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THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

[Family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares.]

OLD DIARY LEAVES.

ORIENTAL SERIES, CHAPTER XXIX.

WHAT his Sunday is to the 'slave of toil' my rare half-days of rest were to me on this 7,000-mile circuit around India, in the year 1883. I had one such, I see, on the 9th May, and up to the 14th I was, at least, settled in Calcutta, but then the ceaseless round had to be taken up again and I left by steamboat for Midnapore, which transit the breaking down of a second boat on the Ooloomaria-Midnapore Canal lengthened out to a two-days' journey. There was a lecture on the evening of my arrival, healings of the sick on the 17th, and the formation of a local Branch with ten members, after which I returned to Calcutta. A lecture was given at Bhowanipore on the 20th, and the next day, at the Calcutta Town Hall, we celebrated, in presence of a huge audience, the first anniversary of the Bengal T. S. Babu Mohini Mohun Chatterji, Secretary of the Branch, read an interesting report, in which he said that the formation of the Branch was due to my first lecture in the same hall in the preceding year; the President, Babu Norendranath Sen, gave a lengthy and eloquent discourse; Babu Dijendranath Tagore, the highly respected and cultured Acharya of the Adi Brahma Samaj, spoke on the subject of Brotherhood; Dr. Leopold Salzer, on Protoplasm and Dr. Jaeger's discoveries in odorant matter; and I wound up the proceedings with a historical retrospect of the doings of Dr. James Esdaile in Mesmeric Anæsthesia, as applied to surgical operations, at Calcutta in the years 1846, '47, '48, '49 and '50. I see by the report (*Theosophist*, Supplement, July 1883) that I read, among other things bearing upon the subject of Mesmerism, the striking passage from the *Sariraka Sutra* where it is said: "by the aura (*ushma*) of the inner man (*sukshma sarira*) is the aura (*ushma*) of the outer man (*sthula sarira*, or body) perceived."* The statement of Mr. Leadbeater (vide *Theosophist*, Dec. 1895,

* The passage reads thus: *Asyaiva chopapatte resha ushma*. In the dictionaries *ushma* is, I know, explained as heat, with the implication in some cases that *prāna* is meant. That it is not the animal heat of the body is clear enough from the fact that the *ushma* of the spiritual body is mentioned. Under the circumstances, then, I think that our word aura (*Sans. tejas*) more nearly explains the idea conveyed in the context than would any English synonym.

art. "The Aura") that the aura extends, in the average man, to a distance of about eighteen inches or two feet from the body in all directions, is borne out by the warning in the ancient Atharva Veda, that if a healthy person comes within *two cubits*, i.e., about three feet, of the body of one diseased, the malady is likely to be communicated to him; the patient's aura transmitting its germs midway between the two, at the point where the spheres blend and the microbes are transferred from the emittent to the recipient aura. According to Susruta, "leprosy, fever, dropsy, eye-diseases and some other abnormal conditions," are communicated from a patient to a healthy person by conversation (intercourse), contact, breath, sitting together at meals or on the same couch, use of the same clothes, garlands of flowers and scented paste (*analepan*). *Appropos* of the now-raging bubonic plague of Bombay, Atharva Veda says that "Even if a son born of one's own loins be attacked by . . . carbuncle . . . he is never to be touched:" a mandate which is not very closely observed in our time of brave, self-forgetful nursing of the sick. But to return from this digression. The above-mentioned occasion was my last public appearance of that year in that portion of India, as on the following day I sailed for Madras. It having been brought to my notice that some of the facts given in this narrative with respect to mesmerism and mesmeric healing have been rather widely commented upon by the press it may, perhaps, interest the public to read a summary of the table of statistics which was published by my friend Nivaran Chandra Mukerji, who accompanied me throughout the tour and kindly acted as my private secretary: his report will be found in *Theosophist Supp't.*, June, 1883. He says the table represents in one column "the number of patients (they were of both sexes, all ages, conditions of social life, and sects) upon whom he (I) actually laid his hands, and in another, that of the gifts of vitalized or mesmerized water made by him (me). I have reduced vessels of all capacities—*ghurras*, *lotaks*, jars, bottles, etc., to an uniform standard of the pint bottle." In the first column are enumerated the twenty stations where I healed the sick, and it is reported that I dealt with 557 patients; in the other column it is shown that I gave 2,255, pint bottles of mesmerized water, and Nivaran Babu, assuming that each bottle represented but a single patient—a too moderate estimate, I fancy—makes a grand total of 2,812 sick persons treated by me, in the circuit of 57 days. Additional facts, of interest to my colleagues at least, are that within the time I travelled "2,000 miles by rail, steamboat, budgerow (canal boat), horse-gharry, elephant, horseback, and palanquin, the travel being sometimes by night, sometimes by day." I gave, it seems, "27 lectures, organized 12 new Branches, visited 13 old ones, and held daily discussions on philosophy and science with hundreds of the ablest men in Bengal and Behar." Nivaran even describes my diet with liberal praise, and tells how many potatoes, ounces of green vegetables, maccaroni, vermicelli, slices of bread and butter, and cups of tea and coffee I took, and how well I thrived on non-flesh diet. That the vegetarians may not claim me as an indiscri-

minating convert, I must say that if Nivaran had gone the tour of 1887 with me, he would have seen me so weakened by this diet that I was peremptorily ordered to resume my usual food, and apparently saved my life by not being so fanatical as poor Powell, who lost his life through asceticism. To compare pigmies with giants, it seems that my case was, in this, like that of the Buddha, who fainted at the end of a long fast and saved his life by eating the rich food brought him by the sweet-souled Sujata, daughter of a nobleman. I recollect that when Mrs. C. Leigh-Hunt Wallace, the authoress of a standard work on Mesmerism, saw the statistics of my year's total score of treatments, she wrote me that there was not a mesmerizer in Europe who would dream of touching with mesmeric intent, half that number of patients. She meant, of course, professional healers like herself, not prodigies like Schlatter, Newton, the Curé d'Ars, Zouave Jacob, and others who have professed to have been working under an overshadowing spiritual control. So far as that is concerned, I frankly confess my belief that I could not have gone through such a great and sustained out-pouring of my vitality unless I had been helped by our Teachers, although I was never so told by them. What I am forced to realise is that I have not had so phenomenal a healing power since I got my order to stop the work, *i. e.*, towards the close of 1883; and I am convinced that, though I should try ever so hard, I should fail to cure those desperate cases which I would then dispose of with the greatest ease within a half-hour, or even less.

I had a hearty welcome home from H. P. B. and the rest, and a series of phenomena were done, chiefly for my benefit, among which I shall only mention the one noted in my entry for June 6th. I say that "not being able to decide whether to accept the invitation to Colombo or that to Allahabad, I placed A. C. B.'s letter in the shrine, locked the door, instantly reopened it, and got the written order of \therefore through... (a second Adept) in French. It was done while I stood there and not a half minute had elapsed." So far as it goes, that pretty effectually disposes of the pretence that these communications were fabricated in advance and passed through a sliding panel at the back of the shrine. A whole month of homely desk work at Adyar was a delightful episode, varied with healings of patients, reception of visitors, and metaphysical discussions with H. P. B. I restored speech to one patient, cured paralytics, deafness, etc. One case is interesting as showing a progressive cure of loss of hearing. A young man who could not hear the ticking of a clock held against his ear, was at the first treatment made to hear it at the distance of 4 ft. 6 inches; at the second, at 6 feet; at the third, at 15 feet: at the second, he could hear conversation at the distance of 13 feet. On the 24th June, a boy who had long been paralyzed in his legs was, in one treatment, made to walk about the room.

On the 27th June I sailed for Colombo, arrived on the third day and plunged into the business cut out for me, *viz.*, the grievances of the Buddhists in the matter of a riotous attack made on them by the Catholics, without their getting redress from Government. The next fort-

night or so was taken up with this affair, and with personal interviews with the Governor of Ceylon, the Colonial Secretary, Inspector General of Police, Government Agent for the Western Province, the leading Buddhists, the chief priests, and counsel. I drafted petitions, remonstrances, instructions to counsel, appeals to the Home Government and the House of Commons, had many consultations and discussions, presided at Branch meetings and, generally was kept busy. All having been got into trim, I crossed over to Tuticorin on the 14-15 July and began a long tour through Southern India, which was full of variety, excitement and picturesque episodes.

Let us begin with my arrival on the 17th July, at Tinnevely, the station where our Colombo Buddhist committee and I planted the cocoanut amid the tumultuous rejoicings described in Chapter XXI. We reached the station at 6 p. m. and found a huge crowd waiting. Five thick ropes of flowers, rather than garlands, were put about my neck and mounted to the top of my head; my hands, arms and pockets were filled with ripe limes—the fruit of welcome and respect; I was put into a canopied sedan-chair; the chief local and governmental officials walked beside, in front and behind me along the dusty road; a young Brahmin threw loose flowers on and about me and tossed them into the air, strewing the road with an odorous carpet; the temple Brahmins came and handed me the flower-wreathed silver lotah and the tray on which lay a broken cocoanut, some red powder, limes and camphor. The procession moved on with waving flags and banners; two bands of musicians—one from the temple—changed their wild music, and so we proceeded until the flower-and-plant-festooned bungalow assigned to me was reached, and I was allowed to get in from the heat of the road and enjoy its coolness. A welcome was here spoken by an ex-Judge of Travancore, a learned and estimable gentleman, to which I responded, of course. Does it not seem as if all this gave the lie to the inimical Missionary tale of 1881, that the orthodox Brahmins had felt so outraged with the pollution of the Temple by our cocoanut-planting party that they had uprooted the nut and purified the premises to get rid of our unholy taint! But why waste time or “spoil one’s blood,” as the Russians say, in refuting the numberless calumnies that have ever been circulated against us, when they refute themselves all in good time?

The next day I lectured on the lawn outside my bungalow to an audience which included all the leading men of the place. At the close I made an earnest appeal for the supply of a good theosophical library for Hindu boys, and got a very handsome sum subscribed on the spot. This, if I my memory serves me, was the first of a long series of successes in the same direction, and down to the present moment I have continued to press the claims of Indian youth upon their elders for the means of proper religious culture. I hope that, when I leave the scene, somebody among my colleagues will thoroughly cultivate this best, most fertile of all mental and moral fields in India. There is no other to be compared with it.

As the publicity given by the Ceylon press to my early healings created an importunate demand for repetitions on the Bengal tour, so the exciting narratives of the North Indian papers caused me to be urged with equal pertinacity to exercise the power for the benefit of the sick in South India. They besieged me at Tinnevelly, as at all the other stations, and some marvellous cures were wrought. An entry of a few words in my Diary for July 20th, recalls to memory one of the most dramatic experiences of my life. I had gone to the Pagoda to sprinkle the "Tree of Friendship" with some refined rosewater, and was followed by at least 1,000 idlers who, for lack of better amusement, watched my every step and exchanged opinions on my personal appearance. A young man of 25 or 30 was brought me through the press, by his father, with a prayer that I would restore his speech, which he had lost three years before. Having neither elbow-room nor breathing-space, I climbed up on the continuous pedestal or basement that supports a long line of monolithic carved figures of Hindu deities, drew the patient up after me, called for silence, and made the father tell the people about the case. What then happened may as well be quoted from the printed contemporary record—a letter from the well-known late S. Ramaswamier, F. T. S., in *Theosophist Supp't.*, August 1883. "Amidst a great crowd," says he, "right in front of the Nelliappa temple, the Colonel laid his hands on the unfortunate dumb man. Seven circular passes on the head and seven long passes, all occupying less than five minutes, and speech was restored to the no more unfortunate man! The Colonel, amidst deafening shouts of applause and thundering clapping of hands, made him pronounce the names of Śiva, Gōpāla, Rāma, Rāmachandra and other deities as glibly as any other bystander [could]. The news of this restoration of speech spread at once throughout the town and created a great sensation." And no wonder, for when I made the patient shout the sacred names at the top of his voice, half the crowd rushed out into the street in mad excitement, waving their arms over their heads and crying, in Indian fashion, *Wah! Wah! Wah!* Recollecting the mean tricks the Missionaries had played on me at my first visit, in circulating a scurrilous pamphlet against H. P. B. and myself, to which, in contravention of law, no publisher's or printer's name was attached, and in putting afloat the falsehood about the cocoanut trees having been uprooted by indignant Brahmins, I planned a little deserved punishment on them. I told the patient's father to take his son to the chief Missionaries at Palamcottah—a suburb of Tinnevelly—tell them about the cure, quote to them the 17th and 18th verses of St. Mark's XVIth Chapter, and demand on behalf of the Hindu community that in proof of their divine commission, they should restore speech to somebody as I had done in the Pagoda. Their reply to be communicated to the Hindu public. Several days later he came and reported to me the result. I had expected some amusement, but fancy my surprise when he told me that one of the chief *padris* had declared his story a lie and not one would believe his son had ever been speechless! The subterfuge was so ingenious that it

excited my profound admiration and I had a good laugh over their astuteness. More than they had, I imagine, since the man was known to the whole town and the cure had been made with the greatest publicity.*

I went on to Trevandrum, the capital of Travancore, by bullock cart and was banged and bruised all over; the distance being about 100 miles and the road a trying one. Trevandrum was reached on the second morning, and the principal nobles and officials came to present their compliments and welcomes. I made ceremonial calls on H. H. the Maharaja, a cultured man, well known for his magazine articles on the Vedānta and other serious subjects, and on the British Resident, the Eliyah Rajah (Heir Apparent), the Dewan (Prime Minister) and other important personages. His Highness, the Maharajah, had up his Palace pandits to meet me, and started a discussion between them and myself on the subject of Yoga, he himself serving as interpreter. At my lecture that afternoon most of the Royal Princes were present, and as one of them was notoriously intemperate, I took occasion to draw a picture of what was the ancient ideal of an Indian Prince, and compared it with the sad contrast presented in most of the Indian Courts at the present day: of course, not mentioning its special applicability in the present instance, since that—as the French say—*sautait aux yeux*. Many patients presented themselves for treatment and I see that on the first day all but one were more or less benefited. On the second morning the Royal Family were present at my rooms to watch operations, and among other cures recorded is that of an old woman to whom I restored speech in their presence. Before leaving town I admitted a number of respectable candidates into our membership. The ordeal by bullock-cart-thumping had to be faced again and in due time I got back to Tinnevely, with a rather realising sense of my anatomy at the end of the journey. *En route*, I lectured at Nagercoil to a big audience. Further additions to our membership were made at Tinnevely, and I then passed on to Srivilliputtur where I formed a local Branch, thence to Sattur, and then onwards to Madura, one of the largest, most prosperous and enlightened towns in Madras Presidency. The Meenakshi Temple is, I think, the finest Hindu religious structure in India—it is 847 × 744 ft. in area and full of giant monolithic statues; it was once the seat of Tamil learning, the statuettes of forty of its most renowned pandits being kept in a closed room which, probably, few foreigners visit, and which is the sad

* First-hand proof of these strange cures being best of all, it will be as well to copy here the certificates which were printed in the *Theosophist* Suppl't., for August 1883. They read thus: "We hereby certify that in our presence Col. Olcott has just restored speech to Oomayorubagam Pillay, son of Utheravasagam Pillay, of Palamcottah, after a treatment of less than ten minutes. For three years he has not been able to pronounce any word except the first syllable of the name of Rāmā, and that but indistinctly. He can now articulate many words plainly and in a loud voice. (Sd.) Utheravasagam Pillay (father of the patient); Soccalingam Pillay (his uncle); Sonachellum Pillay (his father-in-law); N. Padmanabha Aiyer, F.T.S.; Vallinayagam Pillay. The above is strictly true. (Sd.) Oomayorubagam Pillay (the patient). Tinnevely, 21st July 1883.

memento of glorious days of ancient learning, now almost forgotten. There was, when I visited the town—and is now—a brilliant local bar, whose then leader, Mr. S. Subramanier, F. T. S., is now creating for himself a permanent renown as a Justice of the High Court of Madras. I was put up in his garden-house and soon became acquainted with every man in the town worth knowing. The next evening my lecture was given in the noble palace of Tirumala Nayak (the Pandyan king of the 17th century), under difficulties. The Palace is built and paved with stone, and the effect of the presence of a crowd within the building is to create a roar and confusion of sound quite unmanageable. I was first placed to speak on the place under the dome in the Rotunda, where the Prince of Wales had held his Durbar, but the mere rubbing of the unshod feet of 2,000 people on the pavement and the murmur of their friendly voices, prevented my making myself heard, even by friends a few feet off. They craned their necks forward, curved their hands behind their ears, bored me to the centre with their anxious glances, as though their eyes had been drills, and half opened their mouths, as the deaf instinctively do, to catch the air vibrations within the cavity of the mouth as well as those of the tympanum. But it was useless, I was only shouting myself dumb for nothing; so I stopped and made signs of despair and regret. A shouted confab then ensued between the Committee and myself, which ended in my going into the majestic sculptured hall where the District Court now sits. A strong guard was placed at the door of entrance, to admit only those who knew English, and from the bench on the raised dais where British justice is dispensed, but where, formerly, the Indian Sovereign received in state, I spoke for more than an hour to a listening crowd of perhaps 800 to 1,000, including all the highest in birth, position and influence and the brightest in intellect.*

The next day and the following my services as healer were in great demand, and each palpable cure added to the excitement. I had to put myself in the hands of the Committee and let them select the patients to be treated, out of the pushing mob about the door. Mr. V. Coopposawmy Iyer's report to the *Theosophist* says that I laid hands on 27 persons and that "the most remarkable cures were three cases of deafness, one obstinate case of chronic rheumatism of the spinal column, of 9 years' standing, that had long defied the skill of the medical faculty, and two cases of paralysis—one of the middle finger of the left hand, and the other of the whole of the left hand. In the last case the cure was effected within five minutes." In short, a very respectable stock of 'miracles,' enough if they had been exploited by an enterprising priest of any religion, to go far towards proving to outsiders his holding of a special Divine Commission: such ignorant fools are the credulous public

* Hunter's *Gazetteer*, describing the Palace, says it is "the most perfect relic of secular architecture in the Madras Presidency." The main structure consists of two parts, an open court and a lofty hall. The style is a mixture of Hindu and Saracenic. The court yard is about 100 yards square, with high walls of brick, forming long galleries surmounted by domes. One side is constituted a hall and its lofty domed roof is supported by circular pillars of granite.

of every country. I hope the intelligent reader has come to see, long before now, that if the two Founders of the Theosophical Society had been the speculative tricksters they have often been said to be, they could have rolled together immense sums of money and been worshipped as superhuman personages, instead of having had such meagre revenues as the Society's yearly financial reports exhibit. It isn't as if we had never had the chance, for if ever any religious reformers in India had it, we have had. In this epoch of shrunken faith and debauched priests, whose animalised aspect is sometimes enough to turn one's stomach, H. P. B.'s unchallengeable phenomena and my healings caught hold of the popular imagination in such fashion that magnates literally laid their treasure-bags at our feet, and fabulous sums were offered us to show our various powers.* That we rejected all their offers with evident sincerity is the secret of much of the loyal friendship shown us throughout India, from the beginning until now. If we had ever taken a present for ourselves, the whole Indian public would have abandoned us in the Coulomb crisis, and we should have been looked upon as religious hum-bugs; whereas, as it is, all the Missionaries combined, of all the Societies of the world, cannot rob us of our place in the hearts of India's children, degenerate alas! as they are.

The cure of the hand-paralysis had an amusing sequel. The patient was of a good Brahman family, the brother of a B.A., and vakil (pleader), who was impulsive by nature and not morally strong. He was eating his dinner when the lad returned from my rooms, his paralytic hand glowing and burning like fire with the restored rush of vitality through it. The *vakil*, a religious skeptic, too lofty in self-conceit to admit that soul is a reality, no sooner took in the fact of his brother's cure by the mere imposition of my hands, than his skepticism was swept away as by a flood; he left his meal unfinished, hurried over to me, thanked me extravagantly for the cure, hung about me all the day, became a member of the Society, and when I left for Negapatam and other stations, went with me, to serve or fight for me as I might choose. He took no change of clothes, if I remember aright, but just came as he was, like one who jumps into a boat as it is just shoving off from a foundering ship, without thinking of food, water or luggage. Such dry-grass-burning zeal as this could not last long; despite his vows of loyalty shouted to the four quarters of the sky, my wild vakil has proved one of the shallowest friends I have met in India, broken fifty times his promises, and finally let me into paying out of my own pocket a quite large sum for building supplies which he asked me to get for Head-quarters as his own gift, but never refunded the money for. Quite a different sort of character was the other Brahmin vakil who accompanied me to Negapatam. He has been staunch all the way

* A Mussalman in Bengal once offered me Rs. 10,000 to turn aside for a few hours and cure his wife's paralysis which, of course, I did not do, as I might have done, if he had been a pauper, and no friend of his had pronounced the word money to me.

through, is a Trustee of the T.S., and has been chosen by me as one of the executors under my own Will. *Tot homines, quot sententiæ.*

At Negapatam things were much the same as at Madura; a great crowd met me on arrival, covered me with flowers, formed in procession with a band of musicians, and led me to a decorated bungalow where I replied to addresses, held conversations with roomfuls of questioners, formed a new Branch with 27 members, lectured to one educated (*i.e.*, English-knowing) and one popular audience: the first was at my bungalow, the second in the Pagoda, through interpreters, to 3,000 persons. On the 5th August I slept at the railway station and took an early train the next morning for Trichinopoly, where more hero-worship awaited me, with the thermometer at over 100° Fah. in the shade. A warm welcome, truly!

H. S. OLCOTT.

SILPA-SASTRA.

CHAPTER IV. WOODEN ARCHITECTURE.

THE following notes on wooden architecture, which is not treated in the Puri copy, are compiled from the two manuscripts, from the two villages, near Khandagiri, of which I could take no copies for want of time.

The ground (*vâstu*) is to be levelled carefully; and after digging the foundation, a lamp is to be lighted in it, a vessel, full of water is to be placed in the hollow; and a piece of stone, carved like a lotus, is to be laid at the centre.

Supposing a shed, consisting of three rooms, 17 cubits long by 7 broad, to be constructed, it will be easily seen that eight posts are to be erected. Their foundation will be $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubits, and the shaft $6\frac{1}{2}$ in height; total 8 cubits. These posts are to be adjusted exactly perpendicular by the plumb-line. Their heights are to be levelled by water in large brass-plates, or *Dongâ*, a long hollowed piece of wood, which also serves the purpose of canoe. On the posts are to be placed cross-beams, called *Orâ*, 7 cubits in length, and longitudinal beams, called *Srenies*, which are in each room 5 cubits 16 fingers (Angulas) in length. On the four cross-beams stand the four *Gûzas* or king-posts, on which is placed another long beam, called *Tûdiâ Sreniâ*. The projections of the long beams, called *Gûnthies*, should be 8 Angulas at each end. From these three long beams, the structure is called the *Tin-Sreniâ Ghar* (Griha), literally the three-beamed chamber.

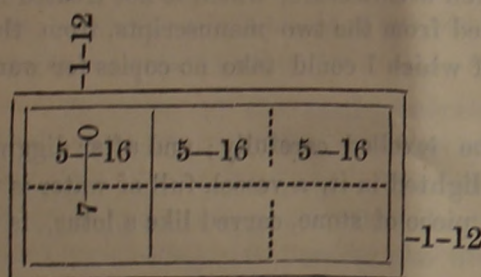
The platform, on which the structure stands, should be 1h. 12a. in height, and should project the same distance; or in other words, one-fourth span of the room should be the breadth of the outer platform. Now according to the calculation of the *Ashta-bandha*, the total area, 119 cubits divided by 8, gives the remainder as 7, which makes the three-beamed hut as *Gaza-bandha*, the door of which should be towards either the north or the south.

