

# THE THEOSOPHIST

A MONTHLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY, ART, LITERATURE AND OCCULTISM: EMBRACING MESMERISM, SPIRITUALISM, AND OTHER SECRET SCIENCES.

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## THE THEOSOPHIST.

BOMBAY, DECEMBER 1st, 1880.

The Editors disclaim responsibility for opinions expressed by contributors in their articles with some of which they agree, with others, not. Great latitude is allowed to correspondents, and they alone are accountable for what they write. The journal is offered as a vehicle for the wide dissemination of facts and opinions connected with the Asiatic religions, philosophies and sciences. All who have anything worth telling are made welcome, and not interfered with. Rejected MSS. are not returned.

THE OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER NUMBERS OF THE FIRST Volume having been reprinted, the subscription for the first year (i. e. from October 1879 to September 1880) will be Rs. 6-8 as advertised in the April and subsequent numbers of that Volume. Subscribers for the Second Volume pay Rs. 6 only.

SIR RICHARD HAS DONE OUR SOCIETY THE GREAT honour of misrepresenting its character and objects to an English audience. A pamphlet edition of "A Speech delivered in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, on Monday, May 10, 1880, by Sir Richard Temple Bart., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., late Governor of Bombay, in furtherance of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta," just sent us from England, informs the Oxonians that "modern education is shaking the Hindu faith to its very foundation;" and "among the consequences of such a change in the minds of the people is the formation of several important sects." He, however, bethought him of only three—the Bralmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, and—the sect of Theosophists! "There is another sect," says Sir Richard, "called the Prarthana Samaj, which is now being established in Poona; and in the city of Bombay itself, there is another sect, called the Theosophists." The religious opinions of two of these three important sects are kindly explained. The Bralmos "are almost, though not entirely, Christians. You may attend one of their lectures, and you will hear the speaker begin with a text from the New Testament, and he will proceed for many minutes before you will find out that he is not a Christian. In fact, these men are lingering upon the very threshold of Christianity, 'almost persuaded,' to be Christians." The Prarthana Samajists are passed over without notice, though their handsome white edifice is one of the conspicuous ornaments of the Girgaum quarter of Bombay. But he knows all about us at any rate: possibly from the reports of his secret police. "The Theosophists of Bombay are, I believe," remarks the eminent lecturer, "being instructed by persons, not natives, but of European descent, who have, after abandoning Christianity, proceeded to India to discover in the Vedas, the ancient writings of that country, the true source of wisdom." And he most kindly suggests that the one thing which "the upper educated classes of the people of India" need is "to send out to them men of greater culture than their own." Stopping only to remark that neither Oxford nor any other European university ever turned out a scholar, the equal of any one of fifty Indian philosophers who might be named, we will say that greater ignorance of the objects and principles of the Theosophical Society could not have been shown. It is not led by persons who abandoned Christianity, since they never accepted it; nor is it a religious sect, nor does it profess to be, but, on the contrary, it distinctly affirms that as a society it has no creed, and takes in members of all creeds upon equal terms. While so far from our helping or encouraging Hindus to "throw off the faith of their fathers," we have been doing our best for the past two years to make them respect that faith more than ever, and to realize that their ancestors taught a better religion, better philosophy and better science than any other nation of Europe ever heard of. If Sir Richard means to discourse again at Oxford upon Indian religious opinion and "sects" he would do well to study his subject a little deeper. He might then even ascertain that there is a Hindu sect-leader with some three lakhs of followers, named Pandit Dayanand Saraswati Swami, whose Arya Samaj has fifty branches throughout India—one at

Bombay, with a member of the Governor's Council as President—and the avowed object of which is to promote the study of the Vedas.

### GOOD NEWS FROM CEYLON.

Facts of a very gratifying nature, and which reflect honour upon all concerned, are reported by Mr. President Jayasekara from Point de Galle. Our Branch Society at that place opened, on the 15th September, according to previous announcement, a secular school, entitled the First Buddhist Theosophical School of Galle. On the opening day, 183 boys were in attendance, and by the 4th of October the number had increased to 305. Of these only 90 boys are from Buddhist temples, 62 are transferred from the Roman Catholic schools, 108 from the Wesleyan schools, and 27 from the S. P. G. Mission schools. Pupils are now being prepared for presentation in the sixth standard of Government Grant Examination. The books used are Laurie's standard publications. Schools have also been opened by our Branches at Panadure, Colombo and Kandy.

A VIENNA JOURNAL OF RECENT DATE CONTAINS A report by Dr. Rudolf Falb, the philologist, upon his examination into the languages of the Indians of the South American Continent, which ought to excite the wonder and interest of all Aryans. The learned author says he has discovered the most astounding affinities in the languages spoken by the Indians in Peru and Bolivia, especially in Quichua and Aymara, with the Semitic languages, Arabic especially. As Dr. Falb has been familiar with this latter tongue from his boyhood his testimony cannot be called in question. Following up this clue he has found, first, a connecting link with the Aryan roots, and, secondly, has arrived face to face with the surprising revelation that the "Semitic roots are universally Aryan." The "common stems of all the variants are found in their purest condition in Quichua and Aymara," from which fact Dr. Falb derives the conclusion that "the high plains of Peru and Bolivia must be regarded as the point of exit of the present race." This means that the race outflowed from Peru and Bolivia towards the East and West to people the earth, instead of pouring out of the high table-lands of Asia. We thus see one more example of the kind of learned guesswork which passes current as "Science" and humbugs the youth of India into despising the real wisdom of their ancestors which contains the truth.

MR. W. B. K., OF POONA, WRITES TO ENQUIRE IF ANY one can explain the cause of the following natural phenomenon. In the dusk of a cloudy evening of July 1861, while travelling by the old road from Byculla to Khandalla, through an avenue of trees, he noticed the simultaneous outflash of the lights of myriads of glow-worms at intervals of six or seven seconds. The effect was very striking, and reminded the observer of the alternate flash and darkness of the revolving light in a light-house at the mouth of Bombay harbour. He saw the same phenomenon, though not on so grand a scale, when going from Bassein to Wadhwan in the month of August last. Our correspondent pertinently asks how it is that so many millions of glow-worms should cover and uncover the luminous parts of their bodies so simultaneously; and queries whether the fact may be attributed to the recurrence of six-second waves, or impulses, of the all-pervading electric or other fluid, which run throughout the universe. This could hardly be, or else a six-second periodicity would be observed in the automatic movements of all other living things, which is not the case, or, if a fact, one that, to the best of our knowledge, has not yet been recorded.

### SWAMI-DAYANAND'S VIEWS ABOUT YOGA.

The recent visit of Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky to Meerut afforded an opportunity, which was embraced, to elicit the views of the Chief of the Arya Samaj upon various subjects. Among these was the Yoga Philosophy and the *Siddhis*, or psychic powers, possible for man to attain by the course of training described by Patanjali and other Asiatic philosophers. There has been so much uncertainty as to what Swami Dayanand does believe, and his concurrence with the Theosophists upon these points has been so flatly denied, that the results of the Meerut discussions will be read with general interest. At the several interviews there were always present some witnesses, and on occasions, as many as thirty or forty. There are, therefore, ample means to corroborate what is here reported, and what is compiled from notes taken by Col. Olcott at the time, and the written memoranda furnished at his request by three of the witnesses.

The first question propounded to the Swami was whether Yoga was a true science or but a metaphysical speculation; whether Patanjali described psychical powers attainable by man, and whether they had been attained, or not. The Swami's answer was that Yoga was true and based upon a knowledge of the laws of Nature. It was then asked whether these powers could still be acquired, or the time had passed by. The answer was that Nature's laws are unchangeable and illimitable; what had been done once could be done now. Not only can the man of to-day learn to do all the things described by the ancient writers, but he himself, the Swami, could teach the methods to any one who might sincerely wish to take up that course of life. Many had come to him professing their desire and asserting their ability to command success; he had tried three but all failed. One was a resident of Agra. They began well, but soon grew impatient of having to confine themselves to what they regarded as trivial efforts, and, to their surprise, broke down suddenly. Yoga is the most difficult science of all to learn, and few men are capable now. He was asked if there are now living any real Yogis who can at will produce the wonderful phenomena described in Aryan books. His reply was that there are such living men. Their number is small. They live in retired places, and in their proper persons they seldom or ever appear in public. Their secrets are never communicated by them to profanes, nor do they teach their secret science (*vidya*) except to such as upon trial they find deserving.

Col. Olcott asked whether these great masters (*Mahatmas*) are invariably dressed in the saffron clothes of the ordinary *sannyashi* or *fakir* we see every day, or in ordinary costume. The Swami answered in either the one or the other, as they may prefer, or circumstances require. In reply to the request that without suggestion he would state what specific powers the proficient in Yoga enjoys, he said that the true Yogi can do that which the vulgar call miracles. It is needless to make a list of his powers, for practically his power is limited only by his desire and the strength of his will. Among other things he can exchange thoughts with his brother Yogis at any distance even though they be as far apart as one pole from the other, and have no visible, external means of communication such as the telegraph or post. He can read the thoughts of others. He can pass (in his inner self) from one place to another and so be independent of the ordinary means of conveyance and that at a speed incalculably greater than that of the railway engine. He can walk upon the water or in the air above the surface of the ground. He can pass his own soul (*atma*) from his own body into that of another person, either for a short time or for years as he chooses. He can prolong the natural term of the life of his own body by withdrawing his *atma* from it during the hours of sleep, and so, by reducing the activity of the vital processes to a minimum, avoid the greater part of the natural wear and tear. The time so occupied is so much time to be added to the natural sum of the physical existence of the bodily machine.

*Question.* Up to what day, hour, or minute, of his own bodily life can the Yogi exercise this power of transferring his *átmá*, or inner self, to the body of another?

*Answer.* Until the last minute or even second of his natural term of life. He knows beforehand to a second when his body must die, and, until that second strikes, he may project his soul into another person's body if one is ready for his occupancy. But, should he allow that instant to pass, then he can do no more. The cord is snapped for ever, and the Yogi, if not sufficiently purified and perfected to be enabled to attain *Moksha*,\* must follow the common law of re-birth. The only difference between his case and that of other men is that he, having become a far more intellectual, good and wise being than they, is reborn under better conditions.

*Q.* Can a Yogi prolong his life to the following extent; say the natural life of his own body is seventy years, can he, just before the death of that body, enter the body of a child of six years, live in that another term of seventy years, remove from that to another, and live in it a third seventy?

*A.* He can, and can thus prolong his stay on earth to about the term of four hundred years.

*Q.* Can a Yogi thus pass from his own body into that of a woman?

*A.* With as much ease as a man can, if he chooses, put on himself the dress of a woman, so he can put over his own *átmá* her physical form. Externally, he would then be in every physical aspect and relation a woman; internally, himself.

*Q.* I have met two such; that is to say, two persons who appeared women, but who were entirely masculine in everything but the body. One of them, you remember, we visited together at Benares, in a temple on the bank of the Ganges.

*A.* Yes, "Majji."

*Q.* How many kinds of Yoga practice are there?

*A.* Two—*Hatha Yoga* and *Raja Yoga*. Under the former the student undergoes physical trials and hardships for the purpose of subjecting the body to the will. For example, the swinging of one's body from a tree, head downwards, at a little distance from five burning fires, &c. In *Raja Yoga* nothing of the kind is required. It is a system of mental training by which the mind is made the servant of the will. The one—*Hatha Yoga*—gives physical results; the other—*Raja Yoga*—spiritual powers. He who would become perfect in *Raja* must have passed through the training in *Hatha*.

*Q.* But are there not persons who possess the *Siddhis*, or powers, of the *Raja Yoga* without ever having passed through the terrible ordeal of the *Hatha*? I certainly have met three such in India, and they themselves told me they had never submitted their bodies to torture.

*A.* Then they practised *Hatha* in their previous birth.

*Q.* Explain, if you please, how we may distinguish between real and false phenomena when produced by one supposed to be a Yogi.

*A.* Phenomena and phenomenal appearances are of three kinds: the lowest are produced by sleight of hand or dexterity; the second by chemical and mechanical aids or appliances; the third, and highest, by the occult powers of man. Whenever anything of a startling nature is exhibited by either of the first two means, and it is falsely represented to have been of an un-natural or super-natural, or miraculous character, that is properly called a *Tamasha*, or dishonest deception. But if the true and correct explanation of such surprising effect is given then it should be classed as a simple exhibition of scientific, or technical skill, and is to be called *Vyavahar-Vidya*. Effects, produced by the sole exercise of the trained human will, without apparatus or mechanical aids, are true *Yoga*.

*Q.* Define the nature of the human *átmá*?

\* The abstract condition of pure spirit, almost identical with the *nirvana* of the Buddhists.—ED. THEOS.

*A.* In the *átmá* there are twenty-four powers; shall I name them all to you, and separately explain each?

*Q.* No, it is not necessary to go so much into detail. We merely want at this time a general idea of the subject.

*A.* Among these qualities are will, passivity, action, determined perception or knowledge, strong memory, &c. When all these powers are brought to bear upon the external world, the practitioner produces effects which are properly classed under the head of Physical Science. When he applies them to the internal world, that is Spiritual Philosophy—*Yoga—Antaryoga*, or inner Yog. When two men talk to each other from far distant places by means of the telegraph, that is *Vyavahar-Vidya*; when without any apparatus and by employing their knowledge of natural forces and currents, it is *Yoga Vidya*. It is also *Yoga-Vidya* when an adept in the science causes articles of any kind to be brought to himself from a distance, or sends them from himself to any distant place, in either case without visible means of transportation, such as railways, messengers, or what not. The former is called *Akarshan* (attraction), the latter *Prashan*. The ancients thoroughly understood the laws of the attraction and repulsion of all things in Nature between each other, and the *Yoga* phenomena are based upon that knowledge. The Yogi changes or intensifies these attractions and repulsions at will.

*Q.* What are the pre-requisites for one who wishes to acquire these powers?

*A.* These are: (1) A desire to learn. Such a desire as the starving man has for food, or a thirsty one for water: an intense and eager yearning. (2) Perfect control over the passions and desires. (3) Chastity; pure companionship; pure food—that which brings into the body none but pure influences; the frequenting of a pure locality, one free from vicious taint of any kind; pure air; and seclusion. He must be endowed with intelligence—that he may comprehend the principles of nature, concentrativeness—that his thoughts may be prevented from wandering and self-control—that he may always be master over his passions and weaknesses. Five things he must relinquish—Ignorance, Egotism (conceit), Passion (sensual), Selfishness, Fear of Death.

*Q.* You do not believe, then, that the Yogi acts contrary to Natural Laws?

*A.* Never; nothing happens contrary to the laws of Nature. By *Hatha Yoga* one can accomplish a certain range of minor phenomena, as, for instance, to draw all his vitality into a single finger, or when in *Dhyan* (a state of mental quiescence) to know another's thoughts. By *Raja Yoga* he becomes a *Siddha*; he can do whatever he wills and know whatever he desires to know, even languages which he has never studied. But all these are in strict harmony with Natural Laws.

*Q.* I have occasionally seen inanimate articles duplicated before my eyes, such as letters, coins, pencils, articles of jewellery; how is this to be accounted for?

*A.* In the atmosphere are the particles of every visible thing in a highly diffused state. The Yogi knowing how to concentrate these, does so by the exercise of his will and forms them into any shape of which he can picture to himself the model.

Col. Olcott asked the Swami what he would call certain phenomena heretofore produced by Madame Blavatsky in the presence of witnesses, such as the causing of a shower of roses to fall in a room at Benares last year, the ringing of bells in the air, the causing of the flame of a lamp to gradually diminish until it almost went out and then, at command, to blaze up again to the top of the chimney, without touching the regulator in either instance, etc. The answer was that these were phenomena of *Yoga*. Some of them might be imitated by tricksters and then would be mere *tamasha*; but these were not of that class.

The above memorandum is not claimed to be a *verbatim* report of the interesting conversation at Meerut, but only a careful abstract giving the spirit of what was said. The Swami's Hindi was interpreted by Babu Baldeo Prasad, Head-Master of the Normal School, Babu Jwala Prasad, Second Clerk of the Magistrate's Court, and Babu Chedee Lal, Gumashtha or Purchasing Agent of the Government Commissariat Department.

The facts will be interesting to all Western biologists, and especially suggestive to those who are familiar with the phenomena of mediumship.

O.

### IS MAN ONLY A MACHINE ?

BY JOSEPH POLLOCK, ESQ.

Dr. Dionysius Lardner, in the instructive article on "Man" published in his "Museum of Science and Art," so far departs from that more familiar theme which he designates the "rigorous logic of physics and mathematics" as to furnish the reader with his views upon the more theological question of the respective claims of Materialism and Spiritualism. With that forcible simplicity of diction so eminently at the command of the author, and which seems to add strength to his arguments, the two theories are brought with great clearness into juxtaposition. It is not, however, difficult to discern on which side the author's own sentiments range themselves. Whether the claims of materialism to our acceptance be well or ill founded, they are at least, sufficiently cogent to be worthy of the most careful investigation.

The case, when briefly summed up, would appear to stand thus:—Spiritualism maintains that the inner, or intellectual being, stands altogether apart from the physical organization, though inseparably connected with it during life. That a soul, or vital principle, or spiritual essence of some inconceivable nature is mysteriously implanted or breathed into the infant at its birth, and at death, again, a similar performance must be gone through, for this spiritual essence, or whatever it may be, has now to be got rid of. In both cases, it may be observed, the presence of the priest is deemed necessary; although it must be obvious to every one, that his presence could in no way change the course of events, whatever might arise. No one probably is more fully aware of this than the priest himself.

