Krishna be the Nārāyaṇa, the veil of Parabrahm is a fatally misleading expression. No Pourānic philosopher ever talked of an objective something to this unconditioned Mukta, and, in fact, they confess their complete ignorance of this unconditioned existence. Vyāsa says:—"No entity can conceive distinctly this inconceivable Purusha," and I think the expression—veil of Parabrahm, is a very misleading one. Nārāyaṇa then is the spirit of all consciousness of the entire universe, the endless truth and wisdom, as said in the S'ruti. The entire universe is in him as a stream of ideation as himself. If desirable, he may be described as the *Chidākas*, or the field of subjective light or intelligence, in whom the ideas underlying the evolution of all solar systems ever are. A right comprehension of the ancient philosophy of India seems to me to thoroughly depend upon our comprehension of the meaning of this centre which is everywhere, containing the law of the universe idealized. Nārāyaṇa is therefore Dharmarūpi. An individualized ray of this central spiritual sun is the Jīvātma or Nara, and A'yana means resort. The compound word Nārāyaṇa means the ultimatum of all such rays, or the Paranirvāna of Buddhistic philosophers.

The stream of ideation that exists in, and constitutes, Nārāyaṇa must not be conceived as a species of pleasant lake always in a heavenly calm. The proper idea would be that this lake is being moved in a most harmonious and graceful way by a bird which is everywhere in that lake—the swan of eternity, or the supreme Hamsa. This lake of ideal waters, being thus subject to a pulsation of its own, the wondrous laws of harmony observable in the evolution of solar systems, their action and interaction, spring into existence. Nārāyaṇa is likewise the bird of eternity or endless time in whom limited times of yugas, cycles and subcycles have their being.

There is another way of deriving this word Nārāyaṇa, from which we gather that he is the cosmic incubus, or spirit, which over-shadows and vivifies the cosmic waters. These waters are of course the abstract space, or the "ever-invisible robe of the eternal parent" in its first manifestation. In this connection I have to say something about the conception called "waters" by the Pourānic thinkers. When the word water is mentioned our modern scientific friends generally take the water of their sense experience and in consequence smile derisively at the ancients. I think this is quite unjustifiable. By waters created at first by Brahma, the ancients meant an all-pervading substance, the base of all material manifestation. From this standpoint

the entire universe is one vast body of water and every manifested globule is but a limited part of the vast ocean, condensed and made to appear as it is by the various potencies residing in the ocean itself. I need not go into a description of these potencies, or Vedic Gods, since it is not required, but it should be remembered that there are oceans within oceans and that the ocean which is the base of our existence as embodied entities is the salt ocean. Those who have read the Vishnu Purāna will recollect the seven zones mentioned there and the salt ocean the innermost of them. So then Nārāyaṇa is he who vivifies the primordial waters.

There is one other aspect in which this supreme, central, spiritual sun can be viewed, and in fact it is the Pourānic view. This aspect is that of the eternal Yagna-Purusha. Yagna-Purusha is he who presides over the Yagna, or the sacrificial ceremonies prescribed in the ritualistic portion of the Vedas, and he is therefore the Purusha of sacrifice. There is not one single idea of the ancients that has been so ill-understood and consequently abused by the moderns as this sublime idea of Yagna. When I say sublime, I do not mean that it should be understood that Yagna as practised at present is advocated by me. I have no doubt that the true Yagna has deteriorated as much as any other thing, man included. This whole solar system being conceived of as one vast mechanism, with an exquisite adjustment of its parts in all major details, is only the physical expression of Vishnu, or the ethereal basic substance, as we may understand the word for the present. All the harmonies observable in the manifested cosmos are only the result of the harmoniously working energies that resolve ether into the expression that we recognize. All planets, worlds, human beings, &c., are only parts of the body, each functioning in subordination to the law which governs the whole. The evolution, preservation and destruction of the world is therefore one vast process called Yagna, which takes place in the body of Yagna-Purusha, or the psychical body of nature. Humanity taken collectively is the heart and brain of this Purusha and therefore all the Karma generated by humanity, physical, mental, or spiritual, determines mainly the character of this Yāgic process. The great and ancient Brahmins, who guided the Aryan race in its infancy, are all Yāgnikas and the rules of life they followed, or required of other Brahmins, is given in our Smritis; and those who have either read the Smritis or considered deeply the ordinary Brahminical life in our villages, will see how very non-receptive of personal elements a Yāgnika's life ought to be. The body of such a man living the life is a real *dharma-kshetram*, or a place in which good is generated, every action being performed with the desire of increasing the good of the entire manifested world, since it is a part of the whole and as such is bound to work for the good of the whole. Every sound spoken is in the line of the eternal Veda, the song sung by nature's life energies in her majestic march from the dawn to the night of Brahma's day. The Yāgnika's mind is in perfect *rapport* with the mind of Brahma and is one with it.

It has been said by some Europeans that the Hindu does everything

religiously including eating and drinking. A Yâgnika Brahmin will answer:—"Yes, I have no right to eat, drink and live for my personal sake. In fact personality is a myth. We are all rays of the unmanifested glory, one with his nature, and his messengers, and hence we have no right to do anything except on his behalf. Every function given us, was given us by the grand Patriarch Brahma for his own service and hence there is no act which we do without dedicating it to him who is the source of all life."

I have no time or knowledge to go into the details of the special Yâgic processes described in the ritualistic portion of the Vedas, but I request my readers not to dismiss with contempt any part of the ancient Vedic writings without anxious effort to study and understand them. I have no doubt that what is apparently most absurd is in fact an exposition of some profound esoteric truth and will amply repay us if only we sit down to understand it. Coming back thus to the word Yagna-Purusha, Nârâyana is the highest Yagna-Purusha named in our Purânas. This Purusha has no form but is the ground from which fire, water, A'kâs'a, all emanate. These are all forces which, once ideas in the constitution of the "Eternal type," become working forces down below. Various other forms of the Yagna of our solar system are given and these must be understood with due reference to the plane of manifestation. The form Garuda, or the Eagle, with his outstretched wings is one form. The boar with his two tusks, projecting face and four legs standing for a particular geometrical figure, is another form.

(To be continued.)

A. NILAKANTA SASTRI.

EPIDEMICS FROM THE THEOSOPHICAL STANDPOINT.

"Thought in the mind hath made us, what we are
By thought was wrought and built, and a man's mind
Hath evil thoughts. Pain follows him as comes
The wheel, the ox behind."

"All that we are is what we have thought and willed,—
Our thoughts make us and frame. If one endure
In purity of thought, joy follows him
As his own shadow—sure."

THESE lines from the *Dhammapâda*, put into verse by Sir Edwin Arnold, are an epitome of Theosophy as to punishment and reward, applied either to the individual or to the race. If the Theosophist should say that cholera and other epidemics are due to the evil thoughts of man, it will be denied in many quarters.

But we can in turn deny that the cause of any epidemic is known to the objector; and since no one stands on proven ground, the Theosophical explanation merits attention. It is this, that the evil thoughts of men of to-day and all past ages are stored up in the ether or "astral light," and when conditions favor they become the cause of epidemics.

We may look for some corroboration in modern science, in its hypothetical ether. The materialistic scientist,—unlike the occultist,—has

never perceived this luminiferous ether, but finds it a necessity, however, in order to understand how light, heat, etc., reach earth from other heavenly bodies, and in other phenomena. Loosely, this ether may be considered identical with the "astral light" of Theosophy, but the occultists know that it has properties that materialistic scientists have not yet discovered it possesses. This is quite likely, since the latter have never appreciated it by any experiment. Since, as Theosophy teaches, every thought is photographed in the ether and exerts a reacting effect, the ethereal plane must be, however invisible, a vast hypnotizing "machine."

Turning to Modern Scientists for corroboration we find Prof. Dalbear in the June *Arena* saying:

"Grant that mental action is accompanied by molecular vibrations of any sort, and it follows that there must be corresponding ether waves; and similarly-constituted molecules in other bodies must as necessarily move in consonance with the first as if the source was heat motion from a similar molecule; and such phenomena as thought transference would be looked for and explained as simply as the phenomena of the exchange of heat."

Camille Flammarion says: "Our psychic force gives rise to an etheric movement which is transmitted to a distance like all other etheric vibrations and becomes perceptible to other brains in harmony with ours. The transformation of a psychical action into etheric motion and *vice-versa* may be analogous to that which is observed in the telephone where the receiver which is identical with the recorder, reconstructs the sonorous vibrations." (*Annales Psychiques*.)

Dr. Draper: "a shadow never falls upon a wall without leaving there-upon a permanent trace which might be made visible by resorting to the proper processes. . . . Upon the walls of our most private apartments, where we think the eye of intrusion is altogether shut out, and our retirement can never be profaned there exist the vestigages of all our acts, silhouettes of whatever we have done." (Quoted in "Secret Doctrine," vol I, p. 104.)

Hertz claims that thoughts may one day be made objective, in some such way as electrical waves can be condensed by a large concave mirror.

Prof. Tyndall in submitting vapours of volatile liquids to the action of concentrated light in an experimental tube, showed that there exists a vast storehouse of pictures invisible to us under ordinary circumstances. In the tube the vapours formed into shapes of bottles, cones, shells, scrolls, etc.; once into a serpent's head, and once into a fish. These were the same on both sides. (See "Isis Unveiled.") Another experience of his was to pass a beam of light through a chunk of ice, the reflection on a screen showing forms of ferns, etc.

Photography shows that pictures are propelled in light; and Jack Frost must have his studio somewhere. His snow-flakes and frosty vegetation on window-panes are not the work of haphazard force. Hyp-

notism furnishes us with a demonstration of the reality of thought-pictures. A mesmerist impresses a mental image upon a blank card. Physical eye-sight will never detect it, but the mesmerized subject can, and will pick it out from among a pack of blank cards. The cards may be photographed—nevertheless the subject can see the image upon the photograph of the card bearing the thought-image.

Prof. Babbage declared that every thought is photographed in the ether; and he looks forward to the time when they may be made visible. A step more and our scientists must acknowledge that these thought-pictures are energies which exert an influence on the minds of men. Then Theosophy will have another important point conceded.

It will surely come after research into hypnotism is carried further. "Thoughts are things," say many varieties of would-be mystics. It is not a happy expression, since "thing" is the most indefinite word in the dictionary. That healthy persons have died merely because they supposed they were dying, is an established fact. The effect of the mother's imagination upon the child is well-known.

"Christ's bleeding wounds" appearing upon devotees at Lourdes have been proven to many, whole sentences are said to have been produced on the skin. Thought-transference shows that not only the character of a propelled thought can be known to the receptive mind, but even the exact words.

Hypnotism furnishes us with demonstrations of thought dynamics. If a piece of paper is glued to the mesmerized subject's body and he is told that it is a poultice, the blister will actually occur, while if a real poultice is applied and the subject told that it is a piece of paper, no change will occur on the skin. Thoughts can be propelled across the continent and which will overpower the subject's consciousness. Hypnotism also proves that thought-images can impel to bravery, cowardice, crime, immorality, etc.

Consider the thoughts of men since the dawn of history: how must the ether surrounding earth be charged with thought-energies of malice, avarice, anger, lust, and hatred. This vast hypnotizing veil affects man both directly and indirectly: directly in influencing him to do evil, indirectly in sowing the seeds of epidemics. It is the Kabalist's Satan, because it "deceived the whole world," no person, (except he be a "twice-born" who has conquered the world, the flesh and this etheric devil) being free from its demoralizing influence. As said by Mme. H. P. Blavatsky in her *Glossary*:

"Eliphas Lévi calls the astral light the great serpent, the dragon, from which radiates on humanity every evil influence. This is so, but why not add that the astral light gives out nothing but what it has received; that it is the great terrestrial crucible in which the vile emanations of the earth (Moral and Physical) upon which the astral light is fed, are all converted into this subtlest essence, and radiated back intensified, thus becoming epidemics—Moral, Psychic and Physical."

Such is the description by one who could see the process on a plane invisible to the "rank-and-file."

It is now necessary to trace the connection to the bacilli or microbes of the bacteriologists.

Theosophy teaches the existence of a universal life principle from which the smallest to the greatest life proceeds. Many life-germs in their passage to objectivity through the astral light, are imbued with man's evil thought-pictures. They have stamped upon them man's mark of Cain, and they become terrors for all who fear death.

