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THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

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

OLD DIARY LEAVES.*

SECOND ORIENTAL SERIES, CHAPTER XXIV.

HOW much was done by us, in the first decade of the Society's existence, towards realising the objects of its formation, will be seen in a few statistics. The *Theosophist* was founded in October 1879, and there appeared in its first ten volumes 429 pages (Royal 8vo.) of translations from the Sanskrit, and 935 pages of original articles on Eastern religious, philosophical and scientific subjects, mainly by writers of Oriental birth; several hundred lectures were given by myself, besides hundreds more by our colleagues in India, America and Ceylon; the Buddhistic educational movement was started and vigorously pushed in Ceylon; a number of Sanskrit and Anglo-Sanskrit schools were begun in India; H. P. B. and I visited Europe several times; Branches and Centres were established in Europe and America; a considerable number of books were published in different languages; I travelled thousands of miles in India and went to most of the villages in the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon; a heavy correspondence was kept up all over the world, and as we crossed the threshold of the eleventh year the erection of the building for the Adyar Oriental Library was begun at the lovely headquarters which had been bought for the Society and paid for. In my Diary of 1886 the entry for January 1st, says:

"In the name of the Masters and for the sake of their cause, I, Henry S. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, this day turned the first sod for the Sanskrit Library and Museum at Adyar. The only witnesses present were T. Vijiaraghava Charlu and two of the gardeners. The impulse to do it came so strongly—after staking out the ground for the building—that I did not call any of the other people in the house."

* Two full series, or volumes, of thirty chapters each, one tracing the history of the Theosophical Society up to the time of the departure of the Founders from New York to India, the other subsequently, have appeared. The first volume is available in book form. The present series is the third.

A very simple affair, one will see: no speeches, no music, no processions, no humbug of any sort, just a real beginning of what is meant to be a great work, accompanied by a declaration of the motive at bottom: one which, though not heard by more than two or three spectators, yet certainly must have been heard and noted in the quarter where the Wise Ones sit and watch the actions of men.

Work was not begun on the building for some little time, however, as plans had to be perfected, money provided for and materials bought. On the 8th I consulted Mr. C. Sambiah, F. T. S., a retired Sub-Engineer and most excellent colleague of ours, about the building, and he agreed to take it in charge in conjunction with "Ananda" and myself. I made myself personally responsible for the money, and we were soon ready. But there were first the religious prejudices of the bricklayers to be considered; they would not begin a new work save at the auspicious hour, whatever temptations might be offered. Saturday morning, the 16th, proved to be the critical moment, so a Brahman was called and at the north-east corner of the ground, where I had started the trench, he recited slokas, laid out a broken cocconut, red powder, betel nuts, saffron and mango leaves, on a tray; then he burnt camphor and threw into the thick, smoky flame seeds of various varieties of gram (pulses), sprinkled the place with drops of water from mango leaves, and recited many Sanskrit mantrams of supposed fiend-smiting potency. Bits of ripe plantain, roasted gram, chopped rice and brown sugar, were laid about the fire for the benefit of any hungry bhutas and pisachas who might be idling about and, finally, flowers were showered into the trench and the ceremony came to an end. After that, the masons were ready for work and so we set them at it. Mr. Sambiah took professional charge and opened a book of accounts in which every load of bricks, sand, lime, and other materials, every foot of teak timber, and every day's "cooly" (work) was entered with scrupulous care and integrity. He and we two others have always been in close accord upon every work of construction or repairs that the exigencies of our corporate property have demanded, and have used the utmost economy possible. It is necessary that this should be stated, because it has sometimes been uncharitably said—of course by those who never had practical experience in the owning and care of real-estate like that of our Society—that I have wasted money in bricks and mortar: such people have no idea of the cost of keeping up such large buildings, bought when they were some forty years old, nor realise that as a society grows it must have increased accommodations, the same as a family. However, this need not be dwelt upon further.

In my entry of January 3rd, I find it recorded that our friend Judge P. Sreenivasa Row, F. T. S., "generously pays not only the cost of feeding the delegates, but also for the *panidals*, decorations and lights used at the Convention." He had drafted for me the "Dwaita Catechism," for my proposed series of elementary hand books of the

ancient religions, and at this time I received from him the MS. and edited it for publication.

Baron Ernst von Weber had gone on a short tour at the close of the Convention, but returned on the 11th January and sailed for Calcutta on the 17th. He was a good-natured man and heartily entered into a joke of mine for the amusement and instruction of the resident Indian members of the headquarters staff. On the evening of the 15th, he donned his gold-embroidered court dress, with his orders, cocked hat, silk stockings, pumps, sword and all, and pretended to have been sent to me as special Ambassador from his Sovereign, to convey to the President of the Theosophical Society His Majesty's compliments and congratulations on the completion of our first decade. I made the Hindus take up positions to the right and left in the vestibule, advanced as Marshal of Ceremonies to the columned front entrance, to receive and conduct the Ambassador, led him up the vestibule, and announced his name, dignities and functions; then wheeled around to face him as P. T. S., heard his (coached) address, responded to it with solemn gravity, and hung on the Baron's button a small tin shield emblazoned with H. P. B.'s escutcheon, to which I gave the dignity of an order with a fanciful name, and begged him to wear it as a proof to his august Master of the value I placed upon his brotherly message. The mock levee being then broken up, the Baron and I had to laugh heartily on seeing the unsophisticated wonder displayed by the auditory at his whole "outfit," every article of which they successively inspected and asked about. His white kid gloves surprised them quite as much as anything else: they did not know what to make of them, but said they were very strange things to wear, "very soft and smooth." Of course, I know that this innocent bit of tomfoolery will be deprecated by those of our members who take life lugubriously and fancy that the P. T. S. must be a yogi-ascetic, but it would have been just the thing to suit H. P. B.'s temperament, and she would have entered into it with zest. In how much of such harmless nonsense did she not indulge in those old days, when we laughed and joked while carrying our heavy burden up hill. In truth, but for our light-heartedness it would perhaps have crushed us: a good laugh is more restful than laudanum, and mirth than morphia. I know Mahatmas, my lugubrious friend, who actually laugh!

On the day of Baron von Weber's departure a British army captain called and asked permission to look at the River Bungalow, in which he had been born. This will give an idea of the necessary age of the Adyar buildings.

On the 19th occurred the annual "floating festival" at the Mylapore temple tank and we went to see it. It is a very striking picture of Indian national life. Symbolically, it typifies the floating of Vishu on the face of the waters at the beginning of a Manvantara, or new cosmic period. The ascending steps on the four sides of the tank, which

mount from the water's brim, are lit up with *chirāgs*, or clay lamps, and the small temple at the tank's centre blazes with light, while its white stucco of chunam is turned into the semblance of old ivory by the soft light of the silvery moon. On a raft of catamaran fishing-boats, that has been prepared by the coast fishermen as an act of time-honored feudal service, the temple idol has been placed in a small pagoda covered with glittering tinsel. Its hereditary attendant Brahmans, naked to the waist, but with two white cloths, one wrapped about them from the waist downward, the other folded into a stripe and laid across the shoulders, chant slokas. Standard-bearers wave their quaint banners. Devadasis, or temple nautch-girls, sway before the idol in graceful motions. Colored fires of all bright hues blaze at the corners of the raft. Musicians waken the echoes with their strident sounds, and the floating raft is poled seven times around the tank, in the presence of a vast multitude of dark-skinned people who watch it from the bank. The disturbed water reflecting back the while the shining splendor of the earthly lamps and fires, and the silver radiance of the moon and stars far up in the blue vault. Anything more picturesque in the way of a human festival would be hard to find.

On the 23rd of the month I gave my first and only lecture in India on practical agriculture, at the Saidapet Agricultural College—a Government institution. It was a pleasant break into the monotony of perpetual lectures on religious and metaphysical subjects, and aroused my old interest in the great problem of helping the earth to fully nourish mankind. The President of the College presided and the whole thing went off very nicely. But as this subject properly belongs to the pre-theosophical portion of my life, it need not be mixed up with the present one, the history of whose chief events we are now tracing.

On the 27th Mr. Leadbeater and I sailed for Colombo to take up a lecturing tour on behalf of the Buddhist National Education Fund that I had promised to make. The sea was smooth, the weather pleasant, the ship's officers old acquaintances of other voyages, and the stretch of 640 miles from port to port was made in due course. On arrival we were met on board ship, at the jetty steps, and at the new quarters of the Colombo Buddhist Theosophical Society, where a hymn of welcome was sung by some of our school children. I found Mr. (now Sir) Edwin Arnold, his wife and daughter, in town, and at once set to work to organize a fitting public reception to one who had laid the whole Buddhist world under deep obligations by the writing of his "Light of Asia." But a very few Sinhalese knew this, however, although Sir Edwin was happily ignorant of the fact, and I had to get my intelligent Colombo Buddhist colleagues to go with me to the priests and secure their co-operation. Fortunately the *Ceylon Observer*, a most abusive and dogmatic paper, made a virulent attack upon him for his sympathy with Buddhism, which made our task a light one. With the High Priest Sumangala,

we arranged that the reception should be given at his College on the second day thereafter, and fixed just where the priests and visitors should sit on the platform and what the High Priest should say. A copy of the proposed address was given Sir Edwin at his request, and the function duly came off with complete success. My next neighbor on the platform was George Augustus Sala, who chanced to be passing homeward from Australia. When the guests had departed Mr. Leadbeater and I were asked by the High Priest to address the people and did so.

The next day we took train for Kalutara with some of our Colombo members, to attend the cremation of Ambagahawatte Indasabha, Nayaka Terunnause, the learned founder of the Ramanya Nikaya (sect) of Ceylon Buddhism. The occasion was so striking that I think I may as well quote some of its details from an account which I wrote for the *Theosophist* while the circumstances were fresh in my mind.*

As it has been more than once explained, the Buddhist sects of Ceylon are not at variance as to dogma, they have the same books and the same beliefs; their distinction from each other is in the several sources of their priestly ordination (*upasampada*), one brotherhood getting it from Siam the other from Amarapoora, in Burma. Buddhism originally went to those countries from Ceylon, but a series of wars of invasion and conquest, waged by kings of India against the rulers of Ceylon, caused the almost complete extinction of the religion of Buddha in that country. To so low an ebb had it come that when, finally, a Sinhalese warrior-king drove out the Tamil invaders and recovered his ancestral throne, he could find no worthy monks to conduct public worship and preach the Dhamma. He accordingly sent to the king of Siam for learned bhikkus to come and re-establish the religion, and the best of the Sinhalese candidates were duly ordained. This formed what is known as the Siam Nikaya. The priests being mainly of high social rank, would not confer ordination upon candidates of lower caste, so the more energetic and learned of these went to the King of Burma and got what they sought from the chief priests. This formed the Amarapoora Nikaya. But in the course of time that happened which always happens in the religious affairs of men, piety relaxed, learning became confined to the minority, idleness and sanctimoniousness prevailed, and now and again a monk who grieved over the decay of true religion would break out in protest and either start a new sub-sect or withdraw into the jungle for a life of seclusion and meditation. Ambagahawatte was one of these protesting rebels; he gave up his connection with the Amarapoora Nikaya, went abroad and took a fresh ordination, and founded the Ramanya Nikaya, just before H. P. B. and I came to the Island, if I remember aright. On the 23rd June 1880, he joined the priests' division of what I called the Buddhist section of the T. S., the other division being that of the laymen who formed our Ceylon branches. Four days earlier the great

* See the issue for May 1886, p. 494.

leaders of all the other sects and sub-sects—Sumangala, Subhuti, Weligama, Bulatgama, Piyaratana, Potuwila, and Megittuwatte, the silver-tongued orator, *par excellence*, of Ceylon, had preceded him in entering our Society; and thus were united on our common platform, those leaders who had been hitherto divided more or less seriously. Ambagatawatte was learned, ascetic, a great stickler for the minute observance of every detail of rule of conduct prescribed for the Sangha in Vinaya Pitaka. His head was of a highly intellectual type, his eye full of thought and power, his manner gentle and repressed, and his private conduct blameless. We were great friends, for I fully sympathised with his yearning for reformation of the bhikkus and extension of Buddhism throughout the world. Naturally, therefore, I was invited by his followers to attend the cremation of his body at Kalutara, and gladly went to pay the last act of respect to his memory. He had died on January 30th and his cremation occurred on February 3rd. Meanwhile the body had lain in state at his own monastery, five miles from the town of Kalutara, whence it was borne in procession on a catafalque erected on a decorated car, to the place of cremation. Mr. Leadbeater and I with our Colombo friends saw everything. Before the coffin was removed from the Dharmasala (preaching hall) where it was lying, the assembled priests, to the number of some two hundred, filed thrice in silence around it, faced inward with joined palms raised to the forehead, knelt, and laid their faces to the ground, as if paying their final homage to their dead chief. The coffin was then raised by the senior disciples, borne outside the house and laid upon the car. Native musicians then, with booming drum and wailing pipe, thrice circumambulated the bier, the people cast flowers, roasted grains and sweet waters upon the coffin; the village headmen closed in about the car, gorgeous in gold lace and buttons and towering combs of shell; the yellow-robed friars extended in single file before and behind the car, each with his fan, his cadjan sunshade, and his begging-bowl slung at his back. The line of march was then taken up in a glare of hot sunshine that made vivid the colors of vestments and gold lace, of amber yellow robes, and of the gaudily bedecked catafalque on wheels. Behind the rear end of the line of bhikkus walked hundreds of men and women bearing the spices, the citronella and sandalwood oils, and other portable materials which they were contributing towards the pyre.

In a grassy basin, bordered at two sides by steep hillocks clothed to the top with forest trees, stood a pyre of logs of mango, cachu, cinnamon and cocoa palm, built nine feet square, so as to front the four points of the compass. At each side three heavy posts of about fifteen feet in height, were provided to serve as a sort of frame to support the additional fuel that might be brought by friends. Outside all was a quadrangular structure of young areca-palm trees, framed in squares after the native fashion for triumphal arches, and prettily decorated with the split and festooned tender leaves of the cocoanut tree in the

charmingly artistic fashion which comes naturally to the Sinhalese. On the side facing the road was a canvas screen inscribed with the name, titles and chronological history of Ambagahawatte; on the east side a larger one painted with emblems; over the pyre stretched a cloth canopy with a painted sun at the centre and stars at the corners; and around the cornice of the arca framework fluttered crimson pennons and bannerets. At the distance of fifty yards towards the east, a long arbor of cloths upon bamboo supports awaited the occupancy of the monks coming in the procession. Leadbeater and I, who had pushed on ahead by a cross path, sat in a cool shade looking on. Presently we heard the sad sobbing wail of the pipes and the roll of the bass and kettle drums and the tom-toms, and the procession came into sight and all took their assigned places. The car was drawn to the pyre, the chief disciples mounted the latter, white cloths were drawn about it as a temporary screen, the coffin was lifted and placed, and then an eloquent, clear-voiced monk recited the Pancha Sila. Response was made by the 5,000 people present in a great volume of sound that produced a most striking effect. The same priest then pronounced an eloquent discourse upon the dead master and enlarged upon the mysteries of life and death, the working of the law of Karma, and Nirvana as the *summum bonum*. Turning towards me, he then asked me to make some remarks as a friend of Ambagahawatte and President of our Society, which I did. The contributions towards the funeral pile were then brought forward and the pyre was built up to a height of nearly fifteen feet, and gallons upon gallons of fragrant oils and gums were scattered over the logs. All being now ready, the disciples removed the cloth screen, descended to the ground, thrice circumambulated the pyre, reciting prescribed Pali verses, called Piritta, thrice knelt and made obeisance, then slowly, with downcast eyes and grief-stricken countenances, stood back. The firing of the pyre in such cases is the privilege of the chief disciple and the brother of the deceased, but these two paid me the unusual compliment of asking me to apply the torch. I, however, declined the honor, as I thought it an intrusion, so the usual course was taken. Presently the great structure was sheeted in curtains of flame, that licked up the wood, the spices and the oils, and waved long yellow-red streamers towards the clear sky. It was a grand sight; how infinitely nobler than the ceremony of burial, one could see who had the least poetical instinct in him. After awhile the huge pyre was a mass of glowing coals, the corpæ was reduced to ashes, and the gifted and courageous founder of the Ramanya Nikaya had passed out of the sight of men whose view is limited to the physical plane, and moved on another stage in his evolutionary orbit.

Cremation was the universal custom of sepulture in Ceylon before the Portuguese conquest, save for the most ignoble class. In the case of a laic the pomp of it was proportioned to the wealth and the consequence of the deceased. This we learn from the ancient Pali and Sanskrit

writings. But with the new masters came innovations, the result in part of bloody persecutions and the necessity for hiding in the jungles from their savage conquerors. Burial replaced cremation for the laity, until, now, it is only given to priests and the nobles of the Kandyan districts. Some of the friends of the Sinhalese, myself among them, have urged them to revert to the older and better fashion, and I hope that in time this may be done. No obstacle whatever in the form of ancient custom, social prejudice, or religious prescription stands in the way; the Sinhalese are just stupidly continuing a bad method of sepulture that their forefathers would have regarded as a terrible disgrace, one which was forced upon them by foreign conquerors who were as bigoted as fanaticism could make them, and as cruel as tigers in dealing with the captives to their sword. It is a curious instance of national auto-hypnotism. Some fine day, a few leading men among them will realise that they are doing to the bodies of their deceased relatives just what, in the olden time, the Government would have done to an out-caste or criminal, one, in short, who was outside the pale of respectable society and not entitled to better treatment for their carcasses than a dog, and then the spell will be broken, ostentatious burials will be given up, and the bodies of the dead will be put into the bosom of the all-purifying fire, to be reduced to their component elements. The embalming of corpses with spices and natron, and the laying of them away underground to turn into poisonous carrion, are customs begotten of false theological beliefs as to the *post mortem* importance of our mortal shell: cremation, the noblest, most honorable of all forms of sepulture, was the natural outcome of those higher, grander and more reasonable concepts about the perishable and imperishable parts of the human Ego, which are taught in Brahmanism and Buddhism.

H. S. OLcott.

THE AURAS OF METALS.*

ADVANCED PROOFS OF CHAPTER 1ST OF A NEW AND IMPROVED EDITION
OF THE BOOK ON THE "HUMAN AURA."

I.

LIKE everything in Nature, to the gifted eye, each atom of the Mineral kingdom,—even the purest metal,—is surrounded by, or is bathed as it were in a proportionally wide and most ethereal-like colored mist or vapor; and each tiny atomic aura coalescing into that of the adjoining atoms, the whole constitutes the aural vesture of the entire fragment.