For better elucidation of the terms, see the accompanying sketches, in which their position is shown.

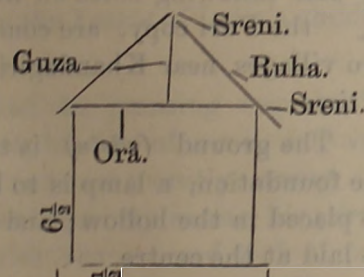
After the *Tin-Sreniâ*, the *Silpa-Sâstra* describes the five-beamed, giving the proportions of the different parts. As in the first example, it is also 7 cubits in length, which, for the three rooms, amounts to 21 *hastas*; and the span is 12-5. Its posts will be 7 *hastas* high; Orâ = 12h. 5a., the Konâ (corner) Orâ = 9-16; Sreni = 7-2½; *Gûnthi* = 3-12; the upper *Gûnthi* = 4-2½; Kânda (corner Ruha) = 18-6½; the central posts = 17-0; Tûndât = 1-0; and Ruha = 13'-18".

Seven-beamed structure (*Sâpta-Sreniâ-Griha*): each room is 7-0; Garva (span) = 12-0; posts on two sides are eight, and two in the middle—total ten posts, of which the height should be 5-0; and section = 16 *Angulas* square. On the posts, the *Bûndias* (capitals) are to be placed, after proper levelling. To *Bândia* the *Malli-Kadi* is to be joined. The height of the two middle posts is 12-16, and of four *Kândas* 18-16. The upper *Sreni* should be 7-7 long, and *Ruha* = 13-0.

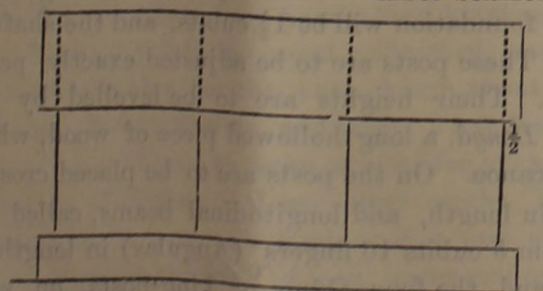
[Diagrams showing the different structures and terms referred to above.]



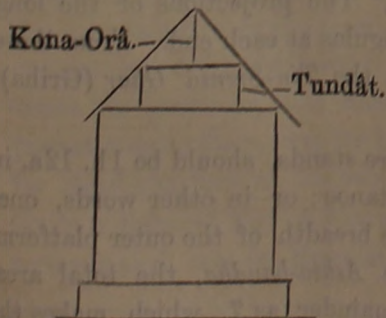
Plan.



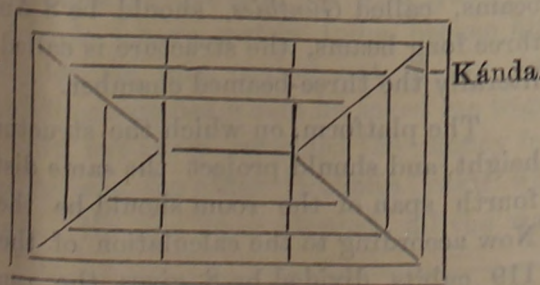
Cross-Section of three-beamed House.



Elevation.



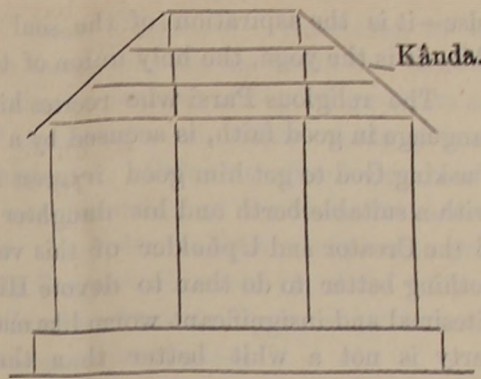
Section of Five-beamed Chamber.



Roof-Plan of Seven-beamed Structure.



Section of Seven-beamed Chamber.



Longitudinal Section of Seven-beamed Structure.

These ancient rules of structure will be of interest to modern architects.

P. C. MUKHERJI,
Archæologist.

SUN-WORSHIP AMONG THE PARSIS.

AMONG the daily or common prayers performed by the religious Parsis is one called "Korshed-niyâesh," which is recited by them in the Avesta language. They recite this and other prayers without understanding their meaning, in spite of the hard-hearted taunts and bitter reproaches of non-Zoroastrians, as well as their less religious co-religionists. The latter, on this pretext, try to escape from all religious restraints or responsibilities, and regard themselves as the wisest of their community, although now-a-days there are means at their command to understand the meaning of their Scriptures. Translations of these, both in English and vernacular, are now easily available, but out of sheer indolence and apathy towards religion they care not to look at them, far less study them. Their condition is thus rather pitiable than otherwise, because a man without a religion, or devotional feeling, approaches nearer the animal than to the higher side of his nature. There are now greater facilities for understanding one's Scriptures by means of philology, Theosophy, and the science of the soul, or yoga-philosophy, than there were some 30 or 40 years ago. Besides this, we are now peacefully settled in India, a country which is the fountain source and motherland of all true spiritual knowledge. Thus the party which has less faith in its religion finds it easy enough to laugh at its more spiritually minded co-religionists, who in simple faith continue to offer prayers to the Sun in the Avesta language, as their forefathers did, though they themselves have not a leg to stand upon in the position they have taken up in this matter, as will be seen presently.

The religious Parsis perform their common prayers standing either before the Sacred Fire or the glorious Sun, the highest symbols of the Supreme that any Saviour of humanity has yet given to the world. I say "common prayers" advisedly, because the true prayer is something

else—it is the aspiration of the soul to reach the Supreme source of All—it is the yoga, the holy union of the soul with Ahura-Mazda.

The religious Parsi who recites his common prayer in the Avesta language in good faith, is accused by a well-known Parsi "Reformer" as "asking God to get him good interest for his money, to provide his son with a suitable berth and his daughter with an eligible husband;" "as if the Creator and Upholder of this vast and magnificent universe had nothing better to do than to devote His time to the affairs of an infinitesimal and insignificant worm like man!" But the god of the Reform party is not a whit better than that of the other. Its exponent, while preaching on a certain occasion, expressed himself as follows:—"If we want to ask for some gift from God, it is better to ask it after performing a prayer than to ask it at once." This sounds exactly like a fair bargain with a shopkeeper who doles out riches in return for a prayer. And what is a prayer of these "educated" Parsis? Gujerati songs, composed for the occasion, set to modern music. Thus the members of the "Reform" party are in far worse plight themselves than their orthodox brethren. The real Zoroastrian prayer is an offering—a sacrifice—rather than an asking, which will be seen further on when we shall deal with the "*Khorshed-niyâesh*," or worship of the Sun, proper.

We will now enter upon an examination of the prayer itself, which is called *Khorshed-niyâesh*, the prayer of the deity which presides over the Sun, and see whether we can learn something from it. Leaving out the Arabico-Pâzand introduction of this prayer, we notice the following passage:—

"Obeisance to Thee, Ahura-Mazda, threefold before other existence. Obeisance to you Ameshaspentas, who have ALL LIKE WILL WITH THE SUN. May this (obeisance) come to Ahura-Mazda, to the Ameshaspentas, to the Fravashis of the Pure, this to Vaiyâm of the Long Period."

We see in the above passage that the Ameshaspentas—who are, according to the *Zamyâd-yasht*, "the shining, having efficacious eyes, great, hopeful, imperishable and pure, which are *all seven of the like mind, like speech, all seven doing alike*, who are the creators and destroyers (or rather regenerators) of the creatures of Ahura-Mazda, their Creators and Watchers, their Protectors and Rulers"—have all "*like wills with the Sun*." And what Sun could be alluded to here but Ahura-Mazda, the Logos? The Ameshaspentas are identical with, and yet separate from, Ahura-Mazda; in other words, Ahura-Mazda is the synthesis of the Ameshaspentas, and these latter are of one will with Ahura-Mazda, who is called Sun in the above passage. That the Sun stands here for Ahura-Mazda can be seen plainly.

Now, what are the Fravashis referred to in this passage? According to the Avesta, all existences—whether a god, man, sky, fire, water, plants—have their Fravashis. Much confusion and misconception prevails among the present interpreters of our Scriptures as regards the

true meaning and function of these Fravashis. According to the latest attempts made to interpret them, they are shown to be "nothing else than the good deeds of animate beings, and good products and properties of the inanimate"* creation; or, in other words, they are merely the effects of visible existences. Columns after columns of a Parsi daily paper are filled with explanations on the basis of this erroneous and misleading hypothesis. In order to have a clear conception of this word we have to turn to Fargard 19, verse 14, of the "Vendidad," where Ahura-Mazda asks Zarathushtra the Spitama, not to invoke Him but His Fravashi. The passage runs thus:—

"Invoke, O Zarathushtra, my Fravashi, who am Ahura-Mazda, the Greatest, the Best, the Fairest of all Beings, the most Durable, the most Intelligent, and whose soul is the holy Word (Mathrâ Spenta)."

The Theosophical interpretation of the Fravashi is that "it is the *inner* immortal man; . . . that it existed before its physical body, and survives all such it happens to be clothed in. . . . This shows as plainly as can be shown that the Ferour is the 'spiritual counterpart' of each god, animal, plant or even element, *i.e.*, the refined and the *pure* part of the grosser creation, the soul of the body, whatever the body may happen to be. Therefore does Ahura-Mazda recommend Zarathushtra to invoke his *Fravashi* and not Himself [Ahura-Mazda]; that is to say, the *impersonal* true essence of Deity, *one with* Zoroaster's own Atman (or Christos), not the false and *personal* appearance. This is quite clear." ("The Secret Doctrine," vol. II., p. 480.)

Now I lay before you these two interpretations, to weigh and judge which of them appears to you in harmony with the fundamental teachings of the Avesta. The Fravashis being spiritual prototypes of physical existences, or Divine Ideation, according to the Greek philosophy, they are the *causes*, and not the *effects*—good deeds of men and good properties of things—as explained above. The new-fashioned interpretation of this essentially spiritual idea is obviously opposed to the true spirit of Zoroastrianism, according to which the Fravashis existed even before the condensation of the physical world. This interpretation amounts, therefore, to nothing short of putting the cart before the horse. We are taught to invoke or adore the Fravashis of the Pure, that is, the essence which is one with God, and not the "good products and properties of the inanimate" things, which would amount to idol-worship, pure and simple. I now leave it to you to decide whether you should bow down, as is enjoined in the *Khorshed-niyâesh*, to the True Divine Cause which is one with Ahura-Mazda, or to the good deeds of animated beings and good products of inanimate things.

We are required further, to make obeisance to Vaiyâm, which is interpreted sometimes as Râm, the Yazata, and sometimes as "Bird of

* "The Fravashis" by Aerpat Meherjibhai Palanji Madan : a paper read before the Eighth International Oriental Congress, 1889. The *Bombay Samachar* has followed this interpretation.

the Long Period," while it is compared sometimes with the Vedic Vâyú. The last interpretation is not very far from the "Bird of the Long Period," if we take Vâyú in its esoteric sense. It gives us a clue to the solution why one should bow down to Vaiyám. The Vâyú of the Vedas is certainly not the air, or the atmosphere that we breathe, nor that which is the air of the later manifestation, a mixture of gases wherein the atoms have already appeared to exist; but the Vâyú of the Vedas is "the Great Breath of the Supreme," which is essentially Eternal Motion, as is said by Mrs. Besant in "The Building of the Cosmos:" "for only when this conception of motion comes in, is any manifestation possible." Thus the distance between Vaiyám, the "Bird of the Long Period," and Vâyú, the Eternal Motion or "Great Breath," is not great; and Vaiyám therefore, being one with the Supreme, the obeisance made to it amounts to the obeisance made to Ahura-Mazda Himself.

The subsequent passage teaches us something about the form of prayer alluded to in the beginning of our subject. It should be borne in mind that the original form of Zoroastrian prayers is not a petition or appeal for worldly comforts or gifts or riches, to an anthropomorphic God, as is sometimes done by some people, but it is the outward form of the inward aspiration of a true devotee who aspires to uplift his soul to become one with the Supreme Source of all. These prayers teach us rather self-sacrifice than self-gratification, as will be seen from the following passage:—

"I praise the well-thought thoughts, well-spoken words, well-performed deeds. I lay hold on all good thoughts, good words, good deeds. I abandon all evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds. I offer to you, O Ameshaspentas! praise and adoration, with good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, with heavenly mind, the vital strength of my own body."

This passage teaches us self-control, control on thoughts, words and deeds, in which the mind and body are trained in a way to control and subjugate the lower activities of the mind, and this training itself forms, as it were, a sort of sacrifice on the part of the neophyte, hitherto a worldly man. It is self-denial, self-sacrifice. Thus purified by abandoning his selfish thoughts, selfish words, and selfish deeds, he offers "the vital strength of his own body" to the Ameshaspentas, whose synthesis is Ahura-Mazda. This offering of one's vitality is true *Jan-festani* or *Jan-kurbani*, which means true devotion.

Then the Parsi "Sun-worshipper" makes

"Obeisance to Ahura-Mazda; obeisance to the Ameshaspentas; obeisance to Mithra of the wide regions; obeisance to the Sun with swift Aspa; obeisance to the Eyes of Ahura-Mazda; obeisance to Geush; obeisance to Gayahi; obeisance to the holy Fravashi of Zaráthushtra the Spitama; obeisance to the Pure (heavenly) Existence which was, which is, and which is to be."

We have said something of Ahura-Mazda and the Ameshaspentas above; now let us take Mithra. It is interesting to note that the Sun

and Mithra are inseparable in the daily prayers of the Parsis. One who prays to the Sun must pray to Mithra, as the prayer to the latter immediately follows the former in what is known as the *Meher-niyâesh*. Not only so, but this *Meher-niyâesh* is almost the same in its composition as the *Khorshed-niyâesh*, with the difference only of a couple of passages or so. And why? Because just as, according to Theosophy, Atma is inseparable from Buddhi in microcosm, or Atma cannot be conceived without Buddhi, the Sun or the Logos is inseparable from his companion, the Mithra. We learn from "The Secret Doctrine" that Mercury is "identical with the Mazdean Mithra, the genius, or god, established between the Sun and the Moon,* the perpetual companion of 'Sun of Wisdom' ". . . "He is the *Golden coloured Mercury* . . . whom the Hierophants forbade to name . . . It is through the intercession of Mercury that the Emperor Julian prayed to the occult Sun every night, for, as says Vassus, 'all the theologians agree to say that *Mercury and the Sun are one.*' ". . . "He was the most wise of all the gods, which is not to be wondered at, since Mercury is in such close proximity to the Wisdom and Word of God [the *Ahunavairya*] (the Sun), that he was confused with both." ("Idolatry," vol. II., p. 373).

It should be remembered that, just as stated above, the sun is the occult Central Spiritual Sun, similarly, Mithra or Mercury must also be taken as one of the occult planets and not the physical one known to Astronomy, concerning which something will be said further on. Suffice it to say, however, that we are not far removed from our legitimate purpose of approaching the invisible Sun, the Logos, in making obeisance to Mithra.

We now come to the word *Aspa*, a term which also possesses a philosophy of its own, like those we have spoken of above. What are these *Aspa*? They are the "swift horses," say all the translators of the Avestâ, the word being similar to the Sanskrit word *अस्य*. Some people would have us believe that the number of these horses is seven, and in some of the symbolical representations of the Sun we actually see the *rath* or chariot of the Surya-Narayan drawn by seven horses. If they are seven in number they might correspond to the Ameshaspentas; but their number varies, and their significance differs. The *Aspa* related to the spiritual Sun can be taken safely as Aswins of the Hindu philosophy, who are sometimes called Kûmâras, or bachelors. Turning to the Vedic philosophy, we see in this term some of the highest gods, the twin-sons of the Sun and Aditi (space). These Aswins, or Aswino-dual, or Aswini-Kumâras are the most mysterious and occult gods of all, who have "puzzled the oldest commentators." . . . They are "swift as falcons." Esoterically they are the Kumâra-Egos, the

* Cf. *Khorshed Niyâesh* or *Yasht*:—"I praise the friendship which is the best of friendships, between the Moon and the Sun." "Friendship" does not give an exact idea of the word "*Hakhegremeha*." The Moon of the Avesta also cannot be taken as the physical Moon. "The real Sun and the real Moon are as invisible as real Man," says the "Secret Doctrine," vol. i., p. 179, c. e.

reincarnating "principles," says our teacher, H. P. B. The nature and functions of these mysterious beings have been very lucidly and ably described in the "Birth and Evolution of the Soul," by Mrs. Besant, and I cannot do better than offer you some quotations bearing on this subject.

"These mighty Spiritual Intelligences," she says, "had accomplished what we are aiming at now. They are the successful men of past ages, who have developed into perfect men, perfect Intelligences, and now are, so to speak, coöperating in the building of a new race, coöperating in the production of a new humanity. But up to the point at which we are, [*i.e.*, until the form was perfect] they had taken no part in this evolution that had been going on—the physical side, the evolution of form. Now from These is to come a second line, from the Sons of Mind, Lords of Light; They are called sometimes, Pillars of Light, and so on. These, coming down to the Earth, when the Tabernacles were ready to receive Them, came to give the necessary impulse in order that at this point of junction a new individual might arise, and afforded the active, impelling, positive energy." It is said at the beginning of the "Secret Doctrine" that "some projected a spark," and "some entered the body. . . . Those who entered became Arhats," or Divine Sages. "Those are the great Teachers of Humanity in the earlier days of our Race," says Mrs. Besant, "They formed the nurseries of Adepts for the present age; the Great Teachers who came in order that this infant humanity might be guarded and protected and helped in its earlier stages."

The Zoroastrians will remember that their Scriptures and traditional works contain names of some of These mighty Adepts.*

Until the union was formed between the almost soulless form and the light of the Kumaras there was no Ego, in the proper sense of the term, although there was the animal soul, if we apply that term to the feelings and emotions. But the true Ego, that which is capable of achieving immortality, was not there. "The Ego which is now in each of you was not in existence as Ego, any more than the plant which will develope from a germ, if the germ be fertilized, is in existence before that fertilization takes place." Let us take an illustration from the same lecture, from which we have taken the above: "Take one of the lower animals. Next we will come to the domesticated. . . . With regard to the wild animal there is the germ of mind, but very little that you can really call mind. Suppose you take an animal and domesticate it, and suppose you domesticate it for generations, you will have handed on in the three bodies of that animal—the physical, the astral, and the kâmic—you will have handed on a very definite heredity; and if these individuals are domesticated time after time, you will find greater and greater intelligence, as it may be called, evolving. Some qualities are developed in the domesticated animal

*See "Divine Kings and Adepts of Zoroastrianism," *Theosophist*, July and August 1896.

which we are compelled to say are due to intelligence.* You will develop in it a limited reason; you will develop in it a limited memory; you will develop in it a limited judgment. Now, these are qualities of the mind, not qualities of Kâma. How is it that in this lower animal these qualities are developed? They are developed artificially by the playing upon it of the human intelligence. To that animal, the mind in you to some extent plays the part which the Sons of Mind [the Aswini-Kumâras] play to Humanity; and, thrown out from the comparatively developed Intelligence in man, these rays, these energetic rays of mental influence, vitalize the germ in the Kâma of the animal, and so produce artificially, as it were, an infant mind," which is the mind or human soul which we are now possessed of.

Now, then, you will see that the Aspâs of the *Khorshed-Niyâesh*, the so-called "horses," are our mind-givers, the sons of the Spiritual sun, Ahura-Mazda. Now it will be easy for you to understand why horse is placed as a symbol of mind in some of the occult works, and you will understand also the mystery of *Aswamedham* ceremony, the horse-sacrifice of the Mahâbhârata, in which the horse is let loose in the city of ten gates, this body, before it is sacrificed. But this "horse" or "mind" is not to be understood as the spark projected into us by the Aswini-Kumâras; it is the lower animal mind which existed in us before their contact with us. Yes, it is by sacrificing this "horse," or lower mind, that the object of life is attained; because the "Voice of the Silence" says:—"Having become indifferent to objects of perception, the pupil must seek out the *râjâh* of the senses, the Thought-Producer, he who awakes illusion. The mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer."

Now can we support this teaching from Zoroastrianism? Perhaps we can. Open the "Bundahish," and in the very first chapter you will find that, in the beginning, Ahura-Mazda "produced spiritually the creatures which were necessary, . . . that they were *unthinking* and unmoving, with intangible bodies." Thus mind was not incarnated into the bodies in the beginning, it only came afterwards.

Now we come to the eyes of Ahura-Mazda. The sun and moon are stated to be the eyes of Ahura-Mazda, which are also taken as symbols of the heart and mind respectively. According to the Vedic literature, however, our sun is called *Loka-chakshûh*, the "eye of the world." But the eye of Ahura-Mazda refers to the heart of everything, whether it be an atom, a man, or a planet. It refers, I suppose, to that illuminated part through which we can see Him and He can see us.

Nemo-Geûsh or obeisance to the Primeval Cow, is the point next under consideration. Just as we have seen before, a spiritual truth underlying the symbol of "horse," we shall also see some truth in the symbol of the sacred Cow. *Geûsh* comes from the root *go* or *gow*, which

* It may be remarked here that it is these domesticated animals—i.e., humanized to a certain extent—that are slaughtered for human food in great numbers in every city which we are led to believe is civilized!

means cow, tongue, earth, life or *jiva*, &c. Happily the modern translators have been trying to interpret the occult terms correctly, and we see that Geúsh has a wider meaning than was formerly attached to it. It means the soul of the universe; it means also *jiva*. Mr. Isaac Myer says in the *Path* (for March 1887), that "AUM, the sacred word, is the first-born Word or Logos of the Deity, the Memrah of the Jews, the Honover of the Parsis, the origin of the Vedas, which appeared before all things, and the image of Aum is the sacred Cow, which is also a symbol of the universe." Thus, in making obeisance to the "Cow" or *Geúsh*, one makes obeisance to the Universal Soul. Gaiyahe or Gayomarathân or Gayomard often appears side by side with Geúsh or the Primeval Cow, in the Avestá as well as in the "Bundahish," and from the hints thrown here and there about him in this literature, he appears not a man like ourselves, but a lunar man or god. As it is a being enwrapped in a mystery which we are at present unable to solve, not wishing to digress from the subject in hand, we will leave it where it is, for the present.

After making obeisance to the "Existence of the Pure, which was, which is, and which will be," certain formulas relating to certain divisions of time are recited; after which the worshipper enters on the adoration of the Spiritual Sun, and the Existences related to it.

The next passage in the *Niyâesh* is as follows:—

"The Immortal Sun, shining, with swift Aspa, we praise. Mithra, possessing wide regions, the truth-speaking, the gatherer, the thousand-eared, well-shaped, with ten-thousand eyes, great, endued with far watching sight, the strong, not sleeping, wakeful, we praise. Mithra, the Lord of all regions, we praise, whom Ahura-Mazda has produced as the most brilliant of the heavenly Yazatas. Therefore come hither, that is, manifest yourselves to me, Mithra and Ahura the Great. The immortal brilliant Sun, with swift Aspa, we praise."