That men's thoughts have given the bacilli which propagate disease their evil character, is borne out to some extent by a few eminent physicians, who contend that vegetable germs are harmless until in the organisms of man or beast they become animalized, after which, under favorable conditions, they become the cause of epidemics. The vegetable germs in yeast, for example, are perfectly harmless, and an ounce even of good cheese contains millions of microscopic lives of hundreds of varieties. If any of these germs can take root in living flesh they can pass into the animal stage and are noxious.

But there are mental and psychical epidemics as well. The middle ages furnishes us many examples of such. The fad in monasteries of biting one another would spread to similar institutions hundreds of miles distant. Whole towns would take to flagellation. The St. Vitus dance is "catching." It is beginning to be suspected that crime is epidemic:—that murders, for example, occur in groups. At any rate, we have murderers' confessions as to being urged by some extraneous influence to do the act. The convulsionnaires of the Cervenues, in the latter part of 1700, show us what a psychical epidemic can do. ("Isis Unveiled," p. 370 et seq). Dr. Charles Elam, in his "Physician's Problems" has the following summary:

"We know that there are periods when certain diseases, propensities, fortunes and misfortunes of humanity are more rife than at others. There are times of epidemic in moral and physical affairs. In one epoch, 'the spirit of religious controversy will arouse the most ferocious passions of which nature is susceptible, provoking persecution, bloodshed and wars; at another, an epidemic of resistance to constituted authority, will spread over half the world (as in the year 1848), rapid and simultaneous as the most virulent bodily disorder.'"

Again, the *collective character* of mental phenomena is illustrated by an anomalous physiological condition invading and dominating over thousands upon thousands, depriving them of everything but automatic action, and giving rise to the popular opinion of demoniacal possession, an opinion in some sense justified by the satanic passions, emotions and acts which accompany the condition..... "The seeds of vice and crime appear to be sown under the surface of society, and to spring up and bring forth fruit with appalling rapidity—and paralyzing succession We know that certain pathological conditions have a tendency to become epidemic, *influenced by causes not yet investigated* We see how strong is the tendency of opinion once

promulgated to run into an epidemic form—no opinion, no delusion, is too absurd to assume this collective character. We observe, too, how remarkably the same ideas reproduce themselves and reappear in successive ages; no crime is too horrible to become popular, homicide, infanticide, suicide, poisoning, or any other diabolical human conception . . . In epidemics, the *cause* of the rapid spread at that particular period *remains a mystery.*" ("Isis Unveiled.")

And so it will always remain until the astral light of Theosophy is taken into consideration.

But why do all these epidemics go westward? Emigrants? But do not people travel eastward also?

"Westward ho!", says cholera. But so does "Annie Rooney." "Westward the star of empire wends its way." And so do "McGinty," *la grippe*, and the fashions.

Materialistic scientists are unable to tell us why, but Theosophy explains that the sun is a vast magnet, a storehouse of electrical and vital forces, and that as it (practically) spreads westward, it exerts a pulling force on earth's astral sphere. This attraction causes humanity to migrate westward, and, according to Theosophy, a new type of man is evolved at every circuit. At the dawn of history, the Aryan type was limited to India and Egypt; to-day, pioneers of that life-wave have reached the Pacific Coast, and when the great body will have arrived, the United States will sustain a population exceeding the present Europe.

Within a few years, we are taught, a cycle of 5,000 years will end when a great deal of this stored-up psychic force in the ether will be precipitated, causing wars, epidemics and calamities of various kinds. So many demonstrations of psychical powers in man will revolutionize present materialistic opinions, while upheaved resting ages of unknown civilizations will humiliate Darwinists.

Why is it so probable that peace will continue? Nations continue arming, for the spirit of war is in the hearts of men, as of old. Labor's cry grows louder, demanding settlement of questions that strike at the very root of our civilizations. There is need only of some of that psychic fire, the effects of which are so well described by Dr. Elam, to ignite the pile; and as a pistol-shot in the Alps may start on avalanche, so may an accumulation of filth serve as a means for manifestation—as an epidemic of disease—of astral filth.

The lessons Theosophy teaches are important ones. Man is his brother's keeper; and the only permanent protection against plagues and calamities lies in the purification of the thought-plane. It is a simple problem of cause and effect. If every man purifies his own thought-sphere, the astral light will eventually be cleansed. As time rolls on will be ushered in the Golden Age, dreamed of by sages. Earth will have become a paradise, and man will have evolved into a demi-god as compared to his present unfinished state.

P. M. JOHNS.

WISDOM OF THE UPANISHADS.

MAN HERE AND HEREAFTER.

(Continued from page 81.)

THE *purusha*—the man—then is "measurable by the thumb." This is but metaphorical language. The human heart is the centre of life, and it has more or less the measure of a thumb. As the blood running from this centre carries to the entire system the life which keeps every organ properly working, it is but fair to lay down that the powers of *manas*, &c., have their ultimate origin in the heart. And according to the Vedántins, it is not only the blood that runs from the centre of the heart. That is but of secondary importance. The real heart is that from which run alternately the solar and lunar currents of life, which make up the sum-total of human physiological existence. Therefore does the learned commentator of the Upanishads treat of the internal organ as located in the heart—the centre of life. The size of the internal organ is determined by the size of the place of its manifestation; and in connection therewith, the *purusha*, the subjective knower of the phenomena of the internal organ and the internal organ itself, is spoken of as having a size, though in point of fact, the *purusha* has nothing of finitude about it. It is only as connected with the internal organ that the infinite appears as finite. The finite changes, not so the infinite *purusha*. The *purusha* is compared to a smokeless light, because it is, as it were, light itself, and ever present as such. Smoke is produced only when light is made to appear in any substance in which it is not already present. It is then ever existent as such. It does not change in itself. So says the Upanishad:—

"The *purusha* of the measure of a thumb is, as it were, a smokeless light; 'this lord of the past and the future is the same to-day as it will be to-morrow. 'This is that.' iv. Valli, 13.

The commentary on the above runs thus:—

"Moreover, the *purusha* of the measure of a thumb is, as it were, a 'smokeless light. It is called smokeless on account of its being but light in 'itself. And he, the lord of the past and the future, who is thus traced in 'the heart by the Yogis, is eternal, independent (of the phenomena of the 'lower self), present in living beings to-day, i. e., now; and to be present 'to-morrow too. None other equal to him is there that will be born."

"By the text which he thus utters, is repudiated the theory, which was 'introduced by the words, 'some say it does not exist,' even though it be 'arrived at syllogistically; and also the theory of momentary destruction."

The third question which Nâchiketa put to Death, referred to the mortality or immortality of man. Some say that man lives after death, others say that he does not. What is the truth of the matter? If the conclusion were derived from the ordinary experiences of the physical world, it would be perfectly logical to hold that man ceased to exist with the death of the physical body. The teachings of the Kathopani-shad however count the death of the physical body for naught. It propounds a view of the human constitution, which would necessitate more

deaths than one, if man were to be annihilated by death. But death himself advances no such claim. His teachings are that the real man never dies. It is the same to-day as it will be to-morrow. If this is the case it is evident that the real man lives on through death. The opposite theory stands repudiated.

This theory of annihilation with death is refined into another phase. Everything changes with every moment of time. That which existed the last moment has ceased to exist now. The same theory extended to the subjective principle in man would make it the constant subject of change, which is death. The text denies this theory as well. The same to-day as it will be to-morrow. The real man is in fact eternal. The phenomena change, the underlying substance remains the same, inasmuch as it underlies the act of appearance itself. The Upanishad describes him as the lord of the past and the present. The real man revels in infinity. Time is from him, not he of time. All those changes, of which time is the mental complement, are for him, not of him. He is their lord, not their subject. But then why does he identify himself with the fleeting shadows of the phenomenal world? The Upanishad says:—

“As rain which falls from an inaccessible height runs down lowly hills in separate streams; so whoever sees the laws of the world as distinct, runs in consequence down the same distinct manifestations.” iv, 14.

And the commentary on this runs as follows:—

“Again does he give an illustration to show the (rationale) of separate existence.

“As rain falling on inaccessible places—heights where none can reach, —runs down hills in the lowly places, i.e., disappears into distinct channels; so, whoever sees the laws (of phenomenal life) as distinct from the *âtma*, i.e., sees it as separate for everybody—runs down the same distinct channels of corporeal separation—i.e., again and again gets but a distinct body.”

On the contrary,

“As pure water, falling into pure water, takes the same appearance, so also, O Goutama, the *âtma* of the knowing thinker.” iv Valli, 15.

The commentary on the above:—

“How is it possible that the thinker who is given to meditation; who sees, i. e., knows clearly—that the *âtma* is not dual, and is but one as pure self-consciousness, whose knowledge of separation caused as it is by connection (with phenomena), is destroyed; (how is it possible that such a thinker) should be but the *âtma* as it is in itself? This is illustrated. As water, pure, i. e., not turbid, falls into pure water, and becomes one with it in nature, and does not look distinct; so also the *âtma*, i. e., in a similar manner, O Goutama, becomes one (with the universal *âtma*), the *tma* of the thinker who is conscious of the oneness of self. Thus the meaning is that the consciousness of distinction established by bad logic, and the false knowledge of him who denies the existence itself, should be given up; and those whose vanity is gone, should only respect the teaching of the oneness of the *âtma* as taught by the Vedas, which are greater well-wishers even than a thousand fathers and mothers.”

These two *S'rutis* teach nothing new. They are meant simply as illustrations of the principle laid down before. The pure self-consciousness—*vijnâna*—is the pure principle of egoity—the *mahat* of the Upanishad under examination. It shows itself forth as the “I am” of the human constitution. The phenomena of the “I see,” “I hear,” &c., and “I think” and “I am seen,” that is, the phenomena of sensation, mentality and objectivity, are all putting forth of the single phenomenon “I am.” From another point of view we might say, that the subjective, objective and instrumental phenomena of the human mind have all their ultimate origin in the pure principle of self-consciousness. The human consciousness centred in the mind, and not capable of soaring higher, cognizes these threefold manifestations as distinct from each other in nature. Whereas, the fact is that they are all one at bottom. The three are but appearances of the one. As waves rise out of the ocean, so do these three classes of phenomena rise out of *vijnâna*. Rain water is but one in the clouds; it falls on a mountain and flows into distinct streams. It falls into an ocean; it remains one with the one. It is only conditions that cause different appearances.

If therefore the “I am”—the principle of pure egoity,—runs along the lines of its different appearances, that is, mentality, sensation and objectivity, it shines into each as distinct from the other. If however, on the other hand, it remains concentrated in itself, it is everywhere the same one principle which underlies and vivifies all. Looking upon manifestations from the height of *mahat*, unity is everywhere perceived even in multiplicity, because, then, every mental act has the ocean of unity for its object.

During evolution, the real man,—the principle of *mahat*,—runs along different lines of manifestation. When involution begins, it begins to turn upon itself. Having passed through the entire circle of phenomena it becomes concentrated in itself and does not come back again.

This finishes the fourth *Valli*—the first of the second chapter. The fifth expatiates upon the same subject from another point of view.

“The city of the unborn, unchanging consciousness has eleven outlets. Turning towards him there is no more sorrow; and the one free from sorrow is released. This is that.” v. Valli, 1.

The commentary runs thus:—

“This is begun for establishing the truth about Brahm from another point of view, inasmuch as Brahm is difficult to know.

“The city is the city-like habitation, the body so appears as it is furnished with more appurtenances than one, like a city, such as door-keepers and governors, &c. The city with all its appurtenances, appearing as one whole made of many parts, is seen as existing for an independent lord. Similarly is it proper that this body appearing as one whole, made by many things put together, should, by the analogy of a city, be taken as meant for an independent lord who would stand for a king in the city.

"And this city known as the body has eleven outlets. Its eleven outlets are—seven in the head; three, including the navel and the lower ones; and one in the skull. It is on account of them that it is a city of eleven outlets.