This seems simple enough; but in reality, when analyzed, the aural emanations are found to be very complicated, from the fact, taught by Theosophy, of their being constituted of ethereal matter belonging to several different planes, which interpenetrate without mixing. The highest is the most diaphanous and shadowy, as well as the widest, and it assumes one predominant color or tint; it is streaked with lines, while through it are imprinted diverse geometrical figures, forms and designs, characteristic of the atomic nature of the substance it belongs to. It grows gradually denser and narrower through the intermediate planes, so that on the lower astral—i.e., the plane bordering or verging unto the material, what Theosophy calls the etheric plane—it becomes a much denser mist, very clearly apparent to wide-awake sensitives in absolute darkness, where it presents the appearance of luminous clouds with flames. The aura grows denser still as it comes to the physical plane where,—although generally imperceptible to the ordinary, inattentive eye,—it is very easily perceptible to ordinary vision, when once attention has been called to the fact of its existence, if one looks for it in a

* At the present stage of scientific development a great gulf exists between the advanced position taken up by our Theosophical writers on Occult Science, and that on which the boldest physical scientists are standing. When the latter shy even at the mention of an "astral plane," how can we expect them to even read or listen to the discussions among us which are based on the revelations of our clairvoyants, who affirm that they have seen and know the facts of transcendental physics which they put forth in their lectures and writings? Should we pretend to support such statements and arguments as authoritative, we should simply make ourselves ridiculous, for we must wait perhaps many years until official science has caught up with us, and is in a position to dogmatise upon our claims. The wise and sensible course is for us to boldly publish whatever we think true and patiently leave our vindication with posterity. Many scientific pioneers have died before their claims to the world's reverence were recognized. Among these a notable case is that of Von Reichenbach, whose discovery of "Od" (the "all penetrating force") was announced in the year 1849 but is only now being substantiated by contemporary scientific research, especially by the discovery of the X-ray of Prof. Röntgen. It is sad to think that this great man of science and public benefactor had his life embittered by the savage assaults upon his reputation by his contemporaries. So, too, we have all seen how Mme. Blavatsky was reviled and hounded down to her dying day as a charlatan, and yet how, in even the short space of eight years, discovery after discovery by men of science is being made which goes to prove her to have been one of the greatest teachers of our age. While, therefore, we gladly give room to Dr. Marques's interesting and suggestive essay, it will be understood that it must stand on its intrinsic merits and not be regarded as authoritative apart from them. This is also, if we are not mistaken, the exact position which he, himself, takes up.—ED. *Theosophist*.

proper kind of a light. Here, when observed transversely to the surface of the metal, in a mild light, with a proper back-ground to bring the shades out, this mist is seen to follow the outlines of the coarse metallic matter, there assuming the aspect of a narrow, ribbon-like zone, ordinarily of about $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ of an inch only in thickness, traversed longitudinally by a certain number of steady, straight, regular, well-defined parallel lines or stripes, recalling the transparent water-marks of some kinds of writing paper. These stripes, which vary in width, some forming proportionally wide zones while others are merely linear, are of very various and sometimes very beautiful tints, much resembling, on a miniature scale, the lines, colors and aspect of the solar spectrum, with this difference that, in this spectrum, the lines and colored bands are presented to our eyes vertically in invariable order, while in the metallic auras they are disposed so as to run along the surfaces of the metals, lying one over the other in various order, differing from one metal to another. Now, two specimens on the writer's table could be described thus: one, a steel knife, shows from the surface outwards the following streaks or zones: a dull yellowish-orange, indigo, grayish-green, a very prominent sky-blue zone, gray nearly white and also very prominent, indigo, dull orange, brilliant dark violet and light brownish-violet (probably due to carbon), general aspect clear, the top fading away; the other, a brass key, brownish orange, dark indigo, four zones one over the other of light greens and blues alternate, dark indigo, very prominent green, reddish zone and a top one, dark-brown, sharply defined, general aspect sombre.

The principal difficulty, however, in this study, is to find appropriate names for the delicate, sometimes nearly undefinable shades of color of the various veins and streaks, as they often suggest different names to different observers.

As a whole, these linear zones constitute around each metal a kind of misty border recalling in a way the aspect of the colored, generally blue, tracings which on some geographical charts, follow the 'lines of the continents or indicate the currents of sea-water. Some eyes are unable to thus resolve the aura into its colored threads, but still recognize its existence as a ribbon of mist arising from the metal, and sufficiently dense to interpose a kind of veil between the eye looking through it, and the details of a properly situated back-ground, the field of this mist or veil (which does not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch at the most) moving as the metal is moved. On the other hand, through the whole "ensemble" of this material, lineated, misty aura around the metal, an eye-sight capable of discerning minute particles—what is called in our literature a microscopical astral sight—will see rudimentary dashes, something like those of the Morse alphabet, either parallel to the surface of the metal or variously inclined, in lines, or forming designs, principally triangles: at the same time, but quite independent, the eye will see a series of equally dispersed circles, very prominent in some metals, with inside divisions like wheel-spokes, occupying nearly the whole width of the

aural cloud. And all this coarse and stiff, though delicately transparent, emanation is generally the only one seen around metallic substances by common eye-sight, in ordinary day of artificial light.

Moreover, as all the colored bands and other marks, with all their variations from metal to metal, are the index to the differences of the rates of atomic vibrations on the lower plane, therefore the phenomena of the metallic auras and their study must be understood to be perfectly independent of the various phenomena produced by the simple play of light on the mere physical atoms by reflexion, transmission or refraction,—such as lustre, color, translucency, phosphorescence, fluorescence and polarization: yet some of these physical phenomena must evidently be modified by, or even owe some of their optical appearances to, the auras through which the light has to pass before reaching the physical matter. This will be seen especially with reference to the physical researches on the colors produced by "Interference and Polarization" and rendered visible by what are called polariscopes; and the interested reader is here referred to Prof. Rood's book on "Colour" (pp. 43 to 52, and 62-64); or Cook's, New "Chemistry" (p. 56-62), both of the Intern. Scient. Series.

Going back now to the next finer aura, *i.e.*, to the lowest astral plane, if observed in perfect darkness by proper psychic sensitives, the result of this study—as condensed by Reichenbach in his "Dynamics" (Bailler's edit., p. 215 to 218)—shows that, more or less, all solid bodies "glow faintly" or "give out emanations of variously colored light in the form of flames with glowing and vaporous luminosity." Thus, over all metals wave delicate flames which move backwards and forwards and can be driven about by a current of air from the hand or breath; each flame and its form as well as its colors being different in different metals, but quite definite and the same for each metal. The simpler the body, the purer the metal, and the purer, plainer and bolder will be its auric flame and luminosity; while these get dingy, mixed, uncertain and weaker and weaker the more mixed and complex the body: this again shows that heterogeneous auras—such as those of impure minerals,—in permeating each other, blend and neutralize each other's colors in a similar manner as an indiscriminate mixture of colored pigments produces only dirty, dingy tints, or in music certain notes in a chord extinguish the natural harmonies of the other notes and produce an uncertain result. Moreover, "the more complex bodies exhibit flames only at their points, when they are crystallised; otherwise they are only surrounded by a luminous vapor, or are merely luminous and glowing on their surface: hence better results are obtained from fresh, clean surfaces of pure metals than from metals covered with oxidation. Finally, the metallic aural flames and lights have generally a very great resemblance of aspect to the flames issuing from magnets and crystals* and they also always have something of the

* The peculiarities of the Aura of Magnets and Crystals will be described in their proper place (see "Human Aura," 1st ed., p. 68).

electric arc-light, "so that the peculiar tint of color—which like the latter varies between red, blue and yellow—is sometimes very difficult to determine with accuracy" (Reichenbach).

When a piece of metal is held for examination between the fingers, it will be easily noticed that the lower auras of the metal—the lined mist as well as the flames—mix up in a curious way with the auras of the skin, thus showing that they readily interpenetrate the human auras or matter of their own plane, and are interpenetrated by them. Those lower metallic auras are also increased in size and luminosity through animal, metallic or telluric magnetism, and vary in aspect—as already demonstrated by the minute and remarkably accurate observations of Reichenbach according to the position of the objects observed.

II.

There is no new revelation in all this, for the study of auras only constitutes a branch of occult physics. Yet some years ago, not only the above description, but merely the assertion of the existence of fluidic—absolutely or nearly imperceptible—mists or vapors around metals or other objects, would have aroused only denial, abuse and ridicule from those narrow-minded scientists who admitted solely the existence of gross, tangible matter. Thus it happened in the case of Baron Reichenbach, an Austrian philosopher and student of truth well worthy of our admiration, but who made the great mistake of being born more than half a century too early. Reichenbach, thanks for his pioneer work on the borders of the kingdom of the "Invisible Fluidic," as it has recently been termed very fitly by the now celebrated Dr. Baraduc of Paris, whereby he studied and made known some of the aural phenomena, under the name of "odic forces," received only abuse, scorn and insult from the blindly presumptuous and narrow-minded men, like Dubois-Reymond, who then assumed to be scientists. But now, many scientific men have openly turned their attention to the subject of our invisible surroundings, and especially during the past years, all the new and finer methods of scientific research have unconsciously brought science ever nearer to our theosophical lines of knowledge. Thus, as said by Rev. J. Page Hopps of London: "Science is carrying us in every direction into an unseen universe, and this unseen universe is everywhere felt to be the sphere of causes and the source and centre of all the essential elements and activities of creation."

But more particularly now, in reference to metallic auras, one of the latest and most important confirmations of their existence, outside our teachings, has been obtained through the labors of an eminent and well-known English scientist, Dr. W. J. Russel, who, in what he modestly calls "Experiments on the Action Exerted by Certain Metals and Other Bodies on a Photographic Plate," has unconsciously been working on the lower auras of various substances, in a manner similar to what is being done on the lower human auras by Dr. Baraduc. Baron Reichen-

bach, over fifty years ago, in the days of the infancy of photography—then called daguerreotype—first succeeded in obtaining on a sensitive plate, the direct impression of the luminous and flame-like auras of the Magnet (“Dynamics of Magnetism,” etc., p. 26). But even before that, M. Moser of Königsberg, and after him, R. Hunt of London, followed by a host of other students of photography and of light, repeatedly noticed that certain substances impress others in a way that can be explained satisfactorily only by the theosophical teaching of the subtle auras, which, surrounding and emanating from everything in nature, react on one another.

To this kind of phenomena belong what science has long called “breath-figures,” without having ever been able to explain them. If, on a cold mirror or piece of glass—or better still, on a polished metallic surface—one lays a coin or some other object, and then breathes upon it while it is in position, the result will be a faint image of that object impressed on the polished surface; and for days and even months after, this image may be brought out anew—made again visible—by merely breathing upon the plate, even though this has, in the meanwhile, been thoroughly and repeatedly cleaned and polished. In a similar manner, on windows, on the inside of which has been affixed a printed or written notice, it will be found that after the notice has been exposed for some time, and especially so if it has been under the influence of the breath or of a warm current of air, the window-pane, on the parts corresponding to the writing, has acquired a positive faculty of condensing moisture differently and in a greater degree from what it has on the parts which have not been under the influence of the ink; and this property will also remain on the pane for weeks and months, in spite of repeated cleanings. All this, for us, is simply the action and reaction of the lower auras of both the object and the plate, which interpenetrate by being placed in contact with or near each other. This action is further impressed—fixed or developed (to use a photographic term)—by the power of the human breath and of the aura that accompanies it, so that the aura of the glass distinctly retains for a while the image of the coin or ink placed over it.*

From this, to the photographing of printed matter by merely placing it in the dark on a sensitive plate, the salts of which are

* This brings us to remember that, according to austere science, as represented for instance by Professors Hitchcock (“Religion of Geology”) and Draper (“Conflict between Science and Religion,”) or Drs. Jevons and Babbage (“Principles of Science,”) as well as by Psychometry, confirmed by Theosophy, through the “actinic” action and power of light, the aura of every particle of what is so commonly but erroneously termed “inanimate” matter is capable of storing up into itself a kind of permanent astral photograph of every scene, of every occurrence that has taken place in its neighbourhood, as well as an impression of all the other auras it may have come in contact with. Consequently, a good psychometrist or astral clairvoyant, as shown by Denton’s experiments (“Soul of Things”), can go back into the past, and, through the impressions stored in the aura of a jewel, for instance, he will be able to describe the successive owners of the jewel, and the various events witnessed by that jewel, thus showing us how the “Lipikae” can obtain the full records of our Karma. But the study of this extraordinary superphysical faculty of the auras of the permanent mineral and vegetable kingdoms would lead us too far for the present.

affected by the aura of the ink, there is only a step, and this was accomplished years ago, under the name of "Thermography." But Dr. Russel went into the matter more deeply and scientifically, and devoted to it years of special and thorough study, the results of which he submitted, in 1897, to the Royal Society, further making the same the subject of the "Bakerian Lecture," in 1898, and his work, which excited great interest, has improperly been termed "Scotography" or "Vaponography"—writing with shadow or vapor. He thus discovered that various bodies—metals, wood, paper, etc.—closed in the dark against or over a photographic plate, have the faculty of impressing that plate as if it had been submitted to the direct action of light, and of causing thereupon, when properly developed, the imprinting of the minute texture of the objects, the marks and scratches of the metal, the water-marks, printing and accidental defects of the paper, the cells and rings of the wood, etc. Dr. Russel is not yet fully convinced, himself, of the real cause of the strange phenomena he has been experimenting on, but "he is evermore confirmed in the idea that those effects are due to 'VAPORS' given off by the objects." Exactly so: and those "vapors" are what Theosophy calls the lower auras. But, anterior experiences seemed to point out that the image impressed on the plate by certain objects—lace for instance—was more pronounced if the objects had been previously exposed to the light of the sun: therefore the possibility that this action might be due to what could be termed stored or latent light, having been suggested to Dr. Russel, he tested it, and found that this mysterious impressive power was the same, whether the active substance had been recently insulated or had been long kept in complete darkness. This is also correct: for these auras, which are the active cause of the phenomena, have in them a living force that enables them to impress other bodies quite independently of solar action.

Another fact which goes to show that the results obtained by Dr. Russel are due to what we term "aura" and not simply to "vapor" or exhalation, is that the most volatile metals are not the most active. Thus, one of the most fixed metals, Uranium, is very powerful and able to impress its aura even through glass, while a near neighbour, Thorium, has such an aura that it affects the photographic film even through screens of paper and of aluminium. Moreover, very volatile substances, such as ether and alcohol, are inert, while heavy oils and gums, like copal, have a very intense action; and old books, which ought to have lost all their "vapor," still impress the plate. And all these results agree perfectly with those other experiments of Mr. G. Lebon, on what he still calls "dark," obscure or invisible light, by which living plants have been photographed in the dark, through the active power of their invisible "radiations" or auras.

Dr. Russel also found that the emanations, or "vapors," causing the photographic impressions, act differently, according to the various metals, so that, if glass is put between them and the sensitive plate, this glass will sometimes be quite pervious, at other times absolutely imper-

vious to their influence, and from this the observer acknowledges that there "must be at least two classes of emanations, while many experiments point to the possibility of there being several more," which is again quite theosophical.

So, the "morale" of all this is that, now, science is on the eve of being forced to admit the theosophical teachings in the matter; it also indicates that, as anticipated by the writer in various of his articles, it probably will not be long before scientific contrivances will be invented to objectify the lower auras and render them visible to the ordinary eye and to the unwilling materialists, without the trouble of Yoga practices to extend the eye-sight.

A. MARQUES.

(To be continued.)

THE PROBLEMS OF VEDANTA.

BEING A TRANSLATION AND EXPOSITION OF THE VYASADHIKARANAMALA OF BHARATATIRTHA.

(Concluded from p. 346.)

FOURTH PROBLEM. (First interpretation.)

- V. S. वेदान्ताः कर्तृदेवादिपराब्रह्मपर उत ?
 P. अनुष्ठानोपयोगित्वात्कर्त्रादिप्रतिपादकाः ॥
 U. भिन्नप्रकरणाल्लिङ्गवत्काञ्च ब्रह्मबोधकाः ।
 सति प्रयोजनेऽनर्थहानेऽनुष्ठानतोऽत्रकिम् ॥ ४ ॥

THE thesis of the foregoing problem was that Brahman could only be known by the Upanishads. This problem retorts by taking up the position that Brahman is not the object of the teaching of the Upanishads. How then is it possible to take them as authorities on the subject ?

V. S. Do the Upanishads treat of the performer (*Kartri-agent*), the deity (*devatâ*) and the reward (*phala*) of vedic sacrifices (*karma*), or, do they treat of *Brahma* ?

P. The Upanishads certainly treat of the former, because it is thus alone that they can be of some use in the performance of sacrifices. Otherwise these treatises would become entirely useless.

Jaimini, the author of the *Pe'RVAMI' MA'NSA'* philosophy, has the following aphorism in his work (I. 2—1.):

'The object of the Veda is sacrifice (*Kriyâ*); whatever has not that for its object, is useless.'

The following argument is based on this :

If the Upanishads have no sacrificial use, they are useless.

If they are to be of any use, then they can only be useful in one of two ways.

(1) They may have for their object the discussion of the agent, the deity and the reward of sacrifices.

(2) Or, they may be taken as laying down precepts for worship (*Upāsana*). This also would be action, although different from ordinary Vedic sacrifice,

Merely teaching the nature of an existing object (the Brahman in this case) can be no object. That requires no teaching. The senses and inference should be resorted to for inquiring into the nature of such things. Besides what would the soul gain from the Upanishads, and how would they help her to get rid of the undesirable, if they were only to discuss the nature of Brahman and give no instructions to do certain acts, and avoid others. Such a discussion therefore as serving no object of the soul is useless.

The first alternative theory of the usefulness of the Upanishads, as put forth by the *pūrvapakṣa*, is discussed in this problem; the second will be taken up further on.

U. The Vedāntas speak of Brahman alone. The agent, the deity and the reward of a sacrifice, are not the objects of their teaching.

The use of this discussion will be seen, when it is understood that the aim of sacrifices is the attainment of heaven (*Śarga*), whereas the object is to establish that the aim of the Upanishads is really much higher, and that if they were to be taken as merely the expositors of the agent, the deity and the reward of a sacrifice, the higher object would be nowhere.

Now to take up the thread of the discussion.

The arguments advanced in support of the thesis are as follows:—

I. The following six signs (*Lingashakṣa*) show to clearness that the Vedāntas speak of Brahman alone.

(a) The commencement of the different *Vidyās* (this is technically called the *Upakrama*). Thus the sixth chapter of the *Chhândogya* (6-2-1) begins with: 'The SAT alone, my dear, was in the 'beginning.'

Here the word 'alone' (*Eva*) excludes all others but Brahman (SAT is only another name of Brahman).

(b) The conclusion of the various *Vidyās*.
(This is technically called *upasaṃhāra*).

Thus another *Vidyā*, commencing with the words (*Chchâ. Up. 6-2-1*)

'One alone without a second'
ends with the words, (6-8-7).

'All this has Him for its A'tman.'

Thus the commencing and the ending words both go to show that He (Brahman) who is 'One alone without a second,' is the Self of the Cosmos.

(c) Repetition (*abhyāsa*). This is the process of laying particular stress upon any truth by constantly repeating it.

Thus beginning with the words (Aitareya Up. I. 1):

‘This One, A’tma alone, certainly was there in the beginning.’

Another vidyā repeats nine times the words: ‘तत्त्वमसि’ ‘That art Thou.’

Evidently it lays stress upon the fact of Brahman, the one A’tman alone, being the Self of every manifestation.

(d) The fruit or end (*phala*) that is taught of the attainment of divine wisdom also points to the same conclusion.

Thus we have (Chcā. Up. 6-14-2):—

‘He (who has attained divine wisdom) only delays so long as he is not free from the body; then he becomes one with (Brahman).’

Again we have (Sri. Up. 4-16):—

‘He alone is the protector in time of the universe and, He is the Lord of the world hidden in all manifestations, in whom have mental application the gods and seers of Brahman: knowing Him thus, cuts the bonds of death.’