In the foregoing passage we do not see anything new to advert upon, except that the devotee who prays to the Sun prays also that Mithra, the Yazata who presides over Buddhis and Ahura, may become manifest to him or may be revealed to him from within. He does not ask for any worldly good, but he wills that Ahura the Great may be revealed to him that he may attain thereby that end which is eternal happiness.

Proceeding further we find the most occult of the passages in the *Niyâesh*:—

Tistrya with healthful eyes, we praise thee thrice. Tistrya we praise. The stars pertaining to Tistrya we praise. Tistrya of the shining glory (Khureh) we praise. The star Venant of Mazda we praise. The star Tistrya of the shining glory (Khureh) we praise. The Heaven which follows its own law, we praise. The Boundless Time we praise.

Time the Ruler of the Long Period, we praise. The holy Wind, the well-created, we praise. The rightest Divine Wisdom of Mazda we praise.

The good Mazdayasnian Law we praise. The most acceptable Path we praise. The golden Tube we praise. The mountain Saokant of Mazda we praise. All holy heavenly Yazatas we praise.

All earthly Yazatas, we praise. We praise the Heavenly Tree: we praise our own Fravashi. Come hither (manifest), O Mazda. The good, strong, holy Fravashis of the Pure we praise. The immortal brilliant Sun, with swift Aspa we praise."

Superfluously observed, the commencement of this passage will appear as star-worship. But while we have taken the Sun of this prayer as Ahura-Mazda, we must likewise find out what this Tistrya and the stars pertaining to it may mean. The Tistrya and the Venant appear to be stars, but they are not the stars that we see. In exoteric religion, Tistrya is considered as the god of rain, corresponding to Indra of the Hindus, and Jupiter Pluvius of the Greeks. An Orthodox Parsi might take objection, however, to the comparison of Tistrya with the Hindu God, Indra, on the ground that the latter is scorned at in the Avesta; but the Indra of the Avesta does not stand for the god of rain of the Hindus. The term used there may refer to some evil elemental or spirit. Because if we hate Indra, the god of rain of the Hindus, then we hate Tistrya, the Yazata or god of rain of the Parsis, which amounts to hating Ahura-Mazda Himself, in one sense, as on certain occasions Jupiter, Indra, Bhrihaspati, all stand for Ahura-Mazda, as will be seen from the "Bundahish" and the "Desatir."

Just as the word *Buddhi* in the Vedic literature bears quite a different meaning, namely, physical intelligence, from what the same word means in the Avesta and the Buddhistic literature, namely, spiritual wisdom, similarly the word *Indra* in the Avesta has quite a different meaning from that given to it in the Vedas. Madame Blavatsky says that Ahura-Mazda is the Father of Tistrya, the rain-bestowing God (the 6th Principle), that fructifies the parched soil of the 5th and 4th, and helps them to bear good fruit through their own existences, *i.e.*, by tasting of Haoma, the tree of eternal life, through spiritual enlightenment". (*Theosophist*, vol. 4, p. 224, &c). While our personality—the fleeting and evanescent—is related to the astrological stars, our individuality—the eternal Ego—may be related to these two most occult and sacred powers which are called "stars" and invoked here. These stars are centres of various spheres, to whom Hazrat Azar Kaivân attaches various colours in the "Makâshefât-i-Kaivani," such as (1) green of the Moon, (2) blue of Mercury, (3) white of Venus, (4) golden of Sun, (5) (red) of Mars, (6) Blue of Jupiter, and (7) black of Saturn. It is to be remembered that no occultist would reveal occult truth in its naked light, but they generally give out these truths to the masses, in the garb of symbols and allegories. Hazrat Azar Kaivân is no exception to the rule, as he appears most probably to have used some blinds in regard to colours.

Zravâne Akarnê is then praised. With regard to the Boundless Time, it should be borne in mind, again, that it is not time as we know it. There is a misunderstanding among the Parsis about the

Boundless Time, identifying it with what we know as time. Time as we know it, by its relativity to our present consciousness as Past, Present and Future, is an illusion according to the "Secret Doctrine." "Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced, but 'lies asleep.' The present is only a mathematical line which divides that part of eternal duration which we call the future, from that part which we call the past." The modern Parsis confound this time with the Boundless Time, *Zeruane Akarne*, the inconceivable, 'eternal duration,' and differ from the Theosophical views. But this was understood in a better way by a more philosophical sect of ancient Parsis, whose views agreed with the Theosophical idea, for which they were called the *Zarvanists*.

Then we praise *Vatem spentem*, the spiritual Vâyû, about which hints will be thrown out, further on, while referring to the channel through which they run.

Razishtam Chishtâm Mazdadâtâm, the wisdom coming from Mazda, the knowledge of true religion, is praised next: then *Daenâm Vanguhim Mazdayasnim*, the Wisdom, the Law, which is true Religion. The word *Daen* or *Din*, commonly means religion, but this religion is not to be taken in its ordinary sense as the masses understand it now: it is the ancient Wisdom-Religion which is so preëminently indicated by Theosophy or *Khodâsanasi*. It means also the great Law. In the "Vendidad" (Fargard II, 2) Ahura-Mazda is made to say to Zarathushtra, the Spitama, that Yima was the "first mortal before thee with whom I, Ahura-Mazda, did converse, to whom I taught the Law of Ahura, the Law of Zarathushtra;" that is to say, the Law of Zarathushtra is the same as the Law of Ahura-Mazda, which was revealed to Zarathushtra. This is the absolute knowledge which is in the Spirit. The Adepts or Initiates who thus acquire the knowledge of the Absolute, time after time, impart a portion of it to mankind in accordance with the growth, mental capacity, and spiritual needs of humanity, in the country and in the age in which they live. In this way have been formed different religions. No religious books, as they are now, in our possession, contain absolute knowledge. It is this partial knowledge which has been preserved till now in the scriptures of the various religions of the world. No religion, therefore, however great its literature may be, can possess the absolute knowledge that is in the Spirit. Hazrat Azar Kaivân also affirms this statement, while he says that at a certain stage in his Yoga training he acquired vast wisdom, the like of which he never learnt in any of the books of the world. In fact the knowledge of the ultimates of things is not to be found in any man-made books, either religious or profane. Every Zoroastrian knows that a greater portion of the religious literature of his forefathers is lost. How can he then boast that he knows *the* Religion? The man, therefore, who boasts in his self-sufficiency, or self-conceit, after reading a few

books of his own religion, that he knows all about his religion, and others do not, lives in a fool's paradise; because the true basis of every great religion is something quite different from what is commonly accepted by the masses. It is therefore necessary to study as many scriptures as we can, in order to gain as much knowledge of the Spirit as we possibly can in the present state of human evolution, always bearing in mind the wise words of the "Bhagavad Gîtâ":

"It is best to die in one's own *dharma*; the *dharma* of another is full of dangers."

NASARVANJI F. BILIMORIA.

(To be concluded.)

PREDESTINATION AND FREE-WILL.

No. IV.

WHAT DO HINDU BOOKS SAY ?

(Continued from page 203).

CONSCIOUSNESS is thus at the root of all manifestation. In its effects it is known as evolution: in its causes it may be known as involution. It descends, but it also ascends. Consciousness works in circles, and infinity conceived in circles solves many puzzles presented as psychological problems, which would never see solution if infinity were conceived as straight lines with no beginning and no end. The doctrine of original sin, and all the free-will controversies, become puzzles, because mankind either takes its views as confined to a link of an infinity of causes, or it infers unreason by forgetting the Rule of Cycles made up of evolution and involution; and each of these appearing to our limited view as effect and cause, *per se*, but really alternating, as the one or the other is viewed in succession. There are causes, primary and secondary. If a man attributes to his present single life all that has been, it is tantamount to his ignorance of primary causes in addition to those of the secondary causes which personate him as the being of the current life he is leading. Primary causes once admitted, in other words, antecedent and consequent incarnations of man beyond the present life once admitted, linking all by the Law of Continuity, the Christians would neither stick to their originality of sin nor that of the universe, nor impugn the Hindus as belonging to the Stoic brotherhood who posited Fatalism.

Consciousness is at the root, and has the double aspect of 'pre-ordination' and 'liberty.' Action is *Karma*, which is the manifestation of consciousness. Like the heat-energy of the sun stored in the wood, consciousness is, as it were, stored in action. An illustration of this is memory. Remembrance of past acts is itself an act of consciousness. An act, the result of consciousness, connotes a consciousness of liberty, but the consciousness of a remembered act is a pre-ordained consciousness. This is the double aspect of consciousness, and that is how a

man is moulded. He is a freeman as well as a bondman ; free, looking forward, and bound, looking back. And he moves in a circle of causes and effects alternating, just in the same manner as all stars, planets and systems move in orbits, just as nights and days alternate, just as our waking and sleeping states alternate, just as the tree comes out of the seed and seeds come out of the tree. *Karma* is thus a wheel, in a point of which man may be said to take his place. As an exception to this universal law, as an exception to the rule of Continuity, as a break of the principle of Antecedents and Sequences invariably connected, no religion can be acceptable which would assert that man all at once jumped into creation by the sudden act of a whimsical God. In so far then as man is a link somewhere in the circular chain of events, he is connected with all the past, and connected with all the future. *Ex nihilo nihil fit* is the Hindu rule ; so says their Scripture, the Bhagavad Gítá :—

नासतोविद्यतेभावो नामात्रोविद्यतेसतः ॥*

‘ To the non-existing there cannot be existence ; to the existing no non-existence.’

“ Predestination ” and “ free-will ” are co-ordinate. In the one is involved the other. Any one with common sense can see that man to-day, is what he is, from what he was, and that he can make himself in the future from what he is. Like the one life are all the lives he has passed through and all the lives he may pass through, the several lives being so many individual items in the list of his destiny, or as Bhagavad Gítá says :—†

सूत्रेमाणिगणाइव ।

i.e., ‘ like so many beads strung on a thread.’

Man’s life is an *Ádi* (beginning), and is yet the *Sésa* (the remainder). The meaning of this may be pondered over. Ever a beginning and yet ever a remainder constitutes the symbol *Ádi-Sésa*, which is represented in a circle. The remainder is always in the beginning. This is represented by the tail of *Ádi-Sésa*, the serpent, grasped in its mouth (the serpent being the symbol of eternity), and shows that Continuity is the law, which expresses itself in circles.

It is the ‘ habit ’ of the seed to grow its tree, and it becomes the ‘ habit ’ of the tree in its turn to produce the seed. So runs man’s destiny. He is a product of himself and his environment.

We may be charged with pleonasm, but the subject is so vast and complicated that its treatment in several ways justifies it. Nor need confusion be made when such treatment is found to be a compound of consciousness, free-will and predestination. The treatment may not appear consistent, nor like logical analysis. In its not being so, there is a purpose, viz., to present it to the reader popularly, but at the same time philosophically. To the charge of repetition, the reply is that re-

* Bhagavad Gítá, II, 16. † Book VII, 7. (Bhág. Gítá.)

petition is a necessary method of education. With these remarks, let us pursue the subject whithersoever it may lead us.

Predestination is the product of free-willed habit, expressed in Sanskrit as *Karma-vāsanā*. Habit is at first a conscious effort. By repetition, the effort becomes gradually eliminated, and habit is automatic. It is automatic, yet is never independent of the self-creative original, on which it ever reposes, and without which it cannot, *per se*, exist or work.

Now, consider man as a spirit, cooped in the body's cage. Man is neither his eye, nor his ear, nor his brain, nor his heart; but yet they all contribute towards his personality. And apart from them all, he exists as "I," as the 'self-conscious' entity: a self-consciousness which may be said to be a compound consciousness in his embodied state. The embodied state is a composition of myriad little consciousnesses, of each of which he was at one time or another the author, but is now their slave. By yogic processes, the lost authorship can be recovered, Patanjali tells us. That is the yogic way of studying man. Till this education or re-assertion is completed, man is a prisoner. The self-consciousness preserves only an indirect supervision, and this must change to direct intervention. Then is he master. The law of necessary existence is a law made out of our own previous free-choice, and that law so far pre-ordains, but the spirit within, frets and chafes and struggles to free itself from self-created bonds. And all this inward struggle is the index of our pristine freedom which has never completely succumbed, nor will so long as the struggle is maintained. We are the children of our past but are the fathers of our future. In the womb of yesterday we have lain, but to-morrow lies in ourselves. The former is necessity, the latter is liberty.

The great difference between Christianity and Hinduism is that the former views but one life, the latter many lives, which is the law of *Karma* or continuity of existence. The question often asked is, why we have no memory of such births? The reply is: Have you memory of all the events of the present life? Could you minutely describe all that you did yesterday—nay, all that you did an hour ago? No. And who remembers his own birth from his mother? And yet nobody can deny that he *must* have been so born. Thus, want of memory cannot constitute an argument for denying the continuity of life, prospective and retrospective. Śrī Krishna speaks to Arjuna thus:—

बहूनिमेव्यतीतानि जन्मानितवचार्जुन ।

तान्यहंवेदसर्वाणि नत्वेत्यपरंतप ॥

i.e., 'Arjuna! thou hast had many lives in the past, I have had many also. I remember them all, but not thou thine.*'

Thus memory is lost, but facts are there, and lost memory is no disproof of the existence of facts. Those who wish to recover memory can do so if the path laid down by Patanjali be pursued.†

* Bhagavad Gītā, Bk. IV, 5.

† Vide Yōga Sūtra, III, 18. "Samskāra-sākshāt-karanāt pūrvajāti-jñānam" et seq.

Predestination and Free-will are thus explicable on no other doctrine than that of *Karma*. In the treatment of this question, consciousness enters as a very necessary factor. For consciousness is in both. It enters into *predestination* as unconscious consciousness, and enters into *free-will* as conscious consciousness. We have thus two equations which may be written down as follows:—

(1) Predestination = the (present) 'I'—free-will potency.

(2) Free-will = the (present) 'I'—predestination.

Consciousness transferred from its original manufactory to the automatic centres never loses in efficiency. On the other hand its action is more orderly and regular. This is the difference between the sympathetic and the voluntary nervous systems. This question has a bearing on the efficacy of 'Mantras.' Leaving for the present those which are merely muttered and used as a vehicle for the passage of will-force, we will take the famous Gâyatri, which forms an integral part of the *Sandhya* of every Dvija of India. The day it was first taught, it was learnt with great care, accuracy, and much intelligent attention. But gradually, it became in our mouths like the prayer wheel of the Tibetan Buddhists. The mind gets entirely disengaged from the Gâyatri, either as regards its import or even the rhythmic pronunciation of the several terms composing it. And yet the mouth performs the function, though the mind may be engaged on other matters. The efficacy of the habitual repetition of that which was once set in motion by a voluntary act of consciousness, may thus be believed in, though it is beyond question that if will-force did infuse into it a re-inforcing power daily, the automatic efficiency would be greatly increased.

It has now been demonstrated that Hindus are not fatalists nor indifferentists. But they believe in *Karma* as a given condition or conditions which mankind is forced to accept; and which mankind has yet latitude to manipulate; and new conditions are thus given birth to. That such is the doctrine of the Hindus was shown by reference to their sacred books.

It has been shown that the Triune Principle of the Universe, God, Soul and Matter, is the fundamental basis on which rests the question of *predestination* and *free-will*; and it was, *en passant*, hinted what sort of relation subsisted between the three postulates of existence, *viz.*, God, Soul and Matter.

Then it was shown that the conditions of the visible or the manifested Universe, in which the Atmic Monad appears as the embodied creature, man, involved the recognition on the moral plane, of the two sets of working forces, '*pâpa*' and '*puñya*,' corresponding to the forces of attraction and repulsion on the physical plane.

This led to an inquiry as to what is sin, and what was the origin of it, and it was shown that there was no origin, an origin being a philosophical impossibility. This position was shown as receiving support from such thinkers as Herbert Spencer and Max Müller.

It was next shown that conditioned existence was due to the union of the two verities known as *Chit* and *Achit*, or in other words *purusha* and *prakriti*. That *Samsâra* was this conditioned existence. That these two principles eternally co-existed was pointed out by a reference to *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, XIII., 19.*

It was then proved by reference to the Upanishadic passages and the Vedanta Sutras that *Chit* was the 'knower' as well as the 'actor,' and *Achit* was its instrument; and that in the capacities of 'knowing and acting,' lay the free-agency of *Chit* or the Soul, but it was a conditioned free-agency. That *Chit* is inherently ever-creative, though under given conditions, was further corroborated by such passages as *Gîtâ*, III, 5.†

That free-agency connoted free-willing, and free-willing was consciousness, was shown by a discussion of what consciousness was, how it was divisible into primary and secondary aspects, or involuntary and voluntary, or automatic and original (or creative), the pairs of terms corresponding with *predestination* and *free-will* respectively. This naturally led to a notice of reflex actions and sympathetic nervous action according to human physiology.

This turned on the statement of the doctrine of *Karma* and re-incarnation, and it was shown that it worked in cycles; and that the hope of the fallen man lay in circles, for only in circles one can ascend and descend and regain the points of departure. For if the descent of spirit into matter were in an infinite straight line, it must infinitely descend and infinitely deteriorate into grossness, and there would thus be a single force of predestination ever gravitating downwards, and no opportunity left for free-will to check the descent somewhere, and turn the course upwards.

How free-will was in shackles was further explained by a reference to such popular expressions as "ill-luck," "bad stars," "a creature of circumstances," &c.

That it is not entirely "kismet" that works, was shown by the otherwise non-utility of all moral laws and regulations, known as *Sâstras*, which, by laying down the conduct for man impliedly appealed to his inherent free nature. The aphorism "*Karthô sâstrârthavatvât*," ‡ it may be remembered, was cited in this connexion.

So far then it has been shown how the question of *predestination* and *free-will* is a question dependent on the interaction of two only out of the three fundamental postulates of existence, viz., *Chit* and *Achit*. What the province of *Ivara*, or God is, in this question, we propose to discuss in the next paper, should space be kindly accorded.

A. GOVINDA CHARLU.

(To be concluded.)

* '*Prakritim purushanchaiva viddhy-anâdiubhâvapi*,' &c.

† "*Nahi kaschit kshanamapi*," &c.

‡ *Brahma Sûtra*, II, iii, 33.

WHAT IS A STAR?*

IN the article headed "RHAPSODY," in the *Theosophist* of July last, it was said:

"The key-note of the universe is obtained by the law of centre.... The truth of the seer of the age is the truth of the reigning one."

Suppose a father to have twelve object-surfaces arranged in a circle, all twelve formed by himself at antecedent periods from the one same substance by the one same rule of law but, in reference to their modes, akin respectively to the four elements air, earth, fire, and water. And suppose the father, after forming the object-surfaces, passes over each in succession a vitalising current which vitalises each. While the current is on the object-surface air, that one is vitalised, and all things of the air are generated, and the seer of the age, seeing, speaks of them, and his truth is the truth of the reigning one.

Then, when, after a lapse of time, the father passes his current on to the next object-surface, akin to the element earth, the preceding object-surface remains at the degree of generated things it had reached during the period when the current was on it; and the object-surface akin to the element earth, having the current on itself, is vitalised in its turn, and all things of the earth are generated: and the seer of the age, seeing, declares the truth of the reigning one. And those things too, after that, remain at the degree they reached when the current was upon them, as the current is passed to the next object-surface, which in succession, is akin to the element fire; and all things of fire are generated. And so on, through each of the twelve object-surfaces.

As there are twelve surfaces and only four elements, it happens that in each complete round there are three surfaces akin to air, three akin to earth, three to fire, and three to water. And in consequence, the element air is vitalised afresh three times in one complete round, and the element earth three times, and fire three times, and water three times, and the circle is then complete. And, may be, the round is continued over again by the father, each object-surface being infused over again in succession, and, starting therefore afresh in the process of sublimification and of corresponding generated things.

If all twelve be placed in a circle in their order, it will be found that each three akin to air form a triangle, each three akin to earth a second triangle, each three akin to fire a third triangle, each three akin to water a fourth triangle. Each of the triangles have been named trigones, and the four from apex to apex of each form the square. But the present purpose is not to indulge in geometric figures. Mystics know the efficacy of manipulating the co-efficients.

Suppose that for the present purpose we name each of the object-surfaces Zodiacal constellations, into which the Father is ever pouring, from an inconceivable beyond, His vitalising current. And suppose that

* This is inserted as a Biblical paraphrase, with astronomical illustrations.—Ed.

we reckon our sun as the reflecting agent which, travelling by the precession of the equinoxes within the internal arc of the zodiacal circle, reflects within the solar system the current pouring in from beyond, through each object-surface or constellation, it will be evident that for the consideration of the action on each planetary body within our solar system, that moment must be selected for each planet which is called the vernal equinox of the planet, when life on the planet receives a fresh impulse each year. A current passing through the object-surface or constellation, akin to the element air, at the vernal equinox of that year, sheds through the reflecting agent, the sun, on that planet, a vitalising principle which acts on the air: and this continues, year after year, so long as the sun at the vernal equinox is in a line with the aerial constellation; and during that epoch all things of the element air of the planet are generated, and its air is sublimated: and the truth of the seer of that age is the truth of the reigning one.

And when the sun, by the precession, passes in a line with the next constellation (which is akin to the element earth of the planet), all things of the earthy element are generated on the planet—and so on.

Here it is necessary for the purpose of elucidating the subject, to specify the constellations and the element akin to each:

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Aries—fire | Libra—air. |
| Taurus—earth | Scorpio—water. |
| Gemini—air | Sagittarius—fire. |
| Cancer—water | Capricornus—earth. |
| Leo—fire | Aquarius—air. |
| Virgo—earth | Pisces—water. |

Let us confine ourselves to our planet, the earth; and see if its history in broad outline bears out all that has been said above. (It is impossible within the limits of this paper to enter into sub-divisions of the constellations, of the minor details of which sub-divisions mystics are well aware).

We will find that that one of the zodiacal constellations in which the sun has been at the moment of the vernal equinox in each successive age, has successively been the one whence has come to the earth the mystic influence, akin successively to each of the four elements which has successively generated things on the earth, and shaped life on the earth, and guided the thoughts of mankind and ruled his being. And we will find that as the sun, the reflecting agent, has, by the precession of the equinoxes, moved from one constellation to another, so has the condition of the earth progressed, so has life on earth progressed, so have the thoughts of mankind moved. Further, we will find that, from the one of the zodiacal constellations in which the sun has successively been, at the vernal equinox, has successively been taken the emblem in the belief of, and union with which, has rested salvation: for the truth of the seer of the age has been the truth of the reigning one.

To proceed, it is possible by mathematical computation based on the annual motion of the sun in the precession (which motion, as is known

in astronomy, is in the reverse of the order noted above), to arrive at a time in the distant past when the sun at the vernal equinox of the earth was in line with the constellation Libra, the balance, the aerial surface-object. Preceding that period was the reign of the watery Scorpio, when water was over the face of the deep, when the negative side of the scale ruled, and darkness prevailed. Now consider the process of sublimification and vitalisation.

When Libra, the balance, was reached by the sun in his precessional motion, balance or equilibrium was reached, and soon thereafter the scale turned the other side, and movement arose: the Spirit of God moved over the face of the deep. Libra is akin to the element air, and the process of sublimification applied to the great air, and an effect was produced, light appeared; and all things of the air were generated, and celestial beings arose.