"Whose? Of the unborn—the *Atma*, which is devoid of the changes of birth, &c., and stands in the place of a king, with characteristics quite distinct from those of a city. (Also) of him of unchanging consciousness. He whose consciousness is unchanging is that, whose mental consciousness changes not, *i. e.*, is not broken, and shines like the sun in its eternal singleness of appearance. It is the consciousness of such a Brahm standing in the place of a king.

"Turning towards, *i. e.*, contemplating, the high lord, whose city is this (body)—for turning towards him means knowing him well, and then contemplating him, one becomes free of all desires, and believing him to be equally present in all living beings, has no more sorrow. Because knowing him there remains no fear, and hence no occasion for sorrow. Why? Because even here does he become free from the bonds of *karma* caused by *avidyā*. And when thus free he is released, that is, never again takes a body."

From this I shall take up the subject in my next article.

RAMA PRASAD.

(To be continued.)

TRUE WELSH GHOST-STORIES.

No. I.

AS far back as the writer's memory goes he has been the willing victim of ghost-stories,—not goody-goody fairy-tales, but blood-curdling anecdotes of the Welsh variety. As a relator of hobgoblin fiendishness, the old-school Welshman stands preëminent. No guest was thought to be hospitably entertained unless filled to over-flowing, just before bed-time, with a *résumé* of all those stories emanating from picturesque Wales within the memory of man, calculated to make one's knees knock together when retiring in the dark. Perhaps the man of extra y's, l's and d's would inform his guest in an unsophisticated way that very few persons had been found brave enough to stay the second night—because of strange, unaccountable noises and the like, in the identical bed-chamber allotted him. This in many cases would bring the situation home.

The fear of ridicule nowadays closes the mouths of nearly every one who could tell of forced interviews with the hilarious phantom in the dread hours of night: for it is not considered masculine for a man to believe in such "old woman's tales". Nevertheless, when little bright-eyed "chatterboxes" persist in making a step-ladder of "uncle" and clamor for the superhuman, he may be persuaded to confide his own cherished experiences to the vivacious phonographs—though only in a jocose way, that it may be considered but an impromptu yarn by older and more skeptical ears. If the "child is father to the man", then we

see what an adult, *properly grown*, would believe in, for a child's heart instinctively turns to fairies, gnomes, and elfin sprites; to genii, ghosts, and mighty giants; to enchantments, charms, and all such as pertains to mysticism. Instead, how many take this ground, held by Dr. Hoyt, an old pioneer of the upper Mississippi:—

"Ya-as, I've seen lots of them spooks they tell about—apparitions of men who fell in battle—saw them in the Mexican war, that appeared, so far as I could see, to be genuine—but I don't believe in it, just the same."

We have to thank present-day Materialism for the throttling of the ghost in America, but the cry "Superstition" cannot wholly drive from crumbling ruins and castles in older countries the remnants of folklore, which cling, like lingering perfume, to those ancient walls.

It has occurred to the writer to compile a number of such incidents, that have never appeared in print, selecting only these coming first-hand from friends in whom reliance is placed for truthfulness and sincerity. Names could be given in every instance but for the reason that some of the statements were made confidentially. While all the stories of this series have a basis in fact, some allowance should be made for exaggeration, though not so much so as was required in the case of "Col."—He had an interesting incident of the "late unpleasantness," in which he had figured prominently, and he would bring it forth whenever opportunity granted. It was a yarn of great power: a heart-breaking situation, a gallant rescue, a hair-breadth escape, etc., frequently bringing tears to the eyes of listeners (to those who heard it for the first time.) But a friend who had been a listener to it on several occasions took the trouble to look up the "Colonel's" army record, and when the story was next produced with great effect, he said:

"See here, now. You never were in the war at all."

"I wasn't, hey?"

"No, sir, I looked up the documents."

"Hem! well, I'll tell you the fact of the case, Jones, now that you have reminded me. I've told that same story so many times that, hang me, if I haven't come to actually believe it myself."

A SAMPLE WELSH GHOST-STORY.

"When a young man," said the Rev. H. Powell, "in company with a friend, Mr. John Phillips, I attended the Presbyterian Synod of South Wales, held at Langattwg, in Brecknockshire; and as arrangements had been made for the entertainment of strangers among the families of the place, we were welcomed by a resident who lived in a house standing partly in the cemetery. Having been warned by the minister presiding at the exercises to be on the alert for pickpockets and burglars, we searched the room assigned to us, lest one might be hiding there. There were no closets, so all that seemed necessary was to fasten the widow, bolt the door, and take the feminine precaution of look-

ing under the bed. After sleeping for some time I woke to find the bed-clothes gone.

'Johnnie,' said I, 'you have been restless: your sore thumb must have ached and caused you to kick off the cover.'

'No, I've been sound asleep,' was the reply.

So we got out and, after groping around, found them at the foot of the bed.

'John,' quoth I, 'you must have kicked mightily to have hoisted them over that high foot-board.'

We had no more than settled snugly between the sheets and gotten into a dose, than jerk, jerk, they went off again.

'Well, I declare, John: this is too much to make your sore thumb an excuse for kicking off the clothes. It's not a bit cute, and if you do it again you'll sleep on the floor.'

'I swear I haven't moved hand or foot,' he declared. 'Now if they move again, you hold on with both hands and I will do the same with one hand and my teeth.'

Agreed. After bringing the clothes again from the foot of the bed and spreading them over us, we retained a firm grip of them. Ere long we felt a tug: then we braced ourselves. Stronger, stronger came the pull, until if we had not let go we should have been dragged bodily over the foot-board after the quilts. Matches were then unknown, so no light could be thrown on the mystery, but we decided to search everywhere. After crawling around on all fours, bumping our heads against the bed-posts and experiencing a thrill of fright every time we ran amuck each other, we gave up the quest and began to catechize him or it. To no avail. Thus we spent the night—up and down, down and up, till to our great relief, daylight came, dispelling, though not solving, the mystery. Our host asked repeatedly if we had slept well, but we evaded inquiries, mentally resolved never to stay there again. Years afterwards, I emigrated to this country and, happening to meet a family in Pennsylvania who had lived in Langattwg, I told them about it. The lady, turning to her husband, said:

"'Why in the name of sense did they put the boys in that room, when it was known all through the country that nobody could sleep in it?'"

Mr. John Phillips, upon being told the story years afterwards at the fated Johnstown, Pa., testified as to its accuracy in every detail.

However there was no "spirit identity" disclosed in this case, such as we have in the following

STORY FROM CALIFORNIA.

Mr. Rees, residing in a town not far from San Francisco, was gored to death in the year 1888, by a bull, and the Rev. D. H.—was commissioned by the widow to arrange the financial affairs of the deceased. While riding towards the house at dusk the minister was thrown to

the ground by his horse taking sudden fright and shying at something in the road. After picking himself out of the dirt he saw a shadowy, unearthly object ahead, which proved to be the identical Rees who had been laid in the grave not long before with so much ceremony and care. Once after this the reverend gentleman had occasion for a chilly spine: he awoke in the night to discover that he had a "live corpse" for a bed-fellow.

"Is that you, Rees?" asked the Rev. H— in a tremulous voice, his flesh tingling with terror.

"Yes," responded the remains. The voice was genial enough, but the touch was decidedly frigid, suggestive of the tombstone and the grave.

"But why do you come here to torture me?" faltered the Divine, who now had more than a far-fetched apologetic theology for belief in the Woman of Endor Chapter.

"I would not harm you on any account," was the response, "but I have directions about the disposal of the property. I owe \$400 to a man who has nothing to show that I do. Nevertheless I want it paid, and also want Mrs. Rees to give a permanent home to her two sisters. She does not wish to do either, but if you will endeavour to persuade her I shall never trouble you again."

As soon as the Rev. H— promised, he discovered he was the only occupant of the room. Next day, Mrs. R. was loath to comply with the measures, but several days after that he found her in a far more compliant mood; and on being pressed, she owned that her late husband had paid her a visit also. Thus we see that a defunct husband can sometimes accomplish with a stubborn "better-half" what a live one cannot.

Numerous are the Welsh narratives in which an animal sees the ghost first. A pet horse, in one instance, recognized the shade of his master and ran up, neighing, to be patted. Only one man out of a group of several saw the phantom also: approached nearer, and conversed with him. The animal's clairvoyance had not been extinguished by a materialistic mind, as is the case with nearly every man.

One noticeable feature is that nearly all the robust spooks (as also medium's controls) were victims of murder, or accident, or suicide, although the last are scarce among Welshmen, who cling tenaciously to life—and generally to everything else they get possession of.

Theosophy teaches that man is composed of seven principles, ranging from the physical to the divine, and that after death the lower separate from the higher and are disintegrated. But when a person is violently severed from his body, as in the foregoing and following cases, his principles remain intact. He can come into touch with the physical plane when conditions are favorable, and manifest to those with whom he has magnetic ties.

A SIMILAR CASE.

Twenty years ago, a well-to-do architect of Mankato, Minn., was burned to death in his barn. It was thought that one of the horses must

have kicked him senseless, and also trampled his lantern under foot. Eighteen months from that time my father returned on a trip to that city to dedicate a church, and was made the guest of David E—, the cousin of the burned man. After all others had retired for the night, the host for the first time confided his secret.

"What shall I do?" he asked, "Cousin Lewis is troubling me. No, no, I don't mean his affairs,—his property and accounts were adjusted by Lawyer B—. It is Lewis himself that molests me! He has appeared to me three times: the first when I was tending the horses. I looked back and there he was as natural as life, with the same genial smile on his face. No, it was no 'figment of the brain', for I am always in robust health, and was not thinking of him at the time. I looked away and back again, rubbed my eyes, but there he stood like a post. I tried my best to speak, but my voice stuck in my throat. Then I turned my back and rushed past, terror lending wings. The second time was at dusk, when milking, I chanced to look up, and there stood Lewis at the head of the cow, looking soberly, as though vexed. It did not take me long to reach the house. The last time was when I entered a bed-room, and at the head of the bed he stood, for the first time looking charred as his body did when found. He had an angry, almost threatening, expression this time. Horror again stopped my voice. We moved away from that house, but he follows me here. I have since heard him pitching hay in the barn when it was locked, and am certain who it was by the peculiar swing of the pitchfork."

The host was admonished that if his cousin appeared again he must muster up courage to speak. Returning confidence would prove it either a creature of the imagination, or a reality. 'If a reality, no doubt the defunct relative would have an important message to deliver. How would the narrator feel if, upon returning from a foreign clime, all his folks would flee because he was presumed to be dead? David must put himself in the spook's shoes in order to understand the latter's anger. The shade may not have realized the changed condition of affairs. Besides,—how could the host have so far forgotten Welsh tradition?—no *yspryd* (spirit) can speak first: the mortal must open the conversation. This is a protection, so that *cythrauliaid* (obsessing demons) can get no hold on men against their will. An embodied person's *yspryd* is able to cope with one having no physical body, hence the latter must wait till the magnetic cue is given before announcing its mission.

Whether or not David had another opportunity of speaking to the departed cousin is not known, but his brother acknowledged to having seen the apparition on other occasions, though he never summoned sufficient courage to speak to it. The sequel to the story was told in 1884, at Cambria, Wis., by John Griffiths, a dry old soul.

"There is no wonder at all that Lewis appeared to David and John. You know how he adored his wife and child, how he doted on that boy, and intended to give him a first-class education. For this pur-

pose he strove tooth and nail and accumulated \$ 30,000. After his death David and John, as executors, turned over the settlement of his affairs to Lawyer B—, who so manipulated matters that the widow was left with only a little cottage, in which she took in washing to support herself and child. No sooner had this thief of a lawyer 'settled' the estate than he erected a palatial residence for himself, out of whose funds some people had their own suspicions. Was it not enough to make one rest uneasy in the grave?"

In answer to a question raised by the above narrative, a chela, who possesses reliable seership, replied, "No spook under the canopy can speak first." So if a spectre waylays us on a lonely road at night and without leave commences imprecations, we may condemn it as an impostor masquarading in winding sheet and falsetto tones, and are privileged to throw sticks at the mumbo-jumbo and cast slurs at his defective make-up.

NEW YORK CITY.

JOHN M. PRYSE, F.T.S.

(To be continued.)

WHEN AND HOW OFTEN ARE WE REBORN?