And so on.—

(e) The recommendatory discussions, thrown into the form of stories or other descriptive passages (*Arthavāda*) in various places point again to the same conclusion. Take for example the story in the third and fourth *Khandas* of the *Kenopanishad*, beginning with the words,—

“The gods obtained a victory over the demons. It was all by His grace. But the gods saw it not. They thought, theirs was the victory, theirs the triumph and glory. He knew the gods knew him not. He knew they were proud and ignorant. He appeared to them. But they knew Him not. They were strangers to the divine appearance. The god of fire went to find out what that appearance was. The great one asked him who he was, and what was his power. ‘I am the god of fire, I can burn all that is on this earth,’ was the proud reply. He set a straw before him, saying,—‘Burn it.’ With all his might the god of fire ran upon the poor straw. But no! he could burn it not. It is by His power alone that fire burns. What fire can burn if He wills it not? Crestfallen the god of fire returned.

“The god of air then went over. ‘I am Vāyu and I can blow up all that is on this earth.’ ‘Blow up the straw.’ But with all his might he could not blow it up. He too was bewildered. He too could not fathom the mighty Presence. Back he flew to the gods. Then went Indra, the Lord of heaven. From him the great one disappeared. But a lady of wondrous beauty appeared instead. By her was Indra instructed into the Wisdom of the Lord. Then for the first time Indra knew Brahman. Then did the gods learn that the glory and the triumph of their victory were all His. Indra was thus the first to

learn divine wisdom. He therefore was ever afterwards honoured as the highest of the gods. The gods of Fire and Air approached him next after Indra. They are therefore placed next only to Indra, among the highest."

The story is meant to impress upon the mind of the ignorant that Brahman is all in all. The agent, the deity, and the reward of a sacrifice are but minor manifestations of His Supreme Life. Who then can argue with reason that Brahman is not taught in the Upanishads, but only the agent, the deity and the reward of sacrifice ?

- (f) The sixth sign, which points to the same thing signified, is *upapatti*,—demonstration by giving examples, &c. Take for example the discourse between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyi, 5th Brāhmaṇa of the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad. Here several illustrations are put forth to bring out the fact that all manifestations of life are unified in Him. Such being the case, it is evidently the One Unity that the Upanishads can have for their object, rather than any one or other of His manifestations.

II. The performance of sacrifices, and the knowledge of Brahman are two entirely different subjects. There is no contextual relation between the two. The Upanishads discuss a science complete in itself. All the six branches of a discussion have been seen in this case to point to Brahman and not at all to the performance of *Yajnas*. The aphorism of Jaimini refers only to that portion of the Vedas which has reference to the performance of sacrifices. The heaven of the sacrificer ends. The heaven of him who knows the divine ends not. The former is in every sense of the word the result of certain actions. But for those actions it would not have been. The latter is the restoration of the original state which has always existed as such. There is a world of difference.

As to the use of such an inquiry, to the soul, it is plain enough. Ignorance is destroyed. The miseries depart. Man knows that true happiness is but the cessation of desire, desire is the consequence of the false sense of duality. That disappearing, the existence of desire becomes impossible.

FOURTH PROBLEM, (2nd interpretation).

V. S. प्रतिपत्तिविधित्सन्ति ब्रह्मण्यवसिता उत ?

P. शास्त्रात्तेविधातारो मननादेश्चकीर्त्तनात् ॥

U. नाकर्तृन्तेऽस्तिविधिः शास्त्रविशंसनादपि ।

मननादेःपुराबोधात् ब्रह्मण्यवसितास्ततः॥

(V. S.) Is the chief object of the Upanishads to enjoin devotion (*Upāsana*), or, only to discuss the true nature of Brahman ?

The object of discussing the problem in this shape is to show clearly that the *Moksha* of Vedānta is not the result of devotion, for in that case its duration would depend upon the amount of the contempla-

tive thought put forth in worship. It would not be the state of perfect freedom which it is thought to be. Freedom and dependence are antagonistic terms. This would be enough by way of preface here. The remaining portion of the discussion as to the nature of Vedāntic *Moksha* will come in its proper place. Now to take up the thread of the discussion.

P. The chief object of the Upanishads is to enjoin devotion. The discussion of the true nature of Brahman is only a secondary object, and is meant simply to meet the natural craving of the devotee to know something of the object of his worship. It has no other object.

The Upanishads are *Sūtras*, and the word *Sūtra* simply means an embodiment of precepts enjoining certain actions and prohibiting others, derived as the word is from the root *Sās*, to rule. This view finds its support in the dicta of Jaimini and his commentator, Śabaravāmi. Sabara says in his commentary of the Aphorisms of Pūrvamīnānsā.

'The object of the Veda is seen to be the giving of the knowledge of Karma (actions which should be performed).' Then again he defines an injunction to be an expression in the Vedas laying down certain actions which should be performed.

‘ चोदनेतिक्रियाया : प्रवर्त्तकं वचनम् ’ ।

Jaimini too defines instruction (*upadesa*) to be that which explains it (*dharma*).

‘ तस्यज्ञापकमुपदेशः ’ ।

Then again one of the rules of interpretation laid down by Jaimini is, (1-1-25),—

'Whatever objects (are mentioned) there (in the Vedas), are to be read together with words laying down rules for action.'

This shows that the knowledge of objects is always imparted in the Vedas as an adjunct to the performance of sacrifices only.

That being the object of *Sūtras*, the Upanishads would become absolutely useless as such, if they were to be taken not as enjoining devotion, but merely discussing the true nature of Brahman.

Besides, the texts of the Upanishads themselves speak of Brahman as the object of devotion. The following Srutis actually enjoin devotion (Br. Up. 2-4-5) :

'O! Maitreyi, the Ātman must certainly be seen and heard about, known and made certain of; when the Ātman is seen and heard about, known and made certain of, all this becomes known.'

Again (Chchā. Up. 8-7-1) :—

'That Ātman which is sinless, is to be sought after to be well known, Worship the Ātman alone as such' (Er. Up. 1-4-7).

'Ātman alone should be worshipped as the plane (that is to be attained)' (Br. Up. 1-4-15).

'The knower of *Brahman* becomes Brahman himself,'

It is but natural that after these injunctions a desire should arise in the mind of the devotee to know who this Brahman is. To satisfy this desire, the Upanishads in various places speak of the nature of Brahman, and it is in this way alone that Srutis like the following are of use :

'The Eternal, the Omniscient, the Omnipresent, ever satisfied, ever pure, ever awake, ever free, Intelligence, and Bliss is Brahman.'

If this secondary use were denied to such *Srutis*, no further use would be left of them. As to their serving the purpose of removing false knowledge, that of course they do not do. Those who have read these Srutis and know their purport, are seen suffering and enjoying, equally with those who have not read these Srutis.

U. Injunctions to do certain things (and avoid others) are out of place in a science (*Tantra*) which treats of the non-actor (*Akartā*). The highest *Ātman*, the one in all manifestations, is not the real actor in the body. The actor is the principle of individuality.

The science of Brahman (*Brahmavidyā*) is different from the science of action (*karmavidyā*). The former leads to Brahman, or what is the same in other words, to *Moksha*, salvation. The latter discusses the causes of pleasure and pain—*dharma* and *adharmā* as they are respectively technically called. Pleasure and pain are the results of *karma*. They are felt through body, mind and speech. They have their being in the contact of sense and object. They differ in degree for different classes of embodied souls. Souls of different capacities have different *dharmas* and *adharmas* (virtues and vices) and thus different degrees of consequent enjoyments and sufferings. It is also laid down that those good people who perform sacrifices, and at the same time devote themselves to study and contemplation, take the northern or higher path to the *Brahma loka*; whereas those who devote themselves only to those actions which are technically known as *Ishā*, *Pūrta* and *Datta*,* take the southern path to the *Chandraloka*. And even in the *Chandraloka* there are different degrees of enjoyment pointed out. It is thus a well established rule that those who are afflicted with *avidyā*, and therefore mistake the non-self (*anātman*) for the self (*Ātman*) act differently according to their differing capacities, and as a consequence of these acts have to take different bodies, and suffer or enjoy as the case may be, accordingly. Such is the Sruti :

'There is no destruction of the pleasant and the unpleasant for him who is embodied' (*Chchā. Up. 8-12-1.*)

This is the promised goal of the science of action; and it is but reasonable that it should be so. Not so however in the case of *Moksha*,

* *Agnihotra*, *tapas* (austerities), *satya* (veracity), *Vedānpādana* (the reading of and the leading of life enjoined by the Vedas), *ātthya* (hospitality), *Vaisnavadeva* (the cooking of food for the service of all the gods)—these actions are *ishā*.

The digging of wells, tanks, &c., the building of temples, the distribution of food to the famished, the planting of gardens for public good—these actions are *pūrta*.

The protection of those who ask for it, the active avoiding of injuries to God's creatures, charity—these are *datta*.

which is the promised goal of the science of Brahman. The above *Sruti* proceeds:

‘The pleasant and the unpleasant touch not him who is disembodied.’

Then evidently there is no gradation in the disembodied state of *Moksha*; and it is impossible that *Moksha* should be the result of any action, for otherwise gradation of happiness in that state could not be denied.

It might be argued that freedom from embodiment might very well be the result of action for the embodied soul. One must do something for the purpose of removing his existing bonds. Well, there is a good deal of difference between action removing the bonds, and action causing the particular state itself. In the latter case it causes something to come into existence, whereas in the former it only shows forth what already exists. The state of *Moksha*, or in other words the state of Brahman, is always the same. It does not come into existence as the result of any action, and there are no changes in it of quality or quantity. The *Sruti* (Katha. Up. 2-22) speaks of that state as follows:—

‘The wise man sorrows not, when he knows the great all-pervading Atman, the disembodied in the bodies, and the permanent, in the impermanent.’

‘Also it is different from *dharma*, (virtue) and different from *adharma* (vice), different from all this action and non-action; different from what has been in the past, or what has to become in the future’ (Katha. Up. 2-14).

It will therefore never do to hold that the Upanishads speak of Brahman only as an object or state which might be attained by devotion. The word ‘disembodied’ in the above *Sruti* does not necessarily mean a man who is dead and has thus got rid of his body. It means one who has got rid of his egoism so that he is one with the body. It does not matter whether such a man is dead or alive. Even after death a man may have that sense of egoism, and he may get rid of it even while alive. The sense that he is one with the body, means, in other words, that the man believes himself to be the actor and enjoyer. The actor and enjoyer, or in other words the principle of individuality, is a manifestation of the Highest Atman (Brahman). There is no manifested egoism in the state of *Moksha*. Hence the science of Brahman is also called the science of the non-actor, and the science of karma the science of the actor. Bhāratātīrtha, by saying that injunctions to do certain acts are out of place in the science of the non-actor, means in brief, that the state of *Moksha* being eternal and self-existent, it cannot be brought into existence in the same way as pleasure or pain is by action. It outrages the sense of the fitness of things to argue that the Upanishads are treatises on the science of action, discussing that particular branch of action which does not directly bring about the state for the attainment of which they preach the performance of that action.

Now to controvert the position that the *Sūtras* are only embodiments of injunctions to do certain acts and avoid others, and that therefore the Upanishads too, as such, must be taken to be the embodiments of such injunctions alone. The word *Sūtra* does not necessarily mean a code of injunctions and prohibitions. It may also mean a science. The root *Sās* means to enjoin, no doubt, but it also means to teach, to praise, &c.

The position taken by certain Mimānsā philosophers (Prabhākara and his followers) that there is no portion of the Veda which treats purely of the nature of anything independently of the necessity that might arise of such discussions in connection with Vedic ceremonial, is unteuable. It does not concern the Upanishads. The discussion of Brahman is not necessary as part of any sacrifice whatever; and yet the Upanishads speak of Him. And the Sruti (Br. Up. 3-9-26),—“I ask about the Purusha of the Upanishads.” By speaking of specified *Purusha* having special relation to the Upanishads shows that the Upanishads are meant to treat of a *purusha* which is independent of all ceremonial. Of such a *purusha* speaks the Katha Up. (3-11): ‘Beyond the *purusha* (Brahman) is nothing; that is the goal, that is the final resort.’

The quotations from Sabarasvāmin and Jamini are to be taken to refer only to the philosophy of the Brahmanas (the *Karma Kānda*) and not to the Upanishads (the *Jñāna Kāndū*). That reasoning applied here would lead to absurdity, as already shown. As to the texts of the Upanishads enjoining devotion, why they enjoin devotion simply for the purpose of purifying the mind to enable it to turn inwards, and see there the great ever present fact of Brahman being the All in All. All these purificatory mental exercises must be gone into before the mind can be expected to break through the bonds of desire—whether they be good or bad—*dharma* or *adharma*. Thus finish the first four problems of Vedānta. We learn from them that the knowledge of Brahman is of the highest importance to man, that the divine wisdom of the Vedas has its source in Him, that the highest purpose of the soul is served by the study of Vedic theosophy, that the aim of the Upanishads is to lead man to Eternal Bliss, which is something quite beyond the promised reward of worldly virtue.

Vice causes hellish suffering. Virtue leads to heavenly bliss. Virtue wedded to knowledge leads to heavens higher still. But all these heavens have an end. Theosophy, or divine wisdom is the highest of all. It leads to or rather is Brahman, which is unending Bliss. Peace to All.

RAMA PRASAD.

ED. NOTE.—The Theosophical reading public will gladly welcome back our gifted colleague Pt. Rama Prasad, whose first contribution to literature “Nature’s Finer Forces” was made in this Magazine.

SUPERSENSUOUS CONSCIOUSNESS.

THE meaning of Buddha's illumination * under the Bodhi tree, Mohammed's prophetic sayings, and Zoroaster's inspirational messages to men all come under the head of extraordinary knowledge revealed to mankind—knowledge independent of sense and of mind. To enter fully into details of this here would occupy a much larger space than is intended, and so the subject will be specially dealt with in a separate article. Illumination or inspiration thus comes under the category of supersensuous consciousness. Let us inquire how the body is affected at such times.

Now how do the occultists differ from the scientists? The occultists affirm that there are higher states of consciousness than brain-consciousness, the development of the former constituting all the psychic phenomena with which they are conversant, and of which the most spiritually sublime kind is that from which all Divine and spirit knowledge is derived; while the scientists look on all psychological wonders as several forms of nervous disease. In the Indian Yoga, it is a well known fact that all Yogic process is a process of nervous education, or unfoldment of latent nervous energy which is not manifest to men whose attention and vital powers are mainly spent on worldly occupations, thus shutting them off from the avenues of knowledge which would open to them if their minds were but bent inwards, and the latent energy alluded to above were diverted along nervous paths, which, for want of such effort, remain closed. The nervous process commences, according to Indian Yoga, at the bottom of the spinal column, and extends up to the mysterious glands and ventricles located about the *corpus callosum* and *corpora quadrigemina* (*Sahasrāra*, Sans.).

The scientists call it all a disease of the nervous system, and an abnormal excitement of the brain. An eminent doctor expresses himself in this manner on the subject:—

“He who frankly undertakes that research in a complete and critical way will not fail to note in many instances that those who lay claim to select periods of ecstatic coalescence with the Deity have what physicians recognize and describe as the neurotic temperament, and those who

* Illumination is no other than the experiences of the soul rescued from the bonds of matter, when knowledge is revealed through inspiration. Thus Buddha is led to exclaim (almost like Archimedes):—

“Found! It is found! The cause of self-hood,
No longer shalt thou build a house for me;
Broken are the beams of sin,
The ridgepole of care is shattered,
Into *Nirvāna* my mind has passed,
The end of craving has been reached at last.”

‘Illumination,’ defines Anna Kingsford, ‘is the Light of Wisdom, whereby a man perceiveth heavenly secrets.’

claim to have them with most intensity have that temperament in its most intense degree. Thereby they are predisposed naturally to states of extreme nervous exaltation, which translate themselves into corresponding affections of consciousness—into extreme, irregular, and even perverted sensibilities, and into similar exaltations and perversions of sentiment and thought, before they undergo that spiritual new birth or conversion by which they enter into communion with the Divine; and into sublimated states of spiritual ecstasy, after they have undergone the transformation from spiritual death into spiritual life. The long and severe illness which St. Theresa had at the beginning of her religious career, when her body was contorted into a helpless bundle of pains and spasms, may have been a tremendous commotion of the nerves antecedent to or accompanying the opening of supernatural vision in her; but it certainly was exactly such a commotion of nerves in a neurotic temperament at a particularly susceptible period of life as is frequently met with and dealt with in young women by physicians at the present day, without being followed by the opening of supernatural vision in the patient. Is the neurotic temperament of the physician's classification, then, identical with the spiritually disposed temperament of the theologian's classification? And is the ultra-physiological or positively pathological outcome of it in ecstatic function no more spiritual and no less material in the one case than in the other?"*

* * * * *

"It will suffice here merely to refer to the varieties of these remarkable seizures—ecstatic, cataleptic, hysteric, hystero-epileptic, and, when induced artificially, hypnotic, or mesmeric—without going into particulars. They will be found described at length in their proper places in medical treatises on nervous and mental pathology. Their general features are faint, incomplete, or almost extinguished consciousness of surroundings; absorption of mind in some strain of purely internal activity, with corresponding strain of vague delirious feeling; insusceptibility, partial or complete, to external impressions; more or less complete abeyance of movement, the muscles of the body or of a part of it being relaxed, or in rigid contraction, or in convulsions; acceleration in many cases, but in some cases marked lowering of the organic functions of respiration and circulation, which in extreme cases are almost suspended. For the time being there is a withdrawal of the individual, entirely, as a conscious and in large measure as an active living element of nature, from his external life of relation; he is, as it were, detached from and dead to the world—whether he is in the body or out of the body he knows not; but he is not dead wholly, seeing that his organic functions go on at a lowered rate of activity, and that his consciousness is absorbed in a purely internal strain of activity—in a special ecstasy."*

Our learned friends, the Doctors, have a special habit of attributing these phenomena to some disease or other. They might as well

* Pages 312-314: Maudsley on "Physical Basis of Ecstatic Intuition."

speculate on what kind of *disease* is birth, what kind of *disease* is man's hankering after worldly riches and tinsel glories, what kind of *disease* it was that made Christ proclaim himself as God incarnate on earth, what kind of *disease* is resurrection, &c. !!

That nerves are somehow related to all ecstatic and inspirational states, and that such states, if they are above and beyond the nerves, are yet first led up to by means of nerves, is a fact that is common to scientists as well as occultists, including the Indian gymnosophists, already noticed. Taking one passage from an occultist's book, this position is corroborated, and further, the passage shows where the scientist whose range of investigation is limited, errs:—

Question. "You have, then, seen an astral body?"

Answer. (Mrs. Annie Besant). "Yes; I have seen my own, among others. The astral world surrounds us on every side, and we very easily contact it."

Q. "Can you convince any one else that it was an objective and not a subjective impression?"

A. "I have seen astral appearances when in company with others, and those others have also seen them, but I do not see how I could convince people who were not there of their objective nature if those people were determined not to believe in anything that was not of solid physical matter. I can give my own testimony, and the testimony of others, but I might none the less be in the condition of the traveller who could not convince the Indian prince that water could become so solid that men could walk on it. To some people everything is hallucination which does not square with their own limited experience."