Then when the sun, by precession, arrived in line with the next constellation which in succession was Virgo, the earthy, the virgin earth appeared, and was made separate from the air and the water; and all things of the earth were generated, for the vitalising current was akin to that element. Vegetation appeared, and animals and mankind, and all things made of the earth.

And mark that it is a law that the negative should tend to overlap with the positive. The sun having passed out of Libra, the beings generated in that period being deprived of the vitalising current were, in common parlance, jealous of the welfare and prosperity of the beings of the earthy one, and an overlapping ensued, which was the temptation in the garden of Eden, whence arose confusion and shame, and weakness; for the true light of the reigning one was darkened by the admixture of a by-gone age, into the things of which man had no business to look.

Then when the sun passed out of Virgo, he reached Leo, the fiery; and we read of the smelting of iron in those days, and the founding of great cities. With cities must have arisen rulers of the cities, royal personages; and Leo is a royal sign. Much progress must doubtless have taken place on earth, in which fire served. Fire probably was first worshipped in this period, and the sun, being the central "fire," was worshipped, for the truth of the seer of the age was the truth of the reigning one. Fire was used to assert innocence, and fire worshippers must have been a great nation within this period. In course of time great wickedness too spread, and there is evidence that the sons of this regal age married with daughters of the earth, the preceding Virgo or earthy period. The overlapping again resulting in mischief.

When from Leo, the sun, the reflecting agent, was about to pass into the next constellation, which was Cancer, the water element, the truth of the seer of the age was that the earth would soon be purged of wickedness by water, that water would reign. Even a hundred years prior to that event, this truth was announced, but the wicked heeded it not. But it came as surely as the sun moved into Cancer. Those who believed

and focussed themselves into the new sense of the great Father's ever living current were saved. And during this period the belief no doubt spread, that salvation rested in water, that water cleansed from sin. (As has since been believed, we shall see, in the next watery period; for there is nothing new under the sun, as the apostle declared when he said, "If it is told you this is new or that is new, believe it not, for that which is new was in the ages before".) Water cleansed from sin we have said: and, as a natural corollary, rivers became sacred, great rivers were likened to the great living powers of the Almighty, and were worshipped, for the truth of the seer of the age was the truth of the reigning one. And trade and navigation must have extended largely in this period, and the great nation must have been that one which, accepting the truth, focussed itself therein.

Then passed the sun into the next constellation which, in order of succession, is Gemini, the aerial; and mark the changes. The first effect was a sign in the air: the rainbow appeared, and was pointed out as a sign that the earth would no more be subject to universal deluge. It had been submerged in the watery Scorpio period; it was submerged in the watery Cancer period. But since then, each of the elements had successively received the vitalising current, and had successively been sublimated; and now that the sun by the precession reached the aerial Gemini, the process of sublimification was so far advanced as to result in the appearance of the rainbow in the air, which could not have occurred when both elements, water and air, were denser, more negative, so to say. Gemini is in affinity with the air: and the tribes that then flourished lived not in cities as those of the Leo period did. They lived under tents in the open air, and moved from place to place free as the air. They sought the living centre, not through the medium of the element water, but in the air around, and heard his voice in the air, and built a tower that raised its stupendous head in the air. Ay, and there is record in ancient writings that they travelled through the air, even from the Himalayas to Ceylon, in which country there apparently was a flourishing race which has been named, grotesquely, the monkey race; not that they were monkeys but probably had the practice of dwelling in the air in trees; and even to within recent times a race of aborigines was found in Southern India, who had their habitations in trees. Are not these the remnants of the aerial Gemini period; and when we, approaching the next aerial period Aquarius (as may be proved by astronomical computation), are striving to navigate the air, and are building high towers, are we not repeating history over again?

Gemini was a double-bodied sign, and the truth of the seer of the age induced the making of double-bodied emblems for purposes of meditation and communion with the reigning one: in one country it was partly human and partly a bird that carried the tidings of heaven to earth; in another country it was partly animal and partly human which proposed a riddle, the solution of which gave salvation. And much progress was no doubt made in this period in the study of astron-

omy, for the thoughts of men were turned to the air and the things seen beyond.

Then, when the sun by his progress onward came to the constellation Taurus, the bull, the earthy centre, the earth counted for much. Earth, cleansed and purified from contamination and sin. With earth, mystic or racial marks were made by men on their own features. The Almighty was worshipped in the fruits and plenty obtained from the earth, and special hymns were composed and chanted, bearing upon this subject. The seer of the age declared the truth of the reigning one, and a golden calf was made and worshipped. The Bull became sacred: and he who died holding the tail of the Bull gained salvation. We see here the origin of the sacred character of the cow, a faith to which remnants of a once flourishing nation still cling.

But the sun in course of time was about to pass out of Taurus into the next constellation which in succession was Aries, the ram, the fiery. And Moses, the seer of the age, knew the time was near for a change, and determined to plant his people in accordance with the new centre. He took them away from the land of the Pharaohs and forbade them to make a golden calf, and gave them instead the ram, the lamb; and their religious rite was that of the Pascal lamb. Fire too became the active agent. The seer of the age heard the voice of god, not in the air, but in the fire of a burning bush. His people were led through desert tracts by a pillar of fire moving before them. Fire from heaven consumed the holocaust, sin was purged by the fire of God's love, and sin was punished in the fires of hell, and wicked cities were destroyed by fire from heaven.

In course of time the seers of the age began repeatedly to prophesy another change, for the sun by the precession would pass out of Aries.

And here we must go back for a while to the Virgo period, when mankind of the earth generated, and confusion arose from communion with beings of the antecedent period. It was foretold that redemption would come, and the redeemer would be born of a virgin: of Virgo, the centre in which sin had occurred. The time for his birth was apparently the time when the sun by precession would reach the point exactly opposite to Virgo, for when confusion occurs at one pole of the magnet the cure may be looked for at the opposite pole. The pole opposite to Virgo is Pisces; and when the sun neared that constellation the birth of the promised redeemer took place. Pisces is of the watery trigone: and mark the distinctive features. The seer of the age begins his mission by getting himself publicly baptized in flowing water; he works his first miracle with water which he changes into wine; he selects his apostles from fishermen, and commands them to preach the new gospel and baptize; and all who will accept the new centre will live in the new centre with a new life. And wonderfully have they progressed and prospered, those who rejected the new centre having broken up and dispersed. Students of the science of the stars know

that Pisces rules the colours glistening white and blue : and it is noteworthy that the particular race which has progressed the most is that whose distinctive features are white skin, light hair, and blue eyes : the Saxon race. It is all noteworthy that the particular portion of the Saxon race which has prospered most is that portion which has lived surrounded with water (the British Isles). And witness the progress : all human thoughts centred on water : water placed on fire gave steam, and that has given rail-roads, steam navigation and wide commerce through oceans of water. The nation leading in navigation is also a nation of paramount influence, on whose dominions the sun never sets. It cannot be said that England itself is a large country : on the contrary it is a very small island ; but it is surrounded by the element in which the living current is, its people are of the Pisces type, and they have accepted the living centre of life ; and all other nations too who have accepted the new centre have progressed wonderfully.

But the sun, by the precession, is drawing near to the end of the Pisces period ; and the next constellation is the aerial Aquarius. Already the thoughts of mankind are on the element air, already repeated attempts are made to navigate the air, great towers are raising their heads into the air, forces and rays are being discovered which were hitherto unknown ; and the prophecy of the seer of the age is (in the Christian scriptures) that when the Avatar will next come he will come in great glory through the air (for it will be the aerial period) and will summon his angels, aerial beings ; and mankind will be baptized not in water, but in spirit coming from heaven—probably by psychic power drawn through the new centre.

Now, ancient teachers of the science of the stars have declared that Aquarius rules that part of the earth which is known as Russia : and strange it is that it should be a Russian lady who has given the first impulse to the study of the old world science of the last aerial (Gemini) period, to prepare mankind, as it were. Teachers also say that Gemini rules that part of the earth which is known as the United States, and strange also that the man selected to work with the lady should be a man of those States. Are these coincidences ?

When the Theosophical Society, reviving the old world science of the Gemini period, begins, notwithstanding ridicule and opposition, to promulgate the study of man's essence, of his centres, and their relation to the great ever moving centre, it begins to teach what a previous race learnt and passed out. It begins to prepare humanity for the new order of things. The science of religion is based on the science of the stars.

What then is a star ? Enough of metaphysical speculation. Little child in the nursery, what is a star ? Thou, newly arrived from heaven, uncertain yet how to stand in this world, staring in wonder around, couldst answer the question if thou wouldst speak ; but thou only lookest around and art silent.

What is a star? Ah, thou hast caught my meaning and thy soul answers:

"What is a great man in the world? He is a star in the world of men. . . . What is a beautiful flower? It is a star in the world of flowers. . . . *Each a focus wherein is revealed the great living God of all.* The star in the sky is the most brilliant, the constellation is most brilliant, because the furthest removed from the world of matter, and therefore nearest to God. The great man is great because he shines with the light that is in him. And when he too is far from sin and the world, he is a star among men. So, too, a beautiful flower is a star amongst flowers because nearest to perfection.

"Wise men of old said that a star can influence a river, the rain, the clouds, a city, a nation. You believe in the moon's influence on the tides of the ocean (the coarsest of influences), but have lost sight of the influence of the stars, because having steeped yourselves in matter you have obscured your finer perceptions. Wise men of old called the influence of the stars angels, and named them each by a distinctive name.

"Each corporized body in the whole animated universe, whether in the form of a star, a man or a flower, spreads through itself its influence which always leads to good. Because the star in the sky is a focus of the living good God beyond, its influence makes all things which centre in it good. Because the beautiful flower is a focus of the same God, it exerts a like influence: and who is it that, seeing a beautiful flower, does not in that instant feel good? (Ay, men place flowers before themselves when they wish to worship the great God). So too, a great good man makes other men wish to be great and good, because he is a true focus. A good child makes other children wish to be good. . . ."

Thy eyes, little one, have closed to the outer world; thy lips reveal the presence of smiling angels. Innocent child, thy soul is a star, and shines like the stars in heaven, because freest from the world of sin.

"And what art thou, O mother?" I said to her who sat by the cradle of her child.

"I am love," she answered smiling.

When the sleeping child woke, he cried, and nourishment moistened the mother's dress.

"This is the greatest mystery of all," I observed; "what is the invisible force see-sawing between thee and thy child, which, when he cries, makes the milk flow, though thy hand is not on him, nor his on thee."

"My child and I," she said, "are one: therefore when he wishes it, love flows."

I retired wondering whether it was not also the case that the whole animated universe was one, though torn apart often by men, and oftenest in quarrelling as to which focus is the true one.

At any rate I had made an important discovery : I found that as in the firmament, so on the earth there are double stars : the mother and child were a double star to me, for I saw in them each a focus which led to the Great Father in the beyond, pouring life and light through the present living centre, to all living centres within our solar system, even unto the earth and all living centres on the earth, whether they be human beings, animals, or plants. And a voice said " In olden times when a wise man wished to see the Creator, and He revealed Himself as a terrible being with millions of eyes in him, it was the living Universe and the eyes were the living centres. The Creator was revealed in His works."

A. M. D. G.

MEDIUMS AND FIRE ELEMENTALS.

ONE evening in December 1886, after dinner, the conversation turned on spiritualism, about which the newspapers were entertaining their readers in connection with the recent publication of the first volume of Dr. Gibier. One of my wife's brothers, a strong believer in these spiritistic doctrines, wishing to convince us of the reality of the phenomena which the papers mistrusted, declared that by simply placing his hands upon a table he could make it move—had, in fact, done so a few days previously. The experiment was tried and to a certain extent, succeeded, but as it did not appear to me that the conditions had been rigid enough, I determined to repeat it with my step-son, then nineteen years old, and we two passed into the billiard room, which was feebly lighted by a gas jet in an adjoining passage.

Scarcely had Monsieur C., my step-son, placed his hands on a little varnished pine table which stood before the fire-place, than a rapid movement occurred and the table, slipping over the polished wooden floor, ran away from us. On my demand, some knocks made by me on the table, were repeated, rap by rap ; the same occurred when I drummed a tune with my fingers, each stroke being echoed with surprising fidelity.

I then came to an agreement with the occult intelligence, that I should call over the letters of the alphabet, and that one strong rap should be made to designate the letters composing the words and phrases of our communication ; also that, in answer to our questions to it, one knock should mean yes, and two, no.

From this first evening we went on obtaining, with accuracy, interesting communications, at first, slowly, because of our lack of practice, but afterwards, much more rapidly : I followed the rule of writing them in a special copy-book, which thus became a sort of register of the proceedings of all our seances. Later on, I shall explain how this copy-book was destroyed, after it was completely filled, as well as the first pages of a second copy-book, on which were registered the proceedings of our final seances.

I am thus compelled, for lack of any written documents, to depend on my recollections of those distant occurrences, so I shall confine myself

to the description of the physical phenomena, which I most clearly remember, and put aside the communications whose exact words, I should not be able to guarantee.

Our seances, at first daily, became less frequent after the second month, because of the fatigue which they caused the medium; at last settling down to one or two a week. We held them, sometimes in my step-son's room, sometimes in the billiard room in presence of the mother and ten-year-old brother of the medium; occasionally other persons, friends or relatives of the family, were allowed to be present, but never without the consent of the familiar spirits of our group, for, unless consulted, they made no manifestations whatever. These same spirits usually prescribed the conditions of our experiments which, agreeably to their request, were made in full light, half light, or complete darkness. The medium was never entranced, but always followed and sometimes even directed the usual progress of our seances.

1. COMMUNICATIONS BY RAPS.

These communications were often given in the full light, with an accuracy that left nothing further to be desired. The knocks were strongly made on the table, sometimes on the ceiling, on the chimney-board, or on the pictures hanging on the walls. When we made any mistake or even showed hesitancy as to the letter called, a succession of quick raps, indicative of impatience, invited us to repeat the alphabet. When they occurred on the table, in darkness, we could sometimes perceive the luminous tip of the finger which made them. Occasionally our breakfast would be interrupted by signals of this kind, giving communications which usually and pertinently replied to the very subject upon which we might be conversing.

2. MECHANICAL ACTIONS: PHENOMENA OF TRANSPORT.

The tables, chairs and furniture generally, would often move about without the direct contact of the medium. One evening, when we had just left the billiard room, the little pine table which was ordinarily used in our experiments, left this room, by the half open door, and sliding along the lighted passage, came to the medium. It sometimes happened that the billiard cues, removed from the rack where they belonged, were thrown across the room where we were sitting, by some spirit inimical to us. Another spirit gave us, one evening, this message: "You are all my prisoners." We then heard a noise of keys turning in locks, and discovered that the three doors of the billiard room were locked, the keys carried off, and that it was impossible for us to leave. We held a parley with the practical joker, and its promise that the keys should be returned was immediately followed by the noise of their fall upon the cloth of the billiard table.

It also happened, after some seances, that when we had retired to our respective rooms we would hear an extraordinary noise in the billiard room that we had just left. We would then find the furniture topsy-turvy in the greatest disorder, the chairs and pictures thrown here and there, or

laid on the billiard table, and we were compelled, if we wished to have calm and peace restored in our house, haunted by these noisy spirits, to begin a new seance and to put up with messages, often of a very insignificant character.

Among the phenomena of transport, I will quote the following, as one of the most interesting. A friend of ours, Dr. D., an eminent physician who was present at one of our seances in the medium's room, was asked to go with us into the billiard room, where we were, in complete darkness. Dr. D., feeling himself pricked in the face and on the neck by some sharp-pointed instrument whose nature he could not identify, requested the spirit to stop this fooling, which he began to find dangerous. We then heard the noise of some rather heavy metallic object thrown upon the table and, on getting a light, saw that it was a sabre-bayonet which was usually kept in a small cabinet which stood at seven or eight yards distance from the billiard room. Certainly, none of us had brought this weapon into the room where we were.

3. APPORT.*

I cannot recall, in the whole course of our experiments, more than two cases of apport that were incontestably proved; that of a small dried flower, taken from between the leaves of an herbarium, and that of a sheet of mica. Neither of these objects had ever been in my possession or in my family residence before their appearance.

4. PHENOMENA OF LEVITATION.

These phenomena must be regarded as among the most interesting of all that we saw. Heavy tables, by the simple touch of the medium's hand, would rise off their four feet to quite a height and could only be dragged down again upon the floor, by our making the greatest combined efforts. One evening we sat in the medium's room in darkness, round a little table which stood before the chimney-place; at one corner of the chimney there lay upon the floor two empty bomb-shells, one of sixteen centimetres in diameter, weighing thirty kilogrammes (about seventy pounds), and the other, smaller, of twelve kilogrammes. After a series of violent knocks, I hear cracklings in the table, similar to those of the sparks of an electrical machine and, glancing towards my left, I see the larger of the two bombs surrounded by a strong light; I feel it rise and brush against my leg and then hear it gently place itself on the table. The second, and smaller bomb, following the same path, almost immediately deposited itself beside the first. The next moment, we hear the medium exclaim, "I feel that I am rising"! Mounted on my chair, I follow his ascent to the ceiling, along which he lies at full length, and my hand can pass along his body, from the head to the feet. He then descends, gently, resumes the vertical position, and is placed, standing, on the table, where we find him, after turning up the gas, with his two feet exactly placed in the narrow vacant space between the two bombs.

* A French word adopted into English spiritualistic literature, signifying an object brought.—O.

This triple ascension, in spite of the considerable effort which it implies, occurred without any noise, and the medium, strange though his situation was, seemed neither surprised nor frightened. His weight might be estimated at the time of our experiments, at sixty kilogrammes. Allowing $0^m .80$ as the height of the table, and about three metres as the height of the ceiling, the work accomplished by the occult force was not less than $(30 + 12) 0, 8 + 60 \times 3 = 214$ kilogrammetres. In two other seances the medium was similarly lifted and laid against the ceiling of his room, without feeling the sensation of any external pressure, and without being able to explain to himself the reasons of his ascension.

5. LUMINOUS PHENOMENA.

The familiar spirits of our seances often declared their intention of showing themselves to us under luminous forms. We then saw appear a brilliant point at the centre of a luminous sphere which moved through the room in every direction leaving behind it a train of phosphorescent vapours. This little comet, at our request, executed the most varied movements and placed itself in the midst of our group, in whatever positions we chose to indicate: it exhaled, in passing, a peculiar odour of its own, resembling that of the vapours of phosphorous, or, perhaps, that of ozone.*

One evening, one of the spirits who had given us, regularly, during several weeks, most interesting communications (whose accuracy we had been able to verify by subsequent enquiries, which often he had himself even suggested), told us that he was about to bid us farewell and leave us, to rise to a superior level from which it would no longer be possible for him to take part in our seances: he added that several spirits were showing him their friendship by being present at the time of his departure. Almost immediately, we saw a dozen lights darting in every direction through the medium's room; strong blows resounded in every part of the room, and these blows were repeated with violence all the way along the passage as we went into the billiard room to finish the seance.

6. HEAT PHENOMENA.

The phenomena of materialization, above-mentioned, were usually attended by the production of a very characteristic coldness. A sensible breath of air accompanied by an icy coldness, made itself felt about the medium and prepared us for the occurrence of the phenomena. The strongest of all those of which I have been able to keep palpable proof was observed by me long after we had ceased our experiments. The two copy-books of reports, above-mentioned, had been kept in a drawer in my writing room, which was on the lower story. This drawer was always kept most carefully locked, and the key was never out of my possession. One morning, on going down to my study, the idea came to me to look up in one of these copy-books, a certain detail of our past ex-

* I deeply regret not to have made, at the time, any experiment to ascertain the actual nature of this odour.

periments which I had partly forgotten. I took out of the drawer this book, the grey cloth outside covering of whose paste-board backs presented no unusual appearance, when what was my astonishment on opening it, to find, instead of the leaves, a prism of ashes of exactly the original shape of the copy-book. The inside linings of the cover, of white paper, were absolutely intact, and showed no trace of burning, but the leaves, reduced to an ash, stiff enough to preserve their form, lay exactly over each other, as if the copy-book had been in a press. It would certainly have been to the last degree impossible by any ordinary process, to have so completely consumed them without obtaining a formless mass as the result of the mixing together of the shrivelled leaves. Everybody to whom I have shown this copy-book has declared that its combustion could never have been effected by any of the processes in common use.

I then opened the second copy-book, which, as I have above stated, was but just begun, and in which were written the reports of our final seances. The first three leaves, completely covered with writing, were found reduced to ash, while preserving their shapes, and the combustion had stopped at the last line of writing on the fourth page. The other papers in the drawer, along with the two burnt copy-books were absolutely intact and had not even been soiled by a speck of ash.

7. DIFFERENT WRITINGS. DIRECT WRITING.

In one of our early seances in December 1886, we obtained in subdued light, a remarkable specimen of direct writing. We had, at the request of one of our spirits, placed some white paper and a pencil on the cloth of the billiard table, while we three (the medium, his mother and myself), were grouped together at the other end of the room. We then heard the noise of the pencil moving on the paper, and when some raps were given, to indicate the close of the experiment, we found on the paper, the following sentence written in English: "*This is a hard task for a spirit to perform at the first visit.*" The medium remembered that he had seen, about a month earlier, this same sentence in the book of Dr. Gibier, "*Le Spiritisme*," and we actually found it (in illustration twenty-four, p. 360), with the signature, "Clark." The author had also obtained it as a direct writing on a slate, in one of the seances with the celebrated medium, Slade. The two writings were identical: the signature, "Clark," was, however, wanting in our communication. Several times we obtained in dark seances, by the medium's hand, absolutely strange writings. His new and dry pen traced on the paper, in a space of time extremely short, characters in different colours, with elegantly decorated initial letters, reproducing poems or prayers of a style sometimes very noble. Unfortunately, these various specimens which I had laid between the leaves of my copy-book, were consumed with them, and, to my great regret, were thus lost.

8. MATERIALIZATIONS.

I have often felt, in our seances, contacts coming from materialized hands, and each time that this phenomenon happened, I felt that these

organs could not possibly be of terrestrial nature. The first contact that I was to experience, was announced to me in the following terms, by a message from a female spirit: "Lay thy head on the billiard table; I am about to touch thee." I was at that moment at quite a distance from the medium. I felt a cold, icy hand pass gently through my hair, brush my face and then noisily move some papers that were lying on the billiard table. The same spirit made several attempts at complete materialization, and even gave us the hint of an electric apparatus which ought, it thought, to make its efforts less severe. This experiment did not succeed, whether because our arrangements were badly made, or because the medium was not sufficiently isolated and protected, but I heard, nevertheless, quite near me in the darkness, the noise of the rustling of stuffs, and even felt this rustling against me.

The most interesting and most convincing materialization that I observed, occurred one evening when the medium and I were alone in the billiard room, in complete darkness, seated at the two sides of our little table. A phosphorescent vapour collected above the table, between us two, then it seemed to condense itself at certain points, and we saw, progressively outlining themselves, the quite elegant contours of a woman's hand, with long, tapering fingers, and nails tidily trimmed. The ends of the fingers discharged luminous emanations so bright that I could distinguish by them the medium seated opposite me. "I should like very well to see the arm," said the medium, who, as usual, retained his full consciousness. His desire was scarcely expressed before a gracefully shaped arm appeared, in extension of the hand. This arm came out of a sleeve whose folds, prettily draped, were tight from about the elbow. The apparition lasted only a few moments; the forms quickly lost their distinctness and gradually melted into the luminous vapour from which they had been born, and then all vanished.