BY

HELLENBACH.*

"The periodicity of Rebirth is a question which must be discussed because mistaken views on the subject are very rife; a fact which is the more to be regretted as this question is closely connected with our ethical development."

"The return of man to the miseries of the world can only be explained as occurring in the interests of his development; and in that case we ought logically to conclude that Rebirth will only take place when and so often as the need arises, which may be more or less frequent according to individual idiosyncrasies. But men will not content themselves with such simple solutions, they hunt for a law, and since no positive basis is to be found, they resort to reasoning on analogy."

Hellenbach then summarily puts aside the Hindu theory, that of Buddhism, that of Charles Fourier, and then proceeds to enter on a loose and general discussion, in which he takes up such cases as Marie Antoinette, Marat, Robespierre, &c., but seems to come to no definite conclusion at all. The question at the head of his article remains at the end with no suggestion of any answer other than this: Man is reborn when his ethical development requires it. This answer leaves us about as wise as we were before, and as Hellenbach advances no definite arguments, and adds nothing to what has been repeated again and again in theosophical literature, it seems unnecessary to give more of this article in detail.

THE STORY OF SIKHIDWAJA.*

(Translated by two Members of the Kumbakonam T. S.)

“OH mayest thou merge thyself in thy all-peaceful *A'tma*, like the King Sikhidwaja who annihilated that Great Bird called mind.” So spoke Vasishta to Rāma,† whereupon the latter questioned him thus:—“Tell me, O Guru, who was this King Sikhidwaja, who was absorbed in the ecstatic enjoyment of all-embracing bliss? Be pleased to bestow on me thy blessing, so that *gnāna*, which is the basis of everything, may arise in me and wax to its fullest strength.” Thereupon the Muni thus replied:—“This king who bore the name Sikhidwaja was born in the Dvāpara Yuga after the seven Manus,‡ who presided over the country like the sun, had passed away. His justice knew no bounds, and he was more-over devoid of the bad qualities arising from desire. For he was replete with the goodness of charity and other virtues, and preserved that silence which avoids the discord born of words. He had cultivated mental and also bodily restraint and other powers of will, and especially delighted in doing good to others. The partner of his marriage was Chudālai § born through *tapas* in the womb of the Queen of the Sourāshtra country, who resembled the peacock in beauty, and could not in the space of the whole world find one to compare with her in her imperishable virtue. And these two lived together in perfect happiness with their two minds interblended, performing all actions without the least difference of opinion, having mastered all the departments of knowledge. Delightfully indeed they passed their youth, as if but one breath of life pervaded in common their bodies. As the years glided sweetly by, their ephemeral youth passed away like water from a broken pot, and middle age fell upon them, like flakes of snow on lotuses in the waters of a rivulet. Like

* Editor's Note:—The Editor has thought it advisable to correct in many places the English and to modify a few passages, but in no case has anything been added to the text, the meaning and spirit of which has been followed throughout as strictly as possible.

Translators' Note:—The following is the translation of a story from the *Laghu Yoga-Vāsishtha*. It occurs in *Nirvāna Prakarana* of the same. The whole book has been translated by the present translators and will shortly be ready for publication. Meanwhile, to give an insight into the book, this story alone is now published in advance. The beauty of the whole work lies in the exemplification of the abstract theories on the origin, preservation and destruction of the universe, viz., the mind, since all the world-systems are to the Vedāntins nothing but different states of consciousness. This story while apparently intended to illustrate the theory, that without a Guru no real progress on the *gnāna path* can be made, has yet an underlying meaning, as will be evident from the derivative meaning of the words Sikhidwaja and Chudālai. Another fact to be noticed in this story is that the metaphysical and occult theories, as well as the manner in which a disciple should behave towards his real Guru taught by H. P. B., find corroborations in this work.

† The whole of this book relates to what passed between Rāma and Vasishta who initiates the former into *ātmagnāna*.

‡ The seventh Manu is Vaivasvata who is our present Manu.

§ The present story, though intended to illustrate the idea of true renunciation, has itself an esoteric meaning underlying it. For instance, Chudālai is composed of two roots meaning, resting on the head. Hence that which rests on the head, or the Pineal Gland, is *Buddhi*—the *A'tmic Ray*. It is Chudālai who through the wife of Sikhidwaja yet initiates him into *gnāna*. Sikhidwaja means one having the peacock flag. Close students will understand from the color of the peacock that he typifies the higher *manas*.

water trickling from the palm of the hand, so their lives sped away, day by day. Then the desires, which had in youth expanded themselves more and more like a gourd plant that grows in the rainy season, ever winding itself round and round, began to lessen like waters in the time of autumn. All the pleasures that once arose in the body now darted from out it, like arrows from a bow. Just as a plantain tree grows useless after it has put forth its fruit-bunches, so they became indifferent to worldly actions after tasting of their fruit. In unison of heart they thus both began to contemplate:—Of a surety that is the most beneficial state from which the mind, when it once reaches it, never returns to another. But such a discriminative state is impossible in the case of those plunged in mundane existence. Therefore the most exalted *adhyātmic-gnānic* knowledge alone is the sure panacea for the cure of the disease of re-birth.

Coming thus to the conclusion that re-birth cannot be avoided except through *ātma-gnāna* alone, both betook themselves to such a life, with their minds absorbed in it and with true meditation. And for the attainment of their wish they ever associated with the wise and learned. Thus did they live long together, exulting over their store of accumulated knowledge and leading a practical life of spirituality in accordance with that knowledge. Then the Lady Chudālai, of true discrimination, having heard and clearly understood the real signification of the *S'āstras*, taught by the wise for the attainment of the different stages leading to the realms of the higher spirituality, thus began to commune with herself:—

While there exists *a'tma* (as I clearly perceive it) to what do we apply the term “I”? Whence is this delusion in the mind? To whom is it due? How and whence did it arise? How can we apply the term “I” to the body visible to us? As the body is inert and ignorant, therefore the term “I” cannot be applied to it. Again, can the term “I” be applied to the ten organs which vitalise the body? No, since like a tile which is moved by a rod, the ten inert and separate sense-organs (*indriyas*) are moved by the flitting mind. Can the term “I” be applied to the *manas* which agitates, through its power of *sankalpa*, the organs? No, since even the *manas* is inert, being goaded on to action by the certainty of *buddhi*, like a stone flung from a sling. Nor is “I” *buddhi*,* as it is in turn galvanised by *ahankāra*. Nor is it the baneful *ahankāra* which galvanises *buddhi*, as it (*ahankāra*) is the inert seat of *jīva* (the higher ego). Once more, can “I” be applied to *jīva* which moves *ahankāra*? Being of the nature of actions and *prāna*, it rests in the heart and there enjoys the bliss of *pratyagātma*. Hence *jīva* is not “I”; thus I have now learnt through this enquiry that what renders *jīva* blissful is *ātma*, the true *gnāna*. Such a *gnāna* will never be bedimmed by objects, but will ever become clearer and clearer. My own

* In the Hindu Vedāntic works, *buddhi*, *manas*, *ahankāra* and *chitta* are the four aspects of the lower mind. *Buddhi* should not be taken as the *ātmic* vehicle, as in Theosophical literature. It is said to be a fact that when one becomes as a *brahma-gnānt*, a *tejas*, or glory, arises in him.

jīva exists only through *ātmic* reality, the eternal *gnāna*. Verily the state of *jīva*, which gets ensnared by objects through *gnāna*, may well be likened to that of water standing in a deep pool, or an odour wafted by the breeze. This *gnāna-power*, ensnared by the perception of objects which are illusory and composed of *tanās*, becomes besmired and consequently inactive: hence is the present *jīva* oblivious of its true state, like heat in a copious supply of water. Thus does the true *chit-sakti* become the *jīva*, and, having become unreal and *tamasic* through longing after objects, cognises again its true state through *ātma-gnāna* (by re-becoming that *gnāna*).

This *ātma-gnāna* is known only through one's self and not through another. I have now cognised *ātma-gnāna*, which can be done only after endless aeons of time. Through the non-cognition of the all-pervading nature of the Supreme Consciousness, there arose in us the six organs, but if that true *chit* is thoroughly cognised, then *manas* and the others are found to be quite illusory. The immeasurable plenum of *gnāna* alone truly is. This *gnāna* is also called *mahā*. This self-light that is stainless, without suffering, inequality or egoism, goes also by the appellations of Parabrahm or Param, and shines everywhere at the same time, being eternal, all-pure and all-potent.

And thus it happened that through her divine intro-vision, the queen enjoyed daily the consciousness of the reality of *ātma*, and remained steadfast in that condition. Also through the strict performance of her daily actions, without the least longing after their fruits, all her desires and the tendency of her mind towards objects entirely ceased; nor was she troubled by the "pairs of opposites", or desires, or hatred. Thus in the performance of actions without attachment to results, her mind ripened and became the receptacle of bliss. Then through the unceasing practices which developed in her, *ātmic* reality—that true realisation of certainty which is beyond all compare and cannot be estimated by any except one's self—became to her direct cognition, and she shone with a radiant spiritual light and became like a soft tendril bearing flowers.

Now it came to pass that King Sikhidwaja, noticing with pleasure the glorious effulgence that shone more and more round the form of his wife, and marvelling to see a glory which surpassed any he had seen before, gave utterance to the following words:—

'How is it, O beloved one, that you now appear radiant with so much beauty, as if your youth had returned to you, as if you had become as it were the prototype of beauty, had quaffed divine nectar and attained the Brahmic seat of eternal, heavenly bliss? How happens it that your mind is now blessed with tranquillity, devoid of the desire of enjoyment and free from instability? By what chance do you possess this perfect beauty of both mind and body? By your purity, I desire you to answer me.'

To this Chūdālai vouchsafed the following reply:—'Having abandoned this universe, which is both *rūpa* and *arūpa*, I attained that

mighty and incomparable One which survives the destruction of all things in the universe; hence the radiant *tejas* in my body. I have cognised that which is the substratum of all, being the atom of atoms and the homogeneous whole without creation or destruction; thus arises this radiant *tejas* in my form. Though I do not enjoy objects of the senses, yet do I derive happiness therefrom without the pains attendant upon such enjoyment, and therefore love and hatred have taken farewell of me. I exult through the divine vision (taught of in books) in the company of *Gnāna*, the mistress of the household, who has love and hatred as hand-maidens performing mental duties. Hence do I glory in the possession of contentment and bodily beauty. In no way affected by the objects which I perceive by my eyes and through my mind, I realise within myself that consciousness (*chaitanya*) which has not the characteristics of the universe but is uncreate. Thus arises my beauty.'

At these words of Chūdālai, her husband the king, without even trying to probe deeper into her heart, simply smiled at her with a look of derision and addressed her thus:—'O damsel with waist like the slender vanji plant, thou has uttered words which but ill suit thee. Thou speakest as one who has lost his mental balance. How is it possible for thee, who revelest in the luxuries of regal wealth, to cognise *ātma*? Even the greatest of men, who, after giving up this paltry universe, have attained that exalted all-pervading principle, have done so only after disconnecting themselves from this visible universe. How is it, O Lady, that thou can'st aspire after that which can be directly cognised by the wise only? Thou can'st be said to enjoy it only as those unfortunate persons do, who not being able to attain that state, profess to have sensed it intuitionally within, and then turn away in sheer disgust. Therefore tell me what thou meanest? How can persons like thee of the above class be able to realise the fact that they see *ātma* within. Thou art but a fragile creature, without intelligence, unstable, liable to be tossed to and fro by emotion.' So saying, he laughed aloud and departed. At this Chūdālai only pitied the ignorance of the king, and became calm with the consciousness of the *ātmagnāna* within, thinking that the king had not appreciated her words through his conception of the duality of the visible universe and his lack of enjoyment of true bliss.

Yet this couple continued to live together harmoniously and happily as before. Preserving as she did a perfect equilibrium of mind, the wife had complete mastery over her desires. But there arose in her, through her own volition, a desire to be a "walker of the skies" (in order to convince her husband of her real powers and so lead him into the spiritual path.) For this purpose she freed herself from all pains arising from enjoyment and seated herself in a solitary spot, in a pleasant posture, in order to obtain enlightenment."