Q. "Have you ever been convinced that some one else saw such a thing?"

A. "Frequently. I have one friend who very readily sees astral forms when she is at all nervously overstrained. You know that as you stretch a string it yields a higher note, vibrating in shorter and more rapid waves as the tension increases. So, as the nervous system is thrown into a state of greater tension than in its normal and healthy state, it vibrates to the shorter and more rapid waves of the astral light. There is another reason why depletion of nervous energy tends to 'visions.' As was said before, every nervous molecule has its envelope of ethereal or astral matter; if the physical nervous molecule is partly emptied of its vitality, it is more at the mercy, so to say, of the vibrations of its astral envelope, and its own vibrations being feeble, the vibrations of the other make themselves more strongly felt. This is why very robust animal vigour conflicts with astral vision. If you want to catch a delicate sound, loud sounds must be stilled. You are aware, I suppose, that an astral form is often mistaken for a physical form, until some incongruity reveals the blunder? Thus, a member of the Blavatsky Lodge in London one day saw an Indian seated on the sofa; the sight was a

* H. Maudsley, M.D., on "Natural causes and Supernatural Seemings."

very usual one and did not attract his special notice until another visitor sat down plump in the lap of the Indian, who promptly disappeared, followed by a startled 'oh!' from the member who had not distinguished his unsubstantial character."*

Though the above extract has no direct reference to ecstatic states or inspiration, it yet gives us facts to show that nervous changes necessarily occur, which is the physical basis for all extraordinary mental manifestations; and also the reason for incredulity of men in general as regards super-physical facts, because they are utter strangers to such experiences.

The existence of the astral body, its separability, the soul travelling in it in full consciousness to the astral, the devachanic and nirvanic planes, are facts intuitionally believed in by the Indians, for to Indians are familiar the anecdotes related in their Purānas of their Rishis travelling to various worlds beyond the earth, and returning to earth with knowledge gained there—Arjuna, for instance, going to Indra's heaven, and Nārada being spoken of as the three-world traveller, &c., &c.—but in modern days, all explorations in astral bodies, to astral and devachanic worlds, seem to be peculiarly the gift of the few London Lodge Theosophical Society members.† Why the Mahātmas are so partial to but a very few European members only and never care to appear even once to the oldest Indian Theosophists, who can trace their descent to the Holy Rishis of the Vedas, is a problem which has been exercising our ingenuity to solve. Probably this is a hard enigma to thousands of our brethren. The only explanation we can find as to the cause for meriting non-recognition from our own Rishis must be our own degeneration: and we are, spiritually and morally, probably at the zero point when compared with the three or four Englishmen in the London Lodge who are favoured by the Mahātmas.

All the great religions of the world insist on the moral and spiritual development of man, and lay little stress on psychic developments such as that which Yoga-practice is said to bestow. The reason is two-fold. It may be dangerous, and powers acquired in the physical body seem to vanish with the death of the physical body. "You will readily understand," says Mrs. Annie Besant, "how easily mischief may be done to unfit men who try to artificially bring about this stage (gaining siddhis or psychic powers) before they are spiritually developed, before the time when they should reach it in orderly evolution. * * * * And so people—ignorantly taking up this practice, with the object of forcing their psychical development before their mental and moral development has fitted them to do it with safety—very often bring about results indeed, but results which work for evil and not for good. They often ruin their physical health, they often lose their mental balance, they often injure their intellectual faculties, because they are trying to pluck the fruit of the tree of life before it is ripe for the plucking; because

* 'Annie Besant on Theosophy,' pp. 19-20.

† A great mistake.—Editor.

with hands unclean and senses unpurified they try to penetrate into the Holy of Holies. Within that faue the atmosphere is such that nothing unclean can live in it ; its vibrations are so powerful, that they break in pieces everything which is tuned to a lower key ; they shiver all that is impure, all that is not able to adapt itself to that subtle and tremendous motion.* "

Secondly, pure physiological currents set up from the *Mûlâdhâra* (*sacral plexus*) may confer powers, but they must cease with the breaking up of the organism by disease or at death. But such is not the case with the intellectual, moral and spiritual cultivation, for they are the permanent possessions of the soul, and therefore endure and follow the soul on its long pilgrimage, serving it to better and better advantage, in its sojournings or repeated births in physical environments on earth or elsewhere.

Those then who have perhaps been trying for years to realize some kind of supernatural power in themselves, might well find comfort that in not having succeeded in developing such power there is nothing lost, except perhaps health, worldly luxury and peace of mind, which however are valuable things for spiritual life. The best thing for them to do is to lead a strictly religious life, which means a moral and spiritual life. And this must eventually lead to self-illumination, or the unfoldment of the spirit in man, which unlocks the door of universal knowledge. This is the knowledge that is referred to in verse 16, Book V. of Sri Bhagavad Gîtâ, knowledge, the light of which, like the sun, dispelling darkness, drives away all ignorance.

So advises Patanjali himself, the author of the Yoga system. After an elaborate exposition of the eight-fold constitution of Yoga, viz., *yama*, *niyama*, *âsana*, *prânâyâma*, *pratyâhâna*, *dhâranâ*, *dhyâna* and *samâdhi*, and after explaining how by the united effort comprised of *dhâranâ*, *dhyâna* and *samâdhi*, many powers can be acquired (read Sûtras 5 to 37, Book III.), Sûtra 38 explains how these powers are obstacles to the procurement of soul-vision ; and that therefore to him who is wending his way towards realizing his own soul, which is his highest goal, all powers conferred by psychic development in the body, must be regarded as most trivial.†

If in the course of leading a spiritual life, powers come unsolicited, as in the case of saints ; let them, but powers should never be hungered after before one is spiritually pure and competent. Let us now read a page from (Laghû) Yoga Vasishtha, Engl. tr., pp. 216—217 :

* " Path of Discipleship," pp. 89-90.

† Says Swami Vivekananda in " Raja Yoga," (p. 197-198) :—" When he has got that discrimination he gets the *Pratibha*, the light of supreme genius. These powers, however, are obstructions to the attainment of the highest goal, the knowledge of the pure self, and freedom ; these are, as it were, to be met in the way, and, if the yogi rejects them, he attains the highest. If he is tempted to acquire these, his farther progress is barred" (I'ide page 48 ou *Prâtibhâ* : Part II. of Lectures on Inspiration, &c.).

"After Vasishtha had delivered himself of what is contained in the last chapter, Rāghava addressed him thus: 'How is it we do not find in a Jivanmukta's body such higher physical powers as walking the sky, etc., displayed?' To which Vasishtha was graciously pleased to reply thus: 'Those who not having full Jñāna are subject to bondage in this world, develop those powers through medicines, mantras, actions, time or skill; but these siddhis do not pertain legitimately to a true Jñāni. The latter will ever be engaged in the reality of ātmic vision. The Jñānis will ever try to rest in Jñānas (Ātma) through Jñāna (spiritual wisdom), but will never run after the desires of levitating in the ākāśa, &c.' All the heterogeneities of worldly objects are nothing but māyā. Those victors who have trampled māyā will never sink into it again. If Jñānis will long after them, then no doubt siddhis will arise through the above-mentioned means. Medicines, mantras, &c., will but confer on one siddhis, but never the beneficent Moksha. If a desire wells up in one for attaining a siddhi then with proper efforts it will be developed in him, but desires of siddhis which do but tend to bondage will not arise in the hearts of Jñānis. With the extinction of all desires, Ātma-Jñāna without any disconcertation will dawn in one; but those who are sunk in siddhis which generate desires will not attain Ātma."

"Have we any ideas independent of experience?" Experience is a word which itself first required a definition. Those who use the expression understand by experience only sense-experience, or experience garnered by the senses and translated into ideas. This is Baconic, but all the time a most important fact escapes the attention of the experimental philosopher, *viz.*, that no outward impressions would be effective, and no senses would perform their functions, if the latter were not under the direction of an inner spiritual intelligence. We are ordinarily aware of the phenomenon of absent-mindedness, which means that when the mind is fixed in contemplation on a certain subject, the senses do receive external impressions, but *there is no mind in the senses* to perform the work of translation into ideas. So then to the question, 'have we any ideas independent of experience' our answer is 'yes.' It was to find this answer that the questions of innate ideas intuition, inspiration, ecstasis, were taken up and examined from many stand-points.

Sense-experience—what is it? It is never a stable thing. It varies from day to day as more facts gather, and as more and more of nature's secrets are unravelled. Is human experience a fixed quantity, as David Hume presumes in his "Essay on the Miracles"? And David Hume refuses to credit miracles, because it is contrary to human experience. But what is human experience? Is it only that which is compressed in David Hume's knowledge, and that which was known only up to his day? What would he have said if some one had told him that human experience would now be such as that of hearing the roar of the Niagara falls, five hundred miles away in New York; such as

that of seeing through boards and men by means of the Röntgen rays, and taking photographs of a man's bones, and the money in his pockets; such as that of hearing the voices of our friends living thousands of miles away; and of being able to boil the baby's milk by touching a button? And then human experience is varied, according to time, place, and circumstances. From sense to reason is a change of circumstance, and from reason to intuition is a change of circumstance. The mind which busies itself in the world is different from the mind which is intuitive. Introspection is a different circumstance from that of using energies outwardly. To be able to see the inner world, one must shut the soul's windows which look out on the world. It is only for the *Sanyâsi*, the world-weary, that the world of the soul unfolds. Swami Vivekânanda tells us in his experiences of Europe and America that "England and France are more prepared for *Sanyâs* than America," for England and France have grown world-weary. "The people have had enough of worldly enjoyments, and there is already to be noticed, especially amongst the leisured classes as well as amongst the best intellects of the country, a feeling of unrest, of world-weariness, which looks about for something more positive, more substantial, something better, in fact, than what the world can give us." * * * "They are beginning to feel that a *Sanyâsi*—one who has renounced the world, a man who has conquered the flesh, who is every morning of his life exercising control over the passions—the man who can spurn away wealth, beauty and honor—the things that have made the world intoxicated—such a man must possess a Herculean strength of mind. The decision, resistance, the fixedness of purpose and tenacity of pursuit which are developed in the *Sanyâsi* by a long course of spiritual discipline must, they are beginning to think, be competent to bring at least within a measurable distance the solution of the great problems, in which all humanity is interested, and which have been hitherto pronounced 'insoluble' by themselves, and other 'giants' of the West."

It is evident from the above and all that has been written, that the mind has to be disciplined to look inwards, and to abstract itself from the senses. So long as the mind is a slave to the senses, no other knowledge comes to it than what the senses bring from the objective world.

Then again, is God a matter of ordinary human experience? Is soul demonstrable, experimentally? And then there are so many curious experiences of various kinds in the world, and so many world-conceptions, such for example, as the immortality of the soul and hopes for an infinite life beyond, which the human breast cherishes. How is it possible to bring them all at once under the restricted sense of Hume's 'human experience?' The existence of God, again, is no sense-knowledge; in other words it is not a fact of 'human (sense) experience.' And yet, how to account for such a belief? It is a belief which no amount of intellectual subtlety, and forensic legerdemain can displace from the throne which it occupies in men's hearts. And yet this belief is knowledge to man, though not sense-knowledge. We have as sources

of knowledge, not only the senses but the intellect and the intuitions of the heart. If the only source of knowledge were the senses, then on what are all the world's religions founded? On sense-knowledge? No. It is on something else. As I first said, God is not a fact of our sense-experience. "We cannot 'sense' God," says Swâmi Vivekānanda, in his lectures in America on *Jñāna Yoga*. 'Nobody has seen God with his eyes or ever will see; nobody has God in his consciousness. I am not conscious of God, nor you, nor anybody. Where is God? Where is the field of religion? It is beyond the senses, beyond consciousness. Consciousness is only one of the many planes in which we work, and you will have to transcend the field of consciousness, to go beyond the senses, approach nearer and nearer to your own centre, and as you do that, you will approach nearer and nearer to God. What is the proof of God? Direct perception, *pratyaksham*, just as there is proof of this wall. I perceive it. God, has been perceived that way by thousands before and will be perceived by all who want to perceive Him. But this perception is no sense-perception at all; it is super-sensuous, super-conscious, and all this training is needed to take us off from the senses. This body, as it were, by means of all sorts of past work and bondage, is being dragged downwards; this preparation and discipline will make it pure and bright. Bondages will fall off by themselves, and we will be buoyed up beyond this plane of sense-perception to which we are tied down, and then we will see, and hear, and feel things which men in the ordinary state neither feel, nor see, nor hear. Then we will speak the language as it were, of madmen; and the world will not understand us, because they do not know anything but the senses. This religion is entirely transcendental. Every being that is in the universe has the potentiality of transcending the senses, even the little worm will one day transcend the senses and reach unto God."

In his "Raja Yoga" again the Swâmi, in order to explain Samādhi or super-sensuous consciousness, tells us:—"The field of reason, or of the conscious workings of the mind, is narrow and limited. There is a little circle within which human reason will have to move. It cannot go beyond it. Every attempt to go beyond is impossible, yet it is beyond this circle of reason that lies all that humanity holds most dear. All these questions, whether there is an immortal soul, whether there is a God, whether there is any supreme intelligence guiding this universe, are beyond the field of reason. Reason can never answer these questions. What does reason say? It says, 'I am agnostic; I do not know either yea or nay.' Yet these questions are so important to us. Without a proper answer to them, human life will be impossible. All our ethical theories, all our moral attitudes, all that is good and great in human nature, has been moulded upon answers that have come from beyond that circle. It is very important, therefore, that we should have answers to these questions; without such answers human life will be impossible. If life is only a little five minutes thing, if

the universe is only a 'fortuitous combination of atoms,' then why should I do good to another? Why should there be mercy, justice or fellow-feeling?

* * * Whence come all these truths about human life, about morality, about the immortal soul, about God, about love and sympathy, about being good, and, above all, about being unselfish?

All ethics, all human action, and all human thought, hang upon this one idea of unselfishness; the whole idea of human life can be put in that one word, unselfishness." * * *

* * * What is the answer? The utilitarian can never give it. The answer is that this world is one drop in an infinite ocean, one link in an infinite chain. Where did those that preached unselfishness, and taught it to the human race, get this idea? We know it is not instinctive; the animals which have instinct do not know it. Neither is it reason; reason does not know anything about these ideas. Whence then did they come? * * "

Whence did they come? They came from beyond. They were inspired, as all the great teachers of religion declared. You may easily gather from the Swami's sayings that he means the intuitional or inspirational knowledge which he whose heart is pure will receive, a knowledge as good and true and reliable as the sense-knowledge or sense-experience. And all religions lay down a code of ethics to effect purification of the heart, and then that heart sees God, as surely as our sense of sight cognizes the wall opposite.

America, according to Swami Vivekânanda is not yet much world-weary, and yet an American, Dr. Turnbull, Ph. D., addressed a meeting in January 1897, in the Kombulia Tala Reading Room, Calcutta, as follows, showing that even America is turning ascetic. Ascetic life, hermit life, monastic life, &c., are specially suited for intuitional education. This was the life that all Rishis, saints and sages led. For a worldly man, therefore, to pronounce judgment on knowledge which these men derive, is preposterous.

Dr. Turnbull says:—

"We have looked to the East for light and guidance in the past and again we look for light and wisdom and understanding in the future. I wish to emphasize one point—a point which has engaged the attention of the Western psychologists. If we wish to evolve truths, then we must look both inwardly and outwardly—in us and out of us. We know that the mind acts in two directions, and when we wish (a truth to discern) we must look outwardly, and at the same time learn to look inwardly. Intellect and Intuition—these two modes work together, as is better understood in India."

A. GOVINDACHARI.

(To be concluded.)

* "Raja Yoga," pp. 76-77-78, by Swami Vivekânanda.

TRUE POVERTY.

THE saying of Jesus, "Blessed are the poor," is quoted sometimes by unbelievers to prove his narrow and anarchist tendencies. We are asked whether a large-minded man (to say nothing of a God) would have condemned the rich merely for being rich irrespective of their good or bad qualities or conduct. Christ's condemnation of the rich and glorification of the poor seems unreasonable to us because every one now acknowledges that there are numbers of poor men who are scoundrels, and a few rich men who are saint-like; and this is not a case in which "exceptions prove the rule"—mistakes are no proof of accuracy.

"Blessed are the poor," is an extremely "hard saying" for a people whose chief ambition and constant endeavour is to get rich; and many attempts are made by Christians to ease their consciences by explaining it away. Two of these attempted explanations are frequently quoted; the first is that it is not the actual possession of riches that is a bad thing, but the fact that the heart becomes shrivelled up during the process of acquiring wealth. However well-intentioned a man may be, he cannot accumulate riches without depriving some other people of their proportionate share of good things; and not only can a man make himself rich in no other way than by, more or less literally, enslaving or bleeding his neighbours, but he also cannot possibly, while he is thus getting rich, preserve his moral purity; for, in his greed for wealth, he gradually becomes indifferent to every consideration of generosity, of fairness, of sympathy, or even of the public good.

The other explanation is that Jesus meant to say that, as poverty brings tribulation of all sorts, and tribulations are good for the soul, the poor man should count his poverty a blessing; that, moreover, as riches bring temptations which few men can resist—temptations to forget higher matters, and to do sinful things—he must consider himself blessed who is saved by poverty from that liability to irreligion or sin. Ingenuous as they may be, neither of these interpretations of the words of Jesus is admissible to-day; for true as they undoubtedly are as far as they go, there are other and further considerations to be taken into account, which more than outweigh them.

It is now known that real poverty is a most powerful cause of crime, the most fruitful source of degeneracy, and the mother of selfishness, cruelty, improvidence, and many other vices; and that wealth, or ease of circumstances, is the first step towards individual and national progress in Science, Art and Philosophy; that, in fact, it is the condition precedent of every thing that raises the civilised man above the savage, whose state is one of extreme poverty, but certainly not of blessedness. We all know now, that carking cares always accompany poverty, and that those cares inevitably to exclude

high and noble thoughts from the mind, and to make the poverty-stricken man a slave and a victim.

It seems that either Jesus was mistaken, or that we misunderstand him; but his words (presuming them to be correctly reported) are perfectly definite; so the only room for any misunderstanding is in the meaning which he and we respectively attach to the words "rich" and "poor." These words, however, are unambiguous in themselves; therefore the only possibility of a misunderstanding lies in a distinction, which we possibly forget to make, between the words "rich" and "poor," which Jesus employed, and their paronyms, richness (or wealth) and poverty; for we know that in many instances an adjective and its corresponding noun do not convey exactly the same meaning, and that the ignoring of a distinction of that kind is a fruitful source of fallacy and confusion. Now, riches, or wealth, has for its essence use and enjoyment; a man who had a valid title to the exclusive ownership of the moon would be no richer than any one else, although he would own a very large property. Use and enjoyment which are not exclusive, when they are guaranteed by legal enactment, are called "collective ownership"; and a person may be a pauper in regard to private or personal property, and yet be a rich man through the use and enjoyment of wealth guaranteed to him by the share he has in a collective ownership—his "undivided share" of the whole.

That this is no playing with words, but a very real and vital fact, is proved by the status, and by the practical experience, of members of brotherhoods that own their property collectively, many of which brotherhoods are very wealthy. The religious brotherhoods are conspicuous instances in point. The members of those brotherhoods are pledged to poverty—vowed to *perpetual* poverty; none of them owns anything but the clothes that he stands in; yet they want for nothing, for each brother has the use of the whole wealth of the brotherhood; as individuals they are wretchedly poor, but as fractional units in the collective person, the brotherhood, they are richer, in all the things they need, than a life-time spent in the accumulation of private riches could make them. We must remember, too, that Jesus, himself, may have had this experience; for he is, with some probability, supposed to have belonged to the Essenes, a brotherhood which, though far from being collectively rich, held everything in common, and owned enough to save the brothers from being obliged to "take thought for the morrow."