Materialism, on the other hand, discards the doctrine of supernatural interference and to this rejection Dr. Lardner opposes the theory now so generally accepted, of the constant casting off from our systems, of worn-out and exhausted matter, and its replacement by particles newly acquired from the process of nutrition, by which means, we are told, the entire organisation undergoes a change within a period not yet fully ascertained, but supposed by many not to exceed twelve months. A man of ordinary stature, it is said, is composed of 14 lbs. of bone, 24 lbs. of flesh and blood, and 116 lbs. of water; or, reduced to their ultimate elements, of 10 lbs. of lime, 2 lbs. of charcoal combined with 2 lbs. weight of the gases that constitute common air. Upon these facts, it is argued with unquestionable potency that reason forbids belief in such a combination accounting for the intellectual principle residing in the human body; and, that, if that principle be not the result of the organization of those materials and of the matter itself, it follows necessarily that it must have resulted from something else, and if that something was not material it can only have been spiritual. The question—so often quoted—is asked;—"What was it that was identical in the Duke of Wellington dying at Waterloo in 1852, with the Duke of Wellington commanding at Waterloo in 1815?" It can scarcely be supposed that any one particle of matter was common to his body on both occasions. He must have changed many times in the course of the thirty-seven years that intervened; yet there

was clearly something within him that had not changed; and that something, not being material, must, it is concluded, have been spiritual. The position it must be admitted has every appearance of being unassailable; yet a writer has recently placed the subject in another light, and argues, upon data equally well founded, the opposite side of the question. It is in this wise that he discourses. The vital principle, or, in other words, life, is neither more nor less than the effect of organization, commencing with the first throb of the circulation of the blood, and terminating when that circulation ceases. Unlike the organization of the musical instrument from the name of which this word is taken, and which is put together in solid parts, the animal organization is built up from a small and invisible point; a vital or electric spark, in fact, passed from one excited body to another, and there germinating and increasing, increment by increment, until that stage of maturity is reached when the circulation of the blood within it commences, and a new life springs into existence. That circulation may continue only for a few hours, or it may continue for three score and ten years or more, and so long, we are told, as this circulation lasts, life lasts, and no longer. The power by which this organized body is to be sustained for three score and ten years, or for whatever time it may last, is asserted to be *galvanic action*, for the generation of which the body itself forms a self-acting and self-sustaining battery, and continues to perform this function healthily so long as its component parts work together harmoniously. The three great functions of this organised body are, the sensorial, the nervous, and the muscular; and these three powers, taken connectedly, constitute man a living, thinking being. The brain and the spinal marrow are the chief storehouses of these powers. They do not, however, follow each other as cause and effect, but mutually act and re-act upon each other. It is this action and re-action, working like the pendulum of a clock between the two extremes of pain on the one hand, and pleasure on the other, that gives rise to all action both moral and physical. The imaginary pendulum like the real one seeks the rest and ease that lies between the two extremes: but extremes beget each other, and the desired rest is never permanently arrived at.

Life may be said to commence with the addition of the last increment to the complete structure of the new being and the consequent commencement of that oscillatory action which gives rise to its movements while even yet unborn. It is this same action which prompts the newly born infant to relieve a feeling of suffocation by the inflation of its lungs, and thus are called into use the respiratory organs. This is followed by a feeling of hunger, which calls forth the act of taking food, and the organs of digestion are thus called into requisition. A sense of repletion follows, attended with other consequences, and these processes are continued so long as life continues.

Like the waking from deep sleep, consciousness gradually dawns upon the infant mind—the consciousness that it lives and the desire to continue to do so; and from these instincts, with which it came into the world, reason by slow degrees asserts itself and, in course of time, as from a germ or root develops itself into full maturity. Happily for us, these instincts remain with us through life, and not unfrequently prove themselves to be a safer guide than even the coolest reason. The springs of moral action are to be found in the functions of the animal body. It is there that the incentives to that action have their roots, and it must be clearly manifest to all who take the trouble to study the subject for themselves that fever or any other derangement of the physical organization influences, often to the extent of total deprivation, those powers of the mind which spiritualism maintains are emanations of the independent "vital principle" so mysteriously bestowed upon us at birth and so strangely left to take its flight at death. For the mind to be in healthy condition the body must be so, and that the converse is the case we are equally well assured. If organic action be excited by

stimulants, the consciousness becomes more vivid; if soothed or allayed by sedatives, the mental perception becomes more dull. The "vital principle" can have no share in this; and if the stimulant or the sedative be taken in sufficient quantity, organic action ceases, uncontrolled by any influences foreign to the organization itself. There are those, to whom it would be simply a waste of time to prove that every function of the mind is ruled by, and dependent upon, a corresponding function of the body. This is not sufficient for them. Mystery has a fascination for the majority of persons, which was not lost sight of by those who framed the doctrine of that inconceivable something which we call the soul or inner life, although its *raison d'être* has never been established, nor its nature ever explained.

When the newly born infant is separated from its mother and commences its own individual existence, the first manifestation is given of that indissoluble union between the sentient and corporeal conditions of existence, which applies in all cases and through all subsequent changes. The feeling of suffocation and the feeling of hunger are mental perceptions that have to be appeased through the organs of respiration and of digestion; and in like manner, to their respective organic functions must be referred the various impulses of the sensorium. It is in them alone that are to be found the primal forces that move every feeling of the mind, every passion, and every sympathy and antipathy. As the instincts and the senses make up the sum of the moral being, so do the brain, the nervous and the muscular systems, make up the sum of the animal organization. Together, these forces serve to connect the physical and the moral worlds; physical action proceeding from the external world, through the senses to the internal mind; and moral action from the internal mind, through the voluntary muscles to the external world; and these forces and functions taken in their relation to each other, constitute man the living, thinking machine we see in him. We are all ready to admit that nature creates nothing in vain; to what purpose then, may we ascribe the creation within us of that second life or soul, of which we hear so much, and know so little?

If we observe closely the process of dying, it will be seen that as the corporeal organization must necessarily have been complete before the sensorial powers could have been evolved from it, so, in like manner, is it the last to yield to death. The sensorial powers are the first to take their flight, as is evidenced by the cessation of all acts of volition. The nervous powers, which hitherto had linked the former to the corporeal fabric, are the next to take their departure; and the last to die are the muscular forces, which is evidenced by the continuance of respiration, even after the most powerful stimulants have failed to awaken consciousness.

Whatever weight may be claimed for the arguments adduced on either side of this question, it will be admitted that, they have been drawn from accepted data, and but little is allowed to rest upon mere assumption.\*

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KNOWLEDGE IS THE TREASURE OF THE MIND; DISCRETION the key to it; and it illustrates all other learning, as the lapidary does unpolished diamonds.

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THE WHOLE UNIVERSE IS YOUR LIBRARY; CONVERSATION, living studies, and remarks upon them, are your best tutors.

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\* Mr. Pollock has as ably presented both sides of the case as any one could without the help to be drawn from experimental Psychology. The materialistic argument is perfect so far as concerns the mechanical aspect of the human being; but here steps in the practitioner of Asiatic Yoga, and, displaying a group of phenomena of the possibility of which the materialist never so much as dreamed, shows us that man can only be comprehended by those who have studied him in both sides of his nature. The old maxim *experientia docet*, should be ever borne in mind by our modern philosophers.—ED. THEOS.

[Concluded from the November Number.]

### SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

(A lecture delivered, upon invitation, at the rooms of the United Service Institution of India, at Simla, October 7, 1880)

BY COLONEL HENRY S. OLCOTT,

*President of the Theosophical Society.*

I will not attempt to give you in these few minutes of our lecture, even the bare outline of my observations during those eventful weeks. Suffice it to say that I saw as many as seventeen of these *revenants* in a single evening, and that, from first to last, I saw about five hundred. There were a certain few figures that seemed especially attached to the medium's sphere or influence, but the rest were the appearances of friends of the strangers who daily flocked to the place from the most distant localities—some as far away as 2,000 miles. There were Americans and Europeans, Africans, and Asiatics, red Indians of our prairies and white people; each wearing his familiar dress and some even carrying their familiar weapons. One evening, the figure of a Khurd, a man whom Madame Blavatsky had known in Kurdistan, stepped from the closet, clad in his tall cap, high boots and picturesque clothes. In the shawl twisted about his waist were thrust a curved sword and other small arms. His hands were empty, but after salaaming my friend in his native fashion, lo! his right hand held a twelve-foot spear which bore below the steel head a tuft of feathers. Now, supposing this farmer-medium to have been ever so much a cheat, whence, in that secluded hamlet, did he procure this Kurdish dress, the belt arms and the spear at a moment's notice—for Mme. Blavatsky had but just arrived at Chittenden, and neither I nor any one else knew who she was, nor whence she had come. All my experiences there were described by me, first in a series of letters to a New York journal, and afterwards in book-form\* and I must refer the curious to that record for details, both as to what was seen and what precautions I took against deception. Two suspicions have doubtless occurred to your minds while I have been speaking—(a) that some confederate or confederates got access to the medium through the closet-window, or dresses and dolls were passed up to him from below through a trap or sliding-panel. Of course, they would occur to any one with the least ingenuity of thought. They occurred to me and this is what I did. I procured a ladder and on the outside of the house tacked a piece of mosquito-net over the entire window, sash frame and all, sealing the tack-heads with wax, and stamping each with my signet ring. This effectually prevented any nonsense from that quarter. And then calling to my help an architect and a clever Yankee inventor and mechanic, with those gentlemen I made a minute practical examination of the chimney, the floor, the platform, the rooms below, and the lumber-loft over-head. We were all perfectly satisfied that if there was any trickery in the case it was done by William Eddy himself without confederacy, and that if he used theatrical dresses or properties, he must carry them in with him. In the little narrow hole of a closet there was neither a candle, mirror, brush, wig, clothes, water-basin, towel, cosmetic, nor any other of the actor's paraphernalia, nor, to speak the truth, had the poor farmer the money to buy them with. He took no fee for his seances, and visitors were charged only a very small sum for their board and lodging. I have sat smoking with him in his kitchen until it was time for the seance to begin, gone with him to the upper chamber, examined the closet before he entered it, searched his person, and then seen the self same wonderful figures come out as usual in their various dresses. I think I may claim to have proceeded cautiously, for Mr. A. R. Wallace, F. R. S., quoted and eulogized my book in his recent controversy with Professor W. B. Carpenter. Carpenter himself went to America to enquire into my character for veracity and publicly admitted it to be unimpeached. Professor Wagner of St. Petersburg reviewed the work in a special pamphlet, in

\* *People from the other World*, Hartford, Conn, 1875, American Publishing Co.

which he affirms that I fulfilled every requirement of scientific research, and three European psychological societies elected me Honorary Member. It should also be noted that four years of very responsible and intricate examinations on behalf of the War Department—during our late American War, the proofs of which service have been shown by me to the Indian authorities—qualified me to conduct this inquiry with at least a tolerable certainty that I would not be imposed upon. Having then seen all that has now been outlined to you, will you wonder that I should have been thoroughly convinced of the reality of a large group of psychic phenomena, that science helplessly tries to offer some explanation for? And can you be surprised that whatever man of science has, since 1848, seriously and patiently investigated modern spiritualism, he has become a convert, no matter what may have been his religious belief or professional bias?

The mention of religion leads me to a certain fact. While the Protestant Church has in our time ever resolutely denied the reality of such manifestations of occult agencies, the Church of Rome has always admitted them to be true. In her rubrics there are special forms of exorcism, and when Miss Laura Edmonds, the gifted daughter of the honoured American jurist above mentioned, and one of the most remarkable mediums of this modern movement, united herself with the Catholic Church, her confessor, a Paulist Brother of New York, drove out her obsessing "devils" in due form after—as he told me—a terrific struggle. Mediumship was anathematized by the late Pope himself, as a dangerous device of the Evil One, and the faithful warned against the familiars of the circle as his agents for the ruin of souls. There appeared in France, within the past few years a series of books by the Chevalier des Mousseaux, highly applauded by the Catholic prelates, especially designed to collate the most striking proof of the demoniac agency in the phenomena. They are all valuable repositories of psychic facts, one especially, *Les Mœurs et Pratiques des Demons*, which every student of Occultism should read. The industrious author, of course, convinces no one but Catholics as to his premiss, but his facts are most welcome and suggestive. Though there is never a grain of religious orthodoxy in me, and I do not in the least sympathize with the demoniacal theory, yet I find, after learning what I have of Asiatic psychological science, that the Catholics are much nearer right in recognizing and warning against the dangers of mediumship, than the Protestants in blindly denying the reality of the phenomena. Mediumship is a peril indeed, and the last thing I could wish would be to see one whom I was interested in become one. The Hindus—who have known these phenomena from time immemorial—give the most appropriate name of *bhuta-dák*, or demons' post, to these unfortunates. I do sincerely hope that sooner or later the experience of India in this matter will be studied, and if mediumship is to be encouraged at all, it shall be under such protective restrictions as the ancient Sybils enjoyed in the temples, under the watchful care of initiated priests. This is not the language of a Spiritualist, nor am I one. In the reality of the phenomena and the existence of the psychic force I do most unreservedly believe, but here my concurrence with the spiritualists ends. For more than twenty years I was of their opinion, and shared with Mr. Owen and Mr. Wallace the conviction that the phenomena could not be attributed to any other agency than that of the departed ones. I could not understand how the intelligence behind the manifestations could be otherwise accounted for, especially that shown in such cases as I have mentioned where the facts related were unknown to any one at the seance and only verified long afterwards in distant countries. But until meeting Mme. Blavatsky at the Eddys' I had not even heard of Asiatic Occultism as a science. The tales of travellers and the stories of the Arabian Nights I set down to fanciful exaggeration, and all that was printed about Indian jugglers and the powers of ascetics seemed but accounts of successful prestidigitation. I can now look back to that meeting as the most fortunate event of my

life, for it made light shine in all the dark places and sent me out on a mission to help to revive Aryan occult science which grows more absorbingly interesting with every day. It is my happiness to not only help to enlarge the boundaries of Western science by showing where the secrets of nature and of man may be experimentally studied, and to give Anglo-Indians a greater respect for the subject-nation they rule over, but also to aid in kindling in the bosoms of Indian youth a proper reverence for their glorious ancestry and a desire to imitate them in their nobler achievements in science and philosophy. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the sole cause of our coming to India; this explains our affectionate relations with the people, our respect for their real Yogis. Each of you looks forward to the day when you will return to your English homes; our home is here, and here we mean to end our days.

The handbills announce me as the President of the Theosophical Society, and you have gathered here to learn what Theosophy is and what are its relations with Spiritualism.

Let me say then, that in the sense given to it by those who first used it, the word means divine wisdom, or the knowledge of divine things. The lexicographers handicap the idea with the suggestion that it meant the knowledge of God, the Deity before their minds being a personal one; but such was not the intention of the early theosophists. Essentially, a theosophical society is one which favours man's original acquisition of knowledge, about the hidden things of the universe by the education and perfecting of his own latent powers. Theosophy differs as widely from philosophy as it does from theology. It has been truly said that in investigating the divine nature and attributes philosophy proceeds entirely by the dialectic method, employing as the basis of its investigation the ideas derived from natural reason; theology, still employing the same method, superadds to the principles of natural reason those derived from authority and revelation. Theosophy, on the contrary, professes to exclude all dialectical process, and to derive all its knowledge of God from direct and immediate intuition and contemplation. This theosophy dates from the highest antiquity of which we have preserved any records, and every original founder of a religion was a seeker after divine wisdom by the theosophic process of self-illumination. Where do we find in our day the facilities for pursuing this glorious study? Where are the training schools that are worthy to be called the successors of those of the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria, the Hierophants of Egypt, the Theodidaktói of Greece, or—and especially—the Rishis of Aryavarta, noblest of all initiates, if we except the stainless, the illuminated Gautama Buddha?

Think for a moment of what this theosophical study exacts of a man who would really penetrate the mysteries and become a true *Illuminatus*. The lusts of the flesh, the pride of life, the prejudices of birth, race, creed (so far as it creates dogmatism)—must all be put aside. The body must be made the convenience instead of the despot of the higher self. The prison bars of sense that incarcerate the man of matter must be unlocked, and while living in, and being a factor in, the outer world, the theosophist must be able to look into, enter, act in, and return from, the inner world, fraught with divine truths. Are there,—were there ever—such men, such demigods, rather let us say? There were; there *are*. The legends of the past may seem to us tinged with error, wild and fantastic, even; but, nevertheless, such men as these existed and displayed their powers, in many countries, at various epochs. And nowhere more than in India, this blessed land of the sun—now so poor, so spiritless, so famished and degraded. This was the home of ancient Theosophy; here—upon these very Himalayan mountains that tower so high yonder—lived and taught the men who won the prize of divine knowledge, whose wisdom—a fertilizing stream—flowed through Grecian and Egyptian channels towards the West. Believe me or not, as you will, I am fully persuaded that there still linger among these fastnesses, out of the poisoned moral atmosphere of the

nineteenth century, social life, safe from the blight and persecution of bigotry and intolerant modern superstition, safe from the cruel malice of scepticism—those who are true theosophists. Neither pessimist nor optimist, I am not satisfied that our race is doomed to destruction, present or future, nor that the moral sense of society can be kept undiminished without constant refreshment from the parent fount. That fount I conceive to be theosophical study and personal illumination, and I regard him as a benefactor to his kind who points to the sceptical, the despairing, the world-weary, the heart-hungry, that the vanities of the world do not satisfy the soul's aspirations, and true happiness can only be acquired by interior self-development, purification and enlightenment. It is not in accord with the abstract principles of Justice that the world should be left entirely without such exemplars of spiritual wisdom. I do not believe it ever was, or ever will be.