XXX.

Editor's Notes.—My eminent scientific colleague and friend, Col. De Rochas, Director of the Ecole Polytechnique, in sending me for the *Theosophist* the foregoing article, says that the writer is a gentleman who occupies a high scientific position but who shrinks from being known in this connection, because of the violent treatment he would be subjected to, within the public body to which he belongs. Col. De Rochas, however, fully guarantees both his trustworthiness and good faith. He then proceeds to say: "It is necessary, for the advancement of the science which we are trying to found, that each of us should study the phenomena from a different point of view, but also that each should profit by the labours of those who look at it from a different side than our own. Here, in the West, we are trying to define, so far as possible, their relations with forces already familiar. You must let us know how you would explain them according to your Eastern traditions. I pray you, then, to append to the story of XXX., a theosophi-

cal commentary." I am not at all qualified to do justice to the theme in question but can, at least, point out some of the most striking points which the phenomena reported by the great French savant offer to the occult student.

In the first place, then, there is insufficient proof that the mental or physical phenomena must absolutely be attributed to disincarnate human spirits. The messages, essays and other teachings might all have been derived from the unconscious mental action of the medium or some other member of the family. The one striking exception which beginners would cite as proof positive to the contrary, the English sentence written by "Clark," on the slate, through Dr. Slade's mediumship and duplicated in the identical handwriting, but without the signature, through that of "Monsieur C.," is quite explicable by the "elemental" hypothesis. The pregnant fact is stated, that young C. had seen the message and handwriting in Dr. Gibier's excellent work, "Le Spiritisme," and this would be quite enough to enable his 'subliminal self' to reproduce, with the help of an elemental spirit that may have been attracted to him by parity of 'temperament', the exact handwriting published by Dr. Gibier. Secondly, the phenomena of table rappings may very well have been done by the medium's astral fingers; unconsciously to himself, be it conceded, as a stranger like myself writing at such a distance, could not call his *bona fides* in question. The raps on the ceiling, the floor, walls, furniture, pictures, etc., are all theoretically possible by an extension of the medium's aura, or psychical effluvium, fortified by one or more elementals of the air incorporating themselves temporarily in it, and making the sounds locally, by creating explosive centres at those points in obedience to the medium's thought (latent or active). As to the auric extension being thinkable, we need not strain our credulity to conceive it, when we think of the marvellous parallels there are in nature in the cases of matter on the grossest plane of manifestation. Among Eastern people, no fact is more unquestionably admitted than that of the permeation of houses, rooms, objects of all sorts, even the soil and the air, by the auric discharges of good and bad people. Any Eastern occultist would, I am sure, tell Col. De Rochas that the sleeping-room of young C., the billiard room where the seances were held, and the passage between the two were saturated with C.'s emanations and, in a way, became blended with his personality by this universal extension of his personal "magnetism," so-miscalled. Under this theory the lifting of the bombs and the levitations of the medium were easily to be accounted for. The physical exhaustion of the medium, mentioned by the writer of the article, is a very significant proof that the phenomena were due to the use of his own aura. In another place* I give fac-similes of duplicated "spirit" writings made for me by or through Mme. Blavatsky, which are well worth consulting in this connection. Especially note-worthy is the offer to imitate

* "People from the Other World," p. 457—458.

the signature of any person we might choose. An equally surprising example of duplicated writing, is cited in my latest work,* with fac-simile photogravures of a portion of a 5-page letter of the late W. Stainton Moses, that was duplicated within a brief time in my presence and in a desk-cupboard under my sole control. Thirdly, as to the very interesting and striking instance of the mysterious incineration of the written pages only of Mr. XXX.'s two copy-books. Here we are confronted by the problem of the nature of Fire, and well may our French correspondent say that not one competent judge to whom he showed the copy-books, would say that the phenomenon of burning could have occurred in the normal way. It is not with the common terrestrial fire that we have here to deal, but with the phase of fire which functions on the subtler plane of nature next to our own. It must be noted that this burning of the leaves in the two books was controlled by the thought of the agent who did the burning, for *it burnt nothing but the mediumistic messages and direct writings, stopping in copy-book No. 2—at the last line of the writing on the fourth page.* Here is intelligent combustion, beyond denial; a discriminating fire which burns what its manipulator wishes without even singeing the sheets of clean paper in contact with them. Our physicists must wait some time yet for the Röntgen who is to experimentally prove the multiple nature of that sublime, universal principle that we call Fire. I should have to take up the whole of this number of our magazine were I to permit myself to enter upon this fascinating field of ancient cosmic phenomena. It must suffice to say that the brute fire that we know on the physical plane is but the lowest phase of its manifestation, its physical body and brute form, so to say. He who would know the whole truth about Fire can only get it by initiation into the Mysteries, but on the other hand it is easy to learn something about its composite nature from the works of Robert Fludd, Thomas Vaughan, Paracelsus and the other so-called alchemists. Very instructive chapters and passages, will be found in "Isis Unveiled," (i, 423, &c.); Hargrave Jennings', "The Rosicrucians," (p. 54, &c.); Olcott's "Theosophy, Religion and Occult Science," (chapter on the Zoroastrian Religion;) Barrett's "Magus" (p. 75) and in many other works. The operators in the combustion of XXX.'s copy-books were the fire-elementals, or non-human spirits (?) which inhabit that cosmic element. The best authorities affirm that spirits of various natures and qualities occupy the fiery element, the highest living in and partaking of the nature of the spiritual, pure, white, shining light; the lowest being akin to, and functioning in the "gross purgations of the celestial fire"—our visible, earthy fire. The ceremonies of Persian fire-worship were devised so as to ensure the perfect purity of the priests who officiate in the Atash Behram, even their mouths being covered with veils so as to prevent the pollution of the sacred flame by their bodily breaths. The baser elementals, those which burn mediums' records, the clothing of tor-

* "Old Diary Leaves," p. 352.

mented persons*, the thatch of village cabins whose inhabitants have failed to make the annual blood sacrifices to the "village goddess,"† belong to the earthly fire, are controlled by practitioners of Black magic, and eventually destroy them in most cases. The Russian peasant protects his house from them by burning wood fires; in ceremonial magic (see Eliphas Levi and other writers) a fire of willow and certain other selected woods is kindled on the altar; the burning of candles near a corpse and on the church altar is intended to drive them away. In the Eleusinian and Samothracian Mysteries the nature of Fire was fully taught to the neophyte, and he had to pass through the ordeal of fire to prove his mastery over the elementals of that kingdom. The Hermes fire; the Elmes fire of the ancient Germans; the lightning of Cybele; the torch of Apollo; the fire of Pan's altar; the fire flame of Pluto's helm; the *pur asbestos* of Athene on the Acropolis; the heaven-descended fire drawn from the sky by Numa, to kindle the altar flame which was watched and fed by Vestal Virgins, were all of one divine origin, and are controllable by the developed human will. But I must not try the patience of my friend DeRochas any longer. Let him at least realise that in the record of phenomena which he has asked me to translate for these pages, is opened up a vast field of scientific research.

Since the above was in type I have read M. Adrien Peladan's work "Apparitions de Boulleret," which describes some of the most astonishingly malevolent "spiritual manifestations" on record. A certain peasant woman, Josephine Reverdy, a religious visionary and evident 'medium', went through a series of psychical experiences, sometimes ecstatically pleasant, sometimes terribly painful, throughout a period of eleven years, commencing with 1875. I counsel MM. XXX. and DeRochas to read it because they will see to what serious results the above-described phenomena of pricking with sharp-pointed weapons, elevation of a medium's body, and burning of the contents of copy-books are sometimes carried when the invisible agents are prompted by malice and an instinct of cruelty. The body of Josephine was seven times stabbed with unseen daggers in the presence of witnesses, who saw the wounds made and torrents of blood spurting forth without the agent being visible. This happened, the first time, in church, during the service. At various times her bedding and bed canopies and curtains were mysteriously set on fire before eye-witnesses and once she was snatched from her sick-bed and wafted out into the street in a state of almost nudity (see "Apparitions, etc. Edition of 1887. For sale by the Author, Rue de la Vierge, 10, Nimes). Our learned colleagues of Paris should be careful how they ignorantly meddle with the demons beyond the "Threshold" without preliminary training.

H. S. O.

* See a very interesting article in *Theosophist*, vol. XII., p. 259. It embodies a number of facts of the most suggestive character and explains from the Indian point of view all the phenomena mentioned in the article of XXX. Col. DeRochas should get Captain Courmes to translate it for him.—O.

† *Theosophist*, vol. VI., p. 246.

GAUDAPADA AND HIS DEVI SUTRAS.

I FEEL it incumbent on me to present some further translations of Devî Sûtras which are not accessible to the general public, as many people now-a-days desire to obtain a knowledge of Mantra Sâstras, especially concerning the Devî âgamas. I take up for the present, Gaudapâda's Devî Sûtras, styled Srîvidyâ ratnasûtras.

My object in presenting these sûtras next in order to Agastya sûtras is to show that Gaudapâda belongs to the secondary rank among the Gurus of Mantrasâstra. For Agastya, Sanaka, and other Rishis are considered to be in the class of *immortal* Rishis, while Gaudapâda, Sankarâchârya and others are recognized as *mortal** ones. This latter class of people, it is said came to the world and returned after fulfilling certain important duties to which they were called, while the former class, consisting of Agastya and other Rishis, are the founders of certain schools of Jnânas. As I have not dealt with the characteristics of Rishis in general, in my previous articles concerning the Mantra-sâstra, I shall now state who are the Rishis and what are the main divisions of them. Vishnu Purâna, Book III., chapter 6, says, "There are three kinds of Rishis, namely, "Brahmarshis, Devarshis and Râjarshis." First of all I shall trace out the meaning of the word "*Rishi*." It is derived from the root *Rish*, to go, with the termination 'i,' belonging to *Unâdipratyas*. The word Rishi, rendered into English, means, one who has gone out of the wheel of births and deaths (Samsâra), and who has attained the highest stage of Jnâna. When this class of people, through the practice of a particular Mantra or some portions of the Vedas, recognize their Self as one with the Universal Soul, they are called *The Rishis* of that particular Mantra or Mantras. The Vishnupurâna's division states that mankind attained sageship from Brahmin and Kshetriya classes alone ; so we do not meet with the word Vaisyarshi or Sûdrashi, meaning that some of the Vaisya and Sûdra classes of people attained that superior stage in those ancient days. Matsya Purâna adds that there is a fourth division also, by name Vaisyarshis, and that Purâna makes mention of three important names who were Rishis among the Vaisya class, that is (1) Balandha, (2) Savatsa, and (3) Sankila. But this fourth division is not to be found in other Purânas. The Trikândasesha of Purashottamadeva, the lexicographer, enumerates in his work the seven divisions of the Rishis supported by the author of Ratna Kosa. These divisions are as follows: (1) "Brahmarshi, (2) Devarshi, (3) Maharshi, (4) Paramarshi, (5) Kândarshi, (6) Srutarshi and (7) Râjarshi; and each previous Rishi is superior to successive ones." Describing the characteristics of the Rishis, Vâyupurâna (Chapter 59, 61) says, "(1) By joy, (2) by solititude, (3) by pain, (4) by pleasure and (5) by sorrow,—by these five causes the Rishis are always doing good (to humanity) without

* I use the words immortal and mortal in the sense that the bodies of Agastya, &c., were not seen to perish, whereas the bodies of Sankarâchârya, &c., were seen to perish.

expecting anything in return, by the power of their Tapas and by their intuitions they have no other work for them than the above-mentioned." Verse 74 says, "the knowledge, dispassion, power, and virtue—these four are born with them and shining always in them." In verse 79, "they are called by name Rishis, because their attention is drawn only to knowledge, truth and Tapas, as the root *Rish* to go, is made to contain the above meanings, by Brahmâ himself."

1. The Brahmarshis (Brahman + Rishi, to go) are those whose permanent wish is to attain Brahman. The Râmâyana gives another definition of Brahmarshi,—that the Vedas with their Pranava, Svâhâkâra and Vashtkâra, should go themselves to him who attains the stage of Brahmarshi and his individuality will remain until the next pralaya (see Râmâyana, I, 65—22). This class is the highest in rank and to this Vasishtha and other Rishis belong.

2. The Devarshi is one who comes to the world as a demi-god to protect humanity by imparting spiritual instruction. To this class belong Nara, Nârâyana, Kapila, Nârada and other Rishis. The Matsya and Vâyû Purânas call them the sons of gods.

3. Maharshis, Mahat + Rishi, those who have gone above Buddhi and attained Mahat, the next lower than Avyakta. Vâyûpurâna says (59, 82) "Because they have attained Mahat with its gunas, which is above Buddhi." To this belong Vyâsa and other Rishis.

4. Paramarshis, Parama + Rishi, means those who desire to attain superiority, that is, those are called Paramarshis who give up worldly affairs and turn towards Âtman. Vâyûpurâna (see 59, 81) designates them as Âtmarshi. Bhela and others belong to this division.

5. Kândarshis, Kânda + Rishi, meaning the Rishis who took some particular branches of the Vedas and preached them to lower kinds of men, &c. To this class Jaimini and other Karmakânda Sûtrakâras belong; and they are also said to be the leaders of certain Vedic Schools.

6. Srtarshi, Sruta + Rishi, meaning, those who heard the Vedas first and preached science concerning the physical aspects of mankind (see Mutsyapurâna, Chapter 144). To this class Susruta and other Rishis of the Hindu medical works belong.

7. Râjarshis are those who were born in this world to protect people and have afterwards relinquished the worldly life. Ritaparana, Mândhâta Janaka and others who were sent to this world in critical times belong to this class.

Vâyûpurâna says, these great men take their birth when called for, in the five Gotras of Dviija class only; namely, in Kasyapa, Vasishtha, Bhrigu, Angiras, and Atri Gotras or families. According to Matsyapurâna, Agastya is placed in the highest rank of Brahmarshis.*

* These seven divisions may be in accordance with the stages of knowledge the sages attained; for Brahmarshis are those who are devoted to the Nirguna Brahman alone.

2. Devarshis, those who have already become Devas expecting to attain Brahman for the future.

Now let us turn our attention to our Acharyas. What are those Gaudapada, Sankara, Ramānuja and others? First of all we should think that these Acharyas are not mythical persons such as Agastya, Vasishtha, &c., as some scholars have supposed these latter to be. The Acharyas were incarnated into this world and left their writings behind them. Gaudapadacharya was Parma Guru (that is, Guru's guru) to Sri Sankaracharya. Gaudapada's probable date should be settled along with the date of Sankaracharya, that is, when Sankaracharya's date is settled, then we can assign safely a few decades earlier to Gaudapada. Sankaracharya's date is not settled yet by scholars. Some place it in the 2nd century, A.D., and others say 8th, A.D. We have, I mean the followers of Sri Sankaracharya, a chronology of Gurus (Guruparamparás) which we are repeating daily on occasions of Guru's praise. The following are the Guru's forms which the Vedānta knowledge is said to have handed down without break. Nārāyana was the first from whom Brahmā received Jnāna. Brahmā's student was Vasishtha. The latter's student was Sakti. His was Parāsara. His was Vyāsa. His was Suka. His Sishya was the great Gaudapada. His Sishya was Govinda, and his Sishya was Sri Sankaracharya. (See Chidvilāsa's Sankaravijaya, chapter 9). Among the ten Gurus of ours, Gaudapada stands eighth in the list. This list of Gurus also is repeated by the followers of Samayamata, in Mantra Sāstra, as the ten Gurus were great Mantra Jnānis. Chidvilāsa says in his work (9—47 and 48), "God Siva himself came down to this world in the form of a man, and seeing the conflicting, self-created theories of the world, took pains to restore order. Thus the Mahātmas are wandering in this world with an eye to lift up deluded humanity. So our Acharya Purushas are not mere men of ordinary capacity, but they are to be considered as gods in the guise of men. Take, for example, the Sivarahasya of Skāndapurāna, open the 9th chapter and there we can see how the whole chapter is devoted to the (then) future Sankaracharya's incarnation. The same authority we can find for Ramanujacharya and others. Sankaracharya, when he commentated upon the Kārikās of Gaudapada on Māndūkhyopaniṣad showed his utmost devotion towards his Paramaguru (Guru's guru), by composing a Sloka which I give here in English :

" I fall prostrate at the feet of my Paramaguru (Gaudapada), the worshipped of the worshipful; who from sheer love for those who are immersed in deep waters of the Ocean infested with terrible Monsters in the form of the series of births, brought forth for the good of all, this nectar, impossible to be obtained even by the gods, from the inmost

-
3. Maharshis, the worshippers of Mahat, that is Saguna Brahmopāsakas.
 4. Paramarshis are those who are preparing their souls for A'tmajnāna.
 5. Kāndarshis are still lower in development and preaching Karma and four qualifications. (Sādanachatushtaya).
 6. Srutarshis preach Sādanachatushtaya and health and for the well being of body, &c.
 7. Rājarshis are persons employed for preserving order and peace among mankind.

depths of the Ocean of the Veda, churned with the churning-rod of his intellect."

Now let us see what are the works left for us by Gaudapādāchārya. By the verses quoted in chapter 9—43 and 44, of Chidvilāsa, we infer that Sri Gaudapāda has written in the style of what we call *Kārikās* (see for example the *Kārikās* on *Māndūkyopanishad*), on Vedas, Vedāngas, and on some original Smritis, on Jaimini sutras and on some Upanishads and Vyāsa's Vedāntasūtras. The copies which are accessible to the public are those of Anugītābhāshya, (of course the *Kārikās* on *Māndūkyopanishad* and commentary on Sankhyakārikās are printed in different parts of India), Uttara Gītā Bhāshya, and of Nrisimhatapaniyopanishad Bhāshya. The author of *Nirnayasindhu* of Dharma Sāstra, quotes from some ancient works by simply mentioning the name Gauda, or Gauda grantha, or Gaudhāh, which may mean some works of Gaudapāda, on Dharma Sāstra, as mentioned by Chidvilāsa.

Next I shall deal with the Mantra Sāstra portion of Gaudapāda.

R. ANANTHAKRISHNA SASTRY.

(To be continued).

CRITIQUE ON PRAMADA DASA MITRA'S TRANSLATION OF BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ.

IN the preface to the translation of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, by Babu Pramada Dasa Mitra, issued in the past year, perhaps as the latest version hitherto made of the work, I find the translator giving the aim of the *Gītā* in the following words at page XIV.:

"To be merged into the Eternal Unconditioned Intelligence, the Absolute Bliss—Brahman—is the highest aim set forth in the *Gītā*", and further declaring that "the *Bhagavad Gītā* embodies the highest spiritual truths taught in the Upanishads" and is itself an Upanishad. If this be the embodiment and aim of the *Bhagavad Gītā* one would naturally enquire as to whether the rendering under notice bears this out.

The first chapter as given in the English language deals with the two armies of the sons of Dhritarāshtra and Pāndu; the holy plains of Kurukshetra, where they assembled eager to fight; the steps that Duryodhana took on beholding the army of the Pāndavas arrayed, the blowing of the conch shells by Bhīshma, Krishna, Arjuna, King Yudhisthira and others; the address of Arjuna to Krishna; the placing of Arjuna's chariot by Krishna in the midst of the two armies; the beholding by Arjuna of the fathers, grand-fathers and other kinsmen assembled eager to fight; and Arjuna's speech in despondency, culminating in his sitting down in his chariot and abandoning his bow and arrows, with heart distressed with grief.

The second chapter of the translation opens with the state of Arjuna's mind, described by Sanjaya as filled with compassion and des-

pendent. In the 7th verse Arjuna declares, "as a disciple I supplicate thee—O teach me." In the 9th verse Arjuna says, "I shall not fight." Then starts the Divine teaching of a spiritual character and continues to the end of the work. Towards the finis, Arjuna binds himself down to do the word of Krishna, chapter XVIII., 73—in other words to fight the battle. This word "to fight" is given expression to in more places than one in the Gîtâ —तस्मात् युद्धस्व भारत

The upshot of the whole work as given in the English garb is, in the words of the translator himself, as follows: "The teachings of this holy poem were imparted by the Deity, in the form of Srî Krishna, to Arjuna in the midst of two armies arrayed in battle against each other, at a time when weapons had begun to be flung. Yuddhisthira, the embodiment of truth and righteousness, was on one side, and Duryodhana, the embodiment of malignity and treachery, on the other side; and all the monarchs of India were ranged on one or the other side. Yuddhisthira had won the sovereignty of all India."

Vanquished by Duryodhana, in the gaming match, Yuddhisthira relinquished his kingdom and entered into a vow. After having fulfilled his vow he returned and asked, out of his own share of the kingdom, five villages, but Duryodhana disdainfully refused. Srî Krishna intervened in vain and war was the inevitable result, waged for the earthly sovereignty.

Now putting together an earthly throne as the object of the war, the utter unwillingness on the part of Arjuna to fight and the teachings imparted by Srî Krishna on the occasion, we are forced to the conclusion that the teachings so imparted were intended by the Deity to arouse Arjuna from his despondency and induce him to fight the battle. The teachings emanating from the Deity, the omnipotent source, were to inevitably take effect and Arjuna had to fight.

This conclusion is irresistible, *i.e.*, one which and which only is deducible from the English translation of the Gîtâ, and when placed side by side with the character of the sublime teachings, and their object, "the divinity of the soul and the means of realizing it" it creates in my mind a hopeless confusion.

An aim is accomplished by means legitimate to it. The aim deducible from the translation is, the earthly sovereignty. The means to this end should have been earthly, *i.e.*, an exposition of the Nîtisâstra which would have resulted in the removal of the despondency of Arjuna. But the aim as given by the translator in the preface quoted above is, to be merged into Eternal Brahman, and the means to that end are the highest spiritual truths. The aim deducible from the translation is diametrically opposed to that set forth in the Preface. The means consisting of spiritual truths do not at all help the accomplishment of the aim of battle. This being so, the whole thing is a confusion, hopeless in its nature and opposed to any human sense whatever.

Now, is this confusion due to any peculiarity in the Sanscrit language, or to a peculiarity in the translation of works couched in that language? Is the language used in the Gîtâ by our Lord, not susceptible of a common-sense interpretation? Does it not admit of a different interpretation from what is given in the learned translations hitherto made both by the European and Indian Scholars? Do the words धमक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे bear only the illegitimate signification of "on the holy plains of Kurukshetra?" Are the following quotations not of the Sanskrit language?

- कुतर्जीवोविधातव्यो कालभूताश्रयेऽपिवा. निरुक्तं. 4 - 227.
 क्षेत्रशरीरमापन्नं सृष्टिकालान्तरस्मृतम्. नि. 5 - 46.
 समवेतासमस्थानं एकत्रिभूयसंप्रहम् ।
 समवेतामानवेदेहे भावज्ञाननिदेहकम् ॥ नि. 2 - 27.
 अपरापराप्रकृतीनां मेकत्रत्वंसमुच्यते ।
 यत्रज्ञानविवेकंच बुद्धिसमानंसतम् ॥ प्रकृत्यार्णव. 7.
 तत्रभेदप्रकृतीनां प्रस्थित्वासानुतीष्टति ॥ प्रकृत्यार्णव. 8.
 युयुत्सवोविधिःसत्वं मोक्षेज्ञाचानुदर्शकः ॥ नि. 5 - 303.
 मामकावर्त्तनस्यैव उद्योगोदेहमासनम् ।
 अपरासत्त्वार्थिकौचव अग्निसंज्ञाविधायिते ॥ नि. 3-255.
 पाण्डवोदेशामाधीरं पराकालप्रकृतिक; नि. 3 - 266.
 संजयोदहकोनाम स्रेष्टबुद्धिर्महात्मनः ॥ नि. 3 - 440.