We see therefore, that what we understand by "suffering from poverty," is a very different thing from "being poor," in the sense of not possessing private property; and that a man can be to the last degree "poor," while possessing wealth as a member of a brotherhood. It is doubtful, indeed, whether there are any poor men in the world at present, in the latter sense, outside of the religious brotherhoods. There are rich men, and would-be rich men, but there are none that

are contented with their poverty, and who would remain poor if they had the chance of becoming rich—none who are "poor in spirit." A poor man who sees no chance of ever growing rich, sometimes says and even believes that he is contented with his lot; but this is only making the best of a bad bargain—the grapes are sour, because he cannot reach them. A share in a collective ownership is evidently not compatible with the possession of private property, else the vows of perpetual poverty which one is called upon to take on entering a brotherhood would be meaningless; but making poverty perpetual implies that the new brother is contented with the prospect, and renounces all wish to be individually rich, whatever opportunities for acquiring personal property may be thrown within his reach. True poverty is voluntary; involuntary poverty, the only poverty recognised by the world to-day, is merely the deprivation of wealth; and the man who suffers from the deprivation of wealth is no more a "poor" man, in what seems to be Christ's meaning, than a person who is obliged to eat potatoes because he cannot get meat, is a vegetarian.

If Jesus, when he declared the poor are blessed, had in his mind not the hungry and brutalised proletariat, driven by necessity to compete with his fellow paupers for most work at the least pay, and ready for any violence or villainy; but the member of a Community, sworn to poverty, indeed, and debarred from personal aggrandizement, but wealthy in the part ownership of the common property, then his words are not only comprehensible, but are full of wisdom. Such a man need not scruple to "take no thought for the morrow," for he is relieved from the cares both of riches and poverty; his conscience is clear, for his wealth deprives no other person of his just share; and the evil results on character, of the accumulation of wealth, do not affect him, for even if he occupies his mind with the getting of riches, it is not for himself alone, but for all the members of the community that he thinks and works. The "poverty" then, which corresponds to the word "poor" as Jesus used it, is not our "poverty;" it is the voluntary poverty which results from abjuring private ownership, in favor of collective possession. And that poverty is really wealth, just as the riches of the man who cannot use what he possesses is real poverty—because the rule which debars others from encroaching on what is "his," also debars him from the use of needed things which are privately owned by others. It is not in human nature to be content with poverty, when poverty means privation and suffering, not only for self but for those one loves; nor by any possibility, or by any figure of speech, can a person be called "Blessed" who is in such an unfortunate position. But when "Poverty" means plenty, and the absence of care of the morrow—as it does when it is a willing renunciation of private property, in favour of collective ownership—then it is fully in accordance with human nature to take the vow of perpetual poverty, and to call the poor man "Blessed,"

But Jesus did something more than bless the poor. If he did not quite curse the rich, he went very near it. Surely there must have been numbers of rich men in his day, as there are in ours, who are full of goodness, who delight in helping others, and who hate to give pain; and why should he condemn such men for happening to possess the means of accomplishing their good wishes? The only answer is, that he abased the individually rich because they are prominent instances of the system of individual ownership which he condemned, and are its natural upholders; and this system of individual ownership is quite incompatible with Collectivism, or with the "Brotherhood of Man" which he preached. Jesus seems to have felt, as some people do even now, that however estimable rich men may be as individuals, still, as owners of private property, and as defenders of separate ownership in those things which all could enjoy were they possessed in common, rich men are in the position of enemies of the people, or even of enemies of the whole human race; and he therefore seems to have thought that, whatever their individual excellences, they are worthy of whole souled condemnation so long as they voluntarily occupy their present position.

RICARDUS COR.

Editor's note.—Looking at this subject from a broad view-point, we can see that the rich man may be one who is truly poor, in all that constitutes real happiness, while the poor man may be rich in goodness, wisdom, love and peace. "There is a path that leads to wealth, and another path that leads to Nirvana," says Lord Buddha; and Jesus urged his followers to set their affections "on things above, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Those riches which are wrought into the character, which are incorruptible and eternal, when tested in the philosopher's scales outweigh all the gold of earth.

But Jesus' words were, according to the record: "Blessed are the poor in spirit,—for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" which is quite different from saying merely, "Blessed are the poor"—as our contributor puts it. It is not difficult to see that a man may be verily poor, yet have his *affections* firmly fixed on things of this world and earnestly long to be rich; he is not poor in spirit; but is heavily weighted by his attachment to things of earth. Another man may be equally poor, so far as ownership of property is concerned, yet truly rich in the character and love which is the basis of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever may have been the views of Jesus concerning collective ownership of property, it is quite probable that He did not in any way refer to material things when uttering the words above quoted, but to that condition of the humble, contrite heart which is sensible of its lack of that higher degree of meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, charity and other virtues, so earnestly longed for.

E.

VIEWS ON THOUGHT AND MATTER.

(Continued from p. 368.)

CONSIDERING still further the influence of the moon, we notice the popular idea as to the moon's rays causing injury to the sight; and concerning this, an Auckland lady who happened to go to sleep on the open deck of a vessel in the moonlight, awoke partially blind; and thereupon consulted a well-known local medico upon the subject. After a careful examination he came to the conclusion that, although the organic structure of the eyes was uninjured, yet there was an undoubted defect of vision—how produced, he could not say. Upon this, she mentioned the presumable cause; but the Doctor thereupon put on a supercilious look, and reminded her that "we live in the nineteenth century"—when all that sort of superstitious nonsense is no doubt safely at an end!" But in this doctors differ; for according to an undated paragraph in my note-book, it appears that a short time before his death, the celebrated Dr. Charcot said in one of his lectures that semi-scientists had for more than fifty years ridiculed the idea that the full moon was a dangerous time for mad people. "Better informed men," said he, "are coming back to that old-time notion, as the result of increased learning on the subject of earth-tides, similar to the oscillation of sea-tides."

As more especially concerning the effects of the moon upon the mental faculties, it is said that "The moon is the deity of the mind (manas) but only on the lower plane"—that is, the thought-evolving plane of the lower or animal mind; for "manas is dual—*lunar* in the lower, *solar* in its upper portion . . . that is to say, it is attracted in its higher aspect towards Buddhi"—or soul—"and in its lower descends into, and listens to the voice of its animal soul, full of selfish and sensual desires,"* and "It is the moon which is the guide to the occult side of terrestrial"—or lower—"nature . . . and this truth was ever evident to the seers and adepts."† This lowest aspect of the moon's effects upon pathological conditions, as there seems plenty of evidence to prove, was well-known to the ancients,‡ and Paracelsus has treated extensively of it.§ His statement that the moon is the *menstruum mundi* agrees with the occult correspondence between that luminary and the human etheric double; || since she is the vehicle between the celestial forces and influences and the earth, just as the double is the vehicle between the mind and the body. Thus the moon is the medium be-

* Cf. S. D., II., 495, 496 o. e., 520, 521 n. e.

† S. D., II., 595 o. e., 630 n. e., cf. I., part ii.

‡ S. D., II., 464 o. e., 487 n. e.

§ Hartmann, op. cit.

|| S. D., III., 452, table.

tween the cosmic forces and the earth, as the double is between those forces and the body; and we may accordingly expect to find the places of thought connected with the lower mind varying with her position in the heavens. Those who will take the trouble to observe need not have the slightest doubt as to the fact that the moon's motions *do* exercise a marked influence over the prevalence of a certain class of thoughts; and that the recurrence of similar phases may be predicted from a knowledge of her future positions; and this I have proved by a long series of consecutive observations with chronometer and ephemeris. These extended from December 1892 to May 1894, and it was found that in all cases, when the aspects were applied to the moon's place, there resulted either the longitude of the ascendant, or the radical places of certain planets. By this it appears that it might be possible to map out the characteristics of a whole series of one's stray thoughts from day to day, if not in shorter divisions; but this very practical astro-psychology is quite unknown to physicians and metaphysicians of the orthodox variety, though it might, if known and accepted, throw much light on obscure mental problems which are at present a mystery.

Let us endeavour to see if there is not some more or less satisfactory reason assignable for this effect, in addition to that above suggested—and perhaps, also, one which is as well physical as mental—possibly as much manifest as occult—for this effect of the macrocosmic influences upon the microcosmic mind-emanations, or of the moon upon the thoughts, as well as the body, of man. As, then, all substance tends to aggregate about a centre of force, so does all thought-matter (whether it be looked upon as of an objective or subjective nature) tend to form a mass about its physical centre, the brain. And this nebulous mass of finely divided ethereal matter,* occupying a similar relation to the body and brain of man as that which the fluidic surroundings of our earth do to it, so, as the moon sets up periodic currents in these latter, she may also set up corresponding changes in the human ethereal envelope or sphere of thought-matter, and our sensations and thoughts will be effected accordingly. She will by her aspects cause changes of vibration in the aura, which will exhibit corresponding colours; † and these changes will differ for each individual, as must be evident. This, it is true, is but analogical reasoning; but occultists hold that man is a world within himself, and that what is true of the greater world is also true of the less—according to the Hermetic maxim that “as above, so it is below.” ‡ However that may be, all mystics assume the existence of such an aura or thought-sphere; which Paracelsus refers to as the *sidereal* or *astral* body, and the receiver

* Many have asserted such a sphere to exist, as Swedenborg, “True Christian Religion,” 331, 433, 409; “Arcana Coelestia,” 4826, 1505, 7454, 10,130 and, also “Night side of Nature,” pp. 132, 252, 253, 362, 363; and, see the researches of Dr. Baradac, *Borderland*, April 1896.

† S. D. III., p. 479.

‡ *Smaragdine Tablet of Hermes*, in Thompson's “History of Chemistry.”

or vehicle of the influences transmitted by the moon and other celestial orbs; for he says "The essences in man's sidereal body are intimately related to the sidereal essences of the stars, and the former attracts the powers of the latter . . . Our astral bodies are in sympathy with the stars, and the stars are in sympathy with our astral bodies, but the same is the case with the astral bodies of all other objects." * It may here be noted that Paracelsus does not use the words "astral body" exactly in the sense Theosophists generally do, but as referring to the aura; as we see in his present reference to the corresponding sphere of inert material things, seen by the sensitives employed by Reichenbach and others. †

But the human sphere is visible occasionally to others than clairvoyants; for it seems as though, in one of its aspects, the thought-aura is of a luminous nature, capable of casting a certain radiance upon surrounding objects, as we know to be the case with some animalculæ ‡. Concerning this, Paracelsus says—"The vital force is not enclosed in man, but radiates around him like a luminous sphere, and may be made to act at a distance." § For this may be called also the radius of the mind, as H. P. B. says, "it is with a certain degree of logic that the ancient theogists maintained that the *rational* part of man's soul . . . never entered wholly into man's body, but only overshadowed him more or less, through the *irrational* or astral soul, which serves as an intermediary agent, or a medium between spirit and body." || Further, it is said that this thought-sphere begins to accumulate or expand from the earliest action of the brain, after birth, "For, at the creation of the *Prima-materia*, while the grossest portions of it were used for the physical embryo-world," the more attenuated essence went to form the human aura, "invisibly permeating and enclosing within its ethereal waves the newly-born infants" ** "The astral form clothing the monad was surrounded, as it still is, by its . . . sphere of aura" "The astral form itself is the nucleus, now, as then, instinct with the principle of life * * * ." "This germ grows and feeds on the aura" which it attracts, "till it becomes fully developed, when it gradually separates from its parent, carrying with it its own sphere of aura." †† Therefore "every man—in common with every other being and even inert object—has an aura of his own emanations surrounding him" †‡

* Hartmann's "Paracelsus," pp. 180, 181.

† Cf. *Path*, vol. VII., July 1892, and Feb. 1893, p. 335. *Proceedings of the Psychological Research Society*, vol. I., p. 230, *et seq.* (1882-3).

‡ Cf. "Night side of Nature," ch. XIV., pp. 354-382, and "Zanoni," Bk. iii., ch. IV., p. 132; also Ennemoser's "History of Magic."

§ "Paracelsus," p. 133., cf. *Theosophist* supplement, July 1883, p. 9, where Indian and other authorities are cited as to the auric spheres.

|| I. U., I., 306.

** I. U. I., 157; and S. D., I., 365 o. e., 303 n. e.

†† S. D., II., 117 o. c., 124 n. c.

‡‡ I. U., II., 619.

From these quotations we may see that the thought-sphere must widen as the mental and spiritual horizon expands; for there is no reason to suppose that thought-matter, in common with grosser particles, is otherwise than cumulative. Hence the most degraded being has his thought-sphere, as well as the highest adept; but while that of the first is gross and dense, narrow and circumscribed, the other is rarefied and far-extending, according to quantity and quality of thought. It is those prevailing thoughts which constitute our *habits of mind* which are chiefly instrumental in forming this auric sphere; for those of a more temporary and fugitive nature may not attach themselves to it for long. With most people, however, nearly *all* their thoughts are of a transient nature; because, as no union takes place between their higher and lower minds, their intellectual generations are the sooner dissipated, so far as the individuals are concerned. But the constant attraction and dispersal of such temporary and stray thoughts by humanity at large, however casual such thoughts may be to its units, are not destroyed; but they will coalesce with all similar thoughts—thus forming the thought-aura of the race, as distinct from those auras which belong to its separate entities. For the human brain, as a centre of force, is also a centre of thought—attraction and dissemination—the stray thoughts of humanity in general being drawn towards it and receding from it periodically, (as comets do with the sun) according to their respective affinities, and the stirring-up of these by the cosmic forces and influences, by reason of which the brain becomes sensitive to certain thoughts, or trains of thought at particular times,—and then again repulses them, or becomes insensitive, according to the combination or opposition of such forces. And all these thoughts, gathering momentum according to the quantity and quality of their evolution, will form masses of matter having different properties and vibrational rates—that is, corresponding to different densities. Those which have the greatest density will form the lowest strata; whilst exalted thoughts, by their rarer nature, will take the highest place—whence, as all things in nature follow the rule of analogy, we may perhaps see one of the reasons why degraded humanity seeks the slums and the low haunts of great cities, while the adepts of spiritual science select the heights and solitudes of mountain-fastnesses; and then enigmatically tell us that they do so because mountain-air is favourable to psychic development.* At least, those who have studied psychology allege that such faculties as those of second-sight and ghost-seeing are most common among the inhabitants of wild and mountainous districts; whereas those who live in the reeking slums of our towns are not commonly found to possess such developments.

As soon as the thoughts which go to make up this mass of aura are evolved, they will by natural affinity attach themselves to that auric zone with which they have most in common. The thoughts of evil-

* Cf. "Five years of Theosophy," p. 23, and *Theosophist*, 1882, p. 169.

doers continue, therefore, to live in the foul strata of the lower regions of this abnormal and mephitic portion of the aura—the abode of all sensuous and selfish thoughts, the true home of animalism. But, on the other hand, towards a higher stratum—the intellectual aura—will converge all those human thoughts having for their subjects the various sciences and other branches of learning. Therefore all these thoughts, guided by natural attraction, finally take their places among the different auric zones of our planet; and from thence they will in turn be drawn into certain brains, when the moon's position and other circumstances are favourable. In the process of religious contemplation, for instance, the mind reaches forth towards infinite space, in search of its object. Let us suppose that this object is Parabrahm, or the Godhead in its pure essence; then the purest rays of the human spiritual aura will attract those of the spiritual auric zone of the earth; for there are treasured up all thoughts concerning the supreme Godhead, emitted since time immemorial from the most spiritual brains. The loftiest thoughts, (reposing in that zone) in harmony with the degree of spiritual development, will be attracted in proportion thereto; and will thus enter the consciousness of the receptive brain. This, then, is the true process of inspiration; for those seemingly new thoughts which have thus been brought down into the individual consciousness, had ascended to the spiritual zone of the earth from mortals, either actually living, or who have lived upon this earth in time past. Those thoughts were theirs, and have now through the process of intuitional inspiration become reincarnated again; for it is a distinct reincarnation, when they are again drawn into the consciousness of a physical brain.

But, to take a less exalted instance, let us say that the student of the natural sciences, in his moments of abstract thought or research, will also find in the intellectual zone of the earth, not only ideas no further advanced than those which are seemingly his own, but also ideas far in advance of them; which he may then appropriate. From such a scientific fountain-head will the scientist draw, more or less successfully, according to the degree of intuition with which he may be gifted; and this will afford an explanation of the reason why the same scientific discoveries or inventions are so often made almost simultaneously in different parts of the world.* Similarly, it shows the reason for the rise and fall of scientific attainment in different ages; because the degree of receptivity of various races will vary as it does in individuals; and sometimes it will be great, and the race eminent accordingly for its scientific achievements, while in other cases it will be absent; thus giving rise to periodic or cyclic manifestations of activity. We may gain some ideas as to the process involved in these mental recognitions, from certain experiments made by Prof. Oliver Lodge. He charged two Leyden jars with electricity at a certain tension; and then, when both jars were completely separated and insulated from each other, he applied

* Cf. the romance, "On the Heights of Himalay," pp. 176, 178.

the discharging rod to one of them—but the other also discharged at the same instant, although in no way connected with the first.* And we all know how two violin strings, tuned to the same note, will both vibrate when one of them is struck. It is the invisible ether of space which makes the necessary connection between these artificially *sympathetic* things; and it is this ether which connects our similar thoughts with some that have gone before, or are then in operation, whenever we have reached the necessary conditions.

The human auric sphere is, as we have seen, of variable extent in different individuals; for though it may be only of limited extent in some cases, such as Dr. O. W. Holmes supposes,† yet in others it extends far beyond their immediate precincts. This distance may be called the zone of radiation, which will increase with the practice of certain habits of thought. In some it may extend only a few feet—in others, perhaps, to miles. But in the highest adepts, it is said to extend over oceans and across continents.‡ It may, under suitable circumstances influence the aura of other persons; and they will then be more or less conscious of such influence, according to their degree of influence and receptivity—each party may pass into the other's thought for the moment; and this is perhaps the basis of the experience we so often meet with, where one person will think of another in a passing sort of way—and that other appears upon the scene a few minutes after. Thus may have originated the old adage, "speak of the Devil and he is sure to appear." Nay, since inanimate objects have also their auric spheres, impressed with the thought-matter of whoever may have been concerned with them, even the letters a person writes, or which others may be writing in connection with him or his thoughts, may come within the sphere of influence of those persons before he actually sees them, and this even long after they have been written, printed, or handled by the others—so that the person affected will sense the approach of such letters or things, and will perhaps drop some casual remark, or otherwise take notice of the writer or whoever it may be, as soon as that letter or object may come within a certain radius of them. In the same way it not unfrequently happens that a person writing a letter or other article for the press, will unconsciously so act upon some other who is upon the same train of thought, or has the incidents dealt with in their recollection—and in this case the one becomes passively conscious of what the other is doing. It usually strikes the recipient of such an effect as very strange, when, it may be the next day, he perceives that the matter of his yesterday's thoughts has, somehow, crept into print! This sort of effect is sometimes quite startling in its strangeness, as in the following: One of our local artists was once walking along an unfrequented suburban road, where he had not

* "Some Modern Views of Electricity," by Prof. O. Lodge.

† *Review of Reviews*, Dec. 15th, 1893; Cf. "Ocean of Theosophy," v., 35.