To him who takes up this course of effort the phenomena of mediumship are transcendently important, for they usher him into the realm of the Unseen, and show him some of the weirdest secrets of our human nature. Along with mediumship he studies vital magnetism, its laws and phenomena, and the Odyle of Von Reichenbach, which together show us the real nature and polarities of this Force, and the fact that it seems to be akin to the one great force that pervades all nature. Further proof he draws from Buchanan's psychometry, and experiments with those whom he finds to be endowed with the psychometrical faculty. If there are any here to whom this is a new word, I will say that this is a name given by the modern discoverer to a certain power possessed by about one person in four to receive intuitive impressions of the character of the writer of a letter or the painter of a picture by direct contact with the manuscript or the painting. Every one of us is constantly leaving the impress of his character upon everything we touch, as the loadstone imparts some of its properties to every needle it is rubbed against. A subtle something—magnetism, or vital fluid, or psychic force—constantly exudes from us. We leave it on the ground and our dog finds us; on our clothing, and the slaver's bloodhound sniffs the scent and tracks the poor runaway to his hiding-place. We saturate with it the walls of our houses, and a sensitive psychometer upon entering our drawing-room can unerringly tell before seeing the family, whether that is a happy home or one of strife. We are surrounded by it as a sensitive vapour, and when we meet each other we silently take in our impressions of our mutual congeniality or antipathy. Women have this sense more than men, and many are the instances where a wife's prophetic intuition, unheeded and ridiculed by the husband in the case of some new acquaintance, has afterwards been recalled with regret that it should have been disregarded. Good psychometers can even take from any fragment of inanimate matter, such as a bit of an old building, or a shred of an old garment, a vivid impression of all the scenes of its history. In its highest manifestation psychometry becomes true clairvoyance, and, when that soul-sight is indeed opened, the eye within us that never grows lustreless shows us the arcana of the Unseen Universe.

Theosophy shows the student that evolution is a fact, but that it has not been partial and incomplete as Darwin's theory makes it. As there has been an evolution in physical nature the crown and flower of which is physical man, so there has been a parallel evolution in the realm of spirit. The outcome of this is the psychic, or inner, man; and, just as in this visible nature about us we see myriads of forms lower than ourselves, so the Theosophist finds in the *terra incognita* of the physicist—the realm of the "Unknownable"—countless minor psychical types, with man at the top of the ascending series. Physicists know of the elements only in their chemical or dynamic relations and properties; but he who has mastered the Occult Sciences finds dwelling in fire, air, earth, and water, sub-human order of being, some inimical, some favourable to man. He not only

comes to a knowledge of them, but also to the power of controlling them. The folk-lore of the world has embalmed many truths about this power, which is none the less a fact because the modern biologist turns up his nose at it. You who come from Ireland or the Scottish Highlands know that these beings exist. I do not surmise this, I *know* it. I speak thus calmly and boldly about the subject, because I have met these proficientes of Asiatic Occultism and seen them exercise their power. This is why I ceased to call myself a Spiritualist in 1874, and why, in 1875, I united with others to found a Theosophical Society to promote the study of these natural phenomena. The most wonderful facts of mediumship I have seen produced at will and in full daylight by one who had learnt the secret sciences in India and Egypt. Under such circumstances I have seen showers of roses made to fall in a room; letters from people in far countries to drop from space into my lap; heard sweet music coming from afar upon the air, grow louder and louder until it was in the room, and then die away again out in the still atmosphere until it was no more. I have seen writing made to appear upon paper and slates laid upon the floor, drawings upon the ceiling beyond any one's reach, pictures upon paper without the employment of pencil or colour, articles duplicated before my very eyes, a living person instantly disappear before my sight, jet-black hair cut from a fair-haired person's head, had absent friends and distant scenes shown me in a crystal, and, in America more than an hundred times, upon opening letters upon various subjects coming to me by the common post from my correspondents in all parts of the world, have found inside, written in their own familiar hand, messages to me from men in India who possess the theosophical knowledge of natural law. Nay, upon one occasion I even saw summoned before me as perfectly 'materialized' a figure as any that ever stalked out of William Eddy's cabinet of marvels. If it is not strange that the spiritualist who sees mediumistic phenomena, but knows nothing of occult science, should believe in the intervention of spirits of the dead, is it any stranger that I, after receiving so many proofs of what the trained human will can accomplish, should be a theosophist and no longer a spiritualist? I have not even half exhausted the catalogue of the proofs that have been vouchsafed to me during the last five years as to the reality of Asiatic psychological science. But I hope I have enumerated enough to show you that there are mysteries in India worth seeking, and men here who are far more acquainted with nature's occult forces than either of those much-initiated gentlemen who set themselves up for professors and biologists.

It will be asked what evidence I offer that the intelligent phenomena of the mediums are not to be ascribed to our departed friends. In reply, I ask what unimpeachable evidence there is that they are. If it can be shown that the soul of the living medium can, unconsciously to his physical self, ooze out, and by its elastic and protean nature take on the appearance of any deceased person whose image it sees in a visitor's memory; if all the phenomena can be produced at will by an educated psychologist; if, in the ether of science—the *Akasa* of the Hindus, the *Anima Mundi* of the theosophists, the *Astral Light* of the cabalists—the images of all persons and events, and the vibration of every sound, are eternally preserved—as these occultists affirm and experimentally prove—if all this is true, then why is it necessary to call in the spirits of the dead to explain what may be done by the living? So long as no alternative theory was accessible, the spiritualists held impregnable ground against materialistic science; theirs was the only possible way to account for what they saw. But, given the alternative, and shown the resources of psychology and the nature of the Unseen Universe, you see the spiritualists are at once thrown upon the defensive without the ability to silence their critics. The casual observer would say it is impossible, for instance, for that aged Quaker lady's figure to be anything but her own returning soul—that her son could not have been mistaken, and that if there were any

doubt otherwise her familiar knowledge of their family matters, and even her old habit of alternately plaiting and smoothing-out her lawn apron identify her amply. But the figure did nothing and said nothing that was not fixed in the son's memory—indelibly stamped there, however, the long dormant pictures might have been obscured by fresher images. And the medium's body being entranced and his active vitality transferred to his inner self, or 'double', that double could make itself appear under the guise of the dead lady, and catch and comment upon the familiar incidents it found in the son's magnetic atmosphere. This will be hard for you to comprehend, for our Western scientific discoveries have not as yet crossed the threshold of this hidden world of Force. But progress is the law of human thought, and we are now so near the verge of the chasm that divides physical from spiritual science, that it will not be long before we will bridge it. Let this stand as a prophecy; if you bide patiently you will see it fulfilled. This then is the present attitude of parties. The promulgation of our views and of many reports by eye-witnesses of things done by members of the Theosophical Society has been causing great talk all over the world. A large body of the most intelligent spiritualists have joined us and are giving their countenance to our work. Groups of sympathizers have organized themselves into branches in many different countries. Even here in Simla there has sprung up the nucleus of what will be an Anglo-Indian branch. No country in the world affords so wide a field as India for psychological study. What we Europeans call Animal Magnetism has been known here and practised in its highest perfection for countless centuries. The Hindus know equally well the life-principle in man, animal and plants. All over India, if search were but made, you would find in the possession of the natives many facts that it is most important for Europe and America to know. And you, gentlemen, of the civil and military branches of the public service, are the proper ones to undertake the work with Hindu help. Be just and kind to them and they will tell you a thousand things they now keep profound secrets among themselves. Our policy is one of general conciliation and co-operation for the discovery of truth. Some tale-bearer has started the report that our Society is preaching a new religion. This is false: the Society has no more a religion of its own than the Royal Asiatic, the Geographical, the Royal, or the Astronomical. As those societies have their separate sections, each devoted to some specialty of research, so have we. We take in persons of all religions and every race, and treat all with equal respect and impartiality. We have royal, noble, and plebeian blood among us. Edison is our member, and Wallace, and Camille Flammarion, and Lord Lindsay, and Baron du Potet and the octogenarian Cahagnet, and scores of men of that intellectual quality. We have but one passionate and consuming ambition—that of learning what man is, what nature. Are there any here who sympathize with these aspirations? Any who feel within their hearts the glow of true manhood—one that puts a higher value upon divine wisdom than upon the honours and rewards of the lower life? Come, then, brother dreamers, and let us combine our efforts and our good will. Let us see if we cannot win happiness for ourselves in striving to benefit others. Let us do what we can to rescue from the oblivion of centuries that priceless knowledge of divine things which we call THEOSOPHY. [Loud applause.]

Upon the conclusion of the lecture, and when the applause had subsided, Lieutenant-General W. Olpherts, C. B., V. C., R. A., rose and said that, however much those present might differ in religious opinion with the eloquent lecturer, or even in the matter of the phenomena he had described, yet he felt sure that the thanks of the meeting would be unanimously voted to him for the impartial and able address to which they had just listened. The motion was carried with marked signs of approbation, and the meeting then adjourned.

## THE KILLING OF COWS AND OTHER USEFUL BEASTS.

BY DAYANAND SARASWATI SWAMI.

A destroyer in the universe is always a *papi* or sinner, and its promoter, a *dharmi* or virtuous. Now what we ought to consider is whether the action of killing cows and other useful beasts for the purpose of getting food is one which tends to the promotion or destruction of the natural order of the universe. It seems to be the latter from the following facts.

A cow, when slaughtered, cannot afford food to more than thirty or forty persons at the most, while, if preserved alive, she produces on an average ten seers of milk per diem or 7½ maunds per month. Supposing she has, first and last, ten calves, and yields milk for ten months after each issue, then the total quantity of milk produced from one cow in her life-time will be 750 maunds. Now taking two seers of milk as sufficient food for one man, one cow at this rate can supply food to 15,000 men for one day.

Besides, a greater advantage is derived from the calves. As stated above, suppose she has ten calves, five male and five female. Each of the calves is just as useful as the cow herself and, therefore, the preservation of one cow and the five she-calves can supply food for one day to 15,000 × 5 or 75,000 men. Let us now suppose that one bullock, when used for agricultural purposes, can help to produce, on an average 8000 maunds of grain. The five he-calves will thus produce 40,000 maunds of grain. Taking the same daily food for a man, five he-calves will give food to 8,00,000 men for one day.

Without considering the immense advantage accruing from the progeny of these calves and so forth, which will increase just like a series in progression, one and only one cow with her one generation is productive of 8,75,000 men's food when preserved and of 40 men's at the most when killed.

Moreover, milk and butter are rather nutritious both to mind and body than flesh; and as good food always keeps good health, it also gives true courage and other mental and bodily qualifications without which a man cannot be said to be existing. On account of scarcity of the milk and butter much grain is used, which has two evident disadvantages.

1. It being used in unusually large quantities becomes dear.
2. Considerably greater will be the quantity of rubbish and filth on the surface of the earth when grain alone is used as food for man, which will corrupt the air and water and thus be the cause of great many evils. Being unable to get so nutritious a food as milk and butter and to live in a better atmosphere (as stated above) men will always be idle and thus unable to do any thing either useful to them or to others.

Owing to their mental weakness, pleasures or sorrows of this life will also tell much upon them.

A little learning is a dangerous thing,  
 Drink deep, or taste not the PLATONIC spring;  
 There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,  
 And drinking largely, sobers us again.

THOMAS TAYLOR.

HE WHO IS PASSIONATE AND HASTY IS GENERALLY honest. It is your cold, dissembling hypocrite of whom you should beware. There is no deception in a bulldog. It is only the cur that sneaks up and bites you when your back is turned.—*Banner of Light*.



## THE OCCULT SCIENCES.

BY BABU BARADA KANTA MAJUMDAR.

To use a Sanskrit aphorism, truth is certainly a jewel that does not go about in quest of an owner, but, to possess it, one must find it out. The same sectarian narrowness and blind prejudice that deafened the ears of Pilate against truth, is markedly noticeable in this boastful nineteenth century of intellectual scientists and philosophers. When I say that the ocean of Indian philosophy bears full many a gem of invaluable truth, I do not mean to impose upon any one's credulity. I mean only to urge upon such of my countrymen as have received fair education in Western science and philosophy, the necessity and desirability of making a bold and patient investigation. The occult sciences of India are the monuments of her ancient greatness. Mere idle fancy or morbid imagination did not lead our sages to write about transmudane forces and their actions; the hidden properties of herbs and minerals; the sun, moon and stars, and their population; the elements of fire, air and ether, and their inhabitants; the hidden powers of man and his destiny &c. &c. Our sages were matter-of-fact people, dauntless investigators of truth and matchless martyrs at its altar. Who ever in other countries, foregoing physical enjoyments, pleasures and comforts, tore off every connection with the world and, subjecting himself to every privation, facing every danger, burying himself in woods and mountain caves, who ever, I repeat, investigated truth for its own sake? Yet such was and is the Indian Yogi.

Those who do not admit the occult sciences, smoothly and very gravely say whenever the subject is brought to their notice that such things have been exploded long ago. But, when the position of these "exploders" is closely viewed, it would appear that they are neither acquainted with the recorded evidence nor have they investigated the matter themselves. The sum and substance of their objections is a *petitio principii*,—they only assert that such a thing is impossible. I humbly ask of my countrymen to read the evidence of many hundreds of Yogis, in all parts of India, professing almost diametrically opposite forms of religion. The witnesses being numerous, their character unimpeachable and the facts not physically or mathematically impossible, no one is entitled to dispose of the matter in a summary way. To impress on the minds of my readers an idea, a very faint one though, of what the occult sciences are, I beg in the first place to premise that they contain nothing in them that may be considered supernatural. On the other hand, all the occult sciences are based upon natural laws and forces, and are the result of investigation and experiment. The end and aim of these sciences is to discover and develop certain powers in man, which, for want of proper culture, lie dormant and useless, but which, if properly brought to action, can truly give him the name of "the Lord of Creation."

The investigations of the Indian ascetics and those of Mesmer, Baron von Reichenbach and Baron du Potet would show that throughout the universe certain very subtle forces are at work which harmoniously bind in one eternal chain the vegetable, mineral and animal kingdoms of this earth with each other and with all the worlds and systems besides; and that man, realizing these forces in him, can put himself *en rapport* with objects and beings other than himself.

Every man, as every other animal or object, possesses a certain amount of this influence which can be increased or decreased by certain objective means, just as muscular force, vitality &c. are capable of augmentation or diminution by mechanical or medicinal means, or otherwise. Vegetables, minerals and animals are the auxiliaries which must be judiciously utilized for the purpose of augmenting or decreasing these influences in man. The action of crystals and precious stones is well-known; but the Yogis mention various herbs and animals which in various

ways confer various powers on man for working wonderful things. There are certain herbs which are said to possess the power of attracting persons or animals towards those who use them, just as magnetic attraction serves to draw the subject involuntarily towards the operator. Then there are others which by their antipathies repel objects from one another. The subjective influence of the most powerful mystic may help him to live unmolested in jungles and caves, but there are certain herbs and roots which can help the less powerful against ferocious lions and tigers—nay, they may live on friendly terms with these animals. Fascination of man or any other animal, cataleptic rigidity of the body, temporary deprivation of any mental faculty &c. &c. are said to be feasible by the judicious use of certain herbs, or bones, hair &c. of some animals. There are certain chemical preparations by which the spirit of every plant may be produced, which will represent the herb from which it is extracted. As this is very extraordinary I give its process *in extenso* from Mr. Sibily's work. "Take any whole herb or flower with its roots, make it very clean, and bruise it in a stone mortar quite small; then put it into a glass vessel hermetically sealed; but be sure the vessel be two parts in three empty. Then place it for putrefaction in a gentle heat in balneo, not more than blood warm, for six months, by which it will be all resolved into water. Take this water and pour it into a glass retort, and place a receiver thereunto, the joints of which must be well closed; distil it in a sand heat until there come forth water and oil; and in the upper part of the vessel will hang a volatile salt. Separate the oil from the water, and keep it by itself, but with the water purify the volatile salt by dissolving, filtering, and coagulating. When the salt is thus purified, imbibe with it the said oil, until it is well combined. Then digest them well together for a month in a vessel hermetically sealed, and by this means will be obtained a most subtle essence, which being held over a gentle heat of a candle, the spirit will fly up into the glass where it is confined, and represent the perfect idea or similitude of that vegetable whereof it is the essence; and in this manner will that thin substance, which is like impalpable ashes or salt, send forth from the bottom of the glass the manifest form of whatever herb it is the *menstruum*, in perfect vegetation, growing by little and little, and putting on so fully the form of stalks, leaves and flowers in full and perfect appearance that any one would believe the same to be natural and corporeal; though at the same time it is nothing more than the *spiritual idea endowed with spiritual essence*. This shadowed figure, as soon as the vessel is taken from the heat or candle, returns to its *caput mortuum*, or ashes again, and vanishes away like an apparition, becoming a chaos or confused matter."

The transferring of diseases from one subject to another by means of herbs and roots is another very striking instance of how the same imponderable agent, variously styled as odyle, mesmerism, Akásha &c., works potentially in every man as well as in every object in the world, binding all of them as if in one chain.

But space will not permit me to recount the almost innumerable means of rendering herbs and lower animals subservient to our purpose. The curious reader is referred to the Tantrik works in Sanskrit and to the English works of Mr. Sibily, Dr. Dec. &c.