Is it absurd to translate the two words of the text as "body tenanted by a monad qualified as imbued with Dharma, therefore as human body, and to say in respect of the whole sloka without undertaking here to authenticate the proposed translation, धृतराष्ट्र उवाच overpowered by illusion, धमक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे In the human body, समवेता combined, युयुत्सवः craving for emancipation, मामकाः Aparā Prakriti पाण्डवैश्चैव Para Prakriti किंअकुर्वत is worthy of being done or not worthy of being done? सञ्जय Buddhi overpowered by illusion, coming to tenant this human tabernacle wherein are actively confronted Aparā and Para Prakriti, the monad craving for emancipation, thinks through superior Buddhi of what ought to be done and what ought not.

PURMESHRI DASS AND DHAURAJ.

* We find some mistakes in metre and svāra in the above quoted slokas.—Ed.

A NEW COMMENTARY ON GITA.*

धूमेनात्रियते बन्धि यथादर्शो मलेन च ॥

यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्मस्तया तेनेदमावृतस् ॥ ३८ ॥

Bhagavad-Gîtâ, Chapter III.

38. As *Agni* is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dirt, as foetus is wrapped in membranes, so this (Universe) is enveloped by it (*Kâma*).

Srî Krishna in this sloka further describes *Kâma* by instances illustrating the various degrees of grossness to which it reaches.

He speaks here of *Kâma* on the plane of individuality and impressions. The various stages of grossness relate to the impressions as such, and what is spoken of as being enveloped is the reality underlying and therefore beyond the subtlest state of impressions.

The *Âtma*, the reality, is ever the same unchangeable, but it is the *Upâdhi* that prevents its being realized on the plane of individuality and impressions. The *Upâdhis* viewed from whatever plane, are three in all: viz., (1) latency stage (*Kârana Sarîra*), (2) activity stage (*Sûkshma Sarîra*), (3) impression stage (*Sthûla Sarîra*), each succeeding one grosser than the preceding one; and these are intended to be illustrated respectively by the three illustrations quoted in this *Sloka*.

The *Upâdhi* here is represented by *Kâma* on the plane of impressions, which are themselves the result of activity as such beyond their subtlest state. And this *Kâma* gives rise to illusive appearances in *Âtma*, the underlying reality, on the plane of impressions.

When *Agni* is enveloped in smoke, it shines not with its natural, pure lustre, but still its powers of burning, &c., are exhibited all the same. Such is the state of *Âtma*, in *Kârana Upâdhi*, with which the plane of individuality comes into being, and a sort of distinction appears between the *Âtma*, the one reality, and *Âtma* as the reality underlying the *Kârana Upâdhi*, corresponding to what is called मायाविशिष्टब्रह्म.

The *Agni* with the envelope of smoke and not shining with its pure original lustre, while appearing so, is not as a matter of fact, in any way distinct from *Agni* (fire) not thus enveloped.

While *Âtma* is enveloped in *Kârana Upâdhi*, the subtlest envelope, knowledge of the reality is possible, by the powers it exhibits, just as the knowledge of *Agni* is possible by the power of burning it exhibits even while enveloped in smoke. But the realization can take place only when the fine film of *Kârana Upâdhi*, is removed, and realized as not forming the essence of the reality underlying it.

The knowledge of *Âtma*, by the powers it exhibits and the absence of any such powers in the *Upâdhi* that envelopes it, lead to the realization of *Âtma*, the now underlying reality, as the One Reality independent of the *Upâdhi*, which by itself has no independent existence, just

* From specimen sheets forwarded to *Theosophist*.—Ed.

as the knowledge of the burning powers exhibited by *Agni* and their absence in the smoke as such, lead to the realization of *Agni*, independent of smoke, which does not form the essence of *Agni*, nor has any independent existence by itself.

The aptness of this illustration becomes still more evident by the fact that smoke is inherent in fire*, but the envelopment takes place by its manifestation and disappears when it again merges into fire, as its heat rises in intensity. The disappearance of smoke coincides with the realization of *Agni*, as it really is. The smoke is here spoken of as inherent in *Agni*, because there is a possibility of its rise.

Similarly *Mâyá* can be said to be inherent in the One Reality, in so far as there is a possibility of its rise and manifestation. In this so called potential state, it is in reality not just like smoke, but with its manifestation the envelopment of the reality takes place; and in this state it is as powerless to affect the reality as smoke is to affect the *Agni* it envelopes. With the realization of the One Reality, *Mâyá* is nowhere. It is on account of the possibility of its manifestation that it is termed **अनादि**, and as in reality it ceases to exist as such with the realization of *Atma*, it is called **संत**.

The mirror dimmed by dirt illustrates *Atma* enveloped by *Súkshma Upádhi*. *Atma* is as little affected by this *Upádhi* as is the mirror, by the accumulation of dirt on its surface. But the reflection in the mirror is, all the same, not quite so clear, though it may be present. Similarly *Atma*, is unaffected by the *Upádhi*, and only its dim knowledge becomes possible while the *Upádhi* lasts. For the realization of *Atma* it is not necessary to go searching after It, which is there as pure as it ever was, and will be realized as soon as the *Upádhi* is removed, just as the reflection in the mirror may occur, though the dirt on the mirror for the time being shows it dim, or not at all if its layer be thick almost resembling the *Sthúla Upádhi*, and for a clear view of the reflection, the only thing that is necessary is the removal of dirt. As the reflection in the mirror will get clearer as the layer of dirt covering its surface becomes thinner, till the total disappearance of dirt shows it in its original purity and clearness, so the knowledge of *Atma* will more and more approach perfection as the *Upádhi* becomes reduced in grossness, till with its total disappearance *Atma* is realized in its pristine purity.

The third illustration of the fœtus wrapped in the membranes, represents *Atma* in *Sthúla Upádhi*. The *Sthúla Upádhi* affects *Atma*, the One Reality, as little as the membranes do the fœtus within. But just as the view of the fœtus is impossible, so long as the membranes persist, there can be no knowledge of *Atma*, so long as the *Sthúla Upádhi* continues. No search for the fœtus or *Atma* would be of any avail, so long as the membranes in the one and the *Sthúla Upádhi* in the other are there, and all attempts for its knowledge would prove fruitless. It is action that

* A very unscientific assertion.—Ed.

is necessary. The membranes and the *Sthūla Upādhi* require to be destroyed to bring to view the fœtus and the *Atma*, which are ever there and will be realized without any more effort than the destruction or removal of the *Sthūla Upādhi*.

From the above it will be seen that the grosser the *Upādhi*, *i.e.*, the lower the plane of individuality, the greater the necessity for action before knowledge can rise and attain final realization. Knowledge is possible by sufficiently reducing the grossness of the *Upādhi*, and will vary in clearness inversely as the grossness of the *Upādhi* that will still be left. It is, however, always inferior to realization which comes on only with the complete disappearance of *Upādhi*, and is ever uniform whenever it occurs, because the Reality is One and ever the same.

Like the envelopes mentioned above, *Kāma* envelopes *Atma* in *Upādhis*, varying in their degrees of grossness, in this Universe (इदं).

By saying this, Sri Krishna seems to imply that this objective Universe, as it appears, is but the One Reality enwrapped in envelopes of various degrees of grossness. In other words according to the various degrees of grossness of *Kāma*—desire—on different planes of individuality, this Universe, either appears as it is on the plane of objective existence, without the faintest perception of the reality underlying it (the result of *Sthūla Upādhi*, resembling the membranes concealing the fœtus), or it appears in its subtler form with a dim knowledge of the underlying reality (the result of *Sūkshma Upādhi*, resembling dirt on the surface of a mirror), which incites the individuality to make attempts for getting a clearer view of the same; or it appears in its subtlest form as transient as smoke (the result of *Kāraṇa Upādhi*, resembling smoke enveloping the fire), and the knowledge of the underlying reality is comparatively clearer, but the thin film of *Upādhi*, even the least *Kāma*—the faintest and the subtlest state of impression on the mental plane prevents the realization of the One Reality, though knowledge of the Reality may be almost perfect.

Kāma—desire, on the plane of impressions, presents three stages. The rise of impression and desire on the mental plane is *Kāma* as forming the *Kāraṇa Upādhi*. The attraction between this impression and the impression in harmony with it and proceeding from some object on the plane of objective existence (शब्दादिक विषय), is *Kāma* as forming the *Sūkshma Upādhi*. When the union between the two impressions takes place, as in satisfaction by enjoyment, it is *Kāma* forming the *Sthūla Upādhi*.

CHHAGANLAL G. KAJL

Theosophy in all Lands.

EUROPE.

LONDON, 29th December, 1896.

Lucifer, in calling to our remembrance that the Theosophical Society has just passed its 21st birthday, remarks that but one member of the Society remains who has watched it from its birth, and that is the President-Founder. Remembering with gratitude his loyalty and constant efforts all these past years, let us now with him feel gladness in the thought that the Theosophical Society enters into this new year of its existence full of fresh life, as may be clearly seen by those who watch its steady progress.

The work is continued here with unceasing earnestness. During this month several drawing-room meetings have been held; there have also been three meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge on Thursday evenings. The subjects then treated were, *Notes on a Gnostic Gospel*, G. R. S. Mead; *Authority*, Miss Ward; and *A Study in Mediaeval Mysticism*, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley. On Sunday evenings there have also been three meetings when Mr. Leadbeater spoke. On the first occasion the subject was "The Earth and the Moon; the Evolution of our Physical Earth; the Planes of our Earth"; on the second, "The Seven Rounds; the Monadism Essence; the Seven Kingdoms and their Characteristics"; and on the third, "The Lunar Pitris, Man in the First Three Rounds, the Fourth Round and Fourth Globe; the turning point of Evolution." Mr. Mead's two lectures given this month at the *Pioneer Club* have also been of great interest. They were on "The Main Doctrines of the Gnostic Gospel, *Pistis Sophia*," and "A Review of the Methods and Doctrines of the Leaders of the Gnosis." Mr. Leadbeater has made a lecturing tour in the North of England, where he spoke at several of the large towns. His addresses on "Invisible Helpers" and on "Our Relation to Children" were particularly attractive. At one place where he spoke on "Spiritualism," a vote of thanks was proposed, and it is interesting to know that it was seconded by Spiritualists.

A very interesting lecture was given at the Blavatsky Lodge on the 26th November, by Mr. Sinnett, on "Electricity." He paid a high tribute to the untiring patience of the true scientists who, by their persevering efforts have learned so much of the wonderful powers of electricity, and how to utilize them in many ways—in heat, in light, &c. With his battery and Leyden jar he gave some beautiful illustrations of the action of electricity, passing it first through a tube of platinum where it appeared as heat—"red-hot"—and would have melted the platinum if continued; then through tubes of glass, showing it as a blue, green, or violet colored light, according to the medium through which it passed, and the positive or negative pole acting. After some further experiments, the X or Röntgen rays were shown: a large piece of solid wood was placed in front of the battery and covered with a black cloth; before this was placed a small wooden screen coated in front with platinocyanide of barium, and covered with glass to protect it. A box packed and tied up with string was then placed before the screen and, the room being darkened, the rays were passed through the black-covered wood, the screen, and the box, and all that became visible was a pair of scissors which had been packed in the box. A large cork with a nail through its centre was placed in front, and the nail alone was visible. Afterwards Mr. Sinnett held his own hand there

and the bones were plainly seen: as he moved his hand so that the arm took its place, the arm bones became visible in the same way through the invisible coat and flesh.

Mr. Sinnett spoke of the enormous difference in the length of the waves of light and those of electricity, the former being measurable by millionths of an inch, the latter by miles; yet, starting simultaneously, both arrived at their destination together.

After describing some of the wonders discovered by patient scientific investigation, Mr. Sinnett said that, passing from what was known to what was not known, he would remark that the greatest scientists confessed their complete ignorance as to the real nature of Electricity; they observe with the greatest care and exactitude, record their observations and turn them to many practical uses, but of what it is in itself they know nothing. Even the relative action of the positive and negative poles upon each other—which at one time was thought to be clear—is now acknowledged to be uncertain.

He concluded a delightful lecture by saying that those among the audience who were Theosophists, or at any rate those who were occultists, would be interested in hearing that, from the same source whence had come information on some other high subjects, he had learnt that it was impossible that our present humanity should understand the essential nature of Electricity, as it corresponded with that of the highest plane of the Manifested Kosmos, which we know as *Fohat*.

The well-known electrician, Mr. W. H. Preece, lectured on the 12th inst. at the Toynbee Hall on "Telegraphy without wires." The subject was naturally one of very great interest, but his audience did not expect the startling announcement he made, of a new invention which was likely to be of the greatest utility. As reported by the *Daily Chronicle*, he commenced his lecture by describing at some length the experiments in the transmission of messages made by the Telephone Company and others in 1884, the results of which were disappointing. Last year, however, they had ascertained that effects could be traced on wires which were separated, and messages had been transmitted between the mainland and the Island of Mull for nearly a week, while the cable between the two places was being repaired. Mr. Preece had since endeavoured to establish communication with the Goodwin Lightship, and after spending hundreds of pounds in his experiments, found it impossible to get a message on board.

He then gave the important announcement of the invention of Signor Marconi, an Italian electrician, who has discovered a system of Telegraphy without wires. This system depends on the effect of electric waves set up at a high rate of vibration—250,000,000, a second. These vibrations are projected in straight lines and can be reflected or refracted, in fact are capable of all the phenomena which have been observed in light. Until the occasion of this lecture, the apparatus used in the system had only been seen by government officials. It consists of what appears to be two ordinary boxes. When a current was set in motion in one of them, a bell immediately rang in the other. It was simply that vibrations were set up in one apparatus and received by the other, and the secret lay in the fact that the number of vibrations in each instrument corresponded. Mr. Preece said that he had had the pleasure that day of telling Signor Marconi that the Post-office had decided to spare no expense in carrying out experiments with the apparatus; if they were successful—which he believed they would be—the value of the dis-

covery was inestimable. It would for one thing be the greatest boon to our Lightships and Light-houses with which communication was at times impossible, and navigation would become infinitely easier and safer than at present. Mr. Preece also said that the curious thing about the invention is that no new principle is introduced. It simply consists in making use of the electric waves first known to Hertz, the German physicist, and developed by others. When the devices invented by Signor Marconi for the practical use of the waves are made public, they will be found both very novel, and of great beauty.

Great gifts are not often made towards the advancement of science in this country, and it is of great interest to hear that Dr. Ludwig Mond has set a splendid example to our millionaires by his gift to London of a Laboratory—which he has also endowed—for scientific research. It is called the “Davy-Faraday Research Laboratory.” There was a large meeting at the Royal Institution on the 22nd inst., when it was opened. The company included a very large number of our leading scientists. Dr. Mond, who opened the proceedings, said that this Laboratory was founded with the idea of its being a place where original researches could be carried on, in both scientific and physical chemistry, and where qualified persons of any nationality or sex would be welcome to work. He said it was unique of its kind, being the only public laboratory in the world which was solely devoted to research in pure science. Professor Dewar on this occasion exhibited some very remarkable experiments, illustrating the use of *liquid air* in scientific research.

E. A. I.

AMERICA.

On December 14th a Charter was issued to the Butte Lodge T. S., Butte, Montana Terr. This Branch is another of those due to the heroic labours of the Countess Wachtmeister. It has 22 Charter-members. The Secretary is Mr. A. B. Edler, 310, South Colorado St. There are now 19 Branches in the American Section.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
Gen. Secy.

INDIA.

MRS. BESANT'S TOUR, No. III.

Karachi is a commercial town, busy and prosperous-looking, with houses built of stone for the most part. A big theatre was used for the lectures, and after the first was delivered I was requested, through a leading member of the European community, to deliver one extra lecture in the Frere Hall, for the convenience of the English residents. So Karachi had six lectures in six days—a proceeding calculated to cause mental indigestion. The morning conversations were very largely attended, and some earnest students put pertinent questions. Five new members were initiated—four Hindus and one Mussalman—and a Branch was formed with these and the older members.

The condition of religion is very low in Sind, and there is great need for a lengthened stay there of some competent Theosophist to spread knowledge and revive spirituality. The people are eager to learn and are ready to study, as was shewn by the large sales of Theosophical literature, and work there would result in a large accession of members. The women are sadly ignorant, but I trust that the leading townsmen will make provision for teaching them in a regular way, as they have promised me that they will do.

A pleasant piece of news from Rawal Pindi reached us at Karachi; a town's meeting had been held to consider the suggestions made as to spreading a knowledge of Sanskrit literature; at this meeting a public-spirited gentleman, named Lala Jiva Ram Thapur, gave a hall with two side-rooms, and Rs. 1,000 to start an Anglo-Sanskrit library, and it is to be opened next month.

We left Karachi by a coasting steamer on Dec. 15th and reached Bombay at 6 P. M. on the 17th; here we met Mr. Keightley, and he and I started for Mysore the same evening: Babu Upendranath Basu going north to Benares. Mysore was reached on the 19th—the Bangalore friends giving us a pleasant greeting as we passed through—and there we met a warm welcome and were lodged as Government visitors. Mysore is an Indian State, lately blessed with a very able and religious ruler who brought it to a most prosperous condition. He died at the early age of 32, and as his son is a minor the government is carried on by the Maharani as Regent, with a Council.

Here the usual programme was carried out, and we had immense audiences. A pleasant meeting was that of the Arya Bâla Samâj, to which I gave an address on the virtues Aryan boys should cultivate. Much is being done in Mysore for Female education, in which the pioneer has been an eminent minister of the late Maharajah, Rai Bahadur Narasimha Aiyengar, now the President of our local Branch. He started and maintained an admirable girl's school, projected on very wise lines; having spent on it all his available resources he handed it over to the Government, the Maharani, a wise and pious princess, taking great interest in it. The course of study has been somewhat altered, in order that the girls may be able to enter for Western examinations—a regrettable change—but a committee of Hindu gentlemen supervise it in the interests of religious and moral teaching, and the school is an institution of which Mysore may feel justly proud. A Sanskrit College for young Brâhmanas is another noticeable institution, and if widened in its curriculum might form the basis of a southern College, where English education might be given under Hindu control, and so train up as true Aryans the bright young intellects now being stunted by a purely secular education.

Mysore was left behind at 10-30 on the evening of the 21st, and we reached Bangalore early next morning, dragging our brothers to the station at an unconscionable hour. Still they mustered in considerable numbers, and we all gathered a little later to a Branch meeting, which presented an address of welcome and the loveliest of flowers to Mr. Keightley and myself. After some hours of "rest"—devoted to writing—came the usual conversation, but not the usual crowd, as we had only a thin attendance, and at 5-30 the first lecture, on "Theosophy, the Science of the soul." There was a very big crowd, and the Dewan of the State took the Chair. A meeting of the E. S. T. closed the day.

We began betimes next morning with an open-air lecture at 8, to a very large audience, and drove from the lecture-ground to visit two flourishing girls' schools, educating over five hundred girls. They are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, simple chemistry, dealing with food-stuffs, etc., music and needlework. In the latter branch of study some time is wasted in producing the hideous wool samplers that were the delight of Englishwomen three generations back, and these almost entirely displace the exquisite silken embroidery native in this land. These will, I hope, soon be consigned to the

dust-bin, to be replaced by the more artistic needlework so readily produced by deft Indian fingers. A largely increased number of visitors attended the conversation from 1 to 2-30, and 3 o'clock found us driving to the palace, the Maharani having expressed a wish to see me. We had a short talk, chiefly on education, and then I delivered a lecture to an audience composed chiefly of ministers and court ladies, taking as my subject the education of women in its bearing on national prosperity. As I was addressing the people who control education in Mysore, I made the speech as practical as possible, and the Dewan is going to circulate the gist of the address in Canarese, Tamil and Telugu. At 6, the Bangalore Branch held its tenth anniversary, and Mr. Keightley delivered an admirable address on the mission of the T. S. to the world and to India. A talk with E. S. T. members closed the day.

On the following day, the lecture and conversation were held as before, and interviews and other work filled up the interval. Then came a meeting of Hindu ladies, at the house of the State Chief of Police, a large gathering of most friendly women. Some of the girls played, sang and recited, and then I addressed the meeting, aided by an interpreter. From that to visit a library and orphanage, and then back to the Branch premises, where members were ready to be initiated, and a Branch meeting was held. And then to the railway station, a chorus of good wishes, a rain of flowers—and the quiet night, as we sped on our way to Adyar.

ANNIE BESANT.

A SOUTH INDIAN FEDERATION.

Mr. K. Narayanswami Aiyar, Provincial Secretary of the T. S., Madras Presidency, has issued a Circular in which he suggests the formation of a South Indian Federation on the lines of the highly successful organisation of the same kind among the Branches of our Society in the North of England. It is a capital idea and I hope it may be carried out. Personally, I am ready to do all that lies within my power to promote it. If the responses to Mr. Narayanswami's Circular should be favorable I shall attend the proposed meeting at Kumbakonam on the 17th February. The document in question being too long for insertion in our crowded pages this month, is printed as a separate sheet and laid in. Mr. Narayanswami makes the important notification that he is about relinquishing his law practice to take up the work of our Society without recompense, thus setting an example of devotion and self-denial that will greatly strengthen his influence.

H. S. O.

NEW ZEALAND SECTION,

It has been decided that the first Convention of the New Zealand Section shall be held in the City of Wellington, it being the most central city in the Colony and so the most convenient meeting place for delegates from both North and South. The time is fixed for the first week of the New Year.

The General Secretary is still travelling, and is now lecturing in various small towns in the Wellington Province; the Branches at Pahiataua and Woodville having been visited. The General Election, just over, has interfered to some extent with Miss Edger's efforts. For the most part there is not much knowledge of Theosophy in these country towns, and the

lectures are in many cases attended more from curiosity than sympathy; consequently the lecturer has very hard work. There has been some real interest shown in Wanganni and Palmerston, which is encouraging, Miss Edger returns to Wellington for the Convention, after which she comes to head-quarters; and then, taking a short rest, she will probably visit Australia and give a course of lectures in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and other places. Apart from the public lectures, the visits to the Branches have had good results; the Secretaries of different Branches, in their reports, mention the good effects in the way of encouragement and increase of effort that followed Miss Edger's visit.

The Auckland Branch held its annual meeting on November 27th; Mr. C. W. Sanders was re-elected President, and Mrs. W. H. Draffin (Melford Street, Ponsonby) is again Secretary and Treasurer. A satisfactory report was read by the Secretary. Financially, the Branch is in a good condition; but the number of members has decreased, owing principally to the Judge secession, but it is satisfactory to know that it is the only Branch in New Zealand that has been so affected. Mrs. Draffin continues her series of lectures in Auckland; the last, Sunday Dec. 6th, being on "The Future of Humanity."

The annual meeting of the Waitemata (Auckland) Branch was held on Dec. 2nd: Mrs. Draffin was again elected President, and Mr. J. Dinsdale (Borough Council Chambers, Devonport), Secretary. This Branch is not in a very flourishing condition.

Mr. J. McCombs has resigned the Secretaryship of the Christ Church Branch, his place being taken by Miss Rogers, Huxley Street, Sydenham, Christ Church.