‡ In the case of the Buddha it was said to have extended through the three worlds (or planes). Ed. *Theosophist*.

previously been for several years, and as his thoughts ran upon his work, he was thinking how well it might have been for him if a certain newspaper, which had then long ceased publication, had been still in existence—because it had always given good notices of his pictures. And as he passed onward, he saw something white lying on the roadside in advance. On taking it up, he found it was an old copy of the defunct journal in question, and actually contained a critique upon one of his own long-past works! Such instances have attracted the attention of scientists for, Dr. de Courmelles says: "How often do we think of our absent friends at the very moment these latter are either suffering, or writing to us, or thinking about us. We find an interesting fact of this kind related in one of M. Ferdinand de Lesseps' letters. Abd-el-Kader, had written to several Arab chiefs, recommending them to pay him [De Lesseps] every attention; a certain number of these chiefs, who could not by any ordinary means have received notice under four days, were ready—and knew the contents of the letter—to greet M. de Lesseps on his landing, eighteen hours after it was written. The English reports of the sepoy mutiny mention the fact that the results of the battles were known in the native bazaars two hours before the information was received by the post. This may have been a coincidence, but it was a strange coincidence, and one that was constantly repeated. . . . There are vibrations that seem to spread to a distance; the probability of mental suggestion, of which Prof. Richet has made a special study may, according to him, be represented by the co-efficient 2/3." * This is a practical admission of the existence of the auric sphere; and Dr. Brierre de Boismont says, "we cannot deny that in certain diseases we see developed a great surexcitation of sensibility, which lends to the senses a prodigious acuteness of perception. Thus, some individuals will perceive at considerable distances, others will announce the approach of persons who are really on their way, although those present can neither hear nor see their coming.†

But there is also some instrumental evidence available, for Dr. de Courmelles remarks that "Human action at a distance is mathematically registered, thanks to the *magnetometre* invented by the Abbé Fortin, of Chalette. This instrument, which in 1890 was presented by its inventor to the Academy of Sciences, announces the approach of storms by the variation of a metallic needle, which is neither magnetic, nor magnetisable, but in any case very mobile; it has, moreover—and this is an important detail—the curious property of deviating when the hand is brought near it. If the hand is held for five minutes in the vicinity of the needle, from which it is separated by the glass globe that contains the instrument, no effect is produced; but two or three minutes after the hand is removed, the needle displaces itself to an angle which varies with the operator. Both Colonel de Rochas and myself remarked

* "Hypnotism," pp. 243-245. According to a recent number of *Chambers' Journal*, the effect is in India known as the "chabar" of the Bazaars, and well known.

† I. U., I. 144, 145. Cf. also "Night side of Nature," pp. 158, 272, 273.

this curious deviation, which cannot be attributed—on account of the slowness of its action—either to electricity or mineral magnetism, at least in so far as their action is at present scientifically known." And since the above was written, Dr. Baraduc has made his remarkable experiments, by which he has obtained photographs of the aura; concluding thence that as the sun has his photosphere or luminous envelope, so has man also—a truly wonderful proof and justification of the assertions made by Paracelsus, Swedenborg and other mystics, to the same effect.

S. STUART.

(To be concluded.)

BENGALI FOLK-LORE.

(Continued from p. 94.)

A GOOD WOMAN.

THERE are four kinds of women. They are : (1) *Padmini* ; (2) *Chitrani* ; (3) *Shankhini* and (4) *Hastini*. The *Padmini* is supposed to emit from her person the scent of a lotus flower—hence the name. The *Chitrani* gives out the scent of alkali, the *Shankhini* that of a fish and the last that of a horse. Like some species of animals, whose existence in ancient times is recorded in the pages of zoology, the first has become extinct or well nigh so. The pride of Bengali homes comes of the class recruited from those who fall under the second category. Of her personal recommendations suffice it to say that she should be as close-footed as the web-footed duck ; her gait be the gait of an elephant—without making the least sound while walking ; her jewel-like teeth be close-set without indenture or jag at the end ; her forehead short and low ; her eyes not piggish nor feline, but like those of a deer ; her nose and brows well defined ; hair dark, not auburn ; mouth small ; neck rather small ; countenance smiling ; fingers tapering and nails regularly paired. By no means should she laugh a loud horse laugh but a low suppressed laughter. She should keep herself neat and clean. Her hair should always remain kempt. In short, she should be well and tastefully toiletted, prayerful, mindful of her daily household works, prepare victuals with her own hands, feed first the guests and the poor who call at her place, then her man and family and other members of the household, and break her fast last of all. From the above it is clear that the multifarious duties of a good householder devolve on her. They consist in the practices and observances of those things that are essential to win over the favour of Lakshmi. She is enjoined to be pure in mind as well as in body as I have said above ; sweet in words ; skilful in works ; orderly in the nice arrangement of furniture ; steady in look ; capable of control over the movement of her hands and feet ; sparing in speech ; respectful of elders ; not idle so as to set forth a meal of stale food ; provident to lay something by to-day for to-morrow's ex-

penditure ; content with her lot ; ungrudging in the payment of her dues and in her eleemosynary gifts ; careful to lay up even trifles, and last though not least, observant of the five *Yajnas*.* The wholesome lessons conveyed in these instructions of the goddess of wealth and prosperity are so much in touch with the gentler folk of the *Zenana* that even Mahomedan *fakirs* are sometimes found to recite them before their leisurely presence. And they are paid a pice or in kind for their song in return.

According to others, women are classified in accordance with what characterises their conduct, into *Saddhi*, *Bhogya* and *Kulata*. A *Saddhi* is a pious, chaste woman. She is the presiding genius of our hearth and home and exacts in some way or other, homage from all. Nobody can dethrone her from her lawful position. A *Bhogya* occupies the next lower place, although she is, as the term implies, addicted to pleasure and luxury, at least to an easy mode of living. It should be borne in mind that the less prone a woman is to animal propensities, the better extolled and held in public estimation is she.

A BAD WOMAN.

Shankhini and *Hasini* on the one hand, and *Kulata* (unchaste) on the other are reckoned as bad women. Their physical signs are briefly contained in the statements that jagged are their teeth ; that high and broad are their foreheads ; that hollow or raised is the middle of the soles of their feet ; that they are untidy and unclean in appearance ; that their hair is left unkempt ; that their clothes are dirty ; that they, in short, tenaciously stick to those habits and malpractices that are absent in their fortunate sisters, of whom mention has been made in the foregoing sub-head. It is idle to say that they are remote from the good grace of Lakshmi, who among others thus speaks of them : They are late risers with the sun ; they never light their lamps in the evening, being always late in doing that ; are incapable of doing their various domestic works, say cooking. Foreign matters have found their way to their food-articles. Substances most foul are allowed to remain here, there and everywhere in their houses. There are constant bickerings and quarrels in the family. Nothing is so apparent in them as an unsatisfied desire for food, oftentimes. These women are, as a rule, she concludes, hasty and voracious eaters, gulping down morsels of rice just as they are put into the mouth.

Truly sings the immortal bard when he says :

“ Frailty thy name is woman.”

To err is human. Human nature is weak. The weakness is more manifested in woman kind, of whom folk-lore pertinently remarks that after the ashes have flown away in the wind from the funeral pyre of a woman her praises should be sung.

* (1) Readings from the *shastras*, (2) *Shraddha* and the like in propitiation of the spirits of departed ancestors, (3) worship of the deities, (4) hospitality, and (5) kind treatment of lower animals.

MAN.

Man is always partial to his own sex. No amount of enlightenment has been up to date sufficient to take off this slur on his character. The ancients and moderns are equally to blame. Moderns men, with their vaunted education, intelligence and everything, are, I am sorry to say, not yet found so liberal as to extend to the opposite sex the same rights and privileges that they claim by birth, and that women have sold to them for a mess of pottage. John Bull would make a bold stand against granting them to her, while Cousin Jonathan, who is not unoften looked down upon, has begun to show himself to best advantage. He is libera-minded enough to make so fair a start in this respect as to concede to her some at least, of what the other would appropriate all to himself. I have noted elsewhere the invidious distinction made by him not between man and man but between woman and woman. In any book no classification of man is made. But Folk-Lore has made it. It divides with the implicit and unassailable authority—which has received the assent of the women in council—man into good and bad. The standard of goodness and badness in him varies according as he passes by a woman with his eyes downcast or uplifted. To make myself more explicit, I would say that a man who cares to look at a woman, is looked down upon by the fair sex as one having a vicious, amorous glance or ogle, as the case may be. He is deemed as immoral and vicious. He is considered as a noble soul who walks with a downcast eye, not caring to look at a woman if he happens to meet with one. Even a debauchee who does not steal a glance at a woman, is not regarded as being so very bad.

LOYALTY.

This trisyllable is the Trinity of the people of India. It is ingrained in their nature, forming as it does one of the, if not the, chief components of their very existence in the comprehensive import of the term. It is a truism that they are used to see the Emperor of Delhi (meaning thereby the sovereign) in the light of the Ruler of the Universe. This is no doubt a hyperbolical expression. But the fact is none the less patent that they are loyal to the back-bone. The sight of a king or a representative of a king is as auspicious, they say, as anything under the sun could be, which has an influence on their destiny. This is why on the occasion of the arrival of a viceroy or even a vicereine, not to say God impersonated in the being called the ruler of the land, the Heir-apparent, or even a royal descendant, they gather in their hundreds, nay, in their thousands, on the route. Nor is this all. They make much also of the satellite of an Indian chief, when out. In face of a stubborn fact like that, saddle-headed would be the statesman, who questions the loyalty of these most loyal of the subjects of Her Majesty the Queen of England and Empress of India. They live by fealty to the throne and implicit obedience to the legislature. All India from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin

proclaims in one universal loyal tone that the will of the sovereign is law unto them. And they have been accustomed to this creed from time immemorial.

Anent this subject I think it would not be too much to touch upon how an administrator of justice is regarded. He is called a *Dharmabatar*, or an *avatar* of *dharmā*, or justice personified. He is popularly called a *Hakim*, a Persian personal noun embodying the same attributes or more. Awful he seems, it is not to be wondered at, as before him are summoned for justice, those with clasped wrists.

PREDESTINATION.

The Bengalis are none the less staunch than any other Indian people in their belief in predestination. The result of this firm-conviction at once works for good and evil, as I shall presently show, in their daily life. Fatalists as they are, in adverse circumstances they are resigned. It breeds inordinate idleness, and, in some cases, laziness, and in loving parents and guardians a harmfully undue indulgence for their truant—and otherwise vicious—children, entirely depending on what fate may have chalked out for them. In Sanskrit there is a *sloka* which says, fate must have its resultants; no friend nor any respectable close connection availing. They say: "Wherever you go, fate chases you." The reason for their natural proneness to walk in ordinary groove, or in that already grooved for them is, that they are wanting in moral stamina. No impetus is given to some new enterprise, or to distinguish themselves some way or other, as they take no heart in anything noble and enterprising, strewn as it is all over with thorns. The self-same blind fate is at the bottom of this suicidal indifference. A parent, worried with the burning question of the day, I mean, the expensive marriage of a daughter, when asked what he or she is going to do to bring it about, would answer to his or her consolation that she is born with her fate and he has sent before her a bridegroom in view of the coming celebration of the marriage and cast her lot with him and decreed it for good or bad long before she assumed this mortal tenement called body.

KARMA AND RE-BIRTH.

The Bengalis believe as much in *Karma* as in their own existence. They must, they say, work it out cost what it may. Whatever action good or bad they did in their former birth, or rather life, they reap its full fruition in this. And the transmigration of the soul effected through a cycle of births is put a stop to, when it by doing good deeds and leading an unsullied, pious life, attains *mukti* (salvation or emancipation from the bondage of sin). Re-birth is the necessary outcome of the sum total of sin committed in this present life. It is good or bad or an admixture of both, as the case may be, in proportion to the amount of good deeds done or sin committed. I must crave leave to state

here that the Hindu *Karma* is of course more lenient than the Buddhist *Karma* with vengeance.*

DEBT.

When a person has given away something to another, the donor should not get it back from the donee, as the consequence of this back-taking accrues in next birth in the animal world in the form of a dog and in living a canine life. So, when one is compelled to contract a debt of another, one is in duty bound to repay it, as a condign punishment is meted out to the borrower for the commission of the sin of non-payment, by his or her having to be born again in the vegetable world as a parasite. Besides, it is commonly believed that all short-lived infants are born unto indebted parents simply to have the debts made good by them which they owed to them in their former birth. No sooner are they paid the last farthing in the shape of nourishment and kind treatment than these infant-lenders are dead and gone. A debt of honour or a promise to pay is tantamount to an actual loan contracted. In the *Shishu Bodhak*, which is much more extensively read in our *patshalas* or indigenous schools than any elementary school book I know of, is the story of Karna who, along with his wife Padmavati, in order to pay up this debt of honour, true to his word, sawed into twain his only son Brishakatu, to break the fast of Narayan, to whom the promise had been made, and who appeared before the self-sacrificing pious parents in the form of an old Brahmin, who had fasted the previous day on account of the Ekadashi. The Almighty God, having put them to this crucial test and satisfied himself as to their sincerity, restored him in his grace to their kisses. It is, moreover, a truism that a debt contracted in a sacred place and on the banks of the sacred rivers, should be at any cost repaid on the first opportunity.

SIGNS OF DEATH.

The screeches of the owl at night, the wild cries of the cat, when at the time of giving a call to the physician he happens to sleep or break his fast, the cough of cattle,—these presage imminent danger or death in the neighbourhood in the near future. An odd number of persons, say 1 or 3, should fetch the physician in. The appearance of the double of a departed kith or kin, the talk of the patient in *delirium tremens* with it, his enjoyment of a meal as a preliminary to leave-taking, the appearance of a person taken seriously ill before a dream relation living in a distant land, or the double while the relation is wide awake,—these are apprehended as precursors of death. A response to one call by name at the dead of night is, it is believed, generally attended on the part of the responsee with fatal consequences. The *tantrics* by a similar nefarious, elaborate process, the details of which are uninteresting, essay to barter

* Ed. note. Our contributor here makes a sad mistake. Who ever heard of any element of vengeance in the doctrines of Lord Buddha ?

the life of a dying person with that of his namesake, hale and hearty. This diabolical practice still has a hold on the minds of some of the uneducated elderly persons of the orthodox school. It is called *Nishijagana*, or, literally, keeping the dead of night. It is a popular belief in this country that the souls of the pious are waited for by messengers whom the dying alone can see, from the *Sivaloka*, *Brahmaloka* or *Vishnuloka*; and those of the vicious, by a dreadful one of *Yama*. The dread of death haunts the life of a good Bengali Hindu. This is the reason why he desires nothing more than a peaceful, happy end. It has given rise to the wise saying in Bengali that counting beads or what rites soever a contemplative turn of religious mind takes to, they are superfluous; what do they avail? *Know how to die* (a peaceful death).

NAKUR CHANDRA BISVAS.

(To be continued.)

Theosophy in all Lands.

EUROPE.

LONDON, February 28th, 1899.

The month which is passing away has left its chief imprint on the mind as a season of storm and stress in the physical world, which will make it a memorable month in the annals of the shipping fraternity. In theosophical circles the same period has been uneventful, but the usual activities have flowed steadily on.

The quarterly gathering of the North of England Federation of T. S. Branches was held at Harrogate, as usual, and was visited by Mrs. Cooper Oakley, who had previously made a successful tour of the following towns, at all of which meetings were held:—Sheffield, Manchester, Bradford, Hornsea (near Hull) and Middlesboro.

The Sunday evening lectures given by Mr. Leadbeater continue to be crowded; a large number of people evidently find in these addresses plain expositions of theosophical teachings on elementary lines which the ordinary lodge lectures cannot, of course, be expected to provide, and the only circumstance to be regretted is that the lecture-hall of the Blavatsky Lodge cannot be stretched to accommodate a larger number.

On February 2nd, Mr. Leadbeater took for his subject, as a lodge lecture, "The Soul of a People"—the interesting book on the people of Burma, of which mention has previously been made in these pages. Several points of much interest to students of Theosophy were alluded to, one interesting question being that of very rapid re-incarnation, to which some of the author's stories pointed, and which seemed to indicate the operation of some law differing from the general rule observable in those cases of individual re-incarnations which have been investigated among more advanced races of mankind. The treatment of animals among the Burmese was very favourably commented on both by the author of the book (Mr. H. Fielding) and by the lecturer—the experience of both being to the effect that in our relations with the so-called lower animals, both Europeans and Hindus have much to learn from the Burmese.

Mr. Moore in dealing with the subject of the 'Transformation of Energy' raised some difficult questions which he treated from the standpoint of physical science, and drew a sharp distinction between the dogmatism and self-importance of the ignorance of the pre-Copernican period and the comparative modesty of modern science in spite of its much greater achievements.

On February 23rd, the lodge heartily welcomed Mr. Herbert Burrows' return to its platform and enjoyed his long deferred lecture entitled "The Light that faileth not." The lecture proved to be an interesting statement of the insufficiency of either religion as it has been ordinarily taught, or philosophy in the hands of its best modern exponents, or science as commonly understood, to give to man's heart that sense of peace and happiness, that certainty of progress, and conviction that 'all's well with the world,' which the teachings of Theosophy alone afford. Mr. Burrows showed how clearly the teachings of physical science, properly understood, pointed to the solutions which Theosophy completed; and how in its teachings we found what synthesised religion, philosophy and science into one harmonious whole, and gave us the 'Light that faileth never.' The lecture was full of useful thought and helpful suggestion.

At the West London Lodge Miss Pope dealt with a deeply interesting subject under the title of the "Riddle of Pythagoras." The lecture raised the hotly contested question of the purity and perfection of the ancient *versus* the modern musical scale, and showed how it had been reserved for the mathematician, physicist and physiologist—Helmholtz—to furnish the true answer to the question which it is told that the great master, Pythagoras, put to his pupils and left unsolved. Incidentally, the points of difference between the music of the East and West were touched upon, and it was contended that the scale of Pythagoras was more nearly represented by that of India and China than of Europe, and that a process of artificial education alone made the dissonances of Western music tolerable to the natural ear. In view of the fact that music will in all probability play a vastly more important part in the religion of the future than it has done for long ages past, it is of vital importance that it should be built up on natural laws—how otherwise can it cause the right response in natural organisms? or, rather, how, if the organisms are not trained to respond to vibrations based on natural laws, are they to become sensitive to those grand strains which come from the higher planes of being where natural law reigns supreme and where there are no pianofortes, or their makers, to govern the concert-pitch? Music and mathematics went hand in hand in the school of Pythagoras—who says they will not do so again ere man and music reach their destined heights? But that does not mean that music will become mechanical.

More and more it is becoming possible to recognise the incorporation of those ideas for which disciples of the Great Teachers have lived and died, into the current thought of Europe. The change which the last twenty-five years have brought about is almost impossible to realise, but day by day the evidence grows clearer. Here, for instance, is the *seclate*, the judicial *Spectator*, in an article commenting on 'The New Psychology,'—a paper by Mr. St. George Mivart in the *Nineteenth Century*—taking up a position quite in accord with theosophical teachings, and arguing in favour of the view of the celebrated Professor Wundt "that psychical life is not the product of bodily organism, but the bodily organism is rather a psychical creation;" thus coming back to

Spenser's opinion that "Soul is form, and doth the body make." Here are a few sentences from the article, culled at random:—

"The identifying principle lies in the unseen part, the soul or mind which sways the senses and which moulds the body to its own design." "The great thinker develops a certain type of countenance, the devout saint stamps his inward vision of holiness on his outward features, the sensualist can be detected through all his disguises. One feels immediately an unexplained affinity or repugnance to a man never seen before; can this inward, subtle impression be warranted by molecular processes?,"....."Still further, how does the materialist hypothesis explain the unquestioned phenomena of thought transference [note the *unquestioned*] or mental communication between persons sundered by physical distance? If the brain originates thought, how can people whose brains are a thousand miles apart with no brain medium, hold converse, respond to one another's moods, inform one another of facts unknown? That these things take place is as certain as any fact of which we know. On the materialist hypothesis they are inexplicable; but on the hypothesis that, behind this visible veil of things, we are all living in a spiritual medium, as the earth is rolling in a medium of ether, and that the waves of this great spiritual ocean are breaking on the human mind through the brain, we have an explanation of the chief psychical facts of life. But when this 'earthly tabernacle is dissolved,' what then?..... We can only say that the mind which has reared our present bodily home can accrete to itself the inexhaustible matter of the universe to build up 'a house not made with hands,' which will serve us for a larger life. We cannot prove this—we do not profess to prove anything connected with this great theme—but we think that a reasonable faith will find no insoluble or final intellectual difficulty here. The things which are seen are temporal; but the unseen reason builds the world."