Then the higher branches of the occult sciences treat of the forces, influences or powers that make up the subject "man"; the means of their development and the uses that may be made of them. The science of mesmerism in all its branches has thrown a flood of light on Indian occultism, which may now be read and intelligently understood by any average reader who has but a slight knowledge of mesmerism. But Western mesmerism is yet in its infancy; and it is hoped that with the help of Indian occultism it will fast gain the position which other sciences now occupy. There is, however, one great distinction between Indian occultism and European mesmerism: viz., that while the latter depends upon secondary sources:

(subjects mesmerised) for the discovery of its truths, the former only treats of self-mesmerisation. In the one case the operator has to rely upon the evidence of his patient, but in the other the self-mesmerised philosopher observes phenomena by the aid of himself alone, in an ordinary conscious state.

### PRANKS OF "SPIRITS" AMONG LAYMEN.

By "laymen," in this case, we mean that class of society and humanity in general, who are not "orthodox spiritualists;" neither are they prepared to declare themselves as believers in the "New Dispensation" theory. We include among this number all ordinary mortals—Christians, sceptics and "half and halves"—if we may be pardoned this unusual expression. Whenever, therefore, we hear of well-authenticated phenomena, alleged to be produced by some invisible agency—the "souls of the departed" as the spiritualists have it, and outside their temples of orthodoxy—the "circle rooms" where mediums as high priests and priestesses lead the service—we give them far more consideration than we would otherwise. Such weird phenomena cannot be easily doubted, nor, if the personal experience and the testimony of millions of people from the remotest ages is worth anything, can they be as little disproved as accounted for. No; not even by the most rapid freethinkers of Bradlaugh's school, unless they are determined to be illogical and go against the very spirit of their own teaching—"Believe but in that which your own eyes see, your own ears hear, and your own hands touch" and whatever the agency sceptics may attribute such phenomena to. In regard to spiritualists, we would only remind them, that in all such strange events showing a malicious, wicked intelligence underlying them, our theory of the elementaries, or earth-bound incarnated thoughts of evil men who have passed away, holds as good as ever. Such phenomena pin all believers in the "angel world" more firmly than ever between the horns of a very disagreeable dilemma. They have either to admit with the Christians the existence of the devil, or with the Kabalists that of the "elementaries." To speak frankly, and in all sincerity, we fail to perceive any substantial difference between a Christian devil—originally a "fallen angel"—and a bad, wicked "spirit"—or a departed soul—each of which the spiritualists hold as being of angelic divine origin. This is the story. We quote from the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, a well-known American paper:—

#### A MISCHIEVOUS GHOST.

A DEFUNCT RAILROAD ENGINEER'S PRANKS.

*The Wild and Mysterious Run of an Engine—Unpleasant Experience of Wipers in a Pit, &c.*

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE "CINCINNATI ENQUIRER."

"VINCENNES, IND., April 18.—Your correspondent fell into the hands of an employe of the Cairo and Vincennes Railroad a day or two ago, and was regaled with one of the most thrilling tales that ever fell on mortal ears. The railroad boys are pretty badly worked up over a reputed ghost at their Round-house in Cairo, and some of their stories are really startling.

"Eighteen or twenty months ago an engineer, named Johnson, was run over by a Cairo and Vincennes engine, No. 4, near the Round-house, and the habitues of that vicinity claim that they have frequently seen Johnson's spook, and have had other evidence of his presence on earth. Employes who have met it have interrogated the shadow, thinking it a human being, only to see it vanish through a solid brick wall.

"The spirit of the defunct engineer does not confine himself to harmless tricks. Two wipers went down into the fire-pit for the purpose of drawing the fire out of engine No. 4, the same machine which caused Johnson's death.

"While they were scraping out the fire the engine suddenly started forward, cutting off their retreat from the hot pit. They yelled piteously for help, but their only answer was mocking laughter. The engine then slowly crawled back to its proper position, and the men, glad of their freedom, rushed out swearing vengeance on the trickster, but not a soul was in sight.

"A coloured man undertook to stay by himself in the Round-house all night, but no sooner had he become comfortably ensconced than missiles of every possible nature began to play around his head. Pieces of coal, crow-bars, spikes, hammers, &c., filled the air, and Mr. Negro vacated, concluding that he was not proof against iron in the form it was being pushed at him.

"The latest exploit of the deceased engineer—at least to his ghost is the act accredited—might have put the Cairo and Vincennes Railroad to considerable expense, and sent more than one life into eternity. Last Monday, as the engineer and fireman of a Cairo and Vincennes engine in the Cairo yards were sitting in a building eating their dinner, steam in their engine being shut off, the machine suddenly darted up the line and was out of sight in a jiffy. It went howling over streets and road-crossings, and did not slack speed till it reached Mound City, five miles distant from the starting-point, where it came to a dead stand. Those who witnessed the stop, testify that no one jumped off the engine, nor did any one see the occupant of the cab during the flight. Fortunately, however, the engine did not meet with any obstructions on the run, or the consequences would, indeed, have been terrible.

"These are only among the hundreds of incidents related by the railroad boys. There is evidently something amiss, and if the Company does not do something to appease the obstreperous defunct, it is not an easy matter to conjecture what the consequences will be. The sceptical "pooh-pooh" the ghost story, but the railroad boys think something is wrong."

Another startling news runs thus:—

#### A CREMATED GHOST.

"NORTH VERNON, IND., April 17.—Late last night a residence belonging to John Wrape, situated at a short distance, west of this city, was destroyed. The house is reported to have been haunted, and it is charged to-day that the building was set on fire to burn up the ghosts. Wonderful stories have been told of the strange sounds that have emanated from this building, and the last family occupying it claimed that they could see no peace on account of the depredations of the now supposed cremated ghosts. Loss to the owner of the building, \$800; no insurance."

TO HEAR THE DISCOURSE OF WISE MEN DELIGHTS US, and their company inspires us with noble and generous contemplations.

AN EMINENT WRITER THUS ADVISES A STUDENT:—  
"Live like a hermit, work like a slave, learn everything, and shun popular pleasure."

NEVER EMPLOY YOURSELF TO DISCERN THE FAULTS OF others, but be careful to mend and prevent your own:—  
*Wisdom in Miniature.*

BEAUTY WITHOUT VIRTUE IS LIKE A PAINTED SEPULCHRE, fair without, but within full of corruption.

THEY THAT LAUGH AT EVERYTHING, AND THEY THAT fret at everything, are fools alike.

[Continued from the August number.]

## THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY.

EXPOUNDED BY THE SOCIETY OF BENARES PUNDITS, AND  
TRANSLATED FOR THE THEOSOPHIST, BY PUNDIT  
SURYA NARAYAN, SECY.

We are now entering into a discussion wonderful as it is to dwell upon, when we hear the *Vedantis* (those who are not well grounded in the subject) heedlessly running amuck before the body politic that they are as pure and holy as *Brahma* who is in no way possessing the attributes of a doer or an enjoyer. Such followers of the Vedanta doctrine as above referred to, being ill-furnished in their attic stories in such matters, commit various sins under the false colour of having recognised the true nature of *Jiva*. But, to prove the invalidity of their wrong notions, we bring in the following argument:—Is it possible for a man to be known as a king as long as he does not attain the pomp and splendour requisite for him to take hold of? Mere saying would not be sufficient. As an advice to the *Vedantis*, we would say that unless they bring the “*mana*,” the eleventh organ into subjection, the seat of all acts—virtuous or sinful—there is no royal road to obtain salvation, and so to put an end to the troubles of this world. Uttering the phrase “*ब्रह्माहं*” (I am *Brahma*) would never suffice to chalk out the path for *mukti* or everlasting freedom. Draw not your bow till your arrow is fixed, for though Brag is a good dog yet Hold-fast is better. For this reason man should practise the *Yoga* as the safest way of reaching the point of destination (freedom from transmigration of soul) because it succeeds in annihilating the different inclinations that take their rise in the heart of man. This practising of the *Yoga* may be well carried out and with better results, by means of its essential parts,\* which are eight in number, being strictly administered.

1. (i) Harmlessness (*अहिंसा*) *i. e.* not afflicting any living being by the different agencies concomitant with human nature; (ii) speaking the truth; (iii) not to be addicted to thieving; (iv) control over the passions (*ब्रह्मचर्य*) *i. e.* avoiding the company of beautiful women; and (v) keeping aloof from the horn of plenty: these are the five religious observances which constitute *yama* (यम). 2. The second necessary step in the *Yoga Philosophy* is also sub-divided into five main points, viz., (i) cleanliness (*शौच*) *i. e.* keeping the body clean and the mind pure; (ii) resting contented with as much as one can gain; (iii) refraining “the *mana*” (the eleventh organ) and the rest of the ten organs from innate passions which each of them is subject to; (iv) repeating mentally the mantra given by one’s own *guru*, (spiritual adviser); and, (v) venerating *Brahma*. The third constituent which is *Asana* (*आसन*) signifies sitting in a certain posture at the time of religious meditation. Under the fourth group comes *pranayama* (*प्राणायाम*) which signifies breathing in a peculiar way through the nostrils during the mental recitation of the names or attributes of the Deity. It is itself subdivided into three classes; viz., (i) *Puraka* (*पूरक*) by which is meant closing of the right nostril and drawing up of air through the left; (ii) *kumbhaka* (*कुम्भक*) which is performed by stopping the breath by shutting the mouth and closing both nostrils with the fingers of the right hand; and (iii) *Rechaka* (*रेचक*) which operation assists in slowly giving off the air drawn up through the right nostril. *Pranayama* can be turned to one’s advantage by the aid of the peculiar postures alluded to in the above lines, (as a necessary constituent of the *Yoga*) and regularity in diet. One who has availed himself of these two advantages is sure to perform the rites of *pranayama* without any difficulty. *Pranayama* which consists in stopping the course of *pranavayu*, (*प्राणवायु*) one of the vital

airs, puts a stop to the different tendencies of the “*mana*,” because these tendencies are due chiefly to the successive respirations and inspirations of the vital air (*प्राणवायु*) only. Next to this in rank but equally important comes “*Pratyahara*” (*प्रत्याहार*) or the restraining of the organs so as to be indifferent to disagreeable or agreeable excitement of a thing according to their respective spheres. “*Dharama*” (*धारणा*) is the sixth in order. According to the *Yoga* philosophy the heart which is represented as a lotus has six divisions (*चक्र*). Each of these is designed for the different duties to be mentally brought into recollection at the time of devotion. Then follows *Dhyana* (*ध्यान*) which is the mental representation of the personal attributes of the Divinity to whom worship is addressed; and, lastly, comes “*Samadhi*” (*समाधि*) which can be explained as deep and devout meditation, restraining the senses and confining the mind to the contemplation of the true nature of the spirit. Any body who practises *Yoga* according to the eight essential parts herein related, is sure to become perfectly initiated in sounding the backward as well as the forward abyss of time and at the same time in attaining the true knowledge of all mysterious things in the universe. But the heel of Achilles of the *Yogis* is, that they are so much overpowered by the dazzling influence of the results of *Yoga* that they pay very little regard towards everlasting freedom without securing which we are successively brought into existence and destroyed.

Here we conclude our discussion with this remark only that in order to get the right sow by the ear every one should take time by the forelock in worshipping the “Most High” and in seeking the truth.

## SACRED PLACES OF INDIA.

BY THE HON’BLE RAO BAHADUR GOPALRAO HARI  
DESHMUKH,

*Vice-President of the Theosophical Society.*

There is no country in the world in which there are more sacred places than in India. Here every mountain, river, town, trees, hours, days, men and women are deified. The people are ignorant, credulous, and highly religious.

The places of pilgrimage may be divided into three classes—universal, provincial, and sectarian.

- १ काशी Benares on the Ganges.
- २ प्रयाग Allahabad at the confluence of the Ganges and Jamuna.

- ३ गया Gaya on the Falgoo river.

These three places go by the name of *तिरस्थञ्जी*.

Then there are seven towns called *सप्तपुरी*.

- 1 Ayodhya near Faizabad.
- 2 Mathura on the Jamuna.
- 3 Maya or Haridwar on the Ganges.
- 4 Kashee or Benares.
- 5 Kuncli on the Toong Bhadra river.
- 6 Awantika or Ujan in Malwa.
- 7 Dwarka at the western end of Kathiawar.

The first is celebrated as the birth-place and capital of Ramchandra. The second is celebrated as the scene of the infancy of Krishna. The fourth is known as the abode of Shiva, and the seventh is venerated as the capital of Krishna.

There are twelve places called *Joterlingas*. They contain Shiva temples built in times in which Shiva religion must have an ascendancy in India. These places are as follows:—

- 1 Somnath in Kathiawar near Verawal.
- 2 Shree Shylya Mallikarjoon in the Nizam’s country.
- 3 Mahakal in Ujan in Malwa.
- 4 Omkar on the river Narmada,

\* (१) यम (२) नियम (३) आसन (४) प्राणायाम (५) प्रत्याहार (६) धारणा (७) ध्यान (८) समाधि.

- 5 Kedar on the Himalaya Mountain.  
6 Bhimashankar near Poona at the source of the river Bhima.  
7 Vishweshwar in Benares.  
8 Trimbackeshwar near Nasick.  
9 Vyzanath in the Nizam's country.  
10 Nagnath Do.  
11 Rameshwar near Madras.  
12 Ghrisneswar near Aurangabad.

Most of these idols were destroyed by the Mahomedan armies which invaded the country. The story of Somnath is well known in the history of India. Mahakal was restored by Mahadajee Scindia. The temple of Vishweshwar was rebuilt. The old one has been turned into a mosque. Ghrisneswar was restored by Ahilya Bai Holkar. Somnath temple has been changed into a mosque, but the Gaikwar has built a new one with the assistance of Ahilya Bai.

Then there are four Dhams (चारधाम) under which come

- 1 Rameshwar }  
2 Kedar } two Jotirlingas.  
3 Dwarka one of the seven towns.  
4 Jagganath in Orissa.

Every river that joins the Ganges is called its branch and the confluence is called a sacred place or प्रयाग. Other sacred rivers have also प्रयाग—Prayags.

- १ नंद प्रयाग the confluence of the Aluknanda and Mandakini.  
२ कर्ण प्रयाग Do. of Aluknanda and Gindar.  
३ रुद्र प्रयाग Do. of Mandakini and the Ganges.  
४ देव प्रयाग Do. of Aluknanda and the Ganges.  
५ भूत प्रयाग Do. of the Jamuna and the Ganges.  
६ दक्षिण प्रयाग Do. of the Krishna and Vemnya near Sattara.

There are five sacred lakes.

- १ नारायण सरोवर in Cutch.  
२ मान सरोवर in Thibet.  
३ पुष्कर in Marwad.  
४ बिंदु सरोवर near Ahmedabad.  
५ पंथा सरोवर near Madras.

There are three and a half षेठ of goddesses. They are :—

- 1 Matapoor in Berar.  
2 Amba in the Nizam's dominions.  
3 Kollhapoor in the Deccan.  
4 Toolzapoor near Sholapoor. This is considered as half षेठ.

There are many other places of pilgrimage as follows :—

1. Dakore near Baroda. It is said that during the Mahomedan invasion of Goozrat the idol from Dwarka was brought here for concealment.

2. Shreeanath. The idol from Gokul was brought here for fear of the Mahomedans. The Bombay merchants pay a tax of three lakhs to this temple near Oodeypoor. This god is worshipped by the Gosawi Maharaj and all Bhattias, Luwanas and Waniyas of Goozrat, Kathiawar and Kutch, and is called Shriji.

3. Venkoba. This shrine is near the Tripote Station on the way to Madras. This god has a large treasury. It used to pay a tax of three lakhs annually to Tippoo Sultan, but the British Government has remitted the tax as revenue from idolatry.

4. Kartic Swamee. This is the shrine on the Sheshachal mountain. It is said to be the abode of Kartic Swamee. Some Pooras say that he is a bachelor, while others say that he was married. He is considered to be a son of Shiva and also General of Shiva's army. He is called सेनानी or Commander-in-Chief. He appears to have established Shiva Dharma in India.

5. Vaijanath. This shrine is different from Guri Vajanath which is counted among twelve Jotirlingas. It is situated near Calcutta in a forest which is called Jackhundi.

- 6 Pashoopateshwar, This shrine is in Nepaul.

- 7 Amarnath in Cashmir.  
8 Brahmakupat. This place is near Badrikedar.  
9 Badrinarayan Do.  
10 Mooktanath Damodar Koond. This is the place from which Shalligram stones are picked up. They are used as an image of Vishnu.  
11 Nodhur Madhav in Kathiawar.  
12 Mahableshtar near Sattara.

This hill is considered sacred from the circumstance of Ram having lived there. It is near Allahabad.

14 Vindhya Wasini.—The shrine of this goddess is near Mirzapoor. Bloody sacrifices are offered to her daily.

15. Elama.—This goddess is in the south of India.

16. Toolsisham.—This place is in Kathiawar in the mountain chain called Gir. There are hot springs there and they contain sweet water.

17. Soodampoorce.—This is the same as Gorebunda in Kathiawar. It was given by Krishna to his friend Soodama.

18. Madhavpoor.—This place is in Kathiawar and celebrated for the marriage of Krishna with Rookmini.

19. Gopi Talav. This place is near Bet Dwarka and the land in which the tank is situated, contains white earth which is called Gopichandan. It is used by all Vaishnavas who besmear their body with it.