At this point Rāma asked Vasishtha to enlighten him as to the path by which such psychic powers as walking in the *ākāśa*, &c., might be

developed after a long and difficult course of practice. Vasishta replied thus :—" Albeit thou hast in the midst of the story of Sikidwaja asked for some light to be thrown on the practice of Yoga, yet I shall vouchsafe a reply to thee. O king, harken to the means which having enabled one to control *prāna*, will yield him a rich return. The first and fundamental essential is that one should divest himself of all affinities for objects, except those which adhere to the mind in the furtherance of those actions upon which it is bent. Next follow proper diet, easy posture, purity of mind and body, knowledge of the true meaning of the many treatises on Yoga and unintermittent practice accordingly, with the help of a wise Guru. He should completely divest himself of all anger and greed as well of attachment to enjoyments and should be free from all love or hatred for others. If he should only study practically the nature of the *prānas* and then master them, their nature will, like subjects, enable him to rule the universe, to attain *moksha* and develope *siddhis*. There is among the one hundred *nādis* one incomparable, called *antraveshtini*. It is spherical, like a vortex, or the circular sounding-board of the vina. This will be found to pervade all places and all bodies from those of Brahma down to *Jīva* (the Ego). Like the coiling body of a serpent when it sleeps, shivering with cold, this ever-immoveable *nadi* coils itself up and rests firmly through *prāna-vāyu*. Like a plantain flower it is exceedingly delicate within. In this *nādi*, it is said, there is a pure and resplendent *s'akti* (power) called *kundalini*, which will enable men to have mastery over the tremendous powers of nature. This *s'akti* will ever be hissing like an angry female serpent. It will ever rear its head aloft. It is the cause of the fluctuation which takes place in the mind. All the other *nādis* are connected with this *kundalini s'akti*. This *s'akti* becomes purified only by the immaculate rays of *gnāna*. It is transformed into the *gnāna* rays through meditation; becomes *gnāna* through *gnāna*; a *jīva* through the tendencies of a *jīva*; *manas* through *manasa* (contemplation); the manifold *sankalpa* through *sankalpa*; *buddhi* through certain knowledge and *ahankāra* through egoism. Thus this *s'akti* rejoices in the name of *puriastaka*. *Kundalini s'akti* passing as *jīva* associates itself with the body which derives great benefit therefrom. Being of the nature of *prāna* and *apana*, it goes up and down. As it is without fixity it becomes of the nature of all and may take an upward course or a downward one. And it is this *s'akti* which, though it becomes without any hindrance, the *jīva*, produces death in the body through the *prāna-vāyus*. Should the upward and downward actions of this *kundalini s'akti* be arrested through the control of *prāna* and this *prāna* be made to rest in the heart, then diseases will not affect permanently those having such control".

At these words of Vasishta, Rāma interposed and said :—" Please enlighten me as to the origin and destruction of original disease as well as those arising therefrom". In answer to this Vasishta thus continued :—" The pains that afflict the body are called the secondary

diseases, whilst the *vāsanās* that affect the mind are termed original (or primary) diseases. We have reached our present state through the absence of the transcendental *gnāna*, the want of mastery over our organs and the perpetual growth of desires and egoism in the mind. And our delusion becomes intensified in us by forgetfulness of the degradation of our state through such causes. With the concretion of such delusion, the primeval disease also setting in congeals in us like the plenteous snows of winter. Then when the intense desires of a person begin to manifest themselves externally and the *agnāna* in him preponderates, he performs fearful karmas and these in their turn breed bodily diseases. Again, the body is further subject to diseases through such actions as the eating of unwholesome food, living in unhealthy countries, and doing things at unseasonable hours, injuries inflicted, association with the wicked, longing after improper things, evil desires, bad thoughts, the distention and contraction of the orifices of the *nādis* in the joints, &c., and the interrupted flow of the beneficial *prānas* throughout the body—these cause the body to shrink away. Then these blossom in the form of diseases in the body, waxing and waning like the floods in a river during the long seasons of autumn and winter. The body attracts to itself effects according to the nature of its countless affinities good or bad, whether in previous births or in the present one. Thus do we see that diseases primary and secondary arise through the five-fold *bhūtas* (elements).

Now listen, O Rāma, as to the manner in which the two forms of disease, primary and secondary, perish in two ways. The wise say that primary disease has two sub-divisions into *sāmānya* (ordinary) and *sāra* (essential). The former includes the diseases incidental to the body, while the latter the re-birth men are subject to. If the diseases which afflict this body return to their primal source, then they are destroyed. Their primary causes being (bad) thoughts, if these thoughts are destroyed, all bodily diseases will vanish. But the disease of re-birth, coming under the head of *sāra*, will never perish except through *ātma-gnāna*. Is it possible to suppose that the misconception of a serpent in a rope will be removed except through the discovery of the real rope? But those grievous diseases of the body, which do not arise through the original cause, can be extirpated by mantras, medicine and the many means proposed by men well-versed in medical lore—I need not expatiate upon this subject any further here."

Here Rama asked Vasishta how diseases originally arise and how they are destroyed. Vasishta thus proceeded :—" When the fixed *manas* is agitated, then this body also follows in its wake. And when the body is agitated, then there is no proper perception of things that are in one's way and *prāna* flies from its even path into a bad road: then it will stagger from its proper road like an animal hit by, and reeling under the wound of, an arrow. Through such an agitation *prāna* instead of pervading the whole body, steadily and equally, will vibrate everywhere at an unequal rate. Thereby the *nādis* will not maintain a steady position (like elec-

tric wires, but will quiver). Then to the body which is the receptacle of food digested partially or completely, the nadis are simply death, through the fluctuation of the *prānas*. The food which settles itself down in this body amidst such a commotion is transformed into incurable diseases. Thus through the primary cause (of the mind) is the disease of the body generated. If this primary cause be annihilated at its root then all diseases will be destroyed. Now hear the path by which diseases may be removed by the uttering of mantras. Like base gold, which when placed in the crucible is transmuted through alchemical processes into pure gold, the mind is unfailingly rendered pure through true, virtuous and pure actions and through dependence upon the wise. In the mind purified thus there will thrill unalloyed bliss. Is not the whole world exhilarated with joy when the soft and delicious moon begins to shed its silvery light on it? If the mind becomes purified with true *satwaguna*, then *prāna-vāyu* will begin to circulate freely throughout the body, the food taken in will be digested properly and hence no diseases will arise. I have thus described to you the path through which can be destroyed the two kinds of diseases."

(To be continued.)

Reviews.

OUR MAGAZINES AND PUBLICATIONS.

Lucifer.—Mr. W. R. Old's article on Tao in the issue of *Lucifer* for November is extremely interesting and a useful *résumé* for students who have not time to read authorities, first hand. "Libra F. T. S.", in a thoughtful article, discusses the question of the co-operation of Man and Woman in human life. Though we may not all agree with the premises furnished by the writer, which include the assumed "Fall of Man," yet the practical suggestions offered, to remedy the varied evils of our present social systems, are worthy of the earnest consideration of those Theosophists whose sympathies are allied with social questions. "A Dance with the Dead" is an interesting and brightly written ghost story by Dr. Hartmann. Rai B. K. Laheri of Ludhiana furnishes a translation of the *Uttara Gītā*, much of which is however, as incomprehensible as the *Mahāvākyadārpanam* of the *Theosophist*.

The Path.—The November issue contains an important document relative to dogmatism in the T. S., in which several of the leading members of the American Section give as their opinion that while the danger of dogmatism is a menacing one, there is at present none within the Society. "Rings, Rounds and Obscuration" is a thoughtful and suggestive study. Mr. Fullerton deals with Scientific Salvation and Salvation by Faith, in two short papers. "From Ostende to London," by Dr. Keightley, is an interesting episode in the life of H. P. B.

Theosophical Siftings.—No. 12, Vol. V. consists of a useful paper by Mr. Oswald Murray on "Man's Relation to the Phenomenal World," which was originally read before the now important Adelphi Lodge. The object of the paper is the drawing of a distinction between the real and unreal aspects of life.

Cyclic Impression and other Papers.—The papers read before the last American Convention have been tastefully bound in a wrapper and issued with the above title. Through the kindness of the General Secretary of the American Section, we shall be able to present the leading Branches in India with copies. Mr. Judge's remarks on "Cyclic Impression" and Dr. Buck's paper on "Materialism and Spiritualism versus Occultism" will be found useful. We wish the Adyar Convention addresses and papers could be issued in this way.

Le Lotus Bleu.—"Handsome is that handsome does" applies somewhat to our French journal. Its contents are always worth reading and no doubt produce handsome results,—but the cover! The cabbage-garden which previously appeared on the blue wrapper has undergone a transformation and we have now an old gentleman of venerable appearance disporting himself, at eventide, in the ocean.

The scholarly "Introduction to the Study of the Secret Doctrine" is continued in the November number, and occupies the greater portion of the Magazine. "Personality and Individuality" is a short but useful paper by M. Arnould. The translation work of our Brothers in France is progressing, and a Fund of over a thousand francs has already been raised for this work. We notice below M. Coulomb's book which is part of the literature of the *Renaissance Orientale*.

S. V. E.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.*

This is a Hindu Magazine started in Calcutta, devoted to Aryan Philosophy, Religions and Occultism. Its chief objects are explained in the Introductory article headed "Signs of the Times," which gives a tolerably good idea of the religious condition of India at the present day. Some of the other articles are also ably written. A translation of *Prasnopanishad* is continued to three numbers, and though apparently well done, includes a few objectional statements on p. 20, which are against public morality and the Hindu S'āstras alike. We hope it will purge itself of such things, and receive the support of the Hindu public.

S. E. G.

LE SECRET DE L'ABSOLU.†

We hail with great satisfaction the appearance of this work from the pen of one of the ablest, as well as the most earnest and self-sacrificing, of our French Members; one who has proved the reality of his love for humanity and his devotion to Theosophy in deeds as well as in words.

The present volume forms the first part of a trilogy, the two remaining divisions of which will treat of the "Secret of the Universe," according to H. P. B.'s "Secret Doctrine," and of the "Secret of Man," according to Theosophy.

The first chapter of the present work deals with the Ultimate of all philosophies under the title of "All and Nothing." The method of treatment adopt-

* Edited by S. C. Mukhopadhyaya, M.A. Published by L. M. Das, Sakha Press, 33, Mussulmanparah Lane.

† Par E. T. Coulomb (*Amaravella*).—Paris: Bibliothèque de la Renaissance Orientale au Siège de la Société Théosophique, 30, Boulevard St. Michel, Prix: 3 fr. 50.

ed is popular and historical, rather than strictly philosophical. It is more of an attempt to convey to the minds of non-specialist readers, by well-chosen illustrations and lucid phrases, what is meant by the various terms: Absolute, Unknowable, Parabrahm, Sat, Be-ness, &c., than an effort to reason out a basis for Metaphysic, or add another to the many systems that already confuse the majority of lay readers. Thus the author's object is clearly expository, not constructive, and the whole book must be judged from this standpoint. Regarded in this light, all readers will, we think, owe a debt of gratitude to the great industry, lucid thought and attractive exposition which mark this endeavour to smooth, for ordinary readers, the approach to the higher and more difficult branches of Theosophic thought.

In the second chapter, entitled a "Journey through the Centuries," M. Coulomb traces in further detail the conception of the Absolute, expounded in chapter one, from the remotest accessible recesses of antiquity downwards to our own day. He begins naturally with the philosophical systems of China, passes then to the analogous conception of the Vedas and Indian philosophies, with their offshoot and reform in Buddhism, refers rather briefly to the Egyptian and later Alexandrian schools, to conclude with the great thinkers of Germany. The work is well done; it shows very careful study and an admirable choice of appropriate quotations.

The problems of time and space are then entered upon; which lead the reader naturally to the consideration of first and final causes.

In estimating the value of these chapters as well as the subsequent ones, the reader must not forget that the author's purpose throughout is *expository not critical*. M. Coulomb is himself a metaphysician of no mean capacity, and it would not be fair to judge him as such from these chapters. But I hope that once he has completed the expository work he has laid out for himself in this trilogy, he will give the world and the T. S. especially the benefit of his own original and untrammelled thought upon these all-important subjects.

In the "Mystery of the Trinity" (Chapter V), and the "Mystery of Good and Evil," we follow the clear and admirably put working-out of the basic principles already laid down. And this exposition culminates in the exposition of the law of Karma under the title: "The Scales of Justice."