Reviews.

THE THEOSOPHIC CATECHISM.*

Among the first and precious fruits of Captain Courmes' exclusive devotion to Theosophical work in France is this epitome of Theosophical teachings in the form of a Question Book, or Catechism. Upon reading it we have been struck with the succinctness of the text and the luminous explanation of the subject which the Author has made. He is as well informed about Theosophy as any man in the Society who has not actually learned the method of transferring his consciousness to the superphysical planes of being. All that can be learnt from our literature has been here condensed and codified, so clearly that even beginners can grasp the ideas. He has the two prime qualifications for such work, *viz.*, an exhaustive knowledge of his subject and an innate faculty for compression. It is in a way the best elementary treatise that has as yet appeared, and with the Author's permission we intend to shortly publish it in an English translation; in fact, the work is already in hand. The Monograph contains only 103 Questions and Answers, with an Appendix of useful information about our Society and its Rules. We hope that in the next Edition the mistakes in spelling and printing the English titles and authors' names will be corrected. The price is 1 Franc and the work may be ordered through the *Theosophist* office.

* "Questionnaire Theosophique Elementaire", par D. A. Courmes de la Marine Française.

IDOLATRY.*

An exposition of the Theory and Practice of the common form of Hindu Worship.

BY ALPHA.

This well-written pamphlet of thirty-nine pages, which is a defence of Idolatry against the attacks of Christian missionaries, will be read with delight, by those who cherish the Hindu faith in their hearts, and with profit by those who are ignorant of its interior meaning. The author reveals the real object and aim of the devotees—that it is not the form or stone or any other material substance which they worship, but that they view these, simply as symbols of something spiritual in connection therewith. In support of this he refers to the mesmeric and magnetic results brought about by the entire ceremony of *Upāsana*, showing how self-mesmerism makes a man know himself, and alluding to the power of mantrams, as supported by present researches in Western science as shown in Mrs. Besant's lecture on the "Building of the Kosmos," Self-magnetisation brings on a state of Samadhi (higher spiritual trance) in which the mind ceases to cognize feeling, and the tablets of memory are erased. Then the Infinite consciousness begins to function, and naturally, as there is then no obstacle standing in its way. To attain unto Godhood, to know oneself, *Upāsana* should be practised. There are two principal requisites pertaining to it—the control of sound and air—*Mantra* and *Pranayama*. The mind is ever evolving images, and it should be made to involve or withdraw into itself, by these two modes. God is ever present with man but it is the mind that prevents man from being conscious of this presence, hence mind should be paralyzed (temporarily), and for this, the above ceremony is necessary. The whole meaning of the *Upāsana* ceremony, lies in keeping the influence of magnetism in view, and it is nothing but a process of self-magnetization, as will be presently shown. Images are not the ends but the means of *Upāsana*, or stopping the action of the mind, and hence they are used as symbols containing certain ideas; they are a help to concentration; they form so many centres of magnetism which help man both spiritually and physically; they are instruments through which the beneficent devas can do good to man. Take, as an example, the idol—Shivalingam, "It is the symbol of the eternal Parent, the combined symbol of the *yoni* (womb) and *linga* (phallus) carved in stone, and represents Parabrahm—the Father and Mother blended into one being—the origin and end of all embodied existence. The word Shiva means, higher good; the state of perfection beyond all bonds and relations." The following is a rough definition of the process of worship of the idol Shiva, which will also show how an idol is magnetised:

"Seated upon a *Kushasana*, facing the North or the East, the boat-shaped copper vessel filled with holy water intervening between him and the idol, the Hindu withdraws his mind from all material concerns and first magnetises the water by dipping the tip of the middle finger of his right hand and revolving the water during the mental repetition of a mantric formula. This water he sips now and then, in the course of his puja. When he proceeds to give life to the idol, willing it, determinedly, repeating a mantra of the same purport and accompanying the will with

* Published by Babu Nundu Lal Ganguly, No. 5, Puddopoker Lane, Bhowanipore.

three passes of the outstretched fingers of both hands. Then he lays water and flowers on it saying, 'I offer such and such things to the *Purusha*, who is thousand-headed, thousand-eyed, thousand-footed and who pervades the universe with but a portion of His infinite body.' He offers flowers to it, saying: 'I worship Thee who hast manifested Thyself as ether, air, heat, water and earth.' He concentrates his mind on the shining image, placing it mentally between his eye-brows, after finishing his *Pranayama*, and continues in that one-pointed state as long as he can. The *Japam* on finger-tips follows, and, when the worship is concluded, he bows down his head before the idol, murmuring internally, 'O, thou abode of all good, and all peace, the cause of the three-fold causes (Satva, Rajas and Tamas, which create the universe, sustain and destroy it), I offer myself to thee.' "

The idol is magnetised to such a high pitch, and becomes so full of magnetic power by the daily worship of all the members of the family and frequently by the family *Guru*, that it imparts its magnetism or healing power to a flame placed on it or to water in which it is dipped, to the cure of disease. In showing how an idol is used by devas, as an instrument for benefitting mankind, it may be stated that the Hindus have an accurate method of communicating with them, of knowing the lives they live, and the duties they discharge. One of these means is, "*Montra*." There is a saying that "A Deva may be laid under a spell by the mystic force of *Mantra*" * * * Now, to understand this, Modern Western science concerning Telepathy, sound and colour, helps us. Of Telepathy there is no question now, sound and colour are identical and interchangeable. Put physical colour in a glass ball and throw physical light over it, the effect is sound. Now the deva is brought into contact with earthly man by means of the mantra perceived by him as a colour, guided to its destination by the concentrated will-force of the worshipper. The thought-images, surrounded by the colours of mantric vibrations, are wafted to the deva as one directs them. They perceive this attempt of the worshipper, and stretch out a helping hand where the recipient is deserving. Take as an example Shiva—the emblem of Tama Guna. "Tama is the most complex and mixed of gunas, therefore is Shiva meditated upon as white. All the articles required in his worship are also white. The white flower, Dhatura, is his greatest favourite." If the critics take the trouble to enquire where and what the Hindus really worship, they might consider themselves blessed to become idolaters like the Hindus. In the temple of his heart, the Hindu shuts his mind, that the Universal Self may appear to him in its transcendent glory. A Hindu wants to feel and realise—a missionary wants to trademark his God. The missionaries "have yet to learn from the Hindus, the Alphabet of religious education, and that the path leading to God can not be monopolized." Let them learn from Confucius that "as it is with the Sun, so it is with God." The higher a man's conception of God, the better shall he know God, the nearer shall he approach unto Him, and the more closely shall he imitate His goodness, mercy and love for men. For this reason, let him who beholds the entire light of the Sun, which fills the Universe, refrain from condemning and despising his superstitious brother who, in his idol, sees but one ray of the same light, and let him likewise beware of condemning the unbeliever who is blind and sees no light. It is self-love only which sees errors and divergences of men in matters of faith, and this mental attitude moves them farther from God. The superiority of a religion is known from its devotees—whether they are selfless and self-sacrificing, or selfish and wholly devoted to themselves and theirs.

K. R. DIVECHA.

MAGAZINES.

Lucifer, for December, has a paper on "Theosophical Asceticism," by Dr. A. A. Wells, which is helpful in presenting a correct idea concerning the proper limits of asceticism. The following sentence, referring to the life of the recluse, contains the gist of the whole matter :

"With all its beauty, such a life, utterly free from self as it seems at first sight, is selfish in the Masters' sense; it provides no means of performing the one duty laid on men—the helping forward of the evolution of the world."

"Power, Knowledge and Love," a thoughtful article by Miss Arundale, is concluded. This is followed by the first instalment of another of Mr. Mead's scholarly, historical treatises, entitled, "Among the Gnostics of the First Two Centuries," which will prove of great interest to students of ancient philosophy. "Invisible Helpers," by Mr. Leadbeater, is continued, and will doubtless attract much attention from all classes of readers. It shows the possibility of bringing even ghosts within the domain of scientific knowledge. Mr. Bertram Keightley's able presentation of "The Sâmkhya Philosophy" is also continued, "The Unknown Philosopher," is the introductory portion of an article by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley. This paper takes us up to the time and "the school wherein St. Martin first studied the occult life." "Christianity according to Tolstoy," is discussed by the Hon. Otway Cuffe, who shows that though the noted Russian Count may be very sincere and self-sacrificing, he lacks breadth of conception in his interpretation of the teachings of Jesus.

Mercury, for December, opens with an article on "Devachan," embodying notes taken at one of Mrs. Besant's London lectures of June last. It will be read with great interest. Following this is a continuation of the synopsis of Mr. Mead's lectures on the "Later Platonists." "Thoughts for the Morrow and the Coming Year," by J. H. Connor, breathe a spirit of tolerance. "A City of the Mines," by Fio Hara, is a dream containing some ennobling suggestions. "T. S. Echoes" presents Mr. Fullerton's circular letter to Branch Presidents and Secretaries, concerning the restoration of members who, having once seceded, now wish to be reinstated in the American Section. "The Children's Corner" has an interesting article on "How the Divine Nature reveals itself through Physical Nature," by Count Axel Wachtmeister, and a closing paper on "Peace," by Lydia Bell. We are pleased to note that Count Axel Wachtmeister has joined his mother, the Countess, in America, and is now a co-worker on the editorial staff of *Mercury*.

Theosophy in Australasia,—December—touches upon a variety of subjects in "The Outlook," "Theosophy and the Books of Genesis," by H. A. Wilson, discusses the esoteric significance of various portions of this remarkable book, and notes their correspondence with allegorical narratives contained in the sacred books of other nations. The "Activities," both in Australia and New Zealand seem to be well sustained.

Le Lotus Bleu. The release of our beloved colleague, Captain D. A. Courmes, from his military service is already changing the aspect of our movement in France. He is bringing to the work his trained capacity for energetic and sustained performance of duty, and his bright intelligence occupies itself with the Theosophical propaganda in his native land as throughout a life-time of naval activity, it did with the details of his profession. Under the perfectly sympathetic accord existing between Dr. Pascal and himself, *Le Lotus Bleu* is becoming more and more a first-class magazine

and organ of propaganda. The contributions of those two gentlemen to its pages, supplemented by those of MM. Guymiot, Luxame, Jacques Brieu, Marius Decrespe and others, are giving the French public a clear idea of Theosophy in its various aspects. At the same time the best writings of Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater and other English writers are being rendered into classical French and thus widening the number of their readers by the whole reading public who can be reached only through that vernacular. We are very pleased to read in the December number of their review, that the new rooms of the Society at No. 3, Rue du 29 Juillet, are being visited daily by not only our local members but also by those who pass through Paris.

O.

Modern Astrology for January is a good number and contains an editorial on "The Esoteric Side of Astrology," which will be read with interest.

The January *Gleaner* publishes a couple of original papers which were read before the Bombay Branch T. S.:—the first being on "The Future of Humanity," by D. D. Jussawalla; the second, on "Celibacy and Marriage," is by Nishikanti Chattopadhaya, PH. D. These are followed by a variety of interesting selections.

The Prabuddha Bharata for January opens with an article on "The Universality of the Vedânta" and continues with an interesting table of contents.

The Brahmavâdin keeps the readers' interest well sustained as usual. It has in the issue of January 2nd, among other things, "Sayings of Râmakrishna Paramahansa," an Editorial on "The Hindu Doctrine of God," and one of Swâmi Vivekânanda's lectures.

The Journal of the Maha-Bodhi Society, for January, has some choice articles on Buddhism and one on the "Initiation of Prince Prisdan Choomsai," containing a summary of the speech delivered by him on this memorable occasion.

The Thinker is struggling with delinquent subscribers and unpaid Printers' bills, yet manages to wish its friends a Happy New Year. We reciprocate the wish.

The Light of the East, *The Arya Bala Bodhini*, so much needed by Hindu youth, *The Prasnotara*, *The Buddhist*, *Rays of Light*, and many other Indian exchanges are received.

From America we are in receipt of *The Metaphysical Magazine*, with a very attractive table of contents; *The Phrenological Journal*, always fresh and interesting; *Notes and Queries*, *Banner of Light*, *Journal of Hygiene*, and, among Theosophical periodicals, a new venture entitled *Child-Life*, which promises to be of service among the little folk; also *The Lamp*, *The Theosophic News*, *The Forum*, and *Theosophy*. In the latter, the article on "Failure" is worthy of commendation for its practical utility."

From Great Britain we have received *The Vâhan*, *Light*, *Nature*, *The Review of Reviews*, and *The Irish Theosophist*; and from the continent, our usual T. S. exchanges, from Spain, France, Germany, Holland and Sweden, also *The Harbinger of Light*, and *The Seen and the Unseen*, from Australia.

CUTTINGS AND COMMENTS.

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

How the Theosophical wind blows the straws. An English friend, sending in some cuttings, writes : "The one, *Invented in a Dream*, I cut from the *Echo*, which is certainly looking up in the matter of occult bits of information. Not long ago any story of this kind would have excited mirth in this worthy journal's pages, but now ! they even published *Black Art in Chaldea* on the front page and devoted nearly a column to it, too. Verily Western journalism is waking up. In the *Windsor Magazine* of this month there is a story called *Lander Caine the Confessor*, by Percy Andrea, which is a most weirdly interesting account given by a young Jesuit of a beautiful girl who used to come to him every night on board ship and walk up and down the deck with him. She was a soulless lovely being who deeply resented the fact that she had to suffer. At the end of the voyage he finds out that it is the astral body of this girl that has appeared to him so constantly, and that her physical body has been all the time in a trance under a doctor's supervision. It is marvellous how these ideas crop up in all modern fiction. I was very much amused the other day in reading a fashion paper, *Hearth and Home*, a very good class of journal—to find the lady correspondent writing, 'Oh ! of course I know that it is quite the correct thing now to believe that one has lived before, but I don't see the good of it if one cannot remember, &c., &c.' All straws show which way the wind blows, and ten years ago the word 'Reincarnation' raised a ripple of laughter wherever it was spoken. You must feel very deeply the importance and far-reaching effect of your twenty-one years' work every time you take up a newspaper or read a book, I should think."

As the French say, "*Cila va sans dire*."

* * *

Mrs. Besant in Calcutta. The following subjects were discussed by Mrs. Besant in Calcutta, during her late visit to that city. On Jan. 8th, "Evolution of the Soul;" Jan. 9th, "Theosophy, Hinduism and Christianity;" Jan. 10th, "Is Spirituality a Bar to National Prosperity?" The lectures were well attended, and, as usual, awakened intense interest.

* * *

The potency of evil thought. As one of the straws which indicate the present tendency of the literary wind we may mention a recent romance entitled "A Secret Inheritance," by B. L. Farjeon. The leading character in this exceptionally interesting work, is a man who is noted for his many charities and his exemplary conduct, in the main ; yet being on whose prejudices were easily aroused, and whose affections were extremely limited in scope, he often came under the sway of the "green-eyed monster." The outworking of his secret, jealous thoughts and intense desires, while in the somnambulic state and wholly distinct from his waking consciousness, as depicted in this strange narrative, culminated in two murders, so secretly committed that, in each case, another man suffered the penalty of the law, and he was not even suspected until many years afterwards.

E.

* * *

Cured by a magnetized handkerchief. Dr. Birkholz, of Detroit, Michigan, U. S. A., appears to be in possession of healing powers similar to those manifested by Jesus, Peter and Paul, and *The Detroit Tribune*, of Dec. 18th, 1896, publishes an account of his cure of a little daughter of Henry W. Koehler, a carriage-maker, of that city. The child was suffering

from a malignant form of diphtheritic croup, and death seemed near. The child's mother says :

"You can imagine how bad she was when I tell you she had to breathe the air through slaked lime, but this was terribly severe on her, and her throat got worse. It was an awful struggle for the poor child to breathe. Finally I could stand it no more to see her suffer, and I said to my husband: 'You must go and get Dr. Birkholz.' My husband went to his home, at 537 Trumbull Avenue, but Dr. Birkholz told him he treated no one except at his parlors there. My husband begged so hard for him to come that finally Dr. Birkholz said: 'Come here and sit down.' Then he took both his hands in his, and said: 'Now, close your eyes and think more earnestly than you ever did in your life that your little daughter is getting well and the membrane is coming away.' Then Dr. Birkholz took a handkerchief and magnetized it, rubbing it in his hands, and said: 'When you get home you rub her throat with your own hands and tie this handkerchief around it.' This was about 10 o'clock. At midnight the membrane broke and came away."

* * *

The Countess Wachtmeister. COUNTESS CONSTANCE WACHTMEISTER, says an English paper, keeps as zealously as ever on her lecturing tours in the Old World and the New. She has done Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, Honolulu, and is now working in the United States. She is about fifty-eight. She was born in Florence, but her family, that of De Bourbel, was one of the most ancient in France. Her mother dying, she lived in London Hall, Berkshire, with her aunt for many years and was married there in 1863 to her cousin Count Wachtmeister, the Swedish and Norwegian Minister in London. Her husband died in 1871, and a decade later she joined the Theosophical Society. For many years she conducted the work of the Theosophical Publication Society, in London.

* * *

The famine and the Bible. One of our exchanges, referring to what the pious Lady said in the *Bombay Guardian*, viz. : that "this famine is a God-given opportunity" (for securing converts), gives expression to the following :

"It is said of the fanatical Mussulmans that they carried the Koran and a sword. But does Jesus Christ also carry with him a famine and the Bible?"

* * *

Sir Edwin Arnold's opinion of Theosophy.

During a recent interview with a London journalist, Sir Edwin Arnold said, replying to a question concerning Theosophy :—

There is no doubt that the Theosophical movement has had an excellent effect upon humanity. It has made a large number of people understand what all India always understood, and that is, the importance of invisible things. The real universe is that which you do not see, and the commonest Indian peasant knows that to be true, by inheritance. The Theosophists have impressed upon the present generation the necessity of admitting the existence of the invisible. The senses are very limited, and everybody ought to know that behind him lies an illimitable field of development."

* * *

A victim of Hypnotis.

A correspondent of an American Journal, writing from Forest City, New York, states the following :—

"Henry Westcott, aged 16, who acted as a subject for a travelling mesmerist recently and was subsequently practiced upon by a boy hypnotist, has relapsed into a hypnotic condition and cannot be brought back."

For the last three weeks he has had periods of unconsciousness. His mind seems dazed much of the time and he acts precisely like a person under the influence of hypnotism.

His attacks come on every night at about 8 o'clock and last till morning, during which time he is subject to terrible paroxysms. Sometimes he barks and snaps like a dog, one of the tricks he was made to do by the mesmerist at his performance. His muscles become rigid, finally relax, and snap like a whip.

The attacks are gradually wearing him out, and his parents and Dr. R. T. Maxwell, of Carbondale, have almost despaired of his recovery. During his paroxysms it requires the services of four strong men to hold him."

* * *

A result of pre-natal influence. A seven-year old boy in America is reported to have quarrelled with a playmate, and becoming very angry, he procured a shot-gun, loaded it and, returning, deliberately blew the other boy's head off. It appears that the mother of this young assassin had, some months before his birth, been an eager reader of a villainous class of dime-novels which abound in tales of robbery and murder, thus stamping upon the plastic mind of her unborn child the tendency which resulted in the awful catastrophe above stated. This is an illustration of the far-reaching effects of thought, which mothers would do well to heed.

E.

* * *

A tribute to Theosophy.

The Lahore paper, *Arjuna*, says :

"The following lines contain a well-deserved tribute to the activity of Theosophy, in various ways :—

"Whatever may be attempted by the enemies of Theosophy to arrest its progress, there can be no manner of doubt that Theosophy has made its way among the educated class, and that it is winning as allies all those who can think for themselves. Hence it is often paradoxically said that it has become the "religion" of the Indian aristocracy and the thinking public. As far as we understand, Theosophy is not a religion, much less a sect; and no other proof is necessary to establish the truth of this statement than the fact that the Theosophical Society includes amongst its members the grossest of so-called Idol-worshippers as well as the most advanced Iconoclasts. The fact must strike every body that our adults have their attention turned to the ancient Aryan literature and sciences, while our youth, especially the fresh graduates, have already learnt to love and esteem the religion and science of their forefathers and to feel proud of their parentage. Our sincere and honest belief is that this change in our countrymen is due to the exertions of the Theosophists. Theosophy has also revived, in an extraordinary manner, many branches of our sacred literature, and books and publications which, a little before were lying bundled away in the corners of shops, or were being disposed of by weight as waste paper, are now sold at over a hundred per cent premium? Who knows but even our stage has also felt the hallowing influence? The celebrated religious dramas recently played to great and appreciative audiences go to prove this fact. Sanskrit literature is now being everywhere encouraged, and schools for the purpose are established in different parts of the country. In a word, an intelligent and impartial observer of facts cannot deny the truth that Theosophy has entirely turned the current which a few years back was running in quite a different and less spiritual channel. It has taught both young and old how to love and respect our ancestors—the sages of yore—and how to unlock their treasures of knowledge. The patriotic spirit it has planted in the heart of the rising generation promises a great deal, and we cannot by any means give full expression to the gratitude we, and the native community in general, owe to Colonel Olcott and his colleague, Madame Blavatsky, for the noble plans they laid and the results they have achieved."

* * *

*Hypnotism
as an
educator.*

Dr. R. Osgood Mason, in an article on "The Educational Uses of Hypnotism," in the *North American Review* for October, quotes the following remarkable incident illustrating the benefits which may in some instances result from a wise application of hypnotism to the degraded and criminal classes :

"In the summer of 1884 there was at the Salpêtrière a young woman of a deplorable type—a criminal lunatic, filthy in habits and violent in demeanour, and with a life-long history of impurity and theft. M. Auguste Voisin, one of the physicians of the hospital staff, undertook to hypnotise her at a time when she could be kept quiet only by the strait-jacket and the continuous cold douche to the head. She would not look at the operator, but raved and spat at him. M. Voisin, however, kept his face close to hers, and followed her eyes wherever she moved them. In ten minutes she was asleep, and in five minutes more she passed into the sleep-walking or somnambule state, and began to talk incoherently. This treatment being repeated on many successive days, she gradually became sane when in the hypnotic condition, though she still raved when awake. At length she came to obey in her waking hours commands impressed upon her in her trance—trivial matters, such as to sweep her room—then suggestions involving marked changes in her behaviour; finally, in the hypnotic state, she voluntarily expressed regret for her past life, and of her own accord made good resolutions for the future, which she carried out when awake; and the improvement in her conduct and character was permanent. Two years later M. Voisin wrote that she was a nurse in a Paris hospital, and that her conduct was irreproachable."

Though hypnotism is undoubtedly a power for good, in certain cases, when applied by noble-minded and unselfish operators, it is equally powerful for evil in other cases, for there are many ambitious scoundrels who do not hesitate to use it to promote their selfish or even villainous desires.

E.