20. Kuroo Kshetra.—This place is near Delhi and is celebrated as the battle-field of Bharat.

21. Humpi Virupaksha.—It is near Bangalore.

22. Udpi Soobrahmanya.—This place is near Mangalore.

23. Dharnidhar.—Is near Deesa in Goozrat.

24. Shreerunga.—This place is in Trichinopoly. The temple is one of the largest in India.

25. Unant Shayan is in Travancore. Shree Unantpooram is corrupted into Travendram.

26. Kanyá Koomaree is the southern extremity of India near Timnevelly.

27. Janardhan is in Malabar.

28. Darbhashayan is near Rameshwar.

29. Padmanath is in Malabar.

30. Gokarn Mahableswar is near Karwar. It is said that Rawan placed this idol there.

31. Eklinga is near Udeypoor and has a large revenue for its support.

32. Hingalaz is in Beeloochistan. It is a favourite deity of Gosawis. Animals are killed here for sacrifices. Byraghees as a rule do not visit those places where bloody sacrifices are offered.

33. Pandharinath or Vittoba. This place is in the Poona District. This is a favourite place of Warkarces or followers of Tookaram.

34. Shakambury.—This goddess is in the south of India.

35. Kamakshi is in Bengal.

36. Nunakshir is in Madura. The temple is one of the largest in India.

37. Amirkanlark. It is the source of the Narmada.

38. Ashita Venayack.—These eight temples are in the Poona District.

39. Panch Kedar in Ahmedabad.—There are five temples in the district. They are of the Provincial celebrity.

40. Ashita Siddha.—These eight shrines are in the Sattara District.

41. Bechurajee is in the Gaikwar's district of Kadi.

42. Khandoba near Poona is the favourite god of Koonbis and Dhangars or shepherds. The Holkar being of the shepherd caste, is a worshipper of this shrine.

43. Jotiba is near Kollhapoor. This is the family god of Scindia in whose seal his name appears.

44. Allandi is celebrated for the tomb of Dnyaneshwar. It is near Poona.

45. Jwala Mookhee is near Jalandar in the Punjab. It is a volcano, perpetually burning but doing no injury to visitors.

46. Dehoo is known as the residence of Tookaran.
47. Parli is a fort on which there is the tomb of Ram-dass Swamee.
48. Sidhapoor is near Ahmedabad. It is known as the residence of Kapil Maha Mooni.
49. Nirmal near Basscin contains the tomb of Shan-karacharya.
50. Chiplone is near Ratnagiri. This place is celebrated for the retirement of Parshooram, founder of the colony of Kokanastha Brahmans.
51. Chinchwad is near Poona. It is well known as the residence of a saint, called Morayadev.
52. Tapta Manikarnika is a hot spring in the Punjab.
53. Ganga of Rajapoor is in the Ratnagiri District. It is an annual spring which flows for about two months and then stops. So the people call it Ganga.
54. Rewaleshwar or the swimming mountain is in the Punjab.
55. Wazrabai, near Bhiwandi in the Tanna District is celebrated for the temple of a goddess. There are numerous hot springs. The water is sweet and is known for its effect on sick men, but no medical man has yet paid any attention to this subject in India. In Europe such a place would have been very valuable, whereas it is a neglected jungle in India.
56. Dewaki Koond.—These hot springs are in the Surat District. These springs have a medicinal quality, but they have hitherto attracted worshippers and not enquirers.
57. Lussondra Koond is near Dakore. The water is saltish.
58. Gulteshwar Koond is in Panch Mahals near Thasra.
59. Narsobachi Wadi is near Kollapoor. Many sick people repair to this place for health.
60. Kali.—This temple is situated in Calcutta.
61. Kiskindha is in the south of India. This place is mentioned in the Ramayan as being the capital of the king Sugriva who became Rama's ally in the expedition against Lanka.

All the great rivers,—such as the Ganges, the Jamuna, the Sangoo, the Gomati, the Saraswati, the Narmada, the Tapti, the Sindhu, the Godawari, the Krishna, the Kaweri, the Sabarnati, the Toong Bhadra, the Vennya, the Bhima, the Kshipra &c.—are sacred. Along the banks of these rivers, at the sources and at the mouths, there are towns which are also sacred, such as Nasick, Paithan, Soolathirth &c.

There are sectarian places, which are held sacred by particular sects. Gudhada is sacred to the followers of Swami Narayan. Chutisgud near Nagpoor is sacred to the followers of Kabir. Alumaprabhoo is the chief place of Lingayats. Amritsur is the chief place of the Sikhs &c. The Jains have their sacred places all over India. Numbers of pilgrims annually go to these places. These bands of pilgrims are called Sanghas. Rich men pay the expenses of a Sangha. These places are :—

संमतशिखर	पार्लिठाणा	गिरनार
अंत्रिकपारसनाथ	आम्बु	आवाजी &c.

There are particular days appointed for fairs at different places. The principal of these fairs are at Haridwar, Allahabad, Ojan and Trinback. Each of these takes place once in twelve years.

Each place has its greatness written in a book called Mahatmya. These Mahatmyas appear to have been written by idle Brahmans who wished to increase their trade and profit. These Mahatmyas not only celebrate sacred places, but months, days, hours, trees &c. For instance,

Prayaga Mahatmya celebrates the merit of visiting Allahabad.

Kartic Mahatmya celebrates the merit of doing certain ceremonies in the month of Kartic.

Vyatipata Mahatmya } These are mahatmyas of days.  
 Shivratri Mahatmya }  
 Toolshi Mahatmya } celebrates the merit of worship-  
 ping a tree of the myrtle species.

Ekadashce Mahatmya celebrates the merit of a particular day.

There are innumerable books of this description put in circulation and read by Brahmans in every temple, house, street, village and town. Those who make this a profession are called Pooraniks and they are so numerous that missionaries are not one-twentieth of them. They make people, particularly women, very religious, but also ignorant and credulous. Millions of people are always seen travelling to distant places as pilgrims, leaving their homes and families in the hope of getting salvation by means of these Tirthas and Kshetras. Some have rivers and tanks in which ablution is performed, and others have temples and images to be seen. The Mahatmyas promise that not only visitors are saved, but their fathers and mothers are saved by pilgrimages made by that descendants. These are the motives which induce people to wander about in quest of holy places and rivers and lakes at the sacrifice of money and time.

### “THE SUPERNATURAL.”

I am pleased to find the definition I offered of the term “miraculous,” as that which is incapable of any rational explanation whatever, appreciated by such deep-thinking people as the conductors of the THEOSOPHIST. At the same time, it seems to me that there is an ambiguity in your rejection of “supernatural agency,” (THEOSOPHIST, Vol. I, p. 310), requiring further elucidation. You have not defined the sphere of “Nature.” If you make this coincident with the realm of Law, including the whole spiritual universe within the term, insisting merely that every process or operation, whether immediately directed by conscious intelligence or not, must be conformable to laws of cause and effect,—then, while you satisfy those who demand a boundless scope of phenomenal possibility, you evidently far transcend current conceptions of nature. I admit that it is disgraceful to the intelligence of any physicist, pretending to be a natural philosopher, so to limit his conception of the forces *possibly* concerned in the production of visible phenomena, as to shut his eyes to the latter whenever his conception of forces *actually* concerned would have to be enlarged by reason of them. But a natural philosopher, though he cannot rationally reject any force as “abnormal,” (*i. e.* without, or having *no* law) merely because he is ignorant of its law, may, in one sense, fairly describe it as “supernatural,” and as such beyond his province. If, for example, facts, otherwise inexplicable, compel him to recognise, as a cause, disembodied will and intelligence, acting by instrumentalities which he cannot trace, and thereby *dominating* the nature with which he is familiar, and her operations, he does not on that account admit the “miraculous,” (which is the *irrational*), but may he not speak with propriety of the “supernatural?” How can he include the “cloud-compeller” within any definition of nature which he could practically and for scientific purposes adopt? It is, however, necessary to distinguish between those unusual phenomena which he can, and those which he cannot investigate. The levitation of human beings, for instance, is *apparently* a suspension of the law of gravitation. But, before relegating this phenomenon to the sphere of the supernatural, it would be necessary for the physicist to examine the hypothesis of magnetic forces in the human body, and of a reversal of its polarity under certain conditions. But the intervention of “spirits,” though they may act according to laws as intelligible to them as our “laws of nature” are to us, may be called “supernatural” if it produces effects in excess of what the causes habitually operant among us can bring about. Such are many of the phenomena recorded by Professor Zöllner, (Transcendental

Physics). The rejection by the Council of the Royal Society of Mr. Crookes' paper "On the experimental Investigation of a new Force" was a disgrace to the scientific intelligence of the age. But it was so as a refusal to receive evidence of facts on the assumption of their impossibility. It would have been less objectionable had it rested on some definition, even though too restricted, of the field of scientific research.

C. C. M.

### SCORPION-BITE.

BY PANDIT PRAN NATH.

I hope you will be good enough to explain the mystery of the efficacy which the following figure undoubtedly has in curing scorpion-bite.



At Jodhpore I used to visit Molvi Zahur-ul-Hasan to read Persian with him. He is a great scholar in that language and in Arabic, and holds an honourable post in the Ráj. I have always disbelieved in the so-called supernatural things as magic, spells &c., but the Molvi believed, for he is a staunch Musalman. One day he asked me what effect I thought the making of this figure could have upon a part which had been bitten by a scorpion. I could see none whatever and so stated. Thereupon, by a successful experimental demonstration upon the body of a patient, he forced me to recognize that the simple writing of this ancient sign or charm upon a venomous bite would almost instantly give relief. I desired him to teach me the figure, which he willingly did, and I only waited for the opportunity to experiment for myself. At last, a person suffering from scorpion-bite came while the Molvi was taking his supper; so I desired him to allow me to try and cure the man. Obtaining his permission I accordingly did so in his presence and, to my surprise, met with great success. Subsequently I saw the Molvi cure as many as thirty or forty persons without fail and he assured me that he had had equal success in all his personal experience. As his veracity cannot for a moment be questioned, and my own observations fully bear him out, I thoroughly believe his statement.

Once at Eranpore (near Serohi) I cured a man in the presence of Babu Kheturchander, the head-clerk in Serohi Agency, if I am not mistaken. The man was his servant. He had been bitten by a scorpion in the great toe. The pain gradually increasing and rising up in his body he had bandaged tightly his whole leg to try to check the growing pain. When brought before me he could not stand upon his leg. I bade him open the bandages, but, as he hesitated, I myself with my own hand removed the binding from his thigh, and drew the figure described upon it six or seven times. After waiting a moment I asked him where the pain was now. He said it had descended to the knee; then I further unbound the bandage as far as the calf, drew the same figure as before, and again asked him where the pain was. His reply was that now it extended no higher than the ankle. I then drew the figure on the foot, whereupon the pain was brought to the very point of the toe where he had been bitten and finding that it had become a mere trifle which he could easily bear, he declared himself cured and walked away after expressing his gratitude. The head-clerk was very much astonished to see the effect of the mantra or spell, as he called it, and desired to learn. I was obliged to decline as I was not then allowed by the man, who taught me, to communicate

the secret. Native sculptors\* when teaching their trade to their children, always cause them to use their chisel first in cutting this figure though they have no knowledge of the mystery enwrapped in it. They traditionally regard it as a good omen to begin teaching their children with it, just as the Hindoos first teach the word "Om" at the beginning of a course of instruction in Sanskrit.

### SATGOOR SWAMI.

(An Indian's views of Theosophy and Spiritualism.)

BY LALLA MAIKOOLAL.

The following is the result of my meditations and I give it out for publication in the THEOSOPHIST.

1. There is but one Infinite, Self-Existent Spirit, Absolute in its nature, described in the Vedant as "Sat (Everlasting), Chit (Intelligence), Anand (Joy)." Its existence is proved by the persistent manifestation of consciousness in all animals, which cannot be the result of the combination of inanimate matter.

2. The existence of a personal God, that is, an Omniscient, All-directing Being who is Creator and Master of the world, is merely suppositional. The idea of such a God suggests creative and destructive power and knowledge of the present, past and future, all at once and everywhere, which is an absolute impossibility.

3. The world is the creation of "Maya." This is nothing else than the negation of the spirit as evidenced in the Alankara or individualism of animals. In its incipient state it is the undeveloped idea of the transcendentalists a sort of involuntary will, something akin to dream but without its consciousness. It gradually develops itself into the forces of nature which in their turn produce the elements and the world.

4. Being evolved out of the spirit, this Maya is liable to destruction or repose. It has, therefore, no substantial existence, but has nevertheless the power to manifest infinite powers and qualities and to compensate and adjust itself in a variety of ways.

5. The consciousness of individualism is manifested, when, from the simple elementary, are developed organized bodies, and as the physiological process progresses, the consciousness which is simple in vegetables increases in complexity until it is highly developed in man on this earth.

6. Consciousness is either positive-universal or negative-individual. Positive consciousness is impersonal and negative personal. The former is simple consciousness of existence; the latter, that of existence as an individual. Simple consciousness is the spirit. Consciousness of individuality is the phenomenal or mind existence.

7. Individual consciousness being the result of action of the inner universal, consciousness on the animal organism is lost when death occurs, and may be also destroyed by true knowledge, *i. e.*, absolute knowledge of self in contradistinction to relative knowledge of the world and its phenomena.

8. There is no proof that the animal soul or the mind consciousness with its senses and powers of understanding existed as an entity prior to birth or that it will not cease to exist after death. On the contrary, it is a palpable fact that the consciousness of individuality only manifests itself at birth, is temporarily lost during profound sleep and under the influence of mesmerism, and is destroyed when the animal organism entirely ceases to act.

9. The assumption that the evolution of species is not physical but the result of metempsychosis, is as unreasonable as that distinct species were created from the beginning. On the other hand, the gradual physiological development of species by variation, climate, and

\* The Pandit probably means Mussulmans.—ED. THEOS.

other causes, is a conclusion borne out by the progressive tendency of the phenomena of nature.

10. The phenomena of spirit manifestations do not prove the existence of disembodied souls, as nowhere have such been revealed without "mediums," whereas men have been found at different times who have worked wonders by the force of their will. It may be, that Western philosophy and science are still unable to account for the phenomena, but as the Yoga Philosophy and the Tantras are read and understood, it will be found that they are nothing more than manifestations produced by an intense concentration of the mind upon certain objects. This innate power of the mind may be called "animal magnetism" or by any other name, and all occult or mystical science is founded on the principles of its development. The Yogi develops it by his Yoga, and the Tantrika by recitations of "Beej Mantras" and diverse other processes. The principle in either case is the same, viz., the increasing of the magnetic power of the mind. By thinking of various things and giving vent to the passions, the mind loses much of its power, hence its inability to fix itself forcibly upon one particular idea. By the discipline of Yoga and by means of true knowledge which enjoins the duty of discarding every thought except of the immutable self, the mind retains much of the magnetic power which otherwise would have been lost; and by the Tantrika exercises the mind recoups from extraneous objects the force which it loses in the daily transactions of life. When by any or all of these means, a certain amount of power is retained or acquired, the mind by sheer force of its will can create all the wonders the eight Yoga Siddhis are credited with. In another way, but in a lesser degree, the like result is temporarily obtained by recitations of Beej Mantras, and the mesmerizing processes in vogue in the Eastern and Western world.

11. In the eight Siddhis is comprised, besides other powers, the ability to create "Káma rupa" \* whether of self or of any other object, to comprehend things at a distance, and to a certain extent to subdue and control the forces of nature; and this is not physically impossible, for in this state of the mind, the Yogi being one with the infinite spirit, ideas operating at a distance come spontaneously to his mind as if through an electric telegraph, and his will-power being much more intense than the original involuntary idea which created the world, he acquires the power of creating things in rapid succession, but lacking continuity of energy, the objects thus created only last for a short time and vanish as soon as the will-force is withdrawn.

12. In the case of the Yogi or the Siddha (the possessor of Siddhis) the motive power is his own will, while in that of the medium, it is his will guided by that of the mesmerizer. The Yogi or Siddha rarely exercises this power, for the more he uses it for worldly purposes, the less is he capable of realizing his true self which is his ultimate aim. But in the Tantras, there are several systems which treat of the practical application of magnetic power in curing sickness, charming animals and men, obtaining the knowledge of hidden things, and influencing in a certain way the course of human action and destiny.

13. However useful, practically, this hidden power may be, and however commendable the efforts of the THEOSOPHISTS to build on it a scientific system based on Western principles, the point should not be lost sight of, that the Siddhis of Yoga and the Tantras are only of secondary importance.† The primary object of Yoga is to obtain by mechanical and that of the Tantras by chemical means, that concentration of the mind which is essential to the knowledge of self, and which more gifted men can obtain by the simple but sustained exercise of

their reasoning power. Both the Yoga and Tantrika systems are considered inferior to "Bichar" or reasoning, for they are but indirect means to the acquisition of that knowledge of self which is the direct outcome of the latter process.

14. This knowledge of self is the "Moksha" or true salvation. Its fundamental principles are that the soul is only the manifestation of spirit in Ahankara, that it does not exist as an entity, that this Ahankara is the negative idea or error and is at the root of all worldliness and misery, that this so-called soul is the spirit itself, that nothing but the spirit exists in reality and that everything is in it, and it in everything, and so on.

15. To be useful, this knowledge should be practical and permanent, otherwise the uniform and lasting happiness which is its result will not be obtained. Unlike the Yoga, it does not require abstention from worldly enjoyment; it only directs it in the right path, and gives its possessor the ability to enjoy thoroughly.