This most appropriately concludes the volume before us, all those main and fundamental principles having thus been considered which underlie the cosmogonical system that will form the subject of the next volume.

Having thus briefly indicated the general scope and contents of the book, a word may fittingly be said as to its literary style. We all know how clear and luminous the French language is when well handled. But many, amongst them the present reviewer, have rather under-rated its capacity for the handling and expression of mysticism proper. At least, that is the impression left on my mind by the perusal of M. Coulomb's work. In spite of the aridity and abstruseness of the subject, there is not a dull page in the book, and many apt remarks and luminous illustrations relieve the work of severe thought.

M. Coulomb is heartily to be congratulated on the good work thus done; and our Brothers in France will feel, I trust, that they owe him the satisfaction of feeling that his efforts have been appreciated, and will prove it to him practically by one and all purchasing and reading this admirable book.

B. K.

THE CAVES AND JUNGLES OF HINDOSTAN.*

If it were possible to think that a great spirit like H. P. B.'s could be interested in what the world she so scorned, while living, would say about her talents when dead, it would be a grim satisfaction to it to know that the people and papers, which spoke naught but ill of her aforesaid, are now lavishing their praises upon one of her books and declaring her to have been a genius. She is beyond their reach, but this beginning of a change of public verdict is sweet to her family and friends, who knew her greatness and loveableness all along, and who felt that a bright star had passed into eclipse when she died. And this is but the beginning of what will be seen as time and Karma work out their changes, and the fullness of this woman's power, knowledge and sufferings becomes revealed. The book under notice is unlike her "Isis" and "Secret Doctrine" in every respect, save in their mystical undertone and their flashes of literary brilliance. The brightness in them glints upon pages and paragraphs, here and there, amid a murk of heavy narrative and argument and a confusion of metaphysics; while here it shines in every page, and the reader feels the fascination of her style and the gorgeousness of her imagination from the beginning to the end. Unsympathetic journals, like the *Times* and its bigoted namesake, the *Methodist Times*, which would begrudge a word of praise for her more serious books, have been captivated by her "Caves and Jungles" and betrayed into admiring criticism by her "Nightmare Tales." For the reason, doubtless, that they fit their mental calibre while the others require a larger bore.

When we first came to Bombay, H. P. B. employed her leisure time in writing for the *Russki Vyestnik*, a series of sketchy letters descriptive of the landscapes, peoples, feelings and traditions of India and the Indian; spicing and immensely increasing the interest of her narrative by weaving into it the story of a long journey by a select party of us, in the company of an Adept whose wisdom instructed and psychical powers astounded us. She carries us to Karli Caves, to mystery-hiding jungles near Nassick, to a Witch's Den where horrors cluster around one, to a city of the Dead in the Vindhya Mountains, to the Caves of Bagh in Malva, to an Isle of Mystery in Noman's Land, and to Jubbulpur, where the sight of the Marble Rocks leads to a dissertation upon the Thugs and Yoga. Having accompanied her in all the wanderings that suggested the idea of her mystical journey, and shared all the incidents which provoked her magnificent romances of travel, I can detect the substantial basis of every one of her tales save a certain few which relate to and are souvenirs of a former journey of hers, from Southern India to Tibet, when she was really in the company and under the protection of the Adept whom she personifies under the *sobriquet* of Gulab Sing—a real name of a real Adept, by the way, with whom I have had to do. I am not going to dampen the pleasure of the readers of this splendid book, while the first charm of its influence is being felt, by uncovering the hard soil from which these flowers of fancy have sprung. But I will say this, that, knowing the facts she had to deal with, and now reading her book, I am amazed at this latest and, to me, most surprising proof of her literary power and exuberance of imagination.

They speak of our Admirable Crichtons, now-a-days, as "all-round men,"

* "From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan." Translated from the Russian of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky." The Theosophical Publishing Society, London, 1892.

a vulgar commonplace worthy of the servants' hall. In the best sense of the word, H. P. B. was versatile to an extent that I doubt if any contemporary author has surpassed. One could hardly believe that the same hand had written her various works unless, like some of us, he had passed years, or at least months, in her company, listened to her conversations and, perhaps, edited her manuscripts. The "Caves and Jungles of Hindostan" is a revelation, even to her closest friends, of mental resources in the department of creative imagination, hitherto unsuspected.

The book acquired instant popularity upon its appearance, and is already finding its way to the counters of booksellers in the remotest countries where the English language is read. The translation has been so admirably and so lovingly done by her accomplished relative that one might really suppose she had taken it down from H. P. B.'s own lips.

H. S. O.

SIMON MAGUS.*

Readers of *Lucifer* will be already acquainted with this scholarly essay of our indefatigable and learned Brother, the General Secretary of the European Section T. S. It now comes before us in a complete form, most tastefully got up, beautifully printed upon fine thick paper, and presenting so attractive an exterior as to do the greatest credit to the "H. P. B." Press and its Manager, our invaluable Brother James M. Pryse. In fact, the whole turn out of this essay is well calculated to make the mouths of the Adyar staff water for longing to have the command of such technical skill and first-rate plant for the production of our Indian Theosophical publications. Regrets are vain, however, so we will turn from the outside to the contents of this new and highly valuable addition to our literature, and say a few words by way of cordially commending it to the attentive perusal of the readers of the *Theosophist*.

In the first place then, Brother Mead's Essay must rank, together with his work on *Pistis Sophia*, next after H. P. B.'s writings, as a contribution to the carrying out of the Society's Second Object. At the outset, the author by thorough critical research and scholarship, rehabilitates the memory of Simon Magus and exhibits his true relation to the religious development of the West in general, and of Christianity in particular. Next he presents us with as clear and full a statement of Simon's real teaching as can be gathered from all the sources available; and finally he concludes by bringing into juxtaposition the teachings of Simon with those of Indian mysticism and philosophy. Thus the author furnishes a remarkable demonstration of the fundamental identity of the great religious systems of East and West; and by the parallel thus drawn clears up much that is difficult and obscure in the doctrines of Simon himself.

As a whole this Essay is a model of how such work ought to be done; and it is greatly to be wished that others of our workers in the Society would follow the example thus given, and honour the Society by producing work equally good in other lines of thought and research.

In conclusion, we recommend this Essay to all who are interested in

* An essay by G. R. S. Mead, B. A., F. T. S. Theosophical Publishing Houses, London and New York. Price 5 shillings, paper; boards, seven shillings and sixpence.

the comparative study of Religions, as well as to those whose special interest in Christianity leads them to desire a clear understanding of the various influences and tendencies which contributed in its early days to mould and form the nascent Christian Religion.

B. K.

Correspondence.

THEOSOPHY IN WESTERN LANDS.

[From our own Correspondent.]

LONDON, Nov. 1892.

Head-quarters here will soon seem comparatively deserted. Mrs. Besant has gone, Mr. Old and Mr. Sturdy leave shortly; and now my last news is that Mrs. Cooper-Oakley is off to Australia. I am sorry to say that Mrs. Oakley's health is still far from good.

This will leave only Mr. Mead (who returned about three weeks ago) and his Assistant Secretary Mr. Ablett, the Countess Wachtmeister, Herbert Burrows, and Miss Cooper—who comes to stay at Head-quarters during Mrs. Besant's absence—as permanent residents; and the work literally increases daily! However, devoted workers are gathering round us, and we have just now staying at No. 17, Mr. M. U. Moore, and Miss Helen Fagg, both of whom give all their spare time to the work; indeed Miss Fagg has kindly taken over, temporarily, the office of Librarian, which will be vacated next week by the departure of our Brother W. R. Old. Then there is Mr. Hargrove, the energetic and able Secretary of the *League of Theosophical Workers*, so altogether we are not left quite forlorn.

This reminds me that the Oriental Bazaar organized by Mrs. Oakley, under the auspices of the League, on behalf of the Crèche, and held (just after I last wrote) in the Lecture Hall at Head-quarters, was an immense success in every way; the actual sum taken during the two days amounting to £65, which will allow of a substantial donation being handed over to Mrs. Marshall (President of the Crèche) after all expenses are paid.

I forgot to tell you in my last letter of a new recruit, who has lately joined the H. P. B. Press staff of workers, in the person of Miss Dickinson, who, like our Brothers Pryse and Green, has devoted herself to the work for the sake of the cause we have so much at heart; so you see that as fast as old workers are drafted off elsewhere, new ones are found to take their place, and the ranks remain intact, so far as numbers, enthusiasm and earnestness go.

The Countess Wachtmeister has been down to Bristol and Exeter recently, following up Mrs. Besant's lectures there; and, in fact, at Bristol, selling Theosophical literature and taking the chair (though not simultaneously) on one and the same evening. She tells us that at Bristol she steadily received streams of enquirers for a whole week, from 2 to 10-30 p.m.! The result was that she left there a circle of nearly thirty people determined to study Theosophy. At Exeter she and Mrs. Passingham hired a room on two occasions, and interviewed enquirers, with an almost equally good result.

H. P. B.'s "Caves and Jungles" has been widely and most favourably noticed by the Press, beginning with the *Times*, and ending with a long and

extremely fair and interesting review in the *Methodist Times*! Everyone has a good word to say, and all without exception praise the translator's work most highly.

Theosophical Tract No. 3, by Herbert Burrows ("Theosophy and Roman Catholicism"), has received a good deal of public attention, as might be expected from the nature of the subject, and coming out, as it did, close upon the heels of Mrs. Besant's "Theosophy and the Society of Jesus", and the delivery of her St. James' Hall lecture—about which I told you in my last—in reply to Father Clarke's attack upon Theosophy, its leaders and prominent members.

The General Secretary brings back with him most enthusiastic accounts of the opening (by himself) of the Paris residential Head-quarters T. S. A. most determined effort is being made just now by our French brethren, in every direction, with apparently every prospect of success; and good feeling and harmony abounds. Amaravella's pen is—if possible—more active than ever; and I am glad to say that Madame Jelihovsky, H.P.B.'s sister, has published a biographical sketch of H.P.B. in the last two numbers of the *Nouvelle Revue*, which will be somewhat of a revelation to those who have given ear to the scandalous untruths that M. Solovieff has been so sedulously circulating abroad, about our teacher.

The Saturday evening meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge are now devoted to an exhaustive study of the *Bhagavat Gîtâ*, in which all get-at-able translations and commentaries will be discussed, side by side with the study of the work itself.

* * * * *

One of the recently published books which is making the greatest stir and about which everybody is talking, is Laing's "Human Origins." There can be no doubt that the book is, indirectly, and unconsciously, working for the favourable reception of Theosophic ideas and modes of thought; a sort of pioneer, in fact; though Mr. Laing might possibly be not a little astonished to find that he had been thus Theosophically involved! Anyhow, although of course in no way directly agreeing with the teaching in the "Secret Doctrine", Mr. Laing's whole treatment of his subject, his masterly analysis (from his own point of view), and able presentation of the religions of the Ancient world, will undoubtedly help to clear the way for the popular acceptance of the Theosophical teaching, that there is but one Universal Basis, or Root, of all religions, viz., the Ancient Wisdom Religion. He points out many significant facts, when dealing with bygone civilizations—especially Egyptian, notably the position held by women therein; e.g., he says (p. 107) that "in the earliest records of domestic and political life in Egypt," we find the equality of men and women "more fully recognized than it is perhaps among ourselves in the nineteenth century," and quotes from Birch's *Ancient History of Egypt from the Monuments* to the effect that:

"The Egyptian woman appears always as the equal and companion of her father, brethren and husband. She was never secluded in a harem, sat at meals with them, had equal rights before the law, served in the priesthood, and even mounted the throne."

Passing on to religious questions, Mr. Laing very pertinently points out that "the Egyptian religion was more logical" than any subsequent form of belief has shown itself to be touching the doctrine of the Trinity. And, as he says further:—

"If we admit a Trinity of Father, Mother, Son, why not admit a daughter and other descendants; or if you personify the power to make a universe, the knowledge how to make it, and the Will to do it, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, why not the benevolence to do it well, the malevolence to do it badly, and a hundred other attributes which metaphysical ingenuity can devise to account for the complication of the known, and the mysteries of the unknown facts of existence? The Egyptian priests accepted this view, and admitted a whole Pantheon of secondary Gods who were either personifications of different attributes of the Supreme God, or separate portions of the one Divine Essence." (pp. 114, 115).