Then, in another direction there is the truth of the philosophy above indicated being put to the test, for in one of to-day's London papers David Christie Murray, the well known novelist, has written a generous tribute to the young poet who is lying apparently at death's door in New York, and ends it with an appeal to every reader to send him one impulse of their own strength and vigour, saying with their whole heart, "Rudyard Kipling, rise and live;" and he believes that "the vitality of the world will animate that feeble frame." So he (Murray) writes that he will risk being thought a madman "and risk it gladly if you will only lend yourself for one instant to my desire." Surely here we have our theosophical teachings echoed back to us, and that being so, we need not lament that the labels are not ours; that the world should know and live the ideals is the needful thing; theosophists want no patent rights in them.

A. B. C.

Reviews.

YOGA.*

This is one of those books which, on even a first reading, one can predict will be a classic. This was said about "Isis Unveiled" on its first appearance, and we do not hesitate to say it of Mr. Flagg's "Yoga." On the occasion of the banquet held in the Hall of Christ College, Cambridge, to celebrate the completion of the ninth edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," the venerable Dr. Garnett, of the British Museum, said that "there is a law pervading the works of literature as sure as the laws of science...that good work will not die." The survival of the teachings of the world's sages and saints after the overthrow of empires and Time's most awful changes, is a proof of this fact, and if our blind generation but knew it, the cave libraries under the watch and ward of the Wise Ones contain copies of all works ever produced within this cycle, that are important enough to keep. Mr. Flagg's work is not so valuable for the conclusions he draws from his facts, as for the mass of facts themselves, which he has collected from all sources within reach during a literary quest extending over many years. It has the value of a cyclopædia or a dictionary, rather than that of a sure guide towards the *summum bonum*. In no other volume have we found collated so many and such instructive facts about the practice and results of Yoga. The author makes it clear that this system of self-emancipation from the chains of ignorance and the tyranny of the flesh, has been common to all religions, in all ages and throughout the world: the difference between their various schools being one of degree, not of kind. His quotations from Hindu, Egyptian, Chaldean, Akkadian, Greek, Roman, Christian, Chinese, Hebrew and Mohammedan authorities are deeply interesting and of very decided value to the thoughtful student, while he has some most pertinent remarks upon Hatha and Raja Yoga, Swedenborgianism, the Quietism of Molinos and Mme. Guyon, the ideas of Paracelsus, our contemporary Spiritualism and its mediums, and Magic—both white and black. His literary style is attractive, bright, pungent and scholarly: one reads his book from end to end without wishing to put it aside. At the same time, the student of Theosophy, at least, will not feel like adopting Mr. Flagg's views of the nature and destiny of the soul, nor accept his queer hypothesis—tentative, he gives us to understand—that in the fullness of time all the race will probably be practising Yoga with the view to obtaining a terrestrial immortality, i.e., unending life on the earth. However, let people think what they may of his beliefs, none will deny that Mr. Flagg's book on Yoga deserves a place in the library of every student of the occult.

H. S. O.

* A comparative statement of the various religious dogmas concerning the soul and its destiny, and of Akkadian, Hindu, Taoist, Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, Christian, Mohammedan, Japanese, and other Magic. By WILLIAM J. FLAGG. New York, J. W. Bouton; London, George Redway, 1898. Price, 16s. net.

L' HOMME ET SES CORPS.*

This is a well executed and neatly printed French edition of Mrs. Besant's "Man and his Bodies," done by a member of our local Branch at Brussels. In his Preface he says that in the lecture of Pandit J. C. Chatterji on "The Esoteric Philosophy of India," which was issued in French in November last he had hoped to have given enquirers a concise compendium of the teachings of contemporary Theosophy, but the matter had to be so much condensed as to leave parts of the subject in bare outline. He now, therefore, publishes this essay of Annie Besant's as the most complete and eloquent exposition of our teaching which has thus far been placed within the reach of the student. Our brother deserves well of the Society for his most laudable enterprise.

H. S. O.

THE SOUND OF A VOICE THAT IS STILL.†

BY ARCHIE CAMPBELL.

The output of books psychological and occult is rapidly increasing, in response to the demand of the public, who have become sated with the ordinary romance—which always hinges on the personal love of two parties of the opposite sex,—and long for something which shall throw light upon the soul's origin, its possibilities, its destiny. In the interesting work before us, the author relates the story of his experiences in a trance of several days' duration, his body meanwhile lying apparently lifeless on a bed in his own home; the anxiety of his wife and children being mitigated by the fact that he had once before been in a similar condition and recovered from it unharmed. On slipping out of his physical encasement he experienced considerable difficulty in comprehending that his consciousness was no longer functioning on the physical plane. He thought the beings whom he saw on the plane beyond were simply masquerading, and could not believe his senses until he was asked "to just look at the bed." He then says:

I did so, and there to my surprise lay the figure of a man, very calm and still. I arose and, walking to the bedside looked down, —there, sure enough, was a man whose face looked marvellously like my own. I put out my hand and touched him, pushed him, but he did not move. He did not seem to breathe, and a great fear broke over me as I saw him lying there so still and pale.

"What," I cried in a hushed voice, "am I dead then?"

He was told that he was not, in fact, dead, but that his experiences were about the same as if that were really the case. Little by little he began to realize that the people whom he met and with whom he conversed were veritable personalities like himself, though some of them were so very much younger in appearance than he would have supposed, in view of the fact that they had left their physical bodies so long ago; and some were living members of his own family, while others were persons he had never met or heard of before. He held most agreeable converse with his disembodied friends, and one or two who belonged to a higher plane, instructed him in the truths of reincarnation and karma,—those fundamental factors in the evolution of every soul; and the striking feature of the book is the author's reiteration and exposition of these basic truths. No previous work of our times so vividly presents

* Traduit de l' Anglais, par F. B. Bruxelles; George Balat, Editeur. Price Fr. 1-50.

† London: Geo. Redway. 5s. net.

the idea of the constant intercourse between the living and the dead,—though not on the plane of the waking consciousness. But the author goes a little too far in giving material coloring to his astral scenes and employments, for he pictures the kamalokic entities as whiling away their leisure hours in rowing, sailing, riding, driving, and even bicycling. They also have spirit orchestral music, dancing, and Lucullan feasts—on the astral plane, of course. When the entranced hero questions the reality of these things, and fears he may be “the victim of an hallucination,” he is answered as follows:—

“Yes, that is always the way; you have a preconception, and everything that does not immediately agree with that is instantly suppressed. In the olden time many people lost their lives for daring to believe the world was round, and the non-existence of America was at one time a canon of the infallible Catholic Church! But because we are not ghastly ‘spooks,’ forsooth, we are impostors and naught but phantoms of your brain.”

“Hardly so bad as that,” I replied, “but I confess I have always regarded a departed spirit with awe—a being who has passed into the Great Beyond, and now sees all the mystery of God from behind the veil. I have always imagined him as one doomed to woe unutterable, and so to be pitied infinitely, or one who has passed into bliss unspeakable, and so to be revered; in either case one to whom the secrets of the past, present and future were at last revealed, and whose weight of knowledge and responsibility was such that he was far removed from all our petty cares and sorrows, and, above all, high beyond our trifling joys and pastimes.”

“And so you are disappointed when you find us men and women like yourselves; you think it beneath our dignity to eat, drink, and be merry; to sympathise with all your fortunes, to sigh when you are sad, to smile when you are happy, to rejoice when you rejoice? Whence all your misconceptions? Surely you sometimes reason by analogy. You plant the seed and it slowly grows into a tree, stage by stage—it is only in fairy tales that beanstalks reach the skies in a single night—yet you find it difficult to believe that your life and our life are but steps in a great evolution; that we are one step beyond you, but only one; that we have many limitations; that we are not necromancers and can neither prophesy nor read your thoughts; and further, that we are not beings who seek to inspire awe, but that we are human—very human—and value your love above any other sentiment you can bestow upon us.”

The teachings of the book are mainly in harmony with theosophic principles, with special touches here and there, of spiritualistic and Christian ideas and the author's imagination. One of the chief employments of the disembodied, it is here stated, is that of guarding their friends who are still on earth; which is not always a pleasant task, especially in relation to mortals who are much inclined to selfishness and evil; for such have one bad (or relatively so) and one good guardian. The doctrine of twin-souls is also distinctly set forth, though not gleaned from Theosophy, and concerning it the visitor asks how it is that even when twin-souls meet on earth they do not always marry, and is told:

“That is owing to one being in a higher state of spiritual progression than the other. They do not recognise each other as twin-souls. They always are attracted to one another, but something may repel. It is only when both are perfected, as far as character is concerned, and the earth-life is over, that they are perfectly united, and this union seldom takes place on earth. Occasionally it does, as the few ideal marriages you may remember go to prove * * *”

This idea does not agree with that of the sexless ego which, in order to perfect its experiences, sometimes incarnates as a man and sometimes as a woman.

We infer that the author may have had some unpleasant personal experience with eccentric Theosophists in former years, since that might account for his being told by the 'powers that be' that 'Theosophy is so *loveless, cold and selfish*; but, furdier on, we read that "Theosophy is becoming more human, less cold and abstract, less mystical and involved—and a gleam of human love and sympathy has been allowed, of recent years, to break into its gloomy depths." Thanks! What an encouraging concession from these higher powers to us poor heartless, icebergular Theosophists!

Our mortal querist is earnestly warned against the dangers of spiritualism—especially public manifestations—and is told that even in one's own family "there is always a risk of the spirits;" and on asking if our guardians would not protect us at such times, he gets this reply:

"There is no certainty of that. All guardians, even though good, are not strong. * * * Evil spirits are frequently very strong, as spirits, and could intercept the communications, as they often do, and tell lies—impersonate others and so on," He is told further that our guardians are usually "only in the second sphere," and but little in advance of us, and even those in the third and fourth spheres do not know everything," and might mislead unintentionally. And again,—“If you were able to come running to us at every little difficulty, and if we assisted you then, where would be the merit, to you, in overcoming difficulties and avoiding evil? We should probably retard instead of advancing your spiritual progress”—certainly a very wise remark. He however admits that if the matter is approached in a reverent and religious spirit, and under proper conditions, some good may come of it. Our astral traveller is treated to formal lectures on "Art," "Music," and "Religion," and gives us the details of many an interesting conversation with his incarnate friends, several of whom narrate to him the history of some of their past earth-lives of long ago. The story told of Atlantis, though somewhat interesting, is inferior to that given by Scott Elliot, and the account of the Moon's past and present condition does not tally with the accepted theosophic teaching. If we take for granted the author's preliminary statements, he seems to have been quite fortunate in impressing his astral experiences upon his physical brain consciousness. Before returning to his body, he seeks the advice of his friends about the propriety of giving to the world the results of his singular experiences; but they quote to him the words of Jesus when Dives asked that Lazarus might be sent to warn his brethren of the consequences of their evil course.—“If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead,” and then tell him to use his own judgment about it. They seem to think it would be good for mankind to be assured of these truths, yet that there are few who are prepared to believe them, or who would care to investigate further.

The book will undoubtedly have a large sale. It is a good sized volume—419 pages 8vo.—and well gotten up. We have read it with great interest, and think it well calculated to lead a certain class of minds, that are not yet advanced in spiritual conceptions, towards the higher levels from which the Theosophist takes such broad views of the problems of human existence and Evolution.

E.

The Editor of *Light*, in reviewing the book above noticed, expressed his disapproval of works of fiction 'turning upon spiritualist experiences,' suggest-

ing that this book might be all 'sheer imagination'; whereupon the author of the work sent him the following letter which we reproduce from a late number of *Light* received since the above was in type:

The book is not an effort of the imagination. The setting is certainly mine, but the teachings came from the 'other side.' It is not avowedly a spiritualistic book, as I hoped that it might, possibly, appeal to some of the 'Gentiles.'

I never had more than an academic interest in Spiritualism, though I had read a great deal about it; and I was therefore very much surprised when a few years ago a daughter of mine, then fifteen years of age, got messages through a sort of Ouija board which she used as a game with some friends. As these messages appeared to be intelligible I investigated them, with the result that my daughter developed the power of automatic writing and we got many most interesting messages from our unseen friends through her. All the characters in the book are 'real'—that is, they represent spirits who actually communicated in the words used in the book. Even the common-place nature of the conversation in some instances is a proof of its not being invented, as I could easily have imagined, something much more brilliant, and what one would suppose more likely to be said by spirits of great and clever men. I fancy the fact is that even in the next world, geniuses are not always at concert pitch! The 'stories' are verbatim, so is the account of Atlantis; and the 'lectures' are also word for word as we got them. 'The True Religion' and the account of the Life Beyond are only dressed up from communications actually received, extending over a period of about two years.

The part that will meet with the least acceptance from Spiritualists in England is no doubt that about reincarnation, and it may be instructive for you to know something about this. Personally, I had always had a certain interest in reincarnation, and though I do not like the idea, yet it always seemed to me philosophically tenable, and so I asked about it early in our spiritual intercourse. The spirits who at first communicated are principally in the second sphere, and one or two in the third, and their reply was adverse to reincarnation. They put me off and declined to discuss the question; but the impression left on my mind was that they did not believe in it. Later, the spirit called in the book 'Divino,' took charge of the spiritual circle. He belongs to the fourth sphere, and soon he began to open out on the doctrine of reincarnation, which he averred was true.

On expressing my surprise that it should have been all but positively denied by the others, it was explained that few spirits below the fourth sphere know the mystery of reincarnation. The great majority of spirits who do communicate belong to the second (or first sphere after the earth), very few to the third, and fewer still to the fourth. These latter only come as teachers. Some of those who taught Allan Kardec were fourth sphere spirits, and 'Imperator,' who taught Stainton Moses, was also from the fourth sphere; but he did not teach reincarnation, as Stainton Moses was not ready for it, nor indeed was he really ready for what he was taught, as you will remember is shown by his opposition to the celestial ideas in his 'Spirit Teachings.'

Divino's mission was to teach reincarnation; and, to draw an inference from what he said, as the higher Spiritualism in private circles is more and more developed, independent messages in support of the doctrine will, in all probability, from time to time be received.

SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS,

BY FRANK H. SPRAGUE.*

The author of this volume says it is "the outcome of an *independent search for the spiritual view-point*," and that men have been feeding on "the husks of materialism" so long that they are now crying out for other nutriment, as is widely manifest by the growing interest in things occult. He says "false ideals" are the cause of the miseries and evils of life, and that they result from "a *wrong view-point*;" and also, that, "When one discerns the real meaning of the *spiritual view-point* he may safely trust 'the spirit of truth' to guide him 'into all truth.'" These ideas, though not new in substance, are none the less important, and the more authors there are who earnestly engage in the warfare against materialism, in the spirit manifested by Mr. Sprague in the present work, the better it will be for humanity.

In the chapter on "Consciousness" the author says:

By many, the spiritual realm is conceived to be a sort of extension of, or adjunct to, the material. They look forward to the time when it shall be disclosed to them as if by magic. But it is only through cultivation of the spiritual faculty that Spirit can be made to appear, and that factor of experience does not depend on time or space. It is futile to search for Spirit within the domain of objective experience; it must be approached subjectively.

In discussing the "Manifestations of the Spiritual Consciousness" he says:—

To gain the spiritual consciousness, to live as seeing the invisible, one must first of all, be filled with a single, deep desire to know the truth; without such an incentive, every attempt will prove vain. He must also be ready to completely renounce opinion, prejudice, wilful propensities, narrowness and all merely personal considerations, whether of thought or impulse, that can in any way interfere with the attainment of a higher state of consciousness. The mental soil, being thus purged, in a negative way, of those forces which impede, choke and dwarf the realization of spiritual ends, and being rendered receptive to truth, is ready for a fresh growth of emotions and thoughts. As seeds of various kinds are constantly scattering abroad over every available tract of the earth's soil, springing up, and growing into plants, each according to its own species, so in the inner life, the same irresistible impulse is encountered. Seed-thoughts of every description are distributed broadcast throughout the realm of mind, and find lodgment in every unoccupied nook and cranny; but wherever the field is preoccupied by a vigorous growth, so that they are unable to take root, they perish. "Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." As the outer world of nature abhors a vacuum, so does the inner world of thought. Wherever a mental vacuum exists, thoughts of all descriptions rush in promiscuously to fill it. A horde of nondescript, ill-defined sentiments and impulses—mental weeds—is always ready to enter in and take possession of the undisciplined mind, run riot, and scatter ruin and desolation. Thoughts are seeds of emotions, and emotions dominate the world of psychic being.

Here are some ideas on the "Spiritual Basis of Health":—

Self-revelation, in the deepest sense, awakens a desire to reveal others to themselves. Good alone can come from permitting the higher consciousness to be so directed toward another that elevating spiritual ideals shall be projected within the reach of his vision. In fact, every moment of our lives, whether we intend it or not, we are sending out thoughts that appeal to some one.

* Published by the author, at Wollaston, Mass. : Price 1.50, net.

The author's thoughts on "Realization of Ideals," Nature and Art," "Religion," "Philosophy," and "Music," afford profitable and suggestive reading. The book is neatly bound (gilt top) and contains 213 pages.

E.

THE CHRISTIAN CREED.

ITS ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICATION.*

By C. W. LEADBEATER.

The misinterpretation, owing to imperfect rendering of the essential meaning, of the Creed of Christianity has been the bane of the Church and brought upon it the obloquy and condemnation of many an honest mind. Mr. Leadbeater has succeeded most admirably in clearing away the clouds which have so long darkened the face of this article of belief which, even in its past state of obscurity, has been the sheet-anchor of so many struggling souls. The author has really laid the Church under great obligations to him, though it will doubtless persist, during his lifetime, in regarding him as a heretic. His explanations of the Trinity, the cross and the resurrection might be read with profit by all Christians. The author has made a masterly historical and critical analysis of the entire subject and gives us the results of his research in his usual lucid manner. The book has been gotten up in excellent style and contains 109 pages, 8vo.

E.

DREAMS.

By C. W. LEADBEATER.

The interesting subject of dreams has engaged the attention of many authors, but we venture to say that no one has previously been able to throw as much light upon it as the author of the work before us has. In his usual scientific way he divides his subject into sections, first considering the mechanism, physical, etheric and astral, through which our consciousness functions. One chapter is then devoted to the Ego, one to the conditions of sleep (of the brain, the etheric brain, the astral body, &c.) and another to the different classes of dreams. The chapter relating to experiments made on a sleeping person with a view to the production and recollection of dreams is especially interesting. This book is bound in the same style as the preceding one, but has not as many pages.

E.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE LONDON LODGE.

No. 33.

By A. P. SINNETT.

This small pamphlet embodies the main substance of two addresses given by Mr. Sinnett before the London Lodge in February last, on "The constitution of the Ego." It contains some important ideas, concerning the condition of the "Higher Self" at different stages of its development, showing that it is by no means perfect when it begins to function on the lower planes.