16. If any one asks, why all this trouble, if there is no future individual existence, the answer is that there is no trouble in acquiring this knowledge; on the contrary, the more it is gained, the brighter appears the world and happier becomes the worldly existence. As for the future individual existence, why should it be an object of desire if it is forsaken for good even in this life? And is it not enough to live well and happy in this life and then pass on to the simple consciousness of one indivisible eternal existence?

#### A PHYSIOLOGICAL TEST FOR THIEF-CATCHING.

BY DR. BATUKRAM S. MEHTA,

*Military Medical Officer in Warusha, Baroda.*

Many of your readers are aware, I believe, that when one has lost some valuable article from his house, it is an old custom amongst us—now confined only to the men of the old school—to send for a man who professes to detect such thefts. Such professionals are still to be found in several parts of India. They have different ways of finding out the thief, but they all boast that they do so by the agency of some Mantras. For my own part, I do not as yet believe in the efficacy of Mantras, but it has appeared to me that some physiological truth may be found in these tests.

A few days ago an ornament of gold worth about Rs. 150, worn by the young child of one of my relatives, was found to be missing. A careful search was made, but to no avail. There was no longer any doubt that it had been taken away by some body, as the boy did not go out that day nor the day previous. Instead of informing the police, I thought it better first to try one test about which I had often heard.

All the sepoy who had come to my house that day and the day previous together with all my servants were called together and made to sit before me. I then brought a small quantity of rice and distributed a little from it to each one present. They were then told to chew it for a while and then take it out before me.

I must here explain the *rationale* of the test. The person who has committed a theft naturally has great fears and when he is brought in the presence of several others for such an investigation his mind is necessarily greatly confused.

Physiology has proved that the various conditions of mind influence the secretions of the body through the nervous cords.

In this test through the influence of mind the secretion of saliva is diminished or is almost stopped, and therefore, the person who has committed the theft—although he tries his utmost to chew the rice grains given to him—does not succeed, and, when he takes them out of his mouth, they

\* An illusionary form, one whose apparent solidity is a deception of the senses. Observers of "form manifestations" should ponder.—ED. THEOS.

† For phenomenalistic purposes, yes—most assuredly. But our Indian brother must remember that the West knows nothing of the existence of such a power in man; and until it does know it there can be no truly scientific researches, especially in the department of Psychology.—ED. THEOS.

either come out all entire and dry, or, if the person exerts his utmost, the rice grains are coarsely powdered, but still are dry from want of a proper quantity of saliva.

When I observed the rice grains from the mouth of each person to whom I had given, I found that all brought out a large quantity of saliva (as is usual) with the rice grains, except one who had no saliva in his mouth. I, therefore, suspected this man. But as I had great confidence in him and as I thought he was entirely incapable of such a crime, I was doubtful about the accuracy of the test. I, therefore, told all of them to take some rice grains once again. The person who was suspected asked for some water, first to gargle his mouth, probably because he was feeling dryness of the mouth. The rice grains were again chewed and again taken out by all. The person who was suspected asked me to give him more time as he said he could not grind them soon, though he was the strongest man in the lot. And although he was the last to take out the grains and partly succeeded in grinding them, the rice grains were not even moist. I had now strong grounds for suspecting the man, but hesitated to give out the name of the person as I had still some doubts about the test.

I told all of them that I had been enabled by means of the test to detect the thief, but, in order to save him from disgrace, I would give him twelve hours to restore the lost article. If he did not do so within that time the matter would be reported to the police and his name given out. This occurred in the evening. Next morning I was delighted to find the lost article in one of the windows of my house.

From the subsequent information that I received, and the demeanour of the person suspected, I was convinced that I had detected the right man by this wonderful little physiological test.

NOTE.—Dr. Batukram is quite correct in his diagnosis, and it would be well if all pretended “miracles” were examined with like common sense. But there is another method of thief-catching practised in India in which the thief’s physiology plays no part. We refer to the “rolling-pot.” In this case the thief-finder causes without human contact a brass-pot to oscillate and finally roll over and over on its side, like a waggon-wheel, until it comes to the place where the thief or his plunder is, and there stops. Will some friend who has witnessed this experiment kindly describe the details and results of it very carefully for the benefit of our readers?—ED. THEOS.

### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

It is expected that the President and Corresponding Secretary of our Society will reach Bombay from their long tour to the North-West Provinces and Punjab soon after the issue of the present number of this magazine. The January number may, therefore, be expected to contain a report of their observations during this important journey; which, added to the itinerary of their previous travels on behalf of the Theosophical Society since their departure from New York—in December 1878—makes a grand total of about 18,000 miles that they have voyaged at their own expense in aid of its cause.

THERE IS AN ODISIOUS SPIRIT IN MANY PERSONS, WHO are better pleased to detect a fault than commend a virtue.—*Wisdom in Miniature.*

IT IS NOBLE TO SEEK TRUTH AND IT IS BEAUTIFUL to find it. It is the ancient feeling of the human heart that knowledge is better than riches.

IF YOU CAN SAY NO GOOD, SAY NO ILL OF YOUR neighbour.

(Continued from the October Number.)

### PURE GOLD ARTIFICIALLY MADE.

An account of some Experiments on Mercury, Silver, and Gold, made at Guildford in May 1782, in the Laboratory of James Price, M.D., F.R.S., to which is prefixed an abridgment of Boyle’s Account of a Degradation of Gold.

TRANSCRIBED FOR “THE THEOSOPHIST” BY PETER DAVIDSON, ESQ., F.T.S.

Boerhaave’s work is in almost every one’s hand; quotation, therefore, from it would be superfluous; the works of Boyle are now less frequently read; and his historical account, which, to use his own words, is really, “a strange chymical narrative,” was so much in point, that an abridgment appears in this place without inpropriety.

An *abridgment* rather than a transcription was attempted, since from the quaintness of Boyle’s style, his own narrative would perhaps make no favourable impression on the ears of modern readers.

It much resembles the massive furniture of “*other days*,” made cumbrous by its own ornaments. Yet perhaps many would more willingly peruse the relation in its original form, as we view with pleasure the softened day, through—

“Storied windows richly dight,  
Casting a dim religious light.”

For the gratification of such, are reserved some fragments of this work of the Venerable Father of English Philosophic Chemistry; these, to use the words, at least the thoughts of an elegant writer, appear like the mouldering stones of an ancient abbey, interspersed among the walls of some more modern, but less *durable* structure.

\* \* \* \* \*

Boyle commenced his preface by apologising for letting his narration make its appearance alone, as it is evidently a continuation of a larger discourse, but adds, that it is an independent narrative “*which (says he) if I may so speak stands upon its own legs, without any need of depending upon any thing that was delivered before, and, therefore, I think it no great venture, or incongruity, to let it come abroad by itself.*”

He seems to imagine the gold to have suffered a still greater *deterioration* than is represented in the narrative, where it is spoken of as appearing like an imperfect metal, *only; yet to tell the truth (says he) I think it was more imbased than so.*

He then proceeds to the relation itself:—*Pyrophilus*, by which name he usually meant himself, rises in a circle of *virtuosi*, and informs them that he is about to relate an experiment which may lead to persuade them of the possibility of transmutation; especially when added to the preceding discourse, (which with Bayes, we are to suppose, was passed in the Green-room), but adds that its result was not improving, but degrading gold.

A certain *Simplicius*, who appears as a *Thersites* among these *chymical* heroes, starts up with an objection that appears to be introduced, only that it may be answered by *Aristander*.

*Pyrophilus* then “*perceiving by several signs that he needed not to add anything apologetical to what Aristander had already said to him,*” resumes his discourse, in which he labours to remove the objections that are “*wont to be framed against the possibility of metaline transmutation, from the authority and prejudices of Aristotle,*” which, he however adds, need not be “*solemnly discussed.*”

The regularity of narration may be here interrupted to remark that however unnecessary such solemn discussion may appear in the present era of Philosophy, it was frequently requisite in the time of Boyle. He had many a noxious weed, grown rank with age, to remove from the field of Science, before he could proceed in its cultivation. And those who now are employed in raising the pile, should look back with reverential gratitude to him, who removed the rubbish from its base.



The author, it may here be thought, like *Pyrophilus* in this part of his speech, must have had occasion for "a short pause to take breath;" and the reader is probably inclined like Boyle's in *Crattippus*, to wish that he would hasten towards the historical part of his discourse.

Pyrophilus proceeds to relate, that meeting at the lodgings of one of his friends, with a stranger who had visited very remote Oriental countries, he learned from him in the course of their conversation, that the chemists of the East, though more reserved, were not less skillful than those of Europe; in confirmation of which he presents Pyrophilus with a small piece of paper folded up, and takes his leave. Pyrophilus, who by no means regards this paper as containing a trifle, is scarcely "consoled" by it, for the loss of this virtuoso's company, which he much "resents."

He, however, prepares to use the substance contained in this paper, according to some obscure directions which the travelled savant had hastily given; and takes a witness or two, and as an assistant "an experienced Doctor of Physic" very well versed in the separating and expelling of metals. For this caution he is much commended by Heliodorus, who, it appears afterwards, "did worthily sustain the dignity he had in presiding in that choice company." Pyrophilus continues his narration after professing it to be his opinion, "that cautiousness is a very necessary qualification for him that would satisfactorily make curious experiments; and particularly in this, whose event, he thought, would prove odd enough," and lest his assistant's perception should be misled by previous information, so as to make him fancy he really saw, what he had been told he might expect, he resolves to obviate this prejudice as much "as he innocently could," and only informs him that he expects a small proportion of powder, presented him by a foreigner, would render gold extremely brittle. He then opens the paper and finds in it a very small quantity of dark red powder, which they estimate (without weighing, to avoid waste) at the tenth, or at most the eighth part of a grain. They next weigh out in "differing" balances two drams of cupelled and quated gold, which they fuse in a new and well-annealed crucible; on this gold, when fused, the powder is projected and the fusion continued for a quarter of an hour; after which the gold is poured out into another annealed crucible, and suffered to cool.

In the fire it had appeared like other fused gold, except that for two or three moments the assistant observed that it looked like an opal\*; but when cold, though exactly the same weight as before the fusion, instead of gold, was found a lump of metal of a dirty colour, as it were overcast with a thin coat, like half-vitrified litharge, with a little globule of metal, not yellowish, but like coarse silver; and the bottom of the crucible was overlaid with a vitrified substance, whereof one part was of a transparent yellow, and the other of a deep brown, inclining to red; and in this vitrified substance were plainly to be perceived several globules, more resembling silver than gold in their appearance. The larger piece of metal rubbed on the touchstone and its mark compared with those from a piece of gold and a piece of silver coin, it was found to be "notoriously" more like the touch of silver than that of gold.

The lump being struck with a hammer was found brittle and flew into several pieces: and the internal surface of these was of a dirty colour like that of brass of bell-metal.

One dram of this degraded gold, being expelled with about six times its weight of lead, required nearly double the usual time to complete the operation; which being ended, the cupel was found smooth and entire, tinged with a fine purplish red† and beside the refined gold there lay on the cavity of the cupel some dark-coloured recriments, which were supposed to have proceeded, not from the lead, but from the deteriorated metal. On weighing the refined

gold it was found deficient by seven grains. This deficiency was supplied by the above-mentioned recriment; whose weight and fixity, notwithstanding their appearance of impurity, indicated their being gold; it was unfortunate that the smallness of them, and Pyrophilus' and his assistant's want of leisure, prevented their being duly ascertained.

That no doubt might remain respecting the gold employed, a dram and a half, intentionally reserved out of the parcel of which the debased gold had been a portion, was melted by itself, and found to be, as was expected "fine and well-coloured gold."

Pyrophilus confesses he did not try what effect *aqua fortis* would have on the debased gold, he not being provided with any whose purity he could rely on; this, however, he was "the less troubled at," because he knew that gold, alloyed with silver or some other metals, in certain proportions, would protect them from the action of the nitrous acid.\*

The metal having been hydrostatically weighed, its specific gravity was found to be that of water, only as 15 $\frac{2}{3}$  to 1. This "examen" (by which he means not a *swarm*, but an examination) added to the other experiments, has justly great stress laid on it by Pyrophilus (Boyle), who observes that to hydrostatical trials he is "not perhaps altogether a stranger" specific gravity is above all other properties the least equivocal mark of identity or diversity in metallic bodies; and by what means soever we may conceive the powder to have acted on the gold in making it brittle, less splendid, or calcinable, we must allow this alteration in specific gravity, to be by far the most wonderful effect of the projected powder.

The objections to Dr. Lewis† cannot be properly applied to this effect of the experiment; and scarcely to the others; for, though gold may be rendered brittle by tin or even by its vapour, (as is said) and its colour altered by a small proportion of other matter (as is also said), yet what known substance will alter so considerably its specific gravity? It was on account of this circumstance, principally, that the present narrative was prefixed to a relation of experiments in which the specific gravity of a metallic substance was changed by a minute proportion of a powder; and in a very small space of time;—a change in this particular, in fixity, and in the capability of being calcined or vitrified, are the most certain marks of the conversion of a perfect into an imperfect metal, and the reverse of them of the contrary.

The auditors of Pyrophilus appear to have paid great attention, and to have received much pleasure from the "recital" of this notable circumstance superadded "to the rest," for "the generality of them and the President too" express themselves to be "delighted as well as surprised by looking and smiling;"—after their "murmuring" is a little over, the worthy and eloquent President returns the thanks of the Company to Pyrophilus, in a speech of which the reader will easily pardon the omission; this is followed by another from Crattippus, in which he demands why "it should not be lawful for philosophers to prize such a lump of depraved gold, before the finest gold the chymists are wont to afford us," and compares, or rather prefers, this lump to the medals whose value is derived from perpetuating some conquest; as this deteriorated gold does the victory of art over nature.

Pyrophilus on being requested by the company to favour them with his reflections on the theory of his process, replies that he has only had "some *varying* thoughts about this *puzzling* subject" and declines the task. Heliodorus then urges him to "draw some inferences and so to conclude." He then observes, that in his experiment a change altogether as wonderful as that said to be occasioned by the PROJECTION of the alchemists, has really been produced:—That gold, the most homogeneous

\* Any gold in a certain heat, if there be a slight draught of air over its surface, will have this appearance, even silver and copper sometimes present a similar one.

† The colour usually communicated by vitrified gold.

\* Brandt's experiments correlative to this are well-known. The phenomena observed by Boyle and Brandt are similar to those presented by any alloy of metals requiring different solvents.

† In his notes on Neumann and elsewhere.

and immutable of metals, may in a very short time be exceedingly changed to malleability, colour, homogeneity, and in that which, as he justly observes, is beyond all in specific gravity, and all this by only *one-thousandth* part of its weight of another substance.

If any credit be given, and surely the highest is due to Boyle, the author of the experiments on mercury, which are next to be related, may hope to derive some sanction from his authority: compared with Boyle's experiments, the *marvellous* of his sinks into the probable. Nay more,—if Boyle's experiment be credited, and who will refuse his assent? Let it be remembered that it was made but once, before three or four persons at most; what then shall be said of processes, often repeated, before numerous spectators?

To conclude this abstract already too long, let us deduce from it the following inference, which shall be given in the words of BOYLE, for whom the author, notwithstanding his having amused himself with the quaintness of his language, entertains the greatest veneration.

The quotation has already been placed on the back of the inscription, as a more diffuse *motto*, but may be repeated here as it cannot be too strongly impressed.

"We may" says Boyle "among other things, learn from our experiment this lesson; that we ought not to be so forward as many men otherwise of great parts are wont to be, in prescribing narrow limits to the power of Nature and Art, and in condemning and deriding all those that pretend to, or believe, uncommon things in Chymistry, as either cheats or credulous."

(To be Continued.)

### THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE DURGA-PUJA.

BY AN ARYA WORSHIPPER.

No one can deny that inward worship is better than external rites. But it is a common mistake to suppose that the latter are incompatible with the former.

While outward forms and ceremonies, without faith and devotion, are a mere sham, it is no less true that internal worship is greatly helped by external observances and expressions, such, for instance, as the act of prostrating ourselves or uttering praises and prayers.

We must remember that we have a double nature—physical and spiritual. So long as we feel ourselves inseparably connected with our bodily organs, we can never offer a *purely* spiritual adoration to the Most High.

The Hebrews of the *old* Testament, then the Christians, then the Mahomedans, and then alas! our own countrymen blindly led by their Christian conquerors and tutors, would dispense with external images and symbols altogether. They know not that they commit the more sinful idolatry of believing that God is such as they can imagine to themselves. They would use vocal symbols which are no less external than material images. Nay the attributes they ascribe to God—justice, wisdom and mercy,—cannot be conceived by man as other than human. The very glorification of Him founded upon the beauty and harmony of the Universe, necessarily partakes of materiality. Whatever conceptions we have, are all borrowed from matter or framed from our own minds, and these can never represent the Divinity who is beyond thought and expression.

The Brahmás of the "New Dispensation" fancy they "perceive God face to face." Of course, this God is as much an image, or a symbol, as the external images worshipped by the orthodox Hindu. The Upanishads have declared that He is known to him who knows Him not, and unknown to him who knows Him, *i. e.*, He cannot be known but as the Unknowable. Indeed, true spiritual worship begins when the word "worship" loses its proper signification and means entire absorption in Him. We

cannot worship Him *with a separate individuality*. We must cease to be ourselves, but be He, to know Him.