Indeed Mr. Laing goes further, and lays great stress on the fact (p. 128) that in many of our modern religious conceptions we find "an almost exact counterpart in those of this immensely remote period;" remarking of them all that they do but bear witness to the strivings of the human intellect to "penetrate the mysteries of the unknowable," to account for the existence of good and evil, and "to reconcile multiplicity of manifestation with unity of essence"—which, as saith the Wisdom Religion, can be, and has been done. It is impossible to do more than give some sort of general idea of the plan and scope of "Human Origins" from the particular instances quoted, for if I say very much more about it, I shall have no room left for anything else!

I read Robert Louis Stevenson's "Across the Plains" for myself the other day, and was much struck with the contents of the chapter on dreams. He tells us that he has dreamt vividly all his life, even from a little child. The poor little boy had "torturing dreams" of God and Hell for one thing; in which many of us can, I think, deeply sympathise. The gift—for such dreaming as Stevenson's seems to be is far beyond the common—was inherited from his father, and appears to have undergone a steady, and more or less orderly evolution, as he grew up and his brain gradually matured; e. g., he tells us that "presently my dreamer began to turn his former amusement of story-telling to account; by which I mean that he began to write and sell his tales." And again, as a student in Edinburgh he began "to dream in sequence and thus to lead a double life—one of the day, one of the night"—one that he "had every reason to believe was the true one," another that he "had no means of proving to be false!"

Stevenson calls this wonderfully developed faculty of his, graphically enough, "the little people who manage man's internal theatre"—his "sleepless Brownies." Who are they?, he asks, and gives answer to himself:—"just my Brownies, God bless them! who do one half my work for me while I am fast asleep, and in all human likelihood, do the rest for me as well, when I am wide awake and fondly suppose I do it for myself!" (Italics mine). He speaks, too, of "my conscious Ego, the denizen of the pineal gland, unless he has changed his residence since Descartes."

The writing of that extraordinarily occult book, "The strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," was curious enough. Stevenson says that he had the idea, for he had long been trying to write a story on the subject, but he went about for days racking his brains for a plot, when one night he got it from his Brownies in a dream. They gave him the central idea "of a voluntary change becoming involuntary," and the matter for three of the scenes: "For the business of the powders, which so many have censured, is, I am relieved to say, not mine at all but the Brownies'." Finally:—

"Sometimes I cannot but suppose my Brownies have been aping Bunyan, and yet in no case with what would possibly be called a moral in a tract; never with the

ethical narrowness; conveying hints instead of life's larger limitations and that sort of sense which we seem to perceive in the arabesque of time and space."

I cannot bring this letter to a close without telling you of a most remarkable article which appeared in a recent number of the *Atlantic Monthly* called "The Romance of Memory," by S. R. Elliott, in which—after telling one or two sufficiently curious and interesting little psychological stories—he concludes by relating an extraordinary experience of his own. This experience, however, he endeavours to mildly pooh-pooh, and explain away, but a clearer case for reincarnation I never read. The writer is in Rome for the first time in his life, and goes to see the Coliseum in broad daylight, his attention and interest being more especially roused by an inspection of the various cells—but I must give it you in his own words, or I shall mar it in the telling:—

"Then, being chilled by the cool dampness engendered in these dark places, I went out into the daylight for the purpose of crossing the arena to a crucifix which has been erected somewhere near its centre. The moment the strong daylight struck my eyes I became vividly conscious of what asserted itself as a remembrance. It was all familiar. Nothing that had ever happened in my past could be more real than this scene which followed. I distinctly remembered having crossed that place before, armed with a light poignard and dressed in a loose tunic of some dark color. A sense of impending peril, yet different from any physical fear I have ever felt, pervaded my entire being. I was conscious that a frightful struggle awaited me, and that the chances were not in my favor.

Full five minutes of this trance-like condition must have passed before I became aware that it was not as a gladiator I had my being in that place, but rather as one thrown to the wild beasts. I even pondered a moment as to whence this dagger, so useless in the struggle which was to ensue.

I continued walking on, with a full revelation of the coming scene, and as I approached the crucifix, which by this time had grown to be a sort of goal to my dis-tempered senses, I became cognizant of the fact that a tiger was emerging from one of those pillared caverns at the side. As I tried to shake off this impression, being somewhat uneasy as to my nervous condition, a strange odor was wafted to me—an odor which I afterwards remembered to have noticed as pervading the vicinity of wild beasts. Could it be Mandragora? It had some such strange yet familiar suggestion..... Yet still the illusion went on and swallowed up the etymology: distinct, yet vague; actual, yet so far away. The impression gradually faded, leaving me bewildered and not a little alarmed, for in all my wayward boyhood I had never been given to experiences of an occult nature."

Mr. Elliott is evidently much impressed with the readiness with which, in broad daylight, his senses had lent themselves to the impression; *the number of senses involved*—that is, sight, hearing, smell—which, he says, "enhanced to such a degree the mysterious character of the phenomenon that I would gladly have welcomed the fantastic explanation offered by Professor Zöllner of a fourth dimension." Now it is all very well for Mr. Elliott to call the whole thing a *crise de nerfs*, with French pathologists—as he does—and to say that he feels "safe in relegating it, with similar unclassified phenomena, to that nebulous domain, the romance of memory," as the concluding sentence of the article runs; but I confess I fail to see that we are thereby brought any nearer to an explanation of the *facts*. One might not unreasonably suggest an application of the reincarnation hypothesis, and see if it fitted the case any better.

A. L. C.

AMERICAN LETTER.

NEW YORK, November 12th, 1892.

The "League of Theosophical Workers" is recrudescing. As it was never totally moribund, it has been possible to vitalize it. But hereafter it will be run on somewhat different lines than formerly. In the past, its efforts were in the direction of charity; now, they will be towards forwarding all kinds of Theosophical activity. Many Theosophists have no marked aptitudes, and are limited in time and means. In the reorganized league they will find channels through which to do such work as they can. Already much is started. Our earnest co-worker, Brother Fussell, is, *de facto*, head of "League No. 1." It and "League Number 2" have been merged into one. The amalgamation, on account of location, was but natural. The good effects of the reorganization are, even now, perceptible.

The "Lotus Circle" is the latest progeny of the American Section. It began work on the 30th ultimo at the lecture hall of "The Aryan T. S." Its scope is not dissimilar from that of the Sunday School of the churches. Several members have taken hold of it with enthusiasm. They are making new, and adapting old songs, composing accompaniments and tunes, and writing stories. This is a wise move, for if the work of the T. S. is to be successfully carried on, into and through the first seventy-five years of the coming century, it behoves us to look well after those who are to fill up the ranks as the present workers, one by one, drop out.

Brother Claude F. Wright is at present in Boston. Handkerchiefs were bedewed with tears of regret when he left New York and Brooklyn—that is, metaphorically speaking. He has done sound work in these cities. If he accomplishes half as much elsewhere he will do more than well. The field in Boston should prove a tillable one. Though it is not quite fallow soil, yet it has never been completely turned over; hardly harrowed. Possibly the plow will have to do some deep cutting. But, in the "Athens of America" the people ought, from a mere sense of fitness, to give an hospitable welcome to the proclaimer of the "Unknown God." The plans of Brother Wright, so far as laid out, embrace his present stay in Boston, visits to Providence and New Haven, and subsequent ones to other cities where there is more or less of the Theosophical cult.

On the second instant, Brother Judge followed Brother Wright to Boston, on a brief lecturing tour. It was, of course, successful.

The "Secret Doctrine" class, which met at Headquarters on Wednesday evenings, is no longer the "Secret Doctrine" class, but one for general discussion on selected topics. Mr. Harding is chairman and has charge. Among the attendants are quite a number of new students. They contribute many a fresh idea to the general fund of information.

The "Aryan," the "H. P. B." and the Brooklyn branches still continue Sunday evening lectures. The number present is, usually, large. Of the lectures most favorably received one was by Miss Katherine Hillard, "The three Objects of the Society," the other by Mr. Judge, "The Lost Chord of Christianity."

On October 14th, Mr. Wright dined, by invitation, on the cruiser "Vesuvius", for the purpose of talking on Theosophy. All the mess officers are interested in the subject, and have on board quite a library pertaining to it.

Outside of regular meetings, informal chats on all sorts of psychic and kindred subjects are the order of the day. The ideas gleaned from different sources are thus passed on from one to another. An eavesdropper often hears bits of conversation like this :

"When a limb is taken off, gangrene—is that what you call it in English?—Yes, gangrene, sets in. This comes from the poison conveyed by the astral from the decomposing limb to the living organism. Therefore, the German surgeons, the more advanced, burn the limb."

"But, I should think the man would feel this."

"You are quite right and so he is put under the influence of—what do you call it?"

"An anaesthetic?"

"Yes, an anaesthetic, and then when the limb which has been removed is burned the pain is not felt. And did you not know that an astral limb can be mesmerized?"

"I don't understand."

"I will tell you. Suppose a man has lost his leg and feels pain where it was, just as though it were not lost. Passes are made over the place where it would have been, in the same way as if a leg of flesh and blood were there, and the pain passes away. You see it is the astral leg that has been mesmerized."

The Dána T. S., of Sioux City, Iowa, has, of late, been advertising somewhat extensively to spread a knowledge of Theosophy and bring it to every one's door. The following notice appeared in five hundred and thirty-nine weekly papers :

"THEOSOPHY."

"Persons desiring information on Theosophy, and those who find in the prevailing systems of the day no satisfactory answer to the Why, Whence and Whither of life, may get a clue to the same, free of charge, by addressing F. T. S., 707, Fourteenth St., Sioux City, Iowa."

It brought responses from a much wider territory than that covered by the papers—a territory reaching from West Virginia to Washington and from South Dakota to Mississippi. The same work will be carried on in other fields, the Salt Lake Branch having decided to take part in it during the coming year. The Dána T. S. has also helped in the placing of about twenty Theosophical books in the public library of Sioux City, and *The Path* and *Theosophical Siftings* on its reading-room table. Sister Annie Besant will deliver a lecture before the Branch on the 17th of December; subject, "Evolution of Man from the Animal to the Divine." The "Vedānta," "Nirvāna," Salt Lake City and other Branches in that part of the world have also put the shoulder to the wheel.

That most tireless body the "H. P. B." Branch at Harlem, has boomed continually since it was organized. Beginning in April of this year with seven members, it now has over twenty-nine, besides fourteen associates. At the Friday evening meetings—which are for study and discussion—only members and associates are admitted. On Sunday evenings—as has been stated before—lectures are delivered, and these are open. They have been more than usually successful in getting noticed in the newspapers. This is largely due to the energy of one of their members, Brother Hecht, himself a newspaper correspondent.

In the last number—November—of *The Arena*, the Rev. Mr. J. Savage says "Facts like these"—certain facts he refers to before—"do not take one 'out of the body,' but they do suggest, with somewhat startling force, the query as to whether the mind is necessarily so dependent on our ordinary senses as is commonly supposed." And then, quoting from Jevous, "We cannot deny even the strange suggestion of Young, that there may be independent worlds, some possibly existing in different parts of space, but others perhaps pervading each other, unseen and unknown, in the same space." And also, what is more significant, "For anything at present known to the contrary, the soul or the self may emerge from the experience we call death with a body as real and much more completely alive than the present visible body, and which shall yet be invisible, inaudible, and intangible to our ordinary senses."

H. T. PATTERSON, F.T.S.

S'RI S'ANKARA'S DATE.

To the Editor "*Theosophist*."

DEAR SIR,

You will be interested to know that Sir Monier Monier-Williams, Boden-Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, has based his account of the Rāmānuja sect, in the latest edition of "*Brahmanism and Hinduism*," on the Catechism of the Visishtādvaita Philosophy by the late Pandit of the Adyar Library, N. Bhāshyāchārya.