*
* *

*The
Champion
bird-
murderer.*

Earl de Grey, of England, seems to have distanced all competitors in the art of slaughtering innocent birds. During the past twenty-eight years he has killed 316,699 living creatures. Of this total, the main portion were birds, who never did him the slightest harm; such as pheasants, grouse, partridge, snipe, woodcock and wild ducks. Is it possible that a human being can be proud of such blood-thirsty slaughtering of innocents? Then in addition to the birds, 567 deer were murdered in cold blood, *simply for sport*. What sights must meet this champion slayer when he reaches the astral world! I remember reading, many years ago, an account of the first hunting adventures of an American who had been camping on the Adirondack mountains, with a party of friends, and had shot his first deer. The animal in its death struggles, turned its soft, gentle, pleading eyes upon him and his soul was stirred to a deep revulsion of feeling, and roused to a sense of shame, of pity, of remorse, and he vowed never to be guilty of such a crime again. He said those gentle eyes, which seemed actually filled with tears, would haunt him through life. What a pity that any human being should, by frequent repetition of such cowardly and dastardly acts, have his finer sensibilities so hardened and paralyzed that he can view with indifference, possibly with silly pride, the death-agonies of his murdered fellow creatures of the next lower kingdom. Alas, that humanity should come so far short of its divine inheritance as to find its chief enjoyment in heartlessly slaying innocent creatures, instead of trying to lessen the burdens and sufferings of mankind.

E.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE THEOSOPHIST.

FEBRUARY, 1896.

EXECUTIVE NOTICE.

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE,

ADYAR, 27th January 1897.

The other engagements of Mr. R. Runga Row, F.T.S., preventing him from giving any longer his valuable services as an Auditor of the Society's accounts, the undersigned thanks him sincerely for the unpaid work he has hitherto done, and appoints Mr. S. V. Rungaswamy Iyengar, B.A., to fill the vacancy.

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

T. S. FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

I hereby beg leave to acknowledge, with thanks, the following donations and subscriptions to the various funds of the T. S. from 27th November 96 to 24th January 1897.

HEAD-QUARTERS FUND.

| | Rs. | A. | P. |
|---|-----|----|----|
| Countess C. Wachtmeister, Donation | 200 | 0 | 0 |
| General Secretary, Indian Section, T. S., part payment of $\frac{1}{4}$ of receipts of the Section for the year 1896 | 250 | 0 | 0 |
| General Secretary, European Section, T. S., for $\frac{1}{4}$ of Charter, Entrance and Subscription fees from May 1st to 31st October 1896—Cheque for £43-11-3, cashed by the Madras Bank | 678 | 4 | 1 |
| General Secretary, Indian Section, T. S., additional payment of Section dues for 1896, | 250 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. Peter De Abrew, Colombo, Donation | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Norman S. Clark, Cairo, do £1 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| „ P. D. Khan, Bombay, do | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| „ A Parsi F. T. S., Bombay, do | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| „ C. Sambiah, Mylapore, Subscription | 1 | 8 | 0 |
| „ Pherozeshaw, R. Mehta, Bombay, Donation | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| „ C. Sambiah, Mylapore, Subscription | 1 | 8 | 0 |
| „ Robert Cross, England, Donation £25. Cashed as per P. O. Sch. No. 35 | 387 | 2 | 0 |

LIBRARY FUND.

| | | | |
|--|----|---|---|
| Mr. C. Sambiah, Mylapore, Subscription | 1 | 8 | 0 |
| „ R. Sooria Row Naidu, Vizagapatam, Donation | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| „ C. Sambiah, Mylapore, Subscription | 1 | 8 | 0 |

ANNIVERSARY FUND.

| | | | |
|---|-----|---|---|
| Mr. C. Annamalai Mudaliar, Kuruchedu, Donation | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| General Secretary, Indian Section, T. S., do | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. Norman S. Clark, Cairo | 76 | 0 | 0 |
| Rai Bahadur Dadhobha Sakharam, Malegaon, Donation | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. N. Pichai Pillai, Vedaraniyam, do | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| „ D. Gostling, Bombay, do | 200 | 0 | 0 |
| „ T. Ramachandra Row, Masula, do | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| „ P. Kesava Pillai, Gooty, do | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| „ K. Narayanswami Iyer, Kumbakonam, do | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| „ J. Srinivasa Row, Gooty, do | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| „ A. Nanjundappa, Cuddapah, do | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| „ A. S. Vaidianatha Iyer, Cuddapah, do | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Madura Branch, T. S., do | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| Prince Buldevji, Dharmpur, do | 15 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-----|----|----|---|
| Mr. V. Venga Iyer, Palghat, | Donation ... | ... | 10 | 0 | 0 |
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| Mr. A. S. Visvanatha Iyer, | do ... | ... | 0 | 8 | 0 |
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| „ H. C. S. Ananta Iyer, | do ... | ... | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| „ M. Papu Row Naidu, | do ... | ... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| „ K. J. Naidu, | do ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| „ M. C. Krishnasawmi Iyer, | do ... | ... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| „ S. V. G. Sarma, | do ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| „ G. Krishniah, | do ... | ... | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| „ C. V. Swaminatha Iyer, | do ... | ... | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| „ T. Muthukumarasawmi Mdr., | do ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| „ S. T. Moodeliar, | do ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Coimbatore Branch, | do ... | ... | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. J. M. Nallasawmi Pillai, | do ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| „ N. S. V., | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| „ M. R. Jagannatha Raju, | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| A Friend, | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. R. Giri Row, Madannapalle, | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| „ B. Bhujunga Row, do | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| „ R. Seshagiri Row, do | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| A Friend ... | ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Vema Varuppu and others, Donation | ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. S. Subbiah ... | ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
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| A Friend ... | ... | ... | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| A Friend ... | ... | ... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. S. Venkata ... | ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| A Friend ... | ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. Sivasunkara Pandia ... | ... | ... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| „ S. V. Rangasawmi Iyengar, | Donation ... | ... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| „ M. Venkatasubba Row, | do ... | ... | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| „ V. Venkataseshiah, | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Vellore Branch, | do ... | ... | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. D. S. Krishnasawmi Iyer, Tanjore, | do ... | ... | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| „ B. Ranga Reddy, Nellore, | do ... | ... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Anantanaraina Iyer, | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Parthasaradhi Naidu, Nellore, | do ... | ... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Raghu Ram Row, | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| A Friend, | do ... | ... | 0 | 12 | 0 |
| Mr. T. Nayana Sastri, | do ... | ... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| A Friend, | do ... | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |

(To be continued).

NOTE:—Names and Subscriptions are entered as per list of Mr. K. Narayanswami Iyer, Prov. Secy., Ind. Sec., T. S., beginning with Mr. D. Gostling and ending with Mr. Venkatasubbier. In the list of subscriptions some of the names are illegible, in certain cases names are not given and in most cases there are no addresses at all. I therefore request those that subscribed more and subscribed newly to forward the amount to the undersigned.

ADYAR, }
24th January 1897. }

T. VIJIARAGHAVA CHARLU,
Treasurer, T. S.

ADYAR LIBRARY.

The following books have been added during the last two months:—

DONATED:—

Avasta, the sacred book of the Parsis from Bombay T. S. Lodge;
Kanarese Rámáyana, from Mrs. Besant; *Light of Grace*; *Descriptive catalogue*

of Sanskrit MSS. of Calcutta Sanskrit College Library No. 6 from Pandit Hrishikesa Sastry; Report of the Commissioner of Education (of U. S. A. for 1894 and 95, Vol. I; *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (U. S. A.), from J. W. Powell, Director; and *Iswara Nichaya* (Tamil), from S. Sabhuratnapillai of Ceylon.

PURCHASED :—

Sacred books of the East, *Vedantasutras*, Vol II.; and Anandasrama Series No. 34, *Bhagavad Gitâ* with Sankaracharya's Bhashya, on Anandagiri's Gloss on Bhâshyâ.

R. ANANTHAKRISHNA SASTRY,

Librarian.

TO INDIAN BRANCHES AND MEMBERS.

During the last T. S. Convention at Adyar, a subscription was started to defray the expenses incurred by our brother R. Jagannathiah in visiting Branches and lecturing in various localities in the Northern Provinces. As the amount thus promised on monthly payments, falls far short of the requirements of the case, it is earnestly hoped that Branches, as well as private individuals, who have not already subscribed for this purpose, will write to the undersigned, stating what amounts they will pay, monthly, toward these necessary expenses.

W. A. ENGLISH,

Recording Secretary T. S.

The offer of Dr. Richardson, PH. D., to help in fighting the plague in Bombay, has been accepted by Dr. Weir, the health officer, and he is now looking after the disinfection of houses. As Dr. R. occupied a prominent position as chemist, in England, this seems like harnessing a race-horse to a dray.

"SANSKRIT GRAMMAR."

Babu Purmeshri Dass sent us a very long reply to the criticism which appeared in the *Theosophist* Supplement for October last, relating to his article on "Sanskrit Grammar," but, owing to its great length, we can give space for only a condensation of the leading points in the main portion, in addition to the author's final summary. As we have already published one long rejoinder from him, this must end the controversy, as far as the *Theosophist* is concerned.

Our author claims that the recognition of Pânini's Grammatical Aphorisms as a Vedânga, is an assumption which is not sustained by the merit of the work itself; that in Pâtanjali's great commentary, we do not find a single word in support of the view advanced in the criticism above referred to; on the contrary, he states that the Aphorisms were not intended by their author to apply to Vedic Sanskrit; that there is, however, a spurious commentary, by one Viramachârya, (?) to which has been assigned the distinction of *Mahabhashya*; that if Pânini's Aphorisms were a Vedânga, applying primarily to the construction of Vedic terms, why do we find therein exceptions applicable to the Vedic language alone.

The word *Chhandasi* is liable to be interpreted differently as—"in the Vedas," or, "in secular poetry." If the author had intended the former interpretation exclusively, he would have used the word *Vedic*, thus avoiding all ambiguity. If *Chhandasi* be construed to signify, "in the Vedas," what rules are left to govern similar expressions in secular language? The employment of the word *Anarsha*, by Pânini, in one of his own sûttras, shows that he intends his grammar to be applicable exclusively to secular language. Were it a Vedânga, it would contain rules applicable to Svara, colour and form. "*Chhandasi*," as used in Pânini's Aphorisms means, "in secular poetry," and if the construction of the Padas alone be the scope and province of a grammar, it is necessary that it should cover *all* the Padas. In the case in hand it does not. The author next quotes numerous secular and Vedic expressions in Sanskrit, in opposite columns, to show that "*Chhandasi*" cannot possibly be intended to mean "in the Vedas," exclusively, and says further, that the Aphorisms of Pânini are a complete work on secular grammar, applicable to both poetry and prose, and that "the Vedas should be left alone to be governed by their own grammar, the *Mahesvariya*, which, with its adjunct, *Krindarka* * * * is a work of 5,000 Aphorisms * * *, a complete grammar to all intents and purposes of the Sanskrit language."

As the existence of *Mahesvariya* is admitted, it is possible that, instead of the fourteen preliminary sūtras which do not make a complete grammar, there may be the 5,000 sūtras constituting the *complete* grammar, just referred to, which alone merits the high distinction of being a Vedānga. He also says that, in addition to the "Aphorisms," "Maharshi Pānini has left to us some eleven more works," and closes with the following summary :

The charges that our critic brings against us are that,—

1. "Pānini's grammar is complete by itself, &c." This has already been answered.

2. "No one has ever heard of the Grammar 'Mahesvariya.'"

To this our answer is that Nandikesvari did at least hear of the Grammar *Mahesvariya*—that through Nandikesvara our librarian heard of the Grammar, as he has been pleased to give us "Philosophy of the Siva Sūtras taken from Nandikesvara's Commentary on Pānini"—that our critic too has heard of the *Mahesvariya*, as he refers to the work in criticising our article on Sanskrit Grammar—that we are not responsible for the voluntary or involuntary deafness of others—that one of us has read the whole of the work of 5,000 Sūtras with 2,500 explanatory Slokas by Siva on the work—and the *Naradiya Bhāshya* on it—and that we are not compelled by the ignorance of others to forget what we have seen and studied.

3. "While its very existence is fabulous how can we decide upon its superiority or inferiority."

The existence is not fabulous as we have shown above. We have given a few of the many proofs of the superiority of the work and are prepared to adduce further evidence on the point if necessary,

4. "It is only to-day we hear of *Kriyopayogika* as a work of Pānini."

To this we simply say that we are by no means responsible for the paucity of the knowledge of our critic.

5. "We have never heard of its slokas."

Self-complacency is no argument. If our critic has never before heard of the slokas of *Kriyopayogika* it is no reason why he should not now hear of them. Progress in knowledge is ever desirable.

6. "No Grammarian is competent to interpret them (as they are full of mistakes as quoted)."

This is a gratuitous assumption on the part of our critic, unless he points out to us the alleged mistakes, and if genuine we shall either plead guilty or answer the charge. But we shall not be responsible for the printer's misdoings.

Lastly we would beg of our critics to criticise but not to abuse—as abuse is no argument.

THE OLCOTT FREE SCHOOL.

The annual examination for Grant-in-aid, at the Olcott Free School was held on December 16th. The classes examined were the third, second, first and infant—numbering twenty-three pupils, of whom twenty-one passed very creditably. As the pupils are from the Pariahs of the poorest classes, this result shows the inherent intelligence of the children, and speaks well for the teachers. Next year, pupils from the fourth standard will compete in the examination. As the moral and religious influences of the school are in accord with the Hindu faith, parents who have this preference in belief, naturally choose to send their children where, in connection with trained and experienced teachers, there is no objection from the standpoint of their ancestral faith. Various Europeans, Brahmins, and a native Prince, who lately visited the school, were highly pleased with the intelligent appearance of the pupils, and with educational results witnessed, which do honour to the management of the school, and to its founder. To provide accommodation for the increasing number of pupils, an enlargement of the building is contemplated in the near future, should funds become available.

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Will be sent by V. P. P. on application to the Business Manager of the *Theosophist*, all books, pamphlets and magazines.

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Names are registered only on receipt of subscriptions. All remittances must be made to the Business Manager, *Theosophist* Office, Adyar, Madras, India.

Foreign subscription is 2 shillings or 50 cents per annum.

THE SOUTH INDIAN T. S. FEDERATION

CIRCULAR.

To Members of the Indian Section.

Brothers:—Those of you that attended the last Convention of the T. S. at Adyar will remember that a proposal was made by some prominent members to constitute a federation of the T. S. Branches in the Madras Presidency. The scheme of federation is said to work well in England and other Western countries. In order to bring about a co-operation of work and feeling on the part of the energetic and sincere members of the T. S. in the South as well as a proper propagation of knowledge to the public at large, it is desirable that meetings be held three or four times annually at different centres where the above purposes may be accomplished. For instance there are some Branches where one or two stray individuals, are to be found who are not able to exercise their powers on account of the non-receptivity of others. Other Branches there are where persons having the powers to work, do not do so on account of the morbid Tamas of centuries from which India is just awakening.

The second reason that suggests itself to me for such meetings is that all the earnest workers may know the different lines of work conducted in the different parts of our Presidency and so may come to some conclusions as regards the best system of propagandism to be adopted. In doing so we shall be able to decide upon the local as well as the general needs.

The third reason is this:—There is a general charge—which is in my opinion quite well-founded—that the Hindus generally have not the aptitude for sustained organization. In a small scale we may organize ourselves into small working bodies in different centres, so that after learning the rudimentary lesson of organization we may go to the higher lessons. How long are we to depend upon foreigners like our revered General Secretary Bro. Bertram Keightley, who sacrificing himself for us, works altruistically on behalf of humanity? Should not India try to raise some sons of hers for this task of ours; India, which in former times, reared many transcendently noble personages like Rishis Vasishta, Viswamitra and many others? To go into the inner details of the religious life of a Hindu and to evoke the sympathy of the orthodox, a Hindu is more fitted than a Westerner. If there should arise a real band of workers amongst us gifted with true spirituality and organizing powers there is not the least doubt but that we should be able to do more work than hitherto. But I may state here that all these results cannot be achieved by us in our annual meetings at Adyar or Benares where we generally meet for the purpose of hearing Mrs. Besant or transacting business connected with the general affairs of the

Indian section. The place that we adopt being local, we shall be able to transact with ease the local affairs here.

Bearing these and other reasons in mind, some of the prominent Theosophists held an informal meeting, last Convention, at Adyar, and wanted to constitute a federation of the South Indian Branches and have it legally organized. But before asking for a legal sanction, we resolved to work out the scheme amongst ourselves and when reduced to a workable and working system to pray for sanction to the proper quarters.

As regards the federation of the South Indian Branches, if all the T. S. Lodges in the Madras Presidency were organized into one federation alone, there will be a great difficulty experienced in making members from the North, say Masulipatam, to attend a meeting in the South, say Kumbakonam. So a proposal was made at Adyar, in the above meeting, that different federal centres might be created in our Presidency, one or two centres for the Telugu Districts, one or two for the Tamil Districts and so on. But it was thought advisable by a majority that, without any present division of centres as proposed above, an initial step might be taken by me for the first meeting to be convened at Kumbakonam during the Maha-Magam festival. This is a sacred festival which takes place here once every 12 years, when the sacred Ganges is said to bubble up in the tank here and many are expected to arrive from distant places. It comes off on the 17th of February next. I was asked, as the Provincial Secretary of the Madras Presidency, to issue this Circular on my own responsibility. Therefore I have sent it to all the Branches in the Madras Presidency showing some signs of work therein, barring those dormant Branches which have no regularly constituted officers even.

Lodgings.

The Maha-Magam festival is an occasion when 2 or 3 lakhs of people are generally expected to attend, though the Government estimates it at 6 or 7 lakhs. Such being the case, all available quarters are being rented or occupied in advance. But fortunately, I have got possession of the Palace Gardens south of Pothâmary tank in the heart of the town where I mean to put up a large pandal to accommodate 50 or 60 individuals. There our members, and not outsiders, will be able to find food and lodging. But it is expected that they will bring their beds with them. The members should bear in mind that, as the meeting is the first of its kind and the auspicious occasion is one when the town will be literally crammed, due notice will be given me as soon as possible of the arrival of the guests, so that I may be able to provide for the number that may exceed my present estimate. Any difficulties that may arise in that way will, with all reasonable care, be met with and the convenience of our guests will be looked after; but it is hoped that all irremediable ones will be borne with true Theosophic tolerance.

The work to be done.

This Convention will, it is hoped, last for two days. It is expected that each Branch which is represented here will read a report of the work done by it—(even if it be small, it does not matter). Any literary or other works that have been or will be undertaken by a member or members of its Branch will be mentioned in the report.

Papers on spiritual topics may be read before the Convention assembled. In this connection I may state that the names of the members or even outsiders who are fit or willing to do a particular work in their locality should be given out so that we may resort to some methods of utilising their services. One may be fit for translating a work and not having proper encouragement may not enter into that field at all. It is our duty to utilise the services of such an individual with proper encouragements.

Therefore it is hoped that each Branch will communicate to me as early as possible before the 7th of February—

(1) The number and names of members who will attend—names necessary to know the caste, etc.

(2) Whether they send up a report of their working or any new suggestions of work.

(3) Whether they have any special paper to read or lecture to deliver and on what subjects.

(4) The names of the members of the Branch, or outsiders, who will undertake any works, original, translations, or charitable, etc., and what work or works.

(5) If a Branch cannot send any member but can send a report, the report will be read here by a proxy.

(6) Whether they have any pamphlets to distribute.

(7) Whether there are any rare books in their parts of the District, unpublished, and their names and owners.

As a first piece of sacrifice, I may tell you that by the termination of our Convention, I have resolved to sever myself wholly from the temporal concerns of life, and place my humble self at the entire disposal of those Higher Intelligences whose unworthy servants we are. Thereby I shall be able to lend my services completely to you in the work inaugurated by us now, as well as other works. Fourteen years ago, the Theosophical Society came to Madras to point out to the spiritually blind, the path up the steep heights towards the Divine Spirit. Two years more have yet to expire ere this cycle of 5,000 years will close. Will not the Madras Presidency, after the lapse of this period, give rise to some spiritual workers who will sacrifice themselves completely at the feet of Him who is our Saviour? Even if that were not possible now, will she not produce a band of spiritual workers at least, who, though they may not, through Karma, be able to divorce themselves from material concerns, will put their shoulders, for some

portion of the year at least, to this wheel of our noble cause. If so then we shall have bright prospects before us and be able to make this cycle a winner in the contest of spirituality *versus* materialism, and expedite the advent of some spiritual hero amongst us when this cycle ends, so that we may have another block of spiritual knowledge to master and greater heights of spirituality to scale.

K. NARAYANSWAMI AIYER,
Prov'l. Sec'y. T. S., Madras Presidency.

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The Theosophical Society.

INFORMATION FOR STRANGERS.

THE Theosophical Society was formed at New York, November 17th, 1875. Its founders believed that the best interests of Religion and Science would be promoted by the revival of Sanskrit, Pali, Zend, and other ancient literature, in which the Sages and Initiates had preserved for the use of mankind truths of the highest value respecting man and nature. A Society of an absolutely unsectarian character, whose work should be amicably prosecuted by the learned of all races, in a spirit of unselfish devotion to the research of truth, and with the purpose of disseminating it impartially, seemed likely to do much to check materialism and strengthen the waning religious spirit. The simplest expression of the objects of the Society is the following :—

First.—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

Second.—To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.

Third.—To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

No person's religious opinions are asked upon his joining, nor is interference with them permitted, but every one is required, before admission, to promise to show towards his fellow-members the same tolerance in this respect as he claims for himself.

The Head-quarters, offices, and managing staff are at Adyar, a suburb of Madras, where the Society has a property of twenty-seven acres and extensive buildings, including one for the Oriental Library, and a spacious hall wherein Annual Conventions are held on the 27th of December.

The Society is not yet endowed, but there is a nucleus of a Fund, the income from the investment of which is available for current expenses; these are mainly, however, met by donations, and one fourth of all fees and dues collected by Sections, and fees and dues from non-sectionalised countries.

All Bequests intended to benefit the *Society as a whole*, must be made to "The Trustees for the time being of the Theosophical Society, appointed or acting under a Deed of Trust, dated the 14th of December 1892, and duly enrolled."

The Society, as a body, eschews politics and all subjects outside its declared sphere of work. The *Rules* stringently forbid members to compromise its strict neutrality in these matters.

The *Theosophist* is private property, but under the Revised Rules it is the organ of the Society for the publication of official news. For anything else in the Magazine, the Society is not responsible.

Many Branches of the Society have been formed in various parts of the world, and new ones are constantly being organised. Up to Dec. 27, 1896, 428 charters for Branches had been issued. Each Branch frames its own bye-laws and manages its own local business without interference from Head-quarters; provided only that the fundamental rules of the Society are not violated. Branches lying within certain territorial limits (as, for instance, America, Europe, India, &c.,) have been grouped for purposes of administration in territorial Sections. For particulars, see the Revised Rules of 1896, where all necessary information with regard to joining the Society, &c., will also be found: to be had free on application to the Recording Secretary of the Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras; or to the General Secretaries of the Sections.

In Europe, apply to G. R. S. Mead, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N. W., London; in Scandinavian countries to A. Zettersten, Nybrogatan, 30, Stockholm, Sweden. In India, to Bertram Keightley, Benares, N. W. P., India. In America, to Alexander Fullerton, 5, University Place, New York City. In Australasia, to J. C. Staples, 42, Margaret St., Sydney, N. S. W. In New Zealand, to Miss Lilian Edger, M.A., Mutual Life Buildings, Lower Queen Street, Auckland. In Ceylon, to Mr. H. S. Perera, 61, Maliban St., Colombo.

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3. All letters about Indian Branch work and Fellows, applications for membership in India and for blank forms, and all fees, dues and donations for the support of the work in India only, address to *BERTHAM KEIGHTLEY, Esq., General Secretary, Indian Section T. S., Benares, N. W. P., India.* Telegraphic and cable Address: *BESANT, BENARES.*
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ADYAR, January 1895.

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

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