So, until we can attain to that state, we must adore Him in symbols whether external or internal. Mind and matter are both extraneous to Brahma, who is Spirit equally beyond mind and matter. Brahma, in his absolute nature, has neither mind nor life. Brahma, associated with that mysterious power from which the universe is called forth and into which it (the universe) is collapsed, is termed Ishwara or Parameshwara or Sagunna Brahma, and, as such, He can, by His Omnipotent and Merciful Will assume any form He likes. This answers the purpose of worship, which, as I have pointed out, indispensably needs symbolization.

These symbolical forms that the Supreme Being is believed by the orthodox to manifest, are also typical of His Power and Mercy.

The Universal Mother (Durgá) is thus represented with ten hands which probably represent the ten quarters of space (dik) and her three eyes typify knowledge of the present, past and future. The *Mahishásura* whom she destroys is the demon of darkness and evil, her own nature being Blessed Wisdom (*chidánandamayi*).

The Semitic worshippers (under which term I include those who would act up to the commandments of the Bible and the Koran) would do well to remember that their worship is no less representative and symbolical than that of material symbols. Language, which they cannot dispense with, is after all only a property of matter—a collection of sounds. The folly, too, is to be pointed out of regarding matter as something necessarily impure and unholy, as if it were not the production of that Holy Power Himself. There is another folly—that of supposing that the symbolical worshipper identifies the Divinity with matter with all its properties. Absurd! Even a human being can hardly be identified by a thinking man with his material body. The external image only serves as a visible symbol of the Divinity, who, indeed, is believed by the devout to fill it specially with his presence. So much the better for the fervour of devotion if the matter is entirely forgotten and the image is beheld as the visible manifestation of the all-pervading Divine Presence—which, in reality, does sustain all the forms and images of this infinite universe. The theory of the world being an emanation of the Deity was not only held by the greatest philosophers of the ancient times, but is taught by that great British scientist and philosopher, Herbert Spencer, who laughs at the Christian system of the so-called monotheism as the Carpenter theory of creation.

ONE PHILOSOPHER IS WORTH A THOUSAND GRAMMARIANS.  
Good sense and reason ought to be the umpire of all rules,  
both ancient and modern.

RICHES BEGET PRIDE, PRIDE IMPATIENCE, IMPATIENCE  
revenge, revenge war, war poverty, poverty humility, humi-  
lity patience, patience peace, and peace riches:—*Wisdom*  
*in Miniature.*

A WISE MAN ENDEAVOURS TO SHINE IN HIMSELF, A  
fool to outshine others.

CAST NO DIRT INTO THE WELL, THAT HATH GIVEN YOU  
water.

GRATITUDE PRESERVES OLD FRIENDSHIP, AND PROCURES  
new.

## THE POUND OF FLESH.

BY MONCURE D. CONWAY.

We give room to the following able essay from the pen of the well-known American writer who has been interesting the thinking part of the London public for the last dozen or more years with his Sunday religious discourses. Though our preference is to give only original matter, the true theosophical spirit of kindly mutual tolerance in religious opinion has been too ably rendered in Mr. Conway's Essay to warrant our withholding it from the public.

"The scholars who, in a recent Westminster Play, evoked four ghosts from ancient Greece to decide on the reliques exhumed by Dr. Schliemann, might well try their mediumship upon the equally mysterious past of their own country. They would confer a large benefit if they could evoke the ghost of William Shakespeare, and bring him before the footlights just now, in order that we might pelt him with questions which have long been accumulating. For one, I should like to put to him the question,—What do you think of Mr. Irving's Shylock ?

"We know that no such figure appeared on Shakespeare's own stage at the Globe. Shylock, as acted by Shakespeare's friend Burbage, was a comic figure. His make-up consisted of exceedingly red hair and beard, a false nose preternaturally long and hooked, and a tawny petticoat. Such a figure must have been largely meant to make fun for the pit and gallery, of which Shakespeare was rarely oblivious, and Burbage never.

"But a conventional stage figure is generally an evolution, and this farcical Shylock was no exception. The famous Isaac of Norwich was a typical Jew in his time. A thirteenth century caricature, preserved in the Pell Office, shows us the popular notion of him. He is pictured as a three-faced idol surrounded by devils. The three faces are not specially ugly or comical, but repulsive enough ; and we may detect in the figure the reflection of a period when the diabolical theory of the Jew was serious, and no laughing matter. Similarly, in the old Miracle Plays, Satan was a serious figure, though he gradually became a mere laughing-stock like Pantaloon in the pantomimes. The stage-Jew shared the same decline as the stage-devil—his supposed inspirer. In his malignant and formidable aspect he was, indeed, in Shakespeare's day, the main figure of a popular play—Marlowe's 'Jew of Malta' ; but even he had the long nose and sundry grotesque features ; and it can hardly be doubted that in the still more ludicrous make-up of Shylock, who succeeded Marlowe's Barabas in public interest, the Globe Theatre followed the popular feeling.

"Mr. Swinburne, in his graphic and subtle 'Study of Shakespeare,' seems to regard Marlowe's Jew as the real man, and Shakespeare's a mouthpiece for the finest poetry. To this I can only half subscribe. Marlowe's Barabas, the Jew of Malta, is closely related to the figure of Isaac of Norwich surrounded by devils. He is no man at all, but an impossible fiend. He kills and poisons Christians without any motive. As Charles Lamb wrote : 'He is just such an exhibition as, a century or two earlier, might have been played before the Londoners, by the royal command, when a general pillage and massacre of the Hebrews had been previously resolved on in the cabinet.' The average Christian murdered the Jew because he did not look upon him as a man, actuated by human feelings and motives, but as a miscreant—the word means 'misbeliever'—which then meant an agent of Antichrist, instigated by his paternal devil.

"In the character of Shylock, Shakespeare retained the grotesquerie which might please the rabble, at the same time turning their scowl to laughter. Even now, while Mr. Irving is giving his powerful and pathetic impersonation, the occasional laugh reminds us how easily some parts of the text would lend themselves to a farcical interpretation, if the painted nose and comic gestures were present. But it is much more remarkable to observe how rare and

superficial are these ludicrous incidents. The farcical Shylock has passed away from the English stage through force of the more real character which Shakespeare drew, and as I believe, meant to draw ; and if that grotesque figure of the old Globe should be acted now, he would be hissed in any theatre ; and the ghost of Shakespeare, were he present, would probably join in the sibilant chorus. Shakespeare may not have intended all the far-reaching moral belonging to the ancient legend of the pound of flesh, but surely no one can carefully compare his Shylock with the Barabas of his contemporary without recognising a purpose to modify and soften the popular feeling towards the Jew, to picture a man where Marlowe had painted a monster, if not, indeed, to mirror for Christians their own injustice and cruelty.

"Let us take our stand beside Portia when she summons the Merchant and Shylock to stand forth. The two men have long legendary antecedents, and have met many times before. Five years ago Miss Toulmin Smith made the discovery that the story of the Bond was contained in the thirteenth-century English poem, *Cursor Mundi*, there interwoven with the legend of the Finding of the Holy Cross.

"In a valuable paper read to the New Shakespeare Society, April 9, 1875, that lady quotes the story. A Christian goldsmith in the service of Queen Eline (mother of Constantine), owes a sum of money to a Jew ; if he cannot pay it at a certain time he is to render the weight of the wanting money in his own flesh. The bond is forfeit ; the Jew prepares to cut the flesh ; but the judges decide that no drop of blood must be shed. The Jew being thus defeated, Queen Eline declares he must give up all his goods to the State and lose his tongue. But he is forgiven on agreeing to tell her where the Holy Cross is hidden.

"There are eleven versions of the Bond story in the early literature of Europe. In four of these versions no Jew appears. Karl Simrock believes that it is an ancient law-ancient—an illustration of the law of retaliation pressed to an extreme. The evidences he gives of its use for this purpose are interesting ; and it appears to me probable that it might have been in this way that the Jew was first introduced into the story. Where a Jew and a Christian confronted each other in any issue it might be assumed that all mitigations of the *summum jus* were removed from the question ; only the naked technical terms of the law could then be conceived as restraining either from doing the utmost injury he could to the other. There is an old Persian version of the tale in which, perhaps for a similar reason, a Moslem and an Armenian confront each other ; and in this case the failure of the bond is not, because of the blood, but because of the extreme exactness of weight demanded by the court. An Egyptian form of the story has a similar end.

"It is not proposed here to discuss and compare these versions or their dates, important as they are, but to pass beyond them to the principles involved and the ideas in which they are rooted.

"Side by side, in all ages and races, have struggled with each other the principle of retaliation and that of forgiveness. In religion the vindictive principle has euphemistic names : it is called law and justice. The other principle, that of remission, has had to exist by sufferance, and in nearly all religions has been recognised only in subordinate alliance with its antagonist. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, blood for blood, is primitive law. Projected into heaven, magnified in the divine majesty, it becomes the principle that a deity cannot be just and yet a justifier of offenders. 'Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.' Since finite man is naturally assumed to be incapable of directly satisfying an infinite law, all religions, based on the idea of a divine lawgiver, are employed in devising schemes by which commutations may be secured, and vicarious satisfactions of divine law obtained. No deity inferred from the always relentless forces of nature has ever been supposed able to forgive the smallest sin until it was exactly atoned for,

For this reason the divine mercifulness has generally become a separate personification. The story of the 'pound of flesh' is one of the earliest fables concerning those conflicting principles.

"The following legend was related to me by a Hindu, as one he had been told in his childhood. The chief of the Indian triad Indra, pursued the god Agni. Agni changed himself to a dove in order to escape; but Indra changed himself to a hawk, to continue the pursuit. The dove took refuge with Vishnu, the second person of the triad, the Hindu Saviour. Indra flying up demanded the dove; Vishnu concealing it in his bosom, refused to give up the dove. Indra then took an oath that if the dove were not surrendered he would tear from Vishnu's breast an amount of flesh equal to the body of the dove. Vishnu still refused to surrender the bird, but bared his breast. The divine hawk tore from it the exact quantity, and the drops of blood—the blood of a Saviour—as they fell to the ground wrote the scriptures of the Vedas.

"Among the various versions of this story in India, I have not been able to find any in accepted sacred books which preserves with the simplicity of this folk-tale the ancient moral antagonism between the deities now found in alliance as a triad. Hindu orthodoxy has outgrown the phase of faith which could sanction that probably provincial legend. Its spirit survives in one of Vishnu's titles, *Yadña Varāha*, 'the boar of sacrifice,' derived from Vishnu's third incarnation by which he saved the world from demons by becoming himself a victim. We may see in the fable reflections of a sacrificial age; an age in which the will and word of a god became inexorable fate, but also the dawning conception of a divineness in the mitigation of the law, which ultimately adds saving deities to those which cannot be appeased.

"The earliest version, probably B.C. 300, is the story in the *Mahābhārata* (*Vana parva*), of the trial of the best of mankind, King *Usināra*. Indra and Agni, wishing to test his fidelity to the laws of righteousness, assume the forms of falcon and pigeon. The latter (Agni) pursued by the former (Indra) seeks and receives the king's protection. The falcon demands the pigeon, and is refused on the ground that it is written that to kill a twice-born man, to kill a cow, and to abandon a being that has taken refuge with one, are equal sins. This is a quotation from the *Laws of Manu*. The falcon argues that it is the law of nature that it shall feed on pigeons, and a law against nature is no law. He (the falcon) will be starved, consequently his mate and little ones must perish, and thus in preserving one the king will slay many. The falcon is offered by *Usināra* other food—a boar, bull, gazelle,—but the falcon declares that it is not the law of its nature to eat such things. The king then declares that he will not give up the pigeon, but he will give anything else in his power which the falcon may demand. The falcon replies that he can only accept a quantity of the king's own flesh equal in weight to the pigeon's body. *Usināra* gladly accedes to this substitution. Balances are produced, and the pigeon is placed in one scale. The king cuts off a piece of his flesh that appears large enough, but is insufficient; he cuts again and again, but still the pigeon outweighs his piled-up flesh. Finally, all his flesh gone, the king gets into the scale himself. The two gods then resume their divine shape, announce to *Usināra* that for the sacrifice he has made he will be glorified in all worlds throughout eternity, and the king ascends transfigured into heaven.

"This legend is repeated under the title *Syena-Kapotiyan* (Dove and Hawk) in the *Purana Sarvasvan* in the Bodleian Library, where it is in Bengali characters. There is another version in the *Markandeya Purana* (ch. iii.) in which Indra appears to the sage *Vipulasvan* in the form of a large famished bird. Finding that this bird can only be nourished by human flesh, the sage appeals to his sons to give it some of their flesh; and on their refusal he curses them, and tells the bird that after he has performed certain funeral ceremonies his body shall be for its nourishment. Whereupon Indra bids the

sage abandon his body only by the power of contemplation, reveals his divine nature, and offers *Vipulasvan* whatever he may ask.

"Indra here says, 'I eat no living creature,' which shows a moral advance. Perhaps his conversion may have been in some measure due to the teaching of Buddha. It is instructive to compare the *Mahābhārata* legend with an early Buddhist version cited by M. Foucaux from the *Dsang-loung*,\* a version all the more significant because the hero of it, *Sivi*, was traditionally the son of *Usināra* and had already appeared in the fourth book of *Mahābhārata* as tried in the same way with his father, and with the same results. *Sivi* had become a popular type of self-sacrifice. According to the Buddhist legend, Indra, perceiving that his divine existence was drawing to a close, confided to *Visvakarman* † his grief at not seeing in the world any man who would become a Buddha. *Visvakarman* declared King *Sivi* such a man. The falcon and pigeon test is then applied. But the Buddhist *Sivi* does not, like his Brahman prototype, offer to compensate the falcon with the flesh of other animals. He agrees to give his own flesh. The gods descend and weep, tears of emotion at seeing the king as a skeleton outweighing the dove which his flesh could not equal. Nor is the Buddhist saint caught up to heaven. He is offered the empire and throne of Indra himself but refuses it; he desires only to be a Buddha. *Sivi*'s body is restored to greater beauty than before, and he becomes Buddha amid the joy of gods and men.

"Other versions show the legend further detached from Brahmanic ideas, and resting more completely upon Buddha's compassionateness to all creatures. Of this description is one in the 'Sermons' by *Asphagosha*, for the translation of which I am indebted to Professor *Beal*. *Sakra* (a name of Indra), tempted by a heretic to believe that the teaching of Buddha was false, and that men followed it from motives of self-interest, sought for a perfect man who was practising austerities solely for the sake of becoming a Buddha. Finding one, *Sivaka Raja*, he agreed with *Visvakarman* to tempt him. All happens as in the old legend, except that *Sivaka* rests his refusal not upon the law of *Manu*, nor upon the sanctity of asylum, but upon his love of all living things. To this his mercifulness the falcon appeals, reminding him of its own young and *Sivaka* calls for a knife and cuts off a piece of his flesh, not caring whether it is more or less than the body of the dove. He then faints. All living creatures raise lamentations, and the deities, much affected, heal the wound.

"The influence of Buddhism is traceable in the modifications of the original legend, which show the sacrifice not accepted as it was in the case of *Vishnu* and to some extent in that of *Usināra*, whose earthly life terminates. With Buddha the principle of remission supersedes that of sacrifice. His argument against the Brahmanic sacrifice of life was strong. When they pointed to these predatory laws of nature in proof of their faith that the gods approved the infliction of pain and death, he asked them why they did not sacrifice their own children; why they did not offer to the gods the most valuable lives. The fact was that they were out-growing direct human sacrifices—preserving self-mortifications—and animals were slain in commutation of costlier offerings. This moral revolution is traceable in the gradual constitution of *Vishnu* as a Saviour. There is a later legend that *Vishnu* approached *Sivi* in the form of a Brahman in want of food, but would accept none except the flesh of *Sivi*'s son *Vrihad-Garbha*. The king killed and cooked his son and placed the food before the Brahman, who then bade him eat it himself. *Sivi* prepared to do so, when *Vishnu* stayed his hand, revealed himself, restored the son to life, and vanished. This legend belongs to a transitional period. Its outcome is found in several Hindu folk-tales, one of which has been told by the charming story-teller, Mr. W. R. S.

\* *Le Mahabharata*, p. 241.

† The 'omniscient,' who offered up all worlds in a general sacrifice, and ended by sacrificing himself.

Ralston. The king of a country is dying, and a poor man is informed of the fact by a disguised 'fate.' He asks if there is no way to save the king's life, and is told there is but one way; if a child should be sacrificed, with its own consent, that would save the king. The man returns home and proposes to his wife to slay their beautiful little boy. She consents; the boy having also consented, the knife is about to descend on the child, when the fates appear, announcing that they only wished to try his loyalty to his king, who had already recovered.

"We may feel pretty certain that originally that king was a deity, though not so certain that the knife was arrested without killing anything at all. In several popular fables we find the story preserved essentially in the old sacrificial form to teach the rewards of self-sacrifice, though, in order to escape the scandal of a human sacrifice, the self-devotion is ascribed to animals. Thus in the *Panchatantra*, a pigeon roasts itself to save a famished bird-catcher, who had just captured his mate; and the bird-catcher presently seeing its radiant form rising to heaven, spends his life consuming his flesh in the fire of devotion, in order that he also may ascend there.

"In the Semitic story corresponding to that of Vishnu and Sivi, the Hindu Abraham, we may see that where a god is concerned the actual sacrifice cannot be omitted. That may do in the case of a dying king or hungry hawk, but not for a deity. In the case of Abraham and Isaac the demand is not remitted but commuted. The ram is accepted instead of Isaac. But even so much concession could hardly be recognised by the Hebrew priesthood as an allowable variation from a direct demand of Jahve, and so the command is said to have been given by Elohim, its modification by Jahve. The cautious transformation is somewhat in the spirit of the disguises of the Aryan deities, who may partially revoke as gods the orders they gave as hawks. It would indicate a more advanced idea if we found Jahve remitting a claim of his own instead of one made by the Elohim.