Writing of Theosophy, in the same work, Sir M. M. Williams says :

"Such Theosophical Societies define 'Theosophy' to mean 'divine wisdom or science,' 'spiritual philosophy.' They hold that all religions have elements of truth which spring from the one Fountain of Truth, and that Theosophy in the synthesis of all religions. Hence pure Brāhmanism, pure Buddhism, pure Islam, pure Christianity, may be equivalent to 'Theosophy.'" (p. 526).

A fairer definition could hardly be given, even by a Theosophist, nor is this the only case in which Sir M. M. Williams has come very close to the Theosophical standpoint. One notable passage is this :

"Indeed, if I may be allowed the anachronism, the Hindus were Spinozites more than two thousand years before the existence of Spinoza; and Darwinians many centuries before Darwin; and Evolutionists many centuries before the doctrine of evolution had been accepted by the scientists of our time, and before any word like evolution existed in any language of the world." Though wisely dissenting from the late Dr. A. Burnell's impossible date of the "fourth century of our era" for the Mānava-Dharma S'āstra, Sir M. M. Williams cannot make up his mind to date it earlier than about the fifth century B. C.; and in one or two other matters he follows the old school of European Sanskrit scholars in bringing down as late as possible the facts and persons of Indian history.

For instance, he brings S'ri S'ankarāchārya Paramahansa Parivrajaka down to the "eighth century of our era," contrary, it would seem, to the Indian tradition, especially that of the S'ringeri Math.

It has been stated, by the late T. Subba Row Garu, that a list of the S'ankaras of the S'ringeri Math, had been published, with the date of each, thus bringing S'ri S'ankarāchārya Paramahansa back to the second century

B. C. Unfortunately, I have not a copy of this list to refer to; nor does T. Subba Row Garu state where and when it was published.

I would ask some Brahman of the Smârta sect, if possible, directly affiliated with the S'ringeri Math to help me in this matter, (1) by letting me know where a copy of the list of the S'ankaras of S'ringeri Math can be obtained, with the date of succession of each Guru; or, better still, by publishing a Devanâgarî list, with translation, (2) and also by giving Sâyana-chârya's date, according to the same tradition, (3) by informing me whether the S'ankara Vijaya of A'nandagiri agrees with the S'ringeri tradition, by giving the year of the Yudhishtira era (Kali Yuga) in which S'ri S'ankarâchârya was born.

I would request my Brahman friends to give me their best help in the matter, as, since the rehabilitation of the Vikramâditya era (Samvat era) by the efforts of Dr. Peterson, Dr. Bühler, and others, there is a growing inclination in the West, to accept the traditional dates of Indian history; an inclination which the learned Brahmans of India should be willing to meet half way.

London, 16th Nov.

Yours fraternally,
CHARLES JOHNSTON, F.T.S.

P.S.—It would be an excellent thing to obtain independent lists of the Guruparampara chains of the other three Maths founded by S'ri S'ankara if such exist, for comparison.

C. J.

REPLY.

A list of the Gurus of S'ringeri Math was published during the reign of Krishnaraja Wadiyar of Mysore more than twenty years ago. The list is given in 15 verses, and as the work is out of print, I reproduce them below italicising the names of Gurus:—

1. Mahâdevo mahâvishnu strithîya s'chaturânanah
Vasistas' s'aktiyogindrah parâs'aramunis' varah.
2. Vyâsas's'uko gaudapâdo govindabhagavânmunih
Guruh S'ri S'ankarâcharya sishanmata sthâpanaprabhuh.
3. Vis'varupâchârya yogî nityabodhaghanâbidhah.
Tatvagnânaghanâchârya gnanottama mahâmunih.
4. Gnânagiryâ châryavarya stadhâ simhagiris' varah
Tatasche s'varatîrthâkhyo nrisimhâbhi tîrtakah.
5. Vidyâs'ankara tîrthâkhyo lambikâyogatatparah
Bhâratîkrishnatîrthâkhyo vidyâranya mahâmunih.
6. Vidyânagaranirmâtâ vedabhâshyâdikritguruh
S'richandrasekharâbhikhyâ bhâratîchatatahparam.
7. Nrisimhabhârati varyah nrisimhopâsakassadâ
Bhaktas'ankara nâmâdhya purushottamabhârati
8. S'richandrasekharâbhikhyâ bhâratîadanantaram.
Nrisimhabhâratichaiva purushottamabhârati.
9. Bhâratî râmachandrâkhyâ narasimhâkhyabhârati
Nrisimhabhâratîbhûyo nrisimhâbinavastadâ.
10. Sacchidânanda Yogîndrah stambheherambadarsakah
S'rînrisimhâkhyâ yogindra ssachchidânandabhârati.
11. Tataschûbhinavâbhikhyâ ssachchidânanda bhârati
Tatobhinavapûrva S'ri nrisimhabhidha bhârati.
12. S'risachchidânanda yogî tapascharyâparâyanah
Punaschâbhinavâbhikhyâ sachchidânanda bhârati.

13. S'ri S'ringerîpurâdhisah srîvidyâmantrabodhakah
S'rimadâchârya sadris'ah srî nrisimhayatis' varah.
14. Bhâratînâmaavikhyâta stapas's'ila jagadguruh
Râjâdhirâja sampûjyo jagatkhyâtovirajâte.
15. S'richâmundâ kripâpûrna S'rikrishnendrena nirmitâ
Jiyâtsadâ S'ri S'ringerî Jagadguru paramparâ.

The present Guru is called Sachchidânanda Sivâbhinava nrisimha bhârati and was consecrated in 1867. It must be borne in mind that these drop their old names on consecration, and assume new ones as the Popes in Rome do. Among the miscellaneous papers left behind by my late uncle (Pandit N. Bhâshyâ Charya) is a list of Gurus of S'ringeri Math, with the dates of consecration and death obtained from its authorities. For the sake of convenience I prefer to give the years of the Christian Era:—

S'ankarâ'chârya the founder of S'ringeri Math, &c., born B.C. 43 .	Consecrated.	Died.
Vis'varupâchârya	34 B.C.	11 B.C.
Nityabodhaghanâchârya	27 B.C.	773 A.C.
Gnânaghana	758 A.C.	848 A.C.
Gnânottama	846	910
Gnânagiri	905	953
Simhagiris'vara	949	1038
I'svaratîrtha	1036	1098
Nrisimhatîrtha	1097	1146
Vidyâs'ankaratîrtha	1145	1228
Bhâratîkrishnatîrtha	1228	1333
Vidyâranya	1328	1380
Chandras'ekhara Bhârati	1331	1386
Nrisimha do	1368	1389
Bhâktas'ankara do	1387	1408
S'ankarânanda do*	1406	1448
Chandras'ekhara do II	1428	1454
Nrisimhati do II	1449	1464
Purushottama... do	1464	1479
Râmachendra do	1472	1517
Nrisimha do III	1508	1560
Do. do IV	1557	1573
Do. do V	1563	1576
AbhinavaNrisimha do	1576	1599
Sachchidânanda do I	1599	1622
Nrisimha do VI	1622	1663
Sachchidânanda do II	1663	1705
A'ohinava Sachchidânanda Bhârati I	1705	1741
Nrisimha do VII	1741	1767
Sachchidânanda do III	1767	1770
Abhinava Sachchidânanda do II	1770	1814
Nrisimha do VIII	1814	1817
Sachchidânanda Sivâbhinava Nrisimha Bharati 1867.	1817	1878

Still living.
There is another list given in Mr. Rice's *Gazetteer of Mysore and Coorg* (vol. I., p. 380), and the two agree with each other except in the dates of consecration and deaths of Sankarâchârya, and his immediate successor who is

* He is the same as the Purushottamabharati in the above verses.

Visvarūpachārya according to my list but Sures'varāchārya according to him. The two dates are S'ankarāchārya's consecration 645 or 705 A. C., his death 685 or 725 A. C., while Sures'varāchārya's consecration is given as 693 or 753. This difference arose out of Mr. Rice's supposition that Sures'varāchārya's death took place 80 or 20 years after his consecration, instead of 800 years as given out in the official list now with me; and the consequent trimming of the dates of S'ankarāchārya's consecration and death. If we agree with Mr. Rice in supposing 800 years as beyond all probability and that 80 or even 20 is the probable figure, we bring down S'ankarāchārya's date to the middle of the seventh century A. C.* from about 43 B. C., the earliest date accorded him by Indian tradition. It is however a matter of regret that the S'ankaravijayas do not in any way enlighten us. Anandagiri's S'ankara Vijaya is entirely silent on the point, not even the least indication is therein given; Chidvilāsayati, the author of another Sankaravijaya, says he was born at noon under the constellation A'rthrá; while Mādhavāchārya's does not go beyond giving the astrological position of the Sun, Mars and Saturn. The other Maths of S'ankarāchārya now existing in Southern India are mostly branches of the S'ringeri Math: and I would urge our friends in Bombay and N. W. Provinces to try their best to procure lists of the Guruparamparas of the Maths of their respective provinces for comparison with the one given above.

Now that the ingenious theory of Mr. Fergusson that the Vikramāditya Era really began in 544 A. C. and that the Indian date 56 B. C. was simply obtained by throwing the event back by six centuries, is no longer tenable, as amply proved by the researches of Profs. Bühler and Peterson, greater credit is now being given, as Mr. Johnston says, to Indian tradition. But if the date, 43 B. C., accorded to S'ankarāchārya, by Indian tradition is once accepted, it upsets all chronological sequence in the history of Sanskrit Literature. I shall briefly explain. S'ankarāchārya quotes in his Sārīrakabhā Shya (I. 1. 3.) Kumārīlaswami; and the latter refers to Kālidāsa in his Tantra Vārtika. Even making all these contemporaries, which is in itself very improbable, and bearing in mind that no account, or tradition, Eastern or Western, gives Kālidāsa any date anterior to 56 B. C.,—the date of Vikramāditya in whose court he lived—it is impossible to maintain the theory that Sankarāchārya flourished before 56 B. C.

S. E. GOPALACHARLU.

PRESIDENTIAL NOTICE.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, ADYAR, 7th December, 1892.

Branches and Fellows of the Theosophical Society in Australasia are notified that Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, F. R. S., of London, will shortly visit their country in her private capacity and in search of health. She will be happy to converse with all who are interested in Theosophical subjects.

H. S. OLCOTT, P. T. S.

* This date is arrived at, but by a different method, by Mr. Fleet in the *Indian Antiquary* (vol. XIV, p. 350).

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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

[Family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares.]

OLD DIARY LEAVES.*

CHAPTER XI.

BARON de Palm's cremation is the theme of the present Chapter. I have related above the circumstances which led to my taking it upon myself and, since it is historically important from having been the first public cremation in the United States and the first where a crematorium was employed, the details should be interesting.

The cremation took place December 6, 1876, at the small inland town of Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania, more than six months after the body had been packed in carbolised dried clay at New York. It is very easy now to cremate a body, either in America or England, for efficient crematories are available and cremation societies exist, but then it was quite another thing. When I pledged myself to dispose of the Baron's remains as he wished, there were no facilities, no precedents in my country to follow, unless I wished to adopt the Eastern method of open-air burning, which had been once employed and which, in the then state of public prejudice and the probable refusal of the Sanitary Board to issue a permit, would have been very difficult, not to say dangerous. My only practicable policy was to wait until the chance offered itself. In the year 1816, a Mr. Henry Laurens, a wealthy gentleman of South Carolina, ordered his executors to burn his corpse and compelled his family to acquiesce by the testamentary proviso that they should not inherit his estate unless his wishes were strictly carried out. Accordingly, his body was burnt on his own plantation in the

* I shall be under great obligations to any friend who wishes well to this historical sketch, if he (or she) will give or lend me for reference any interesting documents, or any letters written them during the years 1875, 6, 7 and 8, by either H. P. B. or myself, about phenomena, the occult laws which produce them, or events in the history of the T. S., or any newspapers or cuttings from the same relating to the same subjects. Loans of this kind will be carefully returned, and I shall be glad to refund, if desired, any expense for postage incurred by the senders. Reminiscences of occult things shown by H. P. B., if described to me by the eye-witnesses, will be specially valued. I may not live to get out a second Edition of my book, and wish to make the first as interesting and trustworthy as possible. One ought not, at the age of sixty, to trust too much to one's own memory, although mine seems not to fail me as yet. Friendly Editors will oblige very much by giving currency to this request

H. S. O.

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