E.

* Price 1s. 6d.

MAGAZINES.

The *Theosophical Review* (February) has a contribution "The Protomartyr of the Mystic Way in Infant Russia," which is from the pen of a Russian, and gives a sketch of the life of the forerunner of the present sect of the Dhoubortzi,—Quirinus Kuhlman by name. J. G. O. Tepper has an article on "The Relation of Minerals, Plants and Animals to each other and to Man," in which are some statements worthy of general attention. Mr. Leadbeater continues his very interesting illustrations and explanations of "Clairvoyance." Mr. W. Kingsland urges the importance of a reversion to "The first Principles of Theosophy," pure and simple, by avoiding the "misconceptions and misrepresentations" which have so often "confused and obscured these principles" by details which are superfluous as far as the general public is concerned. "The Secret Sermon on the Mountain" (from Hermes to his son Tat) is another of Mr. Mead's valuable translations which he is bringing out from the lore of the ancient Greeks, for the humanity of the present day. Dr. A. A. Wells gives us some good, practical thoughts in his paper on "The awakening of the Higher Consciousness." "The Mirror of Illusion," by Miss Hardcastle, illustrates the philosophy of the Orient. H. Ernest Nichol writes on "The Christian Ideal," and shows the importance of the personal aspect of the Divine, as a focal point of our aspiration and devotion, and alludes to the difference "between the man who has received the 'new birth' in the Christian or any other religion, and the man who has not done so * * *"

February *Theosophia* has an article by Afra, entitled "Sat," several important translations, a report of Dr. Pascal's speech at the last Adyar Convention, and other matter.

Mercury publishes, in its January issue, a portrait of Mr. Alfred Percy Sinnett, Vice-President of the Theosophical Society and author of several well known Theosophical works. The leading article—"Communion of Saints"—contains the substance of a lecture delivered by Mr. J. C. Chatterji, in San Francisco, October 16th, 1898, which is freighted 'with valuable thoughts. "An Outline of the Way," by Mr. L. B., treats of the doctrines of the Upanishads. In the T.S. Echoes, Mrs. Besant's Central Hindu College Scheme is unfolded, and the 'Testimonial' offered to the President-Founder of the T. S., by the General Secretaries of the Indian Section of the Society at the Benares Convention in October last, is reproduced, together with other matter.

The Journal of the Buddhist Text and Anthropological Society (Vol. VI. Parts I. and II.) is an important number. It gives, among other matters, a compilation concerning the three convocations which were held to consider the three Pitakas which embody the teachings of Lord Buddha. We find here the grotesque exaggerations of numbers, where millions are spoken of instead of thousands, and thousands instead of tens, which caused Western Orientalists to look contemptuously for so many years, upon the Mahavansa, which is now accepted, despite its exaggerations, as one of the most valuable of all histories of Ceylon and India.

The *Gleaner* concludes Mr. Bilimoria's serial, "Beginnings of Life upon Earth," which is followed by a lecture on "Human Life and its Mission," which was delivered by Jehangir Sorabji at the Hyderabad T. S. "The Delusioned World," by N. Bhattacharya, "The Desert of Gobi," by N. A. and "Reincarnation," comprise the chief of the remaining articles.

Lotus Blüthen has continued articles on the Bhagavad Gītā (versified translation), a manuscript of the Freemasons and the teaching of Paracelsus, and the usual answers to correspondents—in which Dr. Hartmann's views of his contemporaries and their doings are given with his habitual acrid candor.

Teosofisk Tidskrifts for December and January are received and appear to have an unusually large proportion of original articles. This leads us to express the wish that the Editors of our non-English Theosophical exchanges would take the trouble of pasting in each number a summary in English of the contents, for the guidance of the exchange Editors who, from ignorance of the foreign languages are unable to do justice to the periodicals in their review notices. Our Dutch contemporary does it and we wish it might become the rule with all.

Sophia (Madrid) is made up almost wholly with excellent translations into Spanish, of Mr. Besant's, Mrs. Cooper Oakley's and Dr. Marques' writings.

Philadelphia (Buenos Ayres) for January contains also a series of translations, the authors of the long articles selected being Mrs. Besant, H. de Balzac, Arthur Arnould, Albert de Rochas; and those of the instructive short paragraphs, Eliphaz Levi, F. Hartmann and Laplace, the astronomer.

The February number of *Teosofia*, our Roman magazine, contains an article on Consciousness, by Engineer Signor G. Aureli, translations of Leadbeater's "Clairvoyance," and Dr. Marques' "Scientific Corroboration of Theosophy," and an original essay—presumably by the Editor—on the white lotus and White Lotus Day.

The *Maha-Bodhi Journal* (March) has an editorial on "Buddhism in India," and articles on "Buddhists in Ancient India," "The Present Religious Awakening in India," and "The Education of Sinhalese Girls," the latter being contributed by Countess Canavarro, now in Calcutta.

In the *Arya Bala Bodhini*, Miss Edger talks to Hindu boys on Religion and Gya Prasad Sinh writes on "The Present Condition of Hindu Boys." Countess Wachtmeister makes an earnest "appeal to all Hindu fathers to arouse themselves from their apathy and to take into serious consideration what will be the future of their country if they permit their sons to fall, without an effort to save them, into atheism and materialism."

Theosophy in Australasia (February) notices Miss Edger's movements (see Supplement) states that Dr. Marques is soon expected to arrive to assume the duties of General Secretary, gives a very interesting resume of "Theosophy and Christianity," and has an articles on "Sense Perceptions and Spiritual Intuitions" concerning "Space, Time, Matter and Consciousness." "Questions and Answers" continue to be an important feature in the magazine.

We also acknowledge with thanks the receipt the *Phrenological Journal*, *Religio-Philosophical Journal*; *Omega*, *Metaphysical Magazine*, *Universal Brotherhood*, *New Century*, *English Theosophist*, *Theophischer Wegweiser*, *Light*, *Banner of Light*, *Harbinger of Light*, *Rays of Light*, *The Light of Truth*, *Brahmavadin*, *Indian Journal of Education*, *Prabuddha Bhārata*, *Modern Astrology*, *the Light of the East* (an interesting number), *Pramottara*, and *Vāhan*

CUTTINGS AND COMMENTS.

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

We frequently see in the papers brief paragraphs like the following which tend to substantiate Mr. Leadbeater's statements concerning invisible helpers:—

A European child eighteen months old, fell from a window of a train travelling forty miles an hour near Bara-Banki, but on being recovered was found to have sustained comparatively small injury.

* * *

The old Game. A South Indian Missionary, the Rev. J.A. Sharrock, S. P. G., has been bold enough—in emulation, it would appear, of the detestable sectarian, Rev. Dr. Hastie, formerly of Calcutta—to say, in *the Indian Church Quarterly Review*, "that the Hindus as a race are probably, the most immoral, treacherous and cunning people on the face of this wicked earth will generally be admitted. To expatiate on it would be a waste of time." A more gross insult to a noble race "as a race" was never uttered. The friends of foreign missions may see in falsehoods like this the reason for the failure of the efforts of their missionaries to convert the Hindus to Christianity. Let them imagine to themselves what chances a Hindu missionary would have in England, America or any other country in Christendom, if he went there and so basely calumniated the people he was trying to proselytize. Mr. Sharrock has been trying to help the Pariahs, and to that extent has our sympathies, but if this is his secret feeling, his failure among them is not to be wondered at.

* * *

Startling Contrast of Ideals.

The ideal aspiration of one who loves his fellow-men has never been more simply and clearly put than in the following lines by one of America's noblest champions of advanced religious thought—Theodore Parker :

"Give me the power to labor for mankind ;
Make me the mouth of such as cannot speak ;
Eyes let me be of groping men and blind ;
A conscience to the base."

A most shocking contrast to the foregoing is found in the following extract from an American paper:—

Apropos of the story that Mrs. Stayvesant Fish, of New York, is to give a dance on St. Valentine's Day, with "garments reversed"—that is to say, the gentlemen will wear their swallow-tails in front, and ladies the backs of their gowns ditto, and both will wear double-pointed shoes, the *Morning Leader* correspondent writes: Wilile K. Vanderbilt recently gave a nigger cake-walk, and I know the locality of a cellar off Fifth Avenue, which is fitted up in the *Macabre* style as a dungeon. Clanking chains abound and servants wait on the guests, arrayed as convicts. Here the fashionables, including such stars as Mr. Perry Belmont and Mesdames Paget Astor and Cornelius Vanderbilt Junior, go occasionally to sup. Zest is added to the meal by the elimination of the usual table appliances, the guests going to the length of drinking from the bottle which is passed round.

Such loathsome debasement of the ideals of life on the part of those who have the means of alleviating, to so great an extent, the miseries of their fellow-creatures among the lower classes, is painful to contemplate. Perhaps these fustian aristocrats are not aware of the fact that the clanking of chains fitly symbolizes their bondage to material things. If wealth induces such madness, let us pray for poverty.

* * *

*Facts
in
Magic.*

A gentleman in the Madras Presidency, occupying an influential position, and whose word may well be accepted; has told the writer of some experiences of his own that are interesting as illustrating the occult knowledge and powers possessed by some of the natives of India. He had heard of a man who had the reputation of being able to manufacture an ointment that if applied in a stipulated manner, would, for a short time, render the person experimenting invisible to every one. After some difficulty the man was found, and finally consented on receiving 50 rupees, to sell a small portion of the magic unguent which he declared, if properly applied, would render the purchaser invisible for over ten minutes.

Our friend took his purchase home, and proceeded at once to a large open balcony, where he applied the ointment to his forehead in the prescribed place and manner.

At once he called out sharply for his servant, "Boy"! The man replied, and came running into the balcony in all haste; stopped; looked bewildered, and went to another room calling out "Master!" He had evidently not seen any one on the balcony.

Again the call was given, "Boy!" and again the perplexed servant returned, and finally ran right into his master.

He became frightened at being able to feel but not see, and when questioned declared he could not see his master although standing close to him.

Our friend, although in the sunlight, was unable to see any shadow cast by his body, and on going to a looking-glass, utterly failed to perceive his reflection there.

Shortly after the ten minutes had elapsed, his form gradually became visible both to himself and others, until it assumed its normal condition.

Our friend returned to the sorcerer and offered to purchase the secret of the manufacture of this most potent and extraordinary unguent, but failed to obtain his wish, as the purchase price was altogether beyond his means, reaching to many thousands of rupees.

In "Posthumous Humanity," pp. 221-223, is an account of a magic salve used by sorcerers in the sixteenth century. Andre Saguna, physician of Pope Julius III., obtained some of this mysterious unguent; it was of a greenish colour, and on analysis he was able to distinguish hemlock, hyoscyamus, nightshade and mandrake. Cardan, also gives a receipt for one of these salves, in which were mixed opium, aconite, pentaphyllin and nightshade with honey.

That there should be some kinship between these old customs and preparations and the unguent used by our friend at Madras seems more than likely; any way, the fact as given may be relied upon as genuine.

One other anecdote may be related, and our friend referred to in the last case is the author.

A holy man known to him, was talking to him of the power and value of mantrams, and stated that he knew a mantram which if used against any living thing would instantly slay it. As the conversation was going on, a sickly, mangy dog was trotting across the compound. Our friend said: "I can hardly believe what you tell me to be possible; there is that miserable dog; it cannot be a great sin to destroy it; show me your power and the truth of your *words now*. The native turned, and pointed his finger at the dog and muttered something; *instantly* the dog dropped; our friend went up to it and found it dead. He then had it removed and examined by a surgeon known to him, and was told, that there was in the dog's internal and external condition no reason for death.

* * *

After the close of the late Japan-China war, Col. *Buddhism in Japan.* Olcott wrote an urgent letter to the General Viscount Nodzu, the Commander-in-Chief of one of the two victorious Japanese armies, and an old acquaintance of his, from his tour of 1889, for whom he felt a great respect, begging him to use his powerful influence on the side of religion. He warned the Viscount that after such a splendid victory, the nation needed more than ever to have the innate religious spirit fostered and revived so that they might not run to such an extreme of vanity as to lead them to embroil themselves with one or more of the great Powers, who might inflict terrible disaster on Japan. His lordship replied in the following terms:—

"I beg to acknowledge receipt of your kind favour of November 17th, in which you ask me to use my influence for the revival of the Buddhist religion, the reformation of the priesthood, and the bringing of their sects into one great Brotherhood. I must avow that I too am greatly pained to see the growing indifference to religion in my country, and that I share your opinion that a thorough revival of the true Buddhistic doctrine ought to be inaugurated. I should indeed be happy if it were in my power to contribute a little to this great end, and the confidence you express in me is extremely flattering. Being, however, nothing but a simple soldier who is neither versed in politics nor in scientific and religious matters, I am sorry to say that my assistance can be of only insignificant value, there being many other men who by education and profession are far more suitable to lead a religious movement. I feel sure that you will have no difficulty in finding out such men—men who will deserve your confidence in this matter much more than I can pretend to do. Your disinterested sympathy for the welfare of my country has deeply touched me and I therefore wish with all my heart that you will succeed in winning for your great cause abler and worthier collaborators than me."

The publication of this letter of one of the purest patriots, greatest soldiers, and most pious men of the Japanese Empire at this juncture is timely and may be useful. In our last month's issue it was shown how Col. Olcott had been doing his best in Burma to effect a consolidation of the Buddhists of that country, of Ceylon and of Siam, into one great Buddhistic union, or fraternity, with a view to the healing of Theological schisms, and the creation of an irresistible public opinion which should compel the priests and people to reform abuses, and strive to live close to the high ideal of a Buddhist as taught and shown by the Buddha and his Arahats. This is the real key to the present situation in Buddhist countries, and the dream of our aged President's life is to see at least the first step being taken towards a union in love and mutual helpfulness, of all the nations which profess themselves followers of the Tathâgata, by the process

of sectarian consolidation being started within the confines of each country. If once these local sectarians can learn to live together in brotherhood, it will be comparatively easy to move towards the next and final stage of international religious unity.

E.

*Consciousness
restored
after many
years.*

Readers of the *Theosophist* will doubtless remember a case, mentioned in its pages some time ago, of a Negro who had suffered from cerebral paralysis, for very many years, as a result of an injury received during the civil war in America, but who was finally restored to consciousness, suddenly, by a surgical

operation which removed a piece of bone which was pressing upon the brain. He immediately asked about the movements of the army, as if he had been injured but a few hours before. A similar case is the following which we clip from an exchange:—

Twelve years ago, Charles Burrell, a boy living in Chicago, was struck on the head by a playmate. He became insane and was placed in an asylum. Quite recently, the X-rays having revealed a growth on the inner surface of his skull at the point where the blow was received, Burrell, was subjected to an operation. The growth was removed, and he was put to bed. The next day he awoke in full possession of his faculties, and his first words were, "Why did you hit me?" The twelve years had been a blank, and he resumed the life of a rational being at the point where it had been interrupted.

*Lord
Curzon on
Archæologi-
cal Research.*

The following from the *Madras Mail* sets forth the course which the new Viceroy intends to take in regard to Indian relics and the fruits of further investigations in the field of Archæology, and every friend of Oriental literature will feel grateful to him for his enlightened views. It looks very much as if he

were going to be the greatest viceroy we have had since Warren Hastings:—

Speaking at the Annual Meeting of the Asiatic Society the Viceroy said it gave him great pleasure to be present on that occasion. He had come there not in his official garb as patron of the Society, but as a student and writer who had himself profited by its publications and who was intensely interested in its work and welfare. He was glad to have heard the interesting inaugural Address of Mr. Risley and the account by Mr. Bendall of his recent researches and discoveries in Nepal. The latter was a country of great interest, in which he doubted not that original discoveries would await the future explorer and student. Mr. Bendall's remarks on two subjects in particular had confirmed his own observations in Asiatic travel. The parallelism which Mr. Bendall had noticed between some of the features and practices of Roman Catholicism and of the Buddhist religion in Nepal, had been observed in many other countries, and was one of the commonplaces of Oriental travel. He had himself made some study of monastic life and institutions in China, and had made a careful note of the many points of resemblance between the ritual, theology, and to some extent even the dogma of the two religions. Perhaps it was this coincidence that in some degree explained the easy entry of the Roman-Catholic propaganda into some Asiatic countries. The combination of a sort of nature worship with an æsthetic regard for the beauties of natural scenery had also greatly struck him in Korea, and he gave an account of the annual mission of the State embassy from Seoul to pay homage to Long White Mountain in the North. As regarded the work of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, although as he knew that it consisted mostly of voluntary effort and that they did not spurn the help of amateurs, he yet did not personally regard its actions as the mere academic exercise of students. He looked upon it rather as part of a duty which we owed to India. Planted as we had been

by Providence upon the throne of the Indies, we were trustees for the world of a literature, an archæology, a history, and an art that were among the priceless treasures of mankind. For nearly 3,000 years there had been a succession of kingdoms, dynasties, races and religions in India, all of them leaving relics of some sort, many of them relics of the highest value, which it was incumbent upon us to examine, to elucidate, and to conserve. It was sometimes said that officials in India had nowadays no time for independent study or research. "No time," was always the excuse of idleness, and the busiest man was usually he who had most time at his disposal. He did not, therefore, accept that plea as an excuse for any relaxation in the efforts which so many distinguished members of the Society had made in the past, and during his term of office he meant to do whatever lay in his power to encourage research, to promote study, and to safeguard the relics of the past as a part of our imperial obligation to India.

* *

The Aboriginal inhabitants of New Zealand have some curious beliefs. Some of these are set forth in a leading article in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, from which we quote the following :

Omens of the Maoris.

The Maori places great importance upon dreams. This fact probably arose from the universal belief that the spirit (*wairua*) of man has the power to leave the body during sleep, and that when a person dreams, it is his *wairua* roaming round which sees and hears all that one dreams of. Hence it is an *aitua* (evil omen) to suddenly awaken a sleeping person ; you must not shake him, for instance, but call to him and thus give his absent *wairua* time to pass back into the body.

This seems quite in accord with what Shway Yoe says in "The Burman" (p. 98, *et seq.*) concerning the Burmese belief in 'The butterfly spirit' (*leyp bya*) and its leaving the body and roaming about at night.

The Maori article says further :—

"Should you dream that you are flying through space and being pursued by another person, which pursuer, however, is really a spirit of the dead from Hades, which is trying to capture you, should your *wairua* be caught by the *wairua* from Reinge,* that is an *aitua* for you, but should it escape, then it is a * * * *marie* (good omen).

These primitive peoples seem to have caught faint glimpses of astral experiences. In the "Gulistan" Cottage, Ootacamund, there is a very striking and unique Japanese picture of the double of a sleeping girl being pursued through space by an evil looking elemental.

* *

Says the *Hindu* :—

Pro bono Astrologiæ. "There has been a revival in the study of Hindu Astrology in Bengal, and at the present moment there are some very clever astrologers in that part of the country. We have just heard of one, by the name of Nabin Chunder Bhatta Charya, who has startled a qualified allopathic physician of position, by a prediction which has come true. It appears that the Doctor's wife was suffering from remittent fever and was in a low condition. At this stage the astrologer, Bhatta Charya, after a calculation, assured the Doctor that the lady's life was not in danger, and that she would recover on the nineteenth day. The prediction was literally fulfilled and the Doctor has written to some Vernacular journals, mentioning the fact and praising the proficiency attained by the said astrologer in the science."

* The headland in Northern New Zealand, where disembodied spirits are supposed to take their departure for the realms of the dead.