"It is worthy of a remark that in some regions where this change of names in the story of Abraham's sacrifice is overlooked or unknown by Semitic religionists, there has sprung up a tradition that the sacrifice was completed and the patriarch's son miraculously restored to life. Thus, in another branch of the Jewish religion we find Mohammed finching at the biblical story. He does not like to admit that Allah altered his word and purpose except for a serious consideration, so he says, 'We ransomed him with a noble victim.' The Moslems believe that Isaac was not then born, and that it was Ismael across whose throat Abraham actually drew the knife, which was miraculously kept from killing the lad, according to some, but others say resulted in a death and resurrection.

"Last year the highly educated State of Massachusetts was thrilled with horror by the tidings that a man, named Freeman, had offered up his beautiful and only child, Edith Freeman, as a sacrifice to God. It occurred in the historical town of Pocasset. A thousand years ago the Northmen who first discovered America wintered there, and possibly they there offered human sacrifices to their god Odin,—that is, if they got hold of one or two red men; for there has been a notable tendency among men in such cases to prefer other victims than themselves for their gods. Since that first landing of white men in America the religion of Odin had yielded to that of Christ; Pocasset and all New England had been converted to Christianity; the Bible had found its way into every home. Yet this well-to-do citizen, Mr. Freeman, and his wife, had learned in Sunday School about Abraham's touching proof of his faith. They had pondered over the lesson until they heard the voice of Israel's God summoning them to a similar sacrifice, and they committed a deed which probably would have shocked even those rude Vikings who wintered at Pocasset a thousand years before. So much might the worship of a pitiless primitive deity arrest the civilisation of a household in the land of Channing

and Parker. They prayed over the little girl, then the knife was plunged into her heart. Little Edith is now in her grave. The God of Abraham and Isaac got his pound of flesh this time. The devout priest of that horrible altar has just passed from his prison to an asylum. To the many who have visited him he puts questions hard to be answered. 'Do you believe the Bible or not?' he says. 'If you do, and have read the account of Abraham, why should you deny that God could require a man to sacrifice his child? He so required of me. I *did* hope and believe that he would stay my hand before the blow fell. When he did not I still believed he would raise my child to life. But that is his own affair. I have given that, which I loved most, to God, because he commanded me.' The American people waited to see whether a Christian community which trains up children to admire the faith of Abraham would hang them when they grew up to imitate that faith so impressed upon them. The embarrassing dilemma was escaped after eight months, by getting Freeman into an asylum for the insane, without trial.

"I observed last year, soon after the occurrence of this tragedy, a rude picture of it in the *Police Gazette*, or some such paper, exposed in the shop windows of London. The designer had placed a crucifix near the little victim's head. It is probable that Freeman and his wife never saw a crucifix in their lives; they belong to the hardest, baldest dogmatic Protestantism. The rude artist perhaps placed the crucifix in his picture because the Abrahamic sacrifice was supposed to be typical of a holier one,—a sacrifice in which a son was offered up to satisfy the fatal law of a father. In the human sacrifice symbolised by that crucifix culminated all these sacrifices of which mention has been made; and there was embodied that principle which has maintained through the ages that though to forgive may be human, to avenge is divine.

"Let us return now to Shylock and the Merchant whose life is forfeit. Shylock represents the law, the letter and rigour of it. He is Indra tearing Vishnu's breast; Elohim demanding Isaac's death; the First Person exacting the Second Person's atoning blood. His bond, his oath registered in heaven, its sanction by Venetian law, are by him identified with eternal justice. It is the irrevocable 'thing spoken,' *factum*, weird, or word. Portia is exact in telling him that he represents that 'justice' in whose course, 'none of us should see salvation.' The Jew personates his god precisely. Nor is there wanting a certain majesty in his position. There is nothing mean about Shylock now, whatever there may have been at first. He has been called avaricious. It must be remembered, however, that, during those ages, the wealth of the Jews was the main factor in their survival. There is, indeed, an illustration of this in the only version of the Bond legend which has any pretension to be considered historical. A Jew named Cénéla forfeited a pound of his flesh to a Christian merchant, on a wager; the case was brought before the Pope, Sixtus V., who decided that the Christian must pay 2,000 scudi to his treasury for attempting manslaughter, and the Jew pay in an equal sum for having hazarded his life, that being a taxable property belonging to the Pope.

"The Jews, suspected for ages of obtaining their wealth from Beelzebub, really accumulated it because they had no desire to spend it on gentile baubles and Christian worldliness, having no country of their own. They kept it—or tried to keep it—religiously, to lay at their Messiah's feet when he should come; and if they had not possessed it they would long ago have been exterminated. Balzac tells us of a mediæval seneschal in France who declared the Jews to be the best taxgatherers in his region. It was his custom to let them gain money as bees collect honey; then he would swoop down on their hive and take it all away. The Jews were also restricted in their relations to various kinds of property, and almost driven by oppressive statutes to the dealings in money which brought opprobrium upon them. In hating Antonio because he lent money without interest, and so lowered the rate of usance in Venice, Shylock was hating him for undermining the existence of his

tribe. That it was not personal avarice is presently proved, when Shylock scorns thrice his principal proffered to cancel his bond. For now he has been summoned by his own woes, the taking away of his daughter and his property, including that ring mourned because given by his lost Leah—artfully contrasted with the surrender by the Christian lovers of the rings they had vowed never to part with—to stand forth as an avenger of the ages of wrong heaped upon his race. That is a messianic moment for Shylock, and ducats become dross in its presence. When the full tidings of his woes and wrongs are told him he cries, “The curse never fell upon our nation till now: I never felt it till now.” Thenceforth we may see in Shylock the impersonation of the divine avenger of a divinely chosen people, and the majesty of his law confronting an opposing world.

“On the other hand stands Antonio, representing rather feebly, until he too is summoned from being a mere rich merchant to become a shorn victim, the opposite principle. He stands for the Christ, the forgiver, the sufferer. In the course of its travels the legend had combined with one told by Hyginus. The patriot Moros having conspired to rid his country of its tyrant, falls into the hands of that tyrant, Dionysius of Sicily, who orders him to be crucified. But Moros is allowed a respite and absence of three days to visit his sister, his friend Selenuntius having agreed to become his hostage. On his way back, Moros is impeded by a swollen river, and when he reaches the place of execution finds his friend on the point of being nailed to the cross. The two friends now insist each on being crucified for the other, at which sight Dionysius is so affected that he releases both, resolves to be a more humane king, and asks the friends to take him as ‘the third in their bond of friendship.’ It is remarkable that this legend (which suggested to Schiller his ballad *Die Bürgschaft*, the Suretyship) should have been a popular one at the beginning of the Christian era, introducing as it does an exactor of vicarious suffering—that too by a cross—and ending with the tyrant becoming one in a trinity of friendship.

“Shakespeare has brought this vicarious feature into a prominence it never had in any version he could ever have seen, and his art, creating as it must in organic consistency, has dramatised the psychological history of mankind.

“Antonio, the merchant called on to suffer, is the man who gained nothing at all from the bond. He has incurred the danger and penalty in order that his rather worthless friend Bassanio may get the money necessary to secure a rich marriage which shall free him from his debts. It is the just suffering for the unjust. Antonio is the man who gives, hoping for nothing again; in low simplicity he lends out money gratis; and, when Shylock agrees to lend the three thousand ducats, the merchant says, ‘This Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.’ At the trial, Antonio speaks like the predestined victim:

I am a tainted wether of the flock,  
Meetest for death.

And, when the trial is over, Antonio is the only man who offers to relax his hold on the Jew's property. He gives up his own half, and takes the other only to give it away to Shylock's daughter and her husband.

“To be kind Antonio calls Christian; but it was not that spirit which finally brought him into the same fold with his judges. His life is spared on condition of his becoming a Christian. Professor Morley and other critics say that was harsh. But Shylock is no longer a genuine Jew, and Shakespeare properly relieves that race of his connection. The Jews had, indeed, in primitive ages, begun with the eye-for-an-eye principle, but fiery trials had long taught them patience under injury. Shylock, reminding Antonio, when he asks help, of his outrages, says:

Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,  
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe,

So had it been for many ages, and the Jew had relegated the principle of vengeance to his fossil theology, practically becoming the patient victim; while, on the other hand, Christianity, reaching the throne, had antiquated Christ's principle of mercy, and was dealing out the rigours of the Judaic law which Israel had outgrown by suffering. But when Shylock repairs back to the old eye-for-an-eye spirit, when he draws from the armoury of the ancient law the old weapon of retaliation, it is only to find that the sacrificial knife grown rusty for a Jew is bright and keen enough in Christian hands. In pressing to practise the blood-atonement and vicarious principle he enters upon Christian ground, and Shakespeare rightly baptizes him a Christian.

“We may naturally question whether Shakespeare meant this irony. Did he intend any subtle hit when he made these Christians claim as a co-religionist, ripe for baptism, a man who had just attempted to take a fellow-man's life? That cannot be affirmed; but it is notable that there should be in the play another passage liable to that construction. Shylock's enemies have just converted his daughter Jessica into a good Christian; and the first sign of the work of grace in her heart is the facility with which she steals and squanders her father's money. Shakespeare does not fail to connect with this pious robbery the Christian customs of the time towards Jews. When the robbery and elopement have been planned, the Jew's Christian servant, Lancelot, says to Jessica:

There will come a Christian by  
Will be worth a Jewess' eye.

That seems to be a play upon the then familiar phrase ‘worth a Jew's eye’—a Jew having often to pay an enormous sum in order to avoid having his eye put out. With that Christian usage the poet apparently connects the robbery of Shylock's treasure. So by adopting the Christian usage of the time, by saying to Antonio what King John said to the Jews—‘Your money or your flesh,’—Shylock had given evidence of a change of heart, and his right place was in the Christian fold.

“But among all these representative figures of the Venetian court-room, transformations from the flying doves and pursuing hawks, bound victims and exacting deities, of ancient mythology, there is one who possesses a significance yet to be considered. That is Portia. Who is this gentle woman in judicial costume? She is that human heart which in every age, amid hard dogmatic systems and priestly intolerance, has steadily appealed against the whole vindictive system—whether Jewish or Christian—and, even while outwardly conforming, managed to rescue human love and virtue from it. With his wonted yet ever-marvellous felicity, Shakespeare has made the genius of this human sentiment slipping through the technicalities of priest-made law, a woman. It is, indeed, the woman soul which has silently veiled the rude hereditary gods and laws of barbarism—the pitiless ones—with a host of gentle saints and intercessors, until the heartless systems have been left to theologians. Inside the frowning buttresses of dogmatic Theology the heart of woman has built up for the home a religion of sympathy and charity.

“Portia does not argue against the technique of the law. She agrees to call the old system justice—so much the worse for justice. In the outcome she shows that this so-called justice is no justice at all. And when she has shown that the letter of ‘justice’ killeth, and warned Shylock that he can be saved from the fatal principle he has raised only by invoking the spirit which giveth life, she is out of the case. Shylock now sues for mercy before a Christian Shylock. And Portia like Mary and all sweet interceding spirits that ever softened stern gods in human hope—turns from the judicial Jhalves of the bench to the one forgiving spirit there. ‘What mercy can you render him, Antonio?’ The Christian Gratiano interposes—‘A halter gratis; nothing else for God's sake!’ But

Christ is heard, however faintly, above him, and Antonio forgives his part of Shylock's penalty.

"Forgiveness is the attribute of man. We may reverse Portia's statement and say that, instead of Mercy dropping as the gentle rain from heaven, it is projected into heaven from compassionate human hearts beneath. And heavenly power doth then show likest man's when mercy seasons the vengeance of nature. From the wild forces above not only droppeth gentle rain, but thunder and lightning, famine and pestilence; it is man with his lightning rod, his sympathy, his healing art, who turns them from their path and interposes a shield from their fury. Consequently all religions, beginning with trembling sacrifices to elemental powers personified—powers that never forgive—end with the worship of an ideal man, the human lover and saviour. That evolution is invariable. Criticism may find this or that particular deified man limited and imperfect, and may discard him. It may take refuge in pure theism, as it is called. But it amounts to the same thing. What it worships is still a man,—an invisible, vast man, but still a man. To worship eternal love, supreme wisdom, ideal moral perfection, is still to worship man, for we know such attributes only in man. Therefore, the Shylock-principle is non-human nature, hard natural law moving, remorselessly on its path from cause to effect; the Portia-principle, the quality of Mercy, means the purely human religion, which, albeit for a time using the terms of ancient nature-worship and alloyed with its spirit, must be steadily detached from those, and on the ruins of every sacrificial altar and dogma build the temple whose only services shall be man's service for man."—(*The Nineteenth Century.*)

THE MOST ESTEEMED BABU PEARY CHAND MITTRA, F.T.S., of Calcutta, has just given the public one more fruit of his constant industry in the publication of a biographical sketch of the late Dewan Ramcomul Sen. This remarkable Bengali gentleman died in the year 1844, at the age of sixty-one sincerely regretted by every one who had had the honour of his acquaintance. To sterling integrity, methodical business habits, and great commercial sagacity, he added an ardent patriotism and a deep reverence and love for the religion and literature of his country. Foremost in all schemes for the benefit of his race, including education, he was at the same time associated with, and the valued friend of, many of the best Englishmen of his day who were connected with Indian administration. Among these was the late Rev. Dr. H. H. Wilson, who after having been in the most intimate relationship with him in the Asiatic Society, the Mint and other places for thirty years kept up a correspondence with him after his (Dr. Wilson's) return to England and until the Dewan's death. Extracts from these letters of Dr. Wilson are given by Babu Peary Chand in the present pamphlet. Among them are the following which will be read with interest:—

*Ram Mohun Roy*—"In a letter I wrote to you I mentioned the death of Ram Mohun Roy. Since then I have seen Mr. Hare's brother, and had some conversation with him on the subject. Ram Mohun died of brain-fever; he had grown very stout, and looked full and flushed when I saw him. It was thought he had the liver, and his medical treatment was for that and not for determination to the head. It appears also that mental anxiety contributed to aggravate his complaint. He had become embarrassed for money, and was obliged to borrow of his friends here; in doing which he must have been exposed to much annoyance, as people in England would as soon part with their lives as their money. Then Mr. Sandford Arnot, whom he had employed as his Secretary, importuned him for the payment of large arrears which he called arrears of salary, and threatened Ram Mohun, if not paid, to do what he has done since his death, claim as his own writing all that Ram Mohun published in England. In short, Ram Mohun got amongst a low, needy, unprincipled set of people, and found out his mistake, I suspect, when too late, which preyed upon his spirit and injured his health. With all his defects, he was no common man, and his country may be proud of him."

*Society in England.*—"The people here are so taken up with themselves that they cannot bestow much attention upon others. It is the same amongst themselves. England is divided into many little Englands—there is an England of fashion, of classical learning, of antiquities, of science, of profession, of commerce, of speculation, of politics—all dabble in the last; but in each of the former, it is a mere accident if one of one set knows anything of what is going on in another. The sets were very large, comprehending many thousands each; so that there is a wide field of interest, only that it is local and disconnected. Books are printed at the University Press which are never heard of in the Royal Society. The Philosophical Transactions have not six readers in Oxford, and the Royal Asiatic Society's proceedings are unknown to both. The Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature even do not find their way to the College libraries or reading-rooms, and if publications and proceedings immediately under their own noses are not scented, we need not marvel that Bengal Researches and Asiatic Journals do not attract notice. It is of no use to calculate on popularity in England. It is not to be had for any thing but a novel or a newspaper."

And the following—which shows how thoroughly Dr. Wilson's views agree with those expressed in the THEOSOPHIST for September in connection with the subject of the threatened dissolution of Prof. Weber's Sanskrit Text Society. What Dr. Wilson found true in 1844, the unhappy Prof. Weber also bewails in 1880.

*Sanskrit.*—"I am going to publish a translation of the *Sankhya Bhashya* with Mr. Colebrooke's translation of *Sankhyas Karika*, and then the translation of the *Kaumudi*. I must do something of this kind, for my credit's sake; but to say the truth, the people here care nothing about Sanskrit. They care equally little about anything literary, and not much about anything scientific. Eating, ostentation and politics are the total of English existence. I have a very mean opinion of my countrymen."

#### LONGEVITY OF TREES.

From observations made on specimens still in existence the longevity of various trees has been estimated to be, in round numbers, as follows: Deciduous cypress, 6,000 years; baobab trees, 5,000; dragon tree, 5,000; yew, 3,000; cedar of Lebanon, 3,000; "great trees" of California, 3,000; chestnut, 3,000; olive, 2,500; oak, 1,600; orange, 1,500; Oriental plane, 1,200; cabbage palm, 700; lime, 600; ash, 400; cocoanut palm, 300; pear, 300; apple, 200; Brazil wine palm, 150; Scotch fir, 100, and the balm of Gilead about 50 years. Such examples are quite sufficient to prove the truth of a remark of Schleiden's, that there seems to be "a possibility of a compound plant living on without end."—*Banner of Light.*

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE.

We beg to draw the attention of our readers to the Publisher's Notice on the first page of this issue, from which it will appear that the Office of this Journal has been removed from 110, Girgaum Back Road, to the "Crow's Nest," Breach Candy, near Warli Bridge, Bombay, where all correspondence in regard to the Magazine as well as all communications for Madame Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, and the other officers of the Theosophical Society, should be addressed until further notice